

# The Darling Buds of May

FOR MORE INFORMATION  
ON THE DARLING BUDS OF  
MAY TRAIL, INCLUDING  
SPECIAL OFFERS, BEHIND  
THE SCENES IMAGES  
AND MORE, GO TO:

[WWW.KENT.GOV.UK/FILMOFFICE](http://WWW.KENT.GOV.UK/FILMOFFICE)



Behind the Scenes family in garden © ITV



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EXPERIENCE  
THE GARDEN  
OF ENGLAND  
**PERFICK!**

# The Darling Buds of May





## The Darling Buds of May

GOOD FOOD, GOOD FRIENDS, LOVE, LAUGHTER AND BEAUTIFUL COUNTRYSIDE: TV SERIES, **THE DARLING BUDS OF MAY**, CAPTURES LIFE IN AN IDYLIC RURAL, 1950s KENT, WHERE LIFE WITH THE LARKIN FAMILY IS NEVER DULL.

**T**he series was based on a novel of the same name by author H.E. Bates. He was born in Northamptonshire, but it was Kent that captured his heart when he moved to Little Chart with his wife in 1930.

It was some years later when the author and his wife stopped at a village shop to buy sweets when inspiration struck. As he waited for his wife in the car, the shop door suddenly opened and an extraordinary family burst out onto the street: mother and father with a large brood of children hugging bags of crisps and sweets and licking cones of multi-coloured ice-creams. Laughing and shouting, they piled into a big blue truck and disappeared into the summer haze. The Larkin family was born.

The Darling Buds of May novel was first published in 1957 and the now much-loved TV series first aired in April 1991. The cast line-up is led by David Jason as Pop Larkin, with Pam Ferris as Ma Larkin and Catherine Zeta-Jones, who has gone on to become a Hollywood name, as the beautiful Mariette.

Pluckley in Kent was chosen as the base for the filming and nearby Buss Farm with oast-house, out-buildings and a paddock became Home Farm, the residence of the Larkin family.

When it first aired in 1991, the feel-good show was an instant hit and it took top position in the overnight ratings. Three series later it became a firm favourite nationwide. To this day the series has remained in the hearts of audiences as well as the hearts of the Pluckley locals, who still enjoy fond memories of seeing the filming and being involved.

Follow this trail and step back in time to those idyllic days portrayed in the series and experience all the sights, smells and tastes that rural Kent has to offer.



Ma and Pop picnic © ITV

In the words of Pop Larkin himself:

“ I HAD SUCH A WONDERFUL TIME FILMING SUCH A GREAT SERIES AND ENJOYED MY STAY IN KENT ENORMOUSLY. THERE ARE SO MANY LOVELY PLACES TO VISIT AND ENJOY AND THE HOSPITALITY EXTENDED TO THE CAST AND CREW WAS JUST LOVELY. I HOPE THE WEATHER IS KIND AND THAT YOU ALL HAVE A PERFICK TIME. ”

WITH VERY BEST WISHES FROM  
SIR DAVID JASON

### 30 THE AGRICULTURAL MUSEUM

Brook, The Street, Brook, Ashford,  
Kent TN25 5PF

Tel: 01304 824969

[www.agriculturalmuseumbrook.org.uk](http://www.agriculturalmuseumbrook.org.uk)

The museum hosts a variety of collections charting farming history, including ploughing, seed sowing, harvesting and associated crafts. For opening times please visit the above website.

### 31 THE C.M. BOOTH COLLECTION OF HISTORIC VEHICLES

Falstaff Antiques, 63-67 Highstreet,

Rolvenden, Cranbrook,

Kent TN17 4LP

Tel: 01580 241234

[www.morganmuseum.org.uk](http://www.morganmuseum.org.uk)

A private collection specialising in Morgan cars dating from 1909 to 1936.

There are early motorcycles, cycles, garage equipment, Automobilia, as well as toy and model cars on display. For opening times please visit the above website.

### 32 THE CHAPEL DOWN WINERY

Tenterden Vineyard, Small Hythe,

Tenterden, Kent, TN30 TNG

Tel: 01580 763 033

[www.englishwinesgroup.com](http://www.englishwinesgroup.com)

Award winning winery in the heart of Kent. The Wine and Fine Food store sells a full range of Chapel Down wines and has a dedicated tasting area. Tours are available daily from June to Sept and weekends only in May and October. Call to confirm availability before your visit. The on site 'Tochard Phillips at Chapel Down' restaurant has a south facing sun terrace overlooking the beautiful vineyards and herb garden.



### 33 THE DERING ARMS

The Grove, Pluckley, Kent TR27 ORR

Tel: 01233 840 371

[www.deringarms.com](http://www.deringarms.com)

The Dering Arms houses an award winning seafood restaurant, serving up some of the finest seafood dishes in Kent. Known locally for its high quality fresh food, you may also enjoy the fine selection of local ale and cider and the three guest rooms.

### 34 WILLESBOROUGH WINDMILL

Mill Lane, Willesborough, Ashford,

Kent TN24 0QG

[www.willesboroughwindmill.co.uk/](http://www.willesboroughwindmill.co.uk/)

A working windmill where the traditional method of producing stone ground flour can be observed and children are invited to try their hand at making a small sample of flour using quern stones in the traditional way. Open Weekends and Bank Holidays as well as Mon and Wed 10.00 - 17.00 in July and August for guided tours.

### 35 WOODCHURCH WINDMILL

Ashford, Kent TN26 3QW

Tel: 01233 861 144

[www.woodchurchwindmill.co.uk](http://www.woodchurchwindmill.co.uk)

The windmill has extensive views over the village and countryside towards the English Channel. It is a fine example of a Kentish smock mill. For opening times please visit the above website.

### KENTISH FARMERS' MARKETS

[www.kfma.org.uk](http://www.kfma.org.uk)

There are many farmers' markets in Darling Buds of May Country for all you foodie fanatics to enjoy. Why not pop along to savour the flavour of real Kentish produce straight from the fields? Visit the Kent Farmers' Markets Association website for locations and opening times.



## 22 KENT & SUSSEX TEA AND COFFEE COMPANY

Pivington Mill, Egerton Road, Pluckley,  
Ashford, Kent TN27 0PG. UK.  
Tel: 0800 0351199

[www.kenttea.co.uk](http://www.kenttea.co.uk)

Pluckley Tea is one of over 200 different teas and coffees roasted and blended on site and sold at this unique shop. For opening times please visit the above website.



## 23 KINGCOTT CHEESE

Iden Manor Farm, Cranbrook Road,  
Staplehurst, Kent  
TN12 0ES

Tel: 01580 892 478

[www.kentishblue.co.uk](http://www.kentishblue.co.uk)

Kentish Blue is an un-pasteurised, mould ripened, blue, handmade cheese using milk straight from their Holstein-Friesian herd. This exclusive produce can be purchased from numerous Kent shows, listed on the website.



## 24 KENT LIFE

Lock Lane, Sandling,  
Maidstone, Kent ME14 3AU  
Tel: 01622 763 936

[www.kentlife.org.uk](http://www.kentlife.org.uk)

Museum located in the Weald of Kent including oast houses, barns and a herb garden. Within the 28 acres there are animals to cuddle, tractors to ride, play areas to go wild in, fascinating historic buildings to explore and cafés to relax in. For opening times please visit the above website.



## 25 PARSONAGE COTTAGE B & B

Station Road, Pluckley, Ashford, Kent  
TN27 0OZ

Tel: 01233 840 118

[www.parsonagecottagebandbpluckley.co.uk](http://www.parsonagecottagebandbpluckley.co.uk)

Parsonage Cottage is one of the oldest houses in Pluckley, with parts dating back for over 400 years. It is set back from the road, so if you are looking for some peace and tranquillity, you will find it here.



## 26 PLUCKLEY FARM SHOP

Weeks, Smarden Road, Pluckley,  
Ashford, Kent, TN27 0RF

Tel: 01233 840 400

[www.pluckleyfarmshop.co.uk](http://www.pluckleyfarmshop.co.uk)

A farm shop and fine food store selling Kent produce to local people. For opening times please visit the above website.

## 27 RARE BREEDS CENTRE

Woodchurch, Ashford, Kent TN26 3RJ  
Tel: 01233 861 493

[www.rarebreeds.org.uk](http://www.rarebreeds.org.uk)

Apart from getting a chance to see some of the British rare and heritage farm breeds, the centre offers 120 acres of woodland, ponds, fields and play areas. For opening times please visit the above website.



## 28 SILCOCKS FARM SHOP

Grange Road, St Michael's Tenterden,  
Kent TN30 6TL

Tel: 01580 763 351

[www.silcocksfarm-organics.co.uk](http://www.silcocksfarm-organics.co.uk)

Farm shop retailing their own organic and rare breed produce: beef, lamb, port and rose veal. There is also an on site butchery. Open from 09.00 - 16.00 Tuesday to Saturday.



## 29 SIMPLY ICE CREAM

The Nook, Bonnington, Ashford TN25 7BA  
Tel: 01233 720 922

[www.simplyicecream.co.uk](http://www.simplyicecream.co.uk)

Hand made, using the freshest local ingredients, Simply Ice Cream can be purchased all over Kent. A full list of suppliers can be found on the above website.

IT'S NO COINCIDENCE THAT KENTISH FOOD  
AND PRODUCE ALSO PLAY A STARRING  
ROLE IN THE DARLING BUDS OF MAY.

THE DARLING BUDS OF MAY SERIES  
CAPTURES THE KENT WAY OF LIFE, AND  
THE ENJOYMENT OF LOCAL PRODUCE IS  
VERY MUCH PART OF THAT. ONE OF THE  
EARLIEST EPISODES SHOWS THE LARKIN  
WOMEN PICKING STRAWBERRIES, AND  
A MAJOR STORYLINE SEES MARIETTE AND  
CHARLEY GO ON TO BUY A HOP GARDEN  
AND BREWERY OF THEIR OWN. AND NOT  
FORGETTING THE LARKIN FARM, WHICH  
IS OVERFLOWING WITH HOME GROWN  
AND LOCAL FOOD AT ALL TIMES!

Kent has long been celebrated as  
the Garden of England and has been  
famous for its orchards and hop  
gardens since the reign of King  
Henry VIII.

During Henry's reign, vegetables,  
previously considered poor man's food,  
became increasingly popular with the  
nobility. The King was especially partial  
to artichokes, loved fruit and, together  
with Anne Boleyn, shared a passion for  
strawberries and cherries. The Garden  
of England proved a fertile larder for  
his wants and in 1533 the royal fruiterer,  
Richard Harris, planted apple and fruit  
orchards at Teynham. The East Kent  
'fruit belt' had been born.



Main cast in front of table © ITV

Kent's association with growing hops has  
led to oast houses becoming an instantly  
recognisable symbol of the county and in  
the 19th and early 20th centuries, 80,000  
people would have been involved in the  
annual harvest at hop-picking time in  
September.

As well as growing hops, the county has  
a strong brewing heritage. Faversham

is home to Britain's oldest  
independent brewery,  
Shepherd Neame,  
which was used  
in the series for  
exterior shots of  
Bristol's Brewery.

Kent has proudly  
carried forward this  
tradition and today, you can  
still find a vast array of local  
produce from traditional  
orchard fruits to baked goods,  
meat, award-winning wines and even tea.

Restaurants and outlets throughout the  
county are proud to serve and stock  
Kent produce and there are more than  
30 farmers markets, so you are never  
without an opportunity to try the taste  
of Kent for yourself.





THE DARLING BUDS OF MAY TRAIL BRINGS TOGETHER THE IDYLIC SIGHTS, SMELLS AND TASTES OF RURAL KENT THAT ARE SO WONDERFULLY CAPTURED IN THE LARKIN FAMILY'S LIFESTYLE. WHETHER YOU'VE GOT TWO DAYS OR TWO HOURS, THE TRAIL INCLUDES PLENTY OF CHOICE FOR THINGS TO SEE AND DO.

In the village of Pluckley, you can take a look at the church where Mariette and Charley got married and where Primrose flirted with the young vicar. The village primary school opposite became the village hall in the series.

Or perhaps stop off at Pop and Ma Larkin's local, The Black Horse pub, before setting off on the circular Pluckley walk, which will take you through Kent's famous fields and orchards.

Out of the village, you'll find the home of the Larkins, Buss Farm, and if you fancy the beach, a trip to Folkestone will reveal the location of the Larkin's day at the seaside and the cable car lift that was used for Pop and Charley's heart to heart.

You can step back in time at agricultural museums, get hands on experience at a working windmill and admire historic vehicles. Or just sit back and take in the Kent countryside as you travel on the Kent and East Sussex Railway.

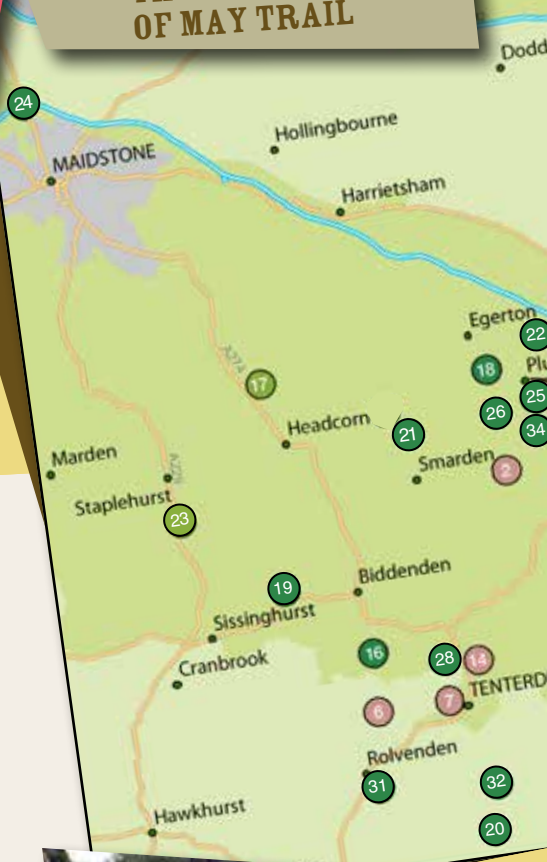


Coach And Grey Rolls at Pool Opening © Roger Holmes



CZJ with Strawberries © ITV

## THE DARLING BUDS OF MAY TRAIL



### 19 FROGSHOLE FARM

Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden,  
Kent TN27 8EY

Tel: 01580 291 196

[www.frogsholefarm.com](http://www.frogsholefarm.com)

Farm producing local Asparagus which is sold at the farm shop seven days a week in season - mid April to early June.



### 20 HARBOURNE VINEYARD

Wittersham, Tenterden, Kent TN30 2NP  
Tel: 01797 270 420

[www.harbournevineyard.co.uk](http://www.harbournevineyard.co.uk)

A small family owned and run vineyard and winery using traditional methods. Drop into the on-site shop open on an evening or at the weekend to buy the wine.

### 21 HEREFORD OAST

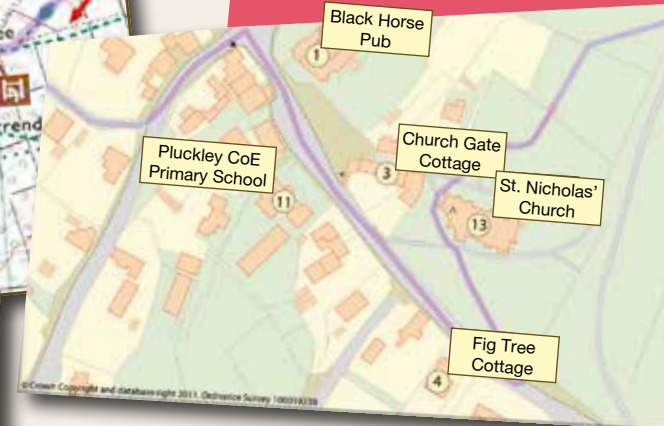
Smarden Bell Road, Smarden,  
Ashford, Kent TN27 8PA

Tel: 01233 770 541

[www.herefordoast.co.uk](http://www.herefordoast.co.uk)

Hereford Oast is a single oast built in 1876, set within 21.5 acres of wooded grounds including a charming English country garden. Breakfast for guests staying in the two rooms is served in the original Victorian Roundel, formerly used for drying hops, and includes home made preserves and local produce.

## CENTRE OF PLUCKLEY VILLAGE



Ma Painting Victoria With Lamb © Roger Holmes







### 15 BEECH COURT GARDENS

Challock, Nr Ashford, Kent TN25 4DJ  
Tel: 01233 740 735

[www.beechcourtgardens.co.uk](http://www.beechcourtgardens.co.uk)

Beech Court Gardens are a nationally renowned 10 acre oasis of tranquillity and beauty. The beautiful English gardens can be visited in the summer months, please go to the above website for further details.



### 16 BIDDENDEN VINEYARD

Gribble Bridge Lane, Biddenden, Ashford, Kent TN27 8DF  
Tel: 01580 291 726

[www.biddendenvineyards.com](http://www.biddendenvineyards.com)

This is Kent's oldest family-owned Vineyard, located just outside the picturesque village of Biddenden. It produces award winning wines alongside farm pressed apple juice and deceptively strong Kentish cider. To plan your visit, please go to the above website.



### 17 CLEARLY JUICE

Great Tong Farm, Headcorn, TN27 9PP  
Tel: 01580 291726

[www.clearlyjuice.co.uk](http://www.clearlyjuice.co.uk)

200 years of fruit growing, has produced a range of single variety apple juices with a distinctive style. Unfortunately there is no access to the orchards, but you can purchase juice from suppliers listed on the above website.



To find out about more walks in Kent please visit [www.kent.gov.uk/explorekent](http://www.kent.gov.uk/explorekent)

### 18 ELVEY FARM HOTEL

Elvey Lane, Pluckley, Kent TN27 0SU  
Tel: 01233 840 442

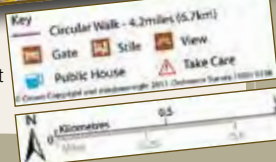
[www.elveyfarm.co.uk](http://www.elveyfarm.co.uk)

Enjoy some real peace and quiet surrounded by seventy five acres of Kent countryside. The nine rooms are the closest you can get to a rural idyll and there is a restaurant on site serving locally sourced food.

## THE DARLING BUDS OF MAY - A WALK AROUND PLUCKLEY



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The trail can also be viewed online or downloaded from: [www.kent.gov.uk/filmooffice](http://www.kent.gov.uk/filmooffice)



*The Darling Buds of May*

To treat your tastebuds to the Kent experience, take your pick from a range of options from ice cream and cheese makers to wine and fruit juice producers, or stock up at one of the local farm shops.

And why not stay a while? Relax, enjoy a slice of Darling Buds of May tranquility and wake up refreshed in the Garden of England.



Ma with Ceese © ITV



## PLACES TO SEE AND VISIT ON THE TRAIL...

© Explore Kent

### 1 BLACK HORSE PUB

The Street, Pluckley, Kent TN27 0QS  
Tel: 01233 841948

[www.blackhorsepluckley.co.uk/index.asp](http://www.blackhorsepluckley.co.uk/index.asp)  
Known as the Hare and Hounds in the Darling Buds of May, The Black Horse was Pop Larkins' local. Today it still offers a typically friendly country hospitality and hearty fayre.

### 2 DARLING BUDS FARM

Tuesnood Lane, Bethersden, Kent TN26 3EQ  
Tel: 01233 822450

[www.darlingbudsfarm.co.uk/](http://www.darlingbudsfarm.co.uk/)  
Known as Home Farm to most, Darling Buds Farm is the most iconic of all the locations: the home of the Larkins! Renovated in 2014, you can now stay at the farm and visit the annual Darling Buds of May Classic Car Show.

### 3 CHURCH GATES COTTAGE

The Street, Pluckley, Kent TN27 0QT

Church Gate Cottage became Edith Pilchester's home and has changed little in the intervening years. It is now a private residence but from the pavement you can easily visualise Pop leading Edith up her garden path.

### 4 FIG TREE COTTAGE

The Street, Pluckley, Kent TN27 0QT

The exterior and garden of Fig Tree Cottage were used as the Brigadier's garden. Die-hard fans of the series will no doubt remember the Brigadier walking out into the street as the Larkin's test drive the new Rolls Royce. This is a private residence which can be seen from the pavement.

### 5 FOLKESTONE HARBOUR

The Station House, Folkestone Harbour, Folkestone, Kent CT20 1QH

[www.folkestoneharbour.com](http://www.folkestoneharbour.com)

When Mlle. Dupont arrives for Oscar's Christening, she arrives at Folkestone Harbour. The Larkins first met her during their holiday to Brittany in the previous season.

### 6 HALDEN PLACE

Halden Lane, Cranbrook, Kent TN17 4BJ

Mrs. Kintley's hop garden was a particularly hard find! But with the help of the series location manager we tracked it down. Not much is visible from the road but the distinctive Oast Chimney is a dead giveaway. This is a private residence.

### 7 KENT AND EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY

Town Station, Station Road, Tenterden, Kent TN30 6HE

Tel: 01580 765 155

[www.kesr.org.uk](http://www.kesr.org.uk)

The Kent and East Sussex Railway brought tax man Charley into the lives of the Larkins, as well as taking Ma, Charley and Mariette to find the perfect wedding dress. The railway still hasn't run out of steam and operates much as it did during the series. A train timetable can be downloaded from the website: [kesr.org.uk/timetable](http://kesr.org.uk/timetable)

### 8 LEAS LIFT, FOLKESTONE

Lower Sandgate Rd, Folkestone, Kent CT20 1QJ

Tel: 01303 210047

[www.visitkent.co.uk/attractions/the-leas-lift/135584](http://www.visitkent.co.uk/attractions/the-leas-lift/135584)

The Victorian Leas Cable Car Lift was used as a backdrop when filming on Folkestone's beach for the Larkins' seaside holiday. It is still operational and carries weary tourists to The Leas for a fine view across The Channel.

### 9 LITTLE CHART CRICKET CLUB

The Forstal, Ram Lane, Little Chart, Ashford, Kent TN27 0PU

[www.littlechartcc.co.uk/](http://www.littlechartcc.co.uk/)

Nothing says 'British Summer' better than a game of cricket on the village green, enjoying strawberries and Champagne, or even Kent's award winning sparkling white wine from Chapel Down Winery. Little Chart cricket pitch was used in the episode 'When The Green Woods Laugh'.

### 10 PLUCKLEY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Street, Pluckley, Ashford, Kent, TN27 0QS

Tel: 01233 840 422

[www.pluckleyprimaryschool.co.uk](http://www.pluckleyprimaryschool.co.uk)

Pluckley's primary school doubled for the village hall. It was here that Mr Mason, a recently escaped prisoner, disguises himself as Santa to see his children before heading back behind bars in 'Christmas is coming.'

### 11 PLUCKLEY VILLAGE

[www.pluckley.net](http://www.pluckley.net)

The small village of Pluckley was the heart of the Darling Buds territory. The local butchers in the square featured and the local post office was turned into the Larkins' local grocery shop.

### 12 SHEPHERD NEAME BREWERY

17 Court Street, Faversham, ME13 7AX  
Tel: 01795 532 206

[www.shepherdneame.co.uk](http://www.shepherdneame.co.uk)

Shepherd Neame was used as the exterior of Bristow's Brewery. The oldest working brewery in Britain, it offers tours and tasting. For opening details please visit the above website.

### 13 ST NICHOLAS - PLUCKLEY

The Street, Pluckley, Ashford, Kent TN27 0QS

Tel: 01233 712598

[www.g7benefice.org/churches/pluckley/](http://www.g7benefice.org/churches/pluckley/)  
The church was used for the filming of Mariette and Charley's wedding, as well as the scene where Primrose tries to seduce Mr Candy.

### 14 SWAIN ROAD

Wentwood, Swain Road, St Michaels, Nr Tenterden TN30 6SH

Having undergone quite a few changes since it appeared in the series, Wentwood cottage, Mariette and Charley's bijou home, saw Charley trying to become the first man to freeze strawberries and Pieter the German visitor proving his worth by fixing the leaky tap. This is a private residence.

Behind the scenes  
blue truck © ITV

