



The Swaffham Crier

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Editorial

The **Village Shop** has foundered *at the last fence*, drat it, and I know this is a blow for all concerned, not to mention the village itself. My personal feeling is that the tide of vanishing small shops is a hard one to reverse without positive Government action. Congratulations to everyone who worked so hard to make it happen: we hope their efforts may yet bear fruit.

Goodbye to **Hilary and Peter Mengham**. We'd like to thank them for all their help with this publication: Hilary as an original member of this Editorial Board and as the author of the Recipe Page; and Peter for his invaluable assistance at *Crier* collating. Peter and Hilary have also played many other public spirited roles in the Village during the time they have lived here, and will be much missed. We'd like to offer them both best wishes for the future in their new abode in Dorset. Applications are invited for the now vacant position of **Food Column Editor**.

Shock results at the **Village Quiz**: *Babbling Brook*, first; the Editorial Board's and the Vicar's teams, joint equal second. *Second?! But surely*, the Editorial Board and the Vicar have only distinguished themselves in the past by a fiercely fought contest to come *bottom*. Something wrong somewhere? I did notice there were a number of unfamiliar faces at the contest - at our own table even. And possibly at the Vicar's?

Recommended reading in this month's magazine must include **Francis Riggs'** final instalment of his series of essays: *That Other Millennium* in which we learn, among other things, about the mixed-sex Monastery at Ely and King Alfred's Latin lessons. But we *don't* learn that it was *Ethelred* who was King in 1000 AD. This is a very sore point - had we known this, we would have won all the second-prize sweets and not had to give half of them to the Vicar.

Don't forget to visit the **Christmas Fayre** (Saturday pm Dec 4) or indeed **Foster's Mill**, which is selling, as part of its Christmas fare, *wooden Christmas Cards*. And remember, copy date is **EARLY** this month, **10 Dec**.

The Crier Editorial Board would like to wish all our readers a very Happy Christmas indeed — well, don't let it get you down too much, anyway!

Caroline Matheson

Cover Picture: *Marcia Miller*



Letters to the Editors

Our Man of the Millennium



Dear Editors

In its edition of 29 October last, *Private Eye* devotes space to an article clearly stating that the plays attributed to Shakespeare were largely the work of Ann Hathaway.

Whilst this publication is often whimsical in manner, I have found it to be correct in controversial matters on many occasions. As a loyal subscriber of many years standing I feel bound by that opinion and can make no further comments on the subject - except that, gender issues being what they are these days, it seems only right that Shakespeare was a woman, doesn't it?

I look forward to Alastair Everitt's article in next month's *Crier* demonstrating fully how she got away with it.

Yours festively in this season of goodwill

Mark Lewinski

Dear Editors,

Mark Lewinski rightly refers to the tight social and political control of the Elizabethan Age, with the Queen at the head. As Lord Burghley said, "Princes have many eyes and ears, and very long arms." Burghley, and Sir Francis Walsingham, were above all others those eyes, ears, and long arms. Yet the author of *Hamlet* lampooned Burghley as Polonius. The author was able to mock the Queen's greatest and longest serving minister without the Queen being offended, and without Burghley being able to do anything about it. Mr Lewinski amply demonstrates that a commoner would not have got away with it. The only person who could, was someone close to and in great favour with the Queen, and who because of his rank was forced to use a pseudonym.

The Stationers' Register provides no more proof that Shakspeare of Stratford wrote the plays than does the last minute modest gift to three actors. It is like saying that George Eliot's *Middlemarch* was written by a man because a man's name appears on the title page. Anyway, before 1623 few of the seventeen Shakespeare play entries in the Register give the name of the author. E.K.Chambers reckoned that up to 1598 fourteen of the plays published or produced were without the author's name. What does this prove? The author was either very modest or did not wish to be identified?

Recently revealed evidence suggests there is more chance of a Karolean Sufi being William Shakespeare than Shakspeare of Stratford.

Alastair Everitt

Dear Editors

Pete and I, through the pages of the *Crier*, would like to thank so many of you who have sent cards, get-well messages and gifts during my current little problem. Many thanks too for the “meals on wheels”, the gardening and offers of help with transportation , shopping etc. (Pete is still looking for the “ironing fairy” though!). We just cannot thank you all individually but hope you know that we really do appreciate everything - you are very lovely people.

I have just been preparing some of the Christmas event notices for the *Crier* - unfortunately I shall not be able to attend *any* of them this year but I sure as heck will be back next year.

A Very Happy Christmas and peaceful Millennium to you all.

Pat and Peter Cunningham

Carters Cottage

Millennium Cross Stich Panel

Thank you to all who attended the Coffee Morning last month and to the people who donated collectables and money. Although few in number, your wonderful generosity resulted in a grand total of £190 being raised which means we now have all we need to frame the panel.

Our grateful thanks also to Mr. & Mrs. Reeks for their generosity in allowing us to hold this event in their home.

Mrs June Wolfenden

St. Mary's Hassock Project

We have finished! The last of the hassocks, 115 in total, were completed and placed in the Church at the beginning of November, the culmination of about 10 years dedicated and loving work. Many hours of sewing has gone in to producing them and I hope you agree that they help to enhance the beautiful building.

To give you a few facts about the project, it was started by Christine Jackson in about 1989 with approximately 10 hassocks being completed. Marion and John Norris had two hassocks commissioned and then the W.I., with Betty Prime as the President, took over the project. They funded and produced a further 43 hassocks for the nave, which were dedicated in the Church in 1995. Seventeen members were involved in their production and Ophir Catling designed the patterns of The Crown, the Windmill, the Daffodil, the Two Churches and the Village Sign from his own drawings and

adapted the cross and the Dove from existing designs.

In 1995 I took over the project and with the help of donations, wine and cheese evening and two coffee mornings, we were able to fund the completion of the project. We have made a further 28 hassocks for the nave, 24 for the choir stalls in the chancel, 4 wedding kneelers and 4 to commemorate the Millennium.

The designs for the nave have been adapted from existing patterns based on the theme of the Cross and we took the first line of two famous hymns for the kneelers in the choir stalls – Thine be the glory and O praise ye the Lord. The designs for both the wedding and the millennium kneelers have been the culmination of a variety of ideas.

Such work takes much patience and dedication as well as skill and I must thank the people who have helped produce the kneelers since I took over the project. Thanks go to Ruth Scovil, Liz Kent, Sue Hilling, George Lamberty, and Pat Lesley, A very special thank you from me to Shirley Wilkins, Betty Prime, Jutta Reeks, Edna Catling, June Wolfenden and Kate Childs who have met on a regular basis since 1995 to work on the project.

The hassocks will be dedicated at the service in the Church on Sunday 2nd January 2000. The hassocks provide a lasting reminder of the skill and dedication of the talent of this village during the 1990's!

Hilary Mengham

PRIME WHITE

TURKEYS

NORFOLK

‘My birds are hand reared to ensure succulence. They will be available **fresh** and oven-ready in perfect time for Christmas’

(weight range: about 8lbs - 20lbs+)

Contact Marcia Miller on





Foster's Mill



By the time you read this, Foster's Mill will be looking a little forlorn and bare, with only two sails!

At the beginning of November our Millwright found evidence of advanced wet rot in one of the main timber which holds two of the four sails in position. As a result we were forced to stop using the mill until we removed the offending timbers and thus two of the sails.

We are now left with reduced wind power which we are supplementing with and mechanical power from a vintage tractor care of John Clarke of Lode! Yes, history is repeating itself - using the original belt driving mechanism, we are now able to power the mill with the aid of the Iron Horse.

As a result, I am delighted to say we have kept up flour supplies to all our customers. To boost the range of items on sale for Christmas, we have our own range of unique wooden cards - come and have a look!

We are planning a number of further fund raising events over the next 6 months, and will be open right up until Christmas. Remember - if its white or wholemeal flour / oats / muesli / honey or cards - we can help! Please feel free to leave your orders, however small on 01638 741 009.

Jonathan Cook



CAROLS IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Please come and join us for the usual Carol singing round the Christmas Tree in the Village Hall on Wednesday 22nd December from 6.30 to 7.30.

Hilary Almond and her All Star Orchestra are providing the music. And here is mulled wine to keep you in good voice.

All welcome.

Pat Cunningham

Secretary, Village Hall Management Committee

From our Reporter at the Parish Council Meeting

Clocks, Mothballs, Maps and the Parish Pump: Random thoughts arising from November's Parish Council Meeting



For at least one member of the public, the most delightful feature of the P.C. meeting of 11 Nov 99 was the revelation of the possibility that our church clock might once again chime. For those of us who remember the sound of the friendly disagreement between the tower of St. Cyriac's and the stable of Swaffham Prior House, the idea of the restoration of the clock bell is a happy prospect indeed. The Churches Conservation Trust (owners of church and clock) whose local representative John Norris attended part of the meeting, are thinking of putting in automatic-clock-winding: and not before time. They will also re-instate the clock bell to chime the hours. When Philip Sheldrick, who has wound the clock almost daily for 40 years or so, finally gives up, the choice is *either* automation—a trip-switch connected with a winder-motor, which would cost about £4500, *or* 'putting the mechanism into mothballs'. How do you put a clock in mothballs? Apparently you stop the clock, cover it up, and take steps to stop the machinery from rusting away into nothingness. The idea of seeing *our* church clock standing at ten-to-three (even with honey-for-tea) so appalled the PC members that they instantly came up with the promise of contributing to the cost of the automation-and-bell-chime. The clock is a Civic Amenity, as everyone agreed.

The Millennium Sub-Committee (represented by Elaine Malster and Elisabeth Everitt) reported on estimates received from several designers for the Village Map. A small sample of one designer's suggestion for the material of the map was passed around; it looked and felt much like a table-mat-coaster. A monetary problem arose because the cost of Projects derived from a *sub*-committee would not be allowed as VAT-refundable; only Projects of the PC itself, or of *committees* of the PC, that is, elected members only. What to do? The problem was solved by the assertions that (a) from now on, the Map was a PC Project, and (b) any donations or other money collected by the Millennium sub-committee for the map would instantly be paid into a PC account. (This simple solution took a good ten minutes and several reiterated explanations from the Chairman). One of the designers had come up with the excellent idea of producing a CD of the Map which, when the Map becomes out-of-date in 15 or 20 years' time, could readily be updated. This makes good sense, for a Millennium Project.

The map that I should really like to see would be a large map of the village, say 3m x 2m, hanging from the ceiling during PC meetings and visible to all those present. Everyone in the room would have a laser-beam

pointer, for use to point out any place in the Village mentioned during the meeting. Then, nobody would have to ask in undertones ‘Which footpath is he talking about?’ ‘Where is the house whose owner wants planning-permission for a porch?’ ‘How are you supposed to get from the cemetery to the Cadenham Lane?’ ‘No, I didn’t mean *this* street-light, I meant *that* one.’ The Village Hall is quite high-tech already, the only building in the village with an induction loop. So my suggestion is not inappropriate to this setting, and would be a great help to those trying to follow the proceedings intelligently while low-voiced Councillors mutter into their beards.

The evening ended with a fascinating discussion about the siting of one of the iron water-taps along the High Street. It *might* be of historic interest in a Conservation Area. Why was it moved? Could it be put back again? Did it work? Did people use it? Do they use *any* of the water taps? Yes, cleaning cars and watering the front garden. So it is true: Parish Pump Politicians really *do* discuss the Parish Pump, and I was happy to hear the proverb fulfilled.

On this happy note I bow out from this year’s reporting of PC meetings, and if ever I witness the fulfilment of another proverb—seeing somebody Giving Money for Old Rope—it will not be a member of this economical Council.

Margaret Stanier

Hockey on Boxing Day Morning

Having been soundly thrashed by the Bulbeckians for the last two years the Prior team is adopting new tactics and bringing in fresh blood for this the Millennium Match. Also our coaches have been studying the brilliant play of the French against the All Blacks and have come up with some very useful tips. We can’t fail.

Come and support us on Sunday 26th December on the Denny at Swaffham Bulbeck at 11.00am. Mulled wine will be available for a contribution, and there is a collection on behalf of Magpas. **Put it in your diary now.**

If any hockey players have arrived in the village during the last twelve months, or if you have a star staying with you over Christmas, please contact me on 742974.

Alastair Everett

The Friends of Bottisham Village College would like to apologise for the postponement of their Christmas Fair.
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THAT OTHER MILLENNIUM

Reading my newspaper some days ago, there was an article by a PR man who is employed by companies to examine where people are going in terms of trends and how these affect the market. He came to the conclusion that the next trend was the revival of religion. Not unlikely in that trends do come round again in a kind of sine wave of differing lengths and heights over the years and indeed, centuries.

However it gave me pause to think of that last Millennium and the times just prior and after the 1000 year mark. Then a religious revival was also taking place. The son and grandsons of Alfred the Great, having fought battles with the Viking raiders and colonists had at last obtained control of all England. A period of peace ensued, such that with Edgar's succession in 959, despite local problems, England could be said to be stable under one Ruler.

King Edgar was a devout man and history has called him "Edgar the Pacific". He was aware that the previous wars and raids by Danes had decimated the monasteries, certainly in East Anglia. They had been rich in comparison with the countryside and had been a prime target. But now in less dangerous times he wanted them reinstated to their former place in the scheme of things.

There were two sides to this revival, although Edgar probably recognised only the Christian side of it. The monasteries provided the only place of learning, and only monks were educated in those times. They were taught mathematics and to read and write, the latter in Latin as the only recognised language (even though Alfred had started to translate the Bible into vernacular English having been taught Latin in his forties). Thus kings and lords needed educated people to run their estates and business as indeed did the Abbots in the monasteries and Bishops in their Sees

The King had three great bishops to perform his wishes. They all had been in the process of reviving monasticism, and having Royal patronage made it easier for them. The result of this was that churches were enjoined to include the Monarch in their prayers - as we still do today.

These Bishops, Dunstan, Aethelwold and Oswald, had all been monks. Of most interest to us is Aethelwold, Bishop of Winchester who had as his particular sphere the old monasteries of East Anglia. He was very successful in the rebuilding and revival of Peterborough, Ramsey and of course, Ely.

It is slightly difficult to imagine that Ely Cathedral had not yet been started and Cambridgeshire came within the diocese of Lincoln. In Ely there was the famous *dual* monastery, i.e. accepting both men and women, of Etheldreda, founded in the mid 600's. By now it had decayed into an institution having

little to recommend it and its lands had been taken. Without land it could not survive and its charitable purposes were unable to be fulfilled. Neither could it sustain its own monks and nuns. Therefore the first thing to provide to revive it was land, or at least the income from such land.

Aethelwold set about finding land and found it here in Swaffham (Prior). (Note that Swaffham included what is now Reach and Bulbeck. These latter did not become parishes in their own right for a further 150 years or so). The purchase was made in the year 970 and it is interesting that the record of this purchase and the provenance that went with it still exists, as follows:

2 hides, owned by Wynsige s/o Wulfric, sold to Wulfstan for £8.

Wulfstan sold it to Earl Aethelwine, Aelderman of East Anglia.

2 hides and 70 acres then sold to King Aedgar for 80 Mancuses of gold.

This land bought from the King by the Bishop for the same price.

Aethelwold then bestowed the land on the monastery at Ely, and Byrthnoth, the newly appointed Abbot. The transaction as stated by the writer of *Libellus de Beato Aethelwaldo*, (which was later incorporated in the *Liber Elyensis*) was challenged by a kinsman of Wynsige, claiming he had had nothing for the land. A great meeting was held at Whittlesford where the decision was made by the Moot that the land did belong to the Bishop and Byrthnoth, Abbott of Ely. At this time little was written down and any transfer of property or other good was witnessed by friends and neighbours who could then be called upon to swear to the transaction, if need be. The full excerpt of the meeting, shows that at least one person was telling lies!

The land was then given to Eadric, on condition that when he died it would be returned to St Aethelthryth (St Etheldreda) as the monastery was called, "together with all stock and all the equipment and all the goods he had acquired in his lifetime". This latter transaction was confirmed in Cambridge by Aelderman Aethelwine at a meeting, held there for this purpose. The property would have been arable land and water, fen and netting, and in all would have been between 310 and 470 acres.

Who or what Eadric was is not stated but it is not to be doubted that he had to pay various rents as well as turn the property over to the monastery on his death. His rents would be paid by his tenants to him in eels, eggs at Easter, fish, corn and so on. He would then pass on a portion to the Cellerer at Ely, as his own rent.

So Swaffham became the property, together with later purchases, of the Church. Very soon the whole holding in the parish was 12 hides and 10 acres. say, between 1440 and 2400 acres. There can be little doubt that some kind of church was built here soon after the year 970 probably starting as a

“field Church”, an altar set up on a piece of ground for use by visiting priests. Then a wattle and daub building until eventually we had St. Mary’s as an aisle-less building to which aisles were added and a tower at a later date. However this latter was not until after the Conquest, probably only some 60 years away!

There is some controversy as to which of our churches came first. The preference can be given for St Mary’s since the patrons of St Mary’s are the Dean and Chapter of Ely, who are the direct assigns of the Abbot of Ely. The redundant church next door, Ss. Cyriac and Julitta, had as its patron, the Bishop of Ely, the first of whom was not appointed until about the year 1100.

It may be conjectured that by the end of the first millennium, there was a thriving community in Swaffham with a real church for the spiritual need of its people.

May the churches look down from their hillside at the time of the next Millennium, and be in as fine a condition then as the people of Swaffham Prior keep their church at the end of this.

FEC Riggs
Churchwarden

Bibliography

<i>Anglo Saxon England</i>	<i>Sir Frank Stenton</i>
<i>Charters of Eastern England</i>	<i>Hart</i>
<i>Anglo Saxon England</i>	<i>P H Blair</i>
<i>Abbey and Bishopric of Ely</i>	<i>E Miller</i>
<i>New translation of Aethelwoldo</i>	<i>Dr S Keynes</i>
<i>Anglo Saxon Wills</i>	<i>Dr Dorothy Whitelock</i>
<i>Swaffham Bulbeck</i>	<i>Rev. Hailstones</i>

Harvest Supper 1999

On the evening of October 9th, some sixty Swaffham Prior residents together with their friends gathered together in St. Cyriac’s to enjoy our traditional “Harvest Supper”, meet their neighbours and relax. Arrangements for the meal had been coordinated by Mrs. J. Summers with her team of helpers to whom we owe our sincere thanks. Mrs Alex Mead, aided by a bevy of enthusiastic young assistants had organised an excellent raffle which raised £87 for the church’s Charity donations. The event itself raised some £150 for St. Mary’s Church funds so the treasurer should also be smiling, and we thank everyone who supported us. We look forward to seeing you again next year, with more of your friends and neighbours.

Francis Reeks



Recipe of the Month

With Christmas fast approaching, I was at a loss as to which recipe to choose, until I came upon a very good alternative to Christmas Pudding. So if you would like a lighter dessert after your main course, I can thoroughly recommend this delicious, easy to make pavlova provided by a New Zealand friend of mine who insists their country is the real home of this pudding!

Pavlova

Ingredients— serves 6

4 egg whites	250mls (½ pt.) whipping cream
200g (8oz) castor sugar	300g(12oz) soft fruit – raspberries,
Pinch of salt	fruits of the forest (frozen and defrosted)
1 teasp vinegar	
1 teasp vanilla/essence	

Oven temperature – 120°C

Method

1. Cover a baking sheet with foil – shiny side down)
2. Whip the egg whites until stiff. Add the salt and a tablespoon of sugar at a time, beating between each additions.
3. Add the vinegar and the vanilla and beat until stiff.
4. Using a metal spoon, spoon the mixture onto the foil to form a circle, making a depression in the centre with the back of the spoon. With a fork, gently ridge the outer part of the circle to form a pattern.
5. Bake in the oven for approximately 1 hr 40 mins.
6. Once cooked remove from oven and allow to cool. Remove from the foil onto a serving dish.
7. Whip the cream until stiff and spread it over the centre of the ring and place the fruit on top. Refrigerate before serving.

This is my last ‘Recipe of the Month’ as we are moving away from the village to live in Dorset. I do hope you have enjoyed the recipes over the past two years and hope there is someone out there who would like to continue with the feature.

A big thank you to all the excellent cooks of the village who have so generously shared their recipes with us.

Hilary Mengham

Our Man of the Millennium - IV

As I showed in the October Crier, little was known about Shakespeare (hereinafter WS) for most of the 18th century, and Nicholas Rowe's inadequate 1709 'Life' remained the standard biography. The last twenty years of the century saw a burst of new activity to find documentary evidence. Our heroes are John Jordan, Edmond Malone and William Henry Ireland.

John Jordan was a failed wheelwright, a hopeful poet, and a self-appointed guide for the increasing numbers visiting Stratford. Schoenbaum* said he "contributed to the Shakespeare-Mythos by inextricably blending traditions, oral and written, with his own naive embellishments". There is no doubt he fibbed, he exaggerated, he was unreliable. So why do I mention him? Because Jordan is still an influence today. It is on the evidence of one of Jordan's transcripts (the original is lost of course) and references to a person called William Shakeshafte that Stratfordians are applying for National Lottery funds to create a new Shakespeare centre at Hoghton Tower near Preston. The theatre alone will cost 20 million pounds. Jordan, the over-imaginative tourist guide, would have chuckled, as in his own day his transcript had been considered a fraud by the great Malone.

Edmond Malone, an Irish lawyer, moved to London in 1776 to pursue his studies of WS and entered the circle of Johnson, Garrick, Gibbon, Burke etc. His edition of WS was published in 1790. It was a good edition but we are only concerned with what he said about WS's life. He showed that Rowe's 'Life' had only 11 biographical facts, of which 8 were mistaken, 1 doubtful, and only 2 accurate. Having demolished Rowe he announced in his Preface his intention of producing a major WS biography. So Malone continued his extensive search for documents, often working again with Jordan. Malone corresponded regularly with him, visited him and raised a subscription to relieve his poverty. Initially he believed in Jordan's above mentioned transcript - The Spiritual Last Will and Testament of John Shakespeare - and included it in his 1790 edition of Shakespeare. In 1796 Malone dismissed the transcript as a fraud and the world accepted this. This highly dubious transcript is the basis on which such a large grant application has been made. Such are the straws at which orthodox Shaksperians clutch.

In Summer 1793 Jordan was visited by the two Irelands, father and son. Samuel was an engraver, an avid collector, and totally besotted with WS. His son William Henry was a conveyor's clerk and considered to be a dolt by his father. They spent a week with Jordan who gave them the full treatment. They even called upon a gentleman-farmer who claimed to have burnt only a fortnight since "several baskets-full of letters and papers . . . many bundles with Shakespeare's name wrote upon them." How Samuel suffered! He was barely consoled by his purchase earlier that week of 'Shakespeare's courting chair'. (In the 18th century there was a lively industry supplying Shakespeare 'relics'.)

The Irelands returned to London and William Henry decided to bring joy to his father by giving him a Shakespeare document. Copying WS's signature from that reproduced in Malone's 1790 Shakespeare he created a quite credible forgery and presented Samuel with an agreement dated 14 July 1610 between "William

Shakespeare of Stratford . . . and John Hemyng of London." Samuel was overwhelmed but cautious and took it to the Herald's Office. The Heralds pronounced it authentic. At the early age of 17 William Henry had done well, and he protected himself by saying he had promised never to divulge the name and address of his source.

Samuel pleaded with his son to look for other documents, William Henry worked hard and obliged with a letter to WS from the Earl of Southampton, WS's catalogue of his own library, a love letter to "Anna Hatherrewaye" with a lock of WS's hair, a few leaves from *Hamblette*, and two new plays, *Vortigern and Rowena* and *Henry II*, amongst a mass of other forgeries. In February 1795 Samuel opened his doors to the public. They flooded in and many of the great and the good were amazed and convinced. There was a huge sigh of relief because people had been puzzled to distraction that someone so famous, whom they thought had mixed with Queen Elizabeth and her nobility, had not received or sent one single letter. At last the nation could rest in peace.

Samuel published most of the forgeries in late December 1795. Now Malone comes back on the scene. Samuel had refused him permission to take any papers away for examination and Malone refused to examine them with Samuel breathing down his neck. As soon as Malone read them he was convinced they were forgeries and in March 1796 issued a 400 page denunciation two days before *Vortigern* opened in Drury Lane. The many mistakes in the forgeries were exposed, the great Malone had spoken, and *Vortigern* was howled off the stage. But, like Jordan, William Henry had left his own legacy to haunt the world. He confessed to creating a Shakespeare library by signing and annotating about 80 books and tracts. Not all have come to light.

And what of Malone and his grand scale biography of WS? In 1794 he had completed half, in 1796 he hoped to finish it soon, in 1802 he had yet to finish it, in 1807 he said a third remained to be written, in May 1812 he died and on his death bed he asked Boswell's son to finish it. This Boswell did and the 21 volumes of *The Plays* were published in 1821. The 700 page second volume was devoted to the life of WS. Alas, this was "deeply disappointing" (Schoenbaum); it only took WS to the point of his arrival in London. Malone had added a lot about 'Shakspere' and his family, had rejected a number of myths, but he had added nothing about WS the playwright. The Scottish antiquary Alexander Chalmers lamented "We have lost the old tradition . . . but have got nothing in return." In their different ways Jordan, Malone and William Henry Ireland had all tried to fill the gap, and failed. Did the 19th century fare any better?

*S. Shoenbaum Shakespeare Lives. Consult the book for the full fun.

Alastair Everitt

Mobile Library

Any queries, please contact Tricia Harrison on 742850 or 01354 660940.

2000

"Bring & Share" Village Lunch



Bumper
Raffle

Village Hall
Saturday 1st January



Wine &
Soft
Drinks



Please come to the Village Hall from 12.30 on New Year's Day for an informal Bring-and-Share lunch. Either drop in for ten minutes to say hello and sign the Visitors book (which will go into the Village Hall 'archive' as a permanent record) or come with the family and friends and stay a little longer. If you are staying to eat, you are asked to bring a plate of food (savoury or sweet) enough for the number of you who are coming. The most suitable would be sandwiches, filled rolls, pizza, quiche, sausage rolls, mince pies, cake, grapes, clementines and anything else that does not need knives and forks. That way, there should be plenty for everyone and a minimum of clearing up. Bring your own drink if you wish but the Village Hall will provide some wine (for which you will be asked to make a donation), squash, coffee and biscuits, plates and glasses.

A *Millennium Cake* will be cut at 2.00pm.

WE HOPE TO SEE AS MANY PEOPLE AS
POSSIBLE.

ENCOURAGE YOUR NEIGHBOURS AND
FRIENDS TO COME ALONG.

CHRISTMAS FAYRE

Saturday, 4th December 2.00 – 4.00 pm
Swaffham Prior Village Hall

Handmade Christmas Cards ◯ Tree & Table Decorations
Pot Pourri ◯ Place Mats ◯ Home-made Christmas Puddings,
Cakes & Mincemeat ◯ Selection of Chutneys & Preserved Fruit
Gifts ◯ Refreshments ◯ Raffle ◯ ...and more!

Admission: Adults 30p ◯ Children free



Father Christmas will be there!

In aid of MAGPAS & The Arthur Rank Hospice

Bottisham Village College Music Society

By Popular Demand

PYLLIDA ANN MCCORMICK (soprano)

And

DAVID PRICE (piano)

Return to Bottisham to give a recital on

Friday 3rd December

At 8pm

Main Hall, Bottisham Village College

Programme includes excerpts from opera by

MOZART, HANDEL, GLUCK, PUCCINI

Songs by FAURE, SCHUMANN & STRAUSS

This will be a club-style concert so bring your own interval refreshments.

Tickets at the Door: £5, (£2.50—students)

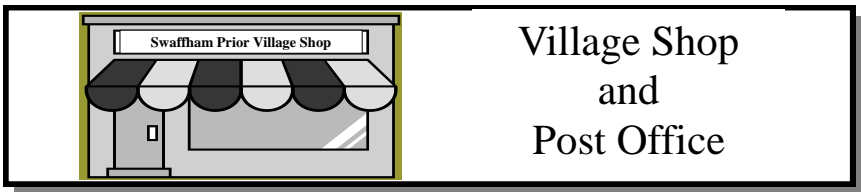
Season Ticket Holders and Children under 16 with adults FREE.

BELLRINGING AT NEW YEAR

The bellringers hope to ring-out/ring-in as usual this year: 31st December (11.45p.m.) to 1st Jan (12.15).

Bellringers all over the country are aiming to ring all the ringable bells in Britain at 12 noon on 1 Jan. 2000, so we hope that Swaffham Prior Bells will be heard at this time too. If you live at the south end of the village you may also hear Swaffham Bulbeck and Bottisham bells; if at the north end, you may hear Burwell and Fordham. Some people call it 'greeting the first year of the new millennium'. (I call it greeting the last year of the old millennium.).

Margaret Stanier



As many of you will have heard, a resident in the village had expressed an interest in providing the village with a Post Office and Shop on a permanent basis.

In order to facilitate this, a special meeting of the Village Hall Management Committee was held on the 8th November to try to mitigate the problem of the low salary offered by the Post Office. Because of the overwhelming social need for this facility in the village, it was unanimously agreed by the VHMC to offer the Meeting Room in the Hall to this resident at a substantially subsidised rent; this would have, at best, barely covered the cost of heating and lighting with no contribution to any of the other expenses involved in running the Village Hall.

The Village Hall Management Committee also undertook to raise the necessary finance to cover the set-up costs. This would have been achieved by a public appeal to the village with the VHMC making good any shortfall. The set-up costs would cover the construction of a brick built counter, erection of the security screen, all legal costs incurred in changing the Lease and Trust Deeds, finalising the tenancy agreement and implementing all the security requirements demanded by the Post Office. The Parish Council had already passed a resolution at their October meeting to pay the fees incurred in obtaining Planning Permission for the change of use of the Meeting Room.

Unfortunately, the resident has decided not to proceed. So despite all our very best endeavours over the last 18 months, we regretfully have to advise that there is no alternative to the Post Office and Shop closing permanently. The last day of trading will be Thursday 27th January 2000.

We should like to take this opportunity to thank Val Clarke for all her hard work in keeping the facility going during the last 18 months in the hope that a permanent solution could be found. Sadly, this is not to be.

Pat Cunningham

Trevor Jones

Christmas Holly

Deck your halls with boughs of Swaffham Prior Holly, which will be for sale (£2.50 per bunch) from Saturday December 11th. All proceeds will go to the flower fund for decorating the church on special occasions.

We shall be selling the holly at Anglesey House (white gate next door to the churchyard) on:

Saturday 11 th	12.00-1.00	Sunday 12 th	12.00-1.00
---------------------------	------------	-------------------------	------------

Saturday 18 th	12.00-1.00	Sunday 19 th	12.00-1.00
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Please telephone Elisabeth Everitt (742974) if you would like to place an order, or if you cannot collect at the above times.

Elisabeth Everitt



BOTTISHAM SWIMMING POOL

**Swimming Pool re-opens February 2000.
DON'T MISS THIS VERY SPECIAL OFFER!**



On sale now, a limited number of lifetime and annual season tickets.
an excellent opportunity to purchase

THE IDEAL CHRISTMAS PRESENT
for children, partners and friends to enjoy

UNLIMITED SWIMMING FROM THE YEAR 2000!

Annual, unlimited use cards	Adults £100 Concessions £75
Lifetime unlimited use cards	Adults £500 Concessions £375

Available from Bottisham Sports Centre Reception, telephone 01223 811121



WI Notes

We were taken into an Aladdin's cave on 15th November when Lady Joan Riley brought her collection of home-made Christmas decorations.

She began by showing us three beautiful needlepoint panels each depicting a scene from the Nativity - the Shepherds, the Stable and the Wise Men. These clipped together to form a triptych.

We then admired many table decorations, Christmas baubles covered in fancy ribbons and sequins and a great variety of Christmas cards all hand-made by Lady Riley. She showed us how to make them all and we were intrigued and filled with enthusiasm. A truly memorable evening.

Next month, on 13th December, we shall be enjoying our Christmas party with food, wine and games.

There are still 4 tickets left for 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat' at the Corn Exchange on Friday, 7th January at 7.45pm. These are very good seats in the tiered section - cost £12.40 each. If you would like to join us please ring Betty Fox on 742000.

We now have some Swaffham Prior Millennium tea towels for sale, price £2.50 each. Please contact Betty Fox (742000) if you would like one.

Betty Prime

GAY BULLEID GOOD NEIGHBOUR AWARD

This will be presented at the Carol Service on 21st December. If you would like to nominate any resident of Swaffham Prior who you feel has been a good neighbour to the village as a whole or anyone in particular, please send their name and a reason for the nomination to Margaret Phillips, 50 Lower End, before 14th December.



STAINED HUNDRED

Mr Whitehead of the Isaac Newton Masonic Lodge spoke about Freemasonry in Cambridge. Although there are continuous records of an Edinburgh Lodge since 1598, the date of the start of Freemasons in England is not known, though it may have started with the Knight Templars. Mr

Whitehead is the Information Officer for the Province of Cambridge which came into being in 1796. Lodge 88, the Scientific Lodge, began in Cambridge in 1752 and met at the Black Bear in Trinity Street. In 1793 a new Lodge, School of Plato, came into being but it was expensive and selective. 7 shillings was charged for the Dinner which followed the

meetings at a time when an excellent meal could be bought for a shilling, and it ceased to exist in 1837. Thomas Nutter, a brewer, petitioned for a new Lodge for tradesmen as the other Lodges were either overrun by University people or too expensive. Lodge 441 was instituted and its members were very varied: college porters, bootmakers, librarians, builders, surgeons, tailors. Masonic Lodges were accepted as one aspect of society in the 18th and 19th centuries and met in public houses. The University Lodge wanted their own premises and moved into several different buildings before finally building their own premises in Corn Exchange Street and when these were demolished to make space for the Lion Yard car park, used the compensation to move half their Lodge to Bateman Street. Slides were shown of both the old and new Masonic Halls.

Mr Whitehead began the second half of his talk by showing the regalia which relate to the different stages of membership. There are 9000 Lodges in England with an average of 50 members. They raise enormous amounts for charity, supporting both local and national appeals out of their own pockets and money has gone to projects both in this country and abroad. Hitler and Mussolini wiped out freemasonry in their respective countries and Hitler had a hit list of prominent Freemasons who were to be arrested. It was during wartime that "No comment" became policy leading to the accusations of secrecy.

The next meeting will be on December 8th at Bottisham Village College at 7:30pm. and will have a Christmas theme, including refreshments.



VILLAGE GARDENERS

As our speaker Mr.Collen told us at the November meeting – a garden feature can be anything that stands out.

The many features he illustrated with slides included old brick walls, beds covered with pebbles and boulders, fountains, statues and a variety of pots. There were also many different types of plants, yuccas and cordilines with their striking leaves, brilliantly coloured acers and many more colourful plants and trees. Although the majority of the slides were of large gardens he gave us many ideas that we could incorporate in our own smaller plots.

There will be no meeting of the Village Gardeners in December, so the next meeting will be on Tuesday 18th January in Swaffham Prior Village Hall when Mr Peter Lewis will speak on 'Organic Gardening'.

Betty Prime



LADIES CIRCLE

The October Ladies Circle meeting was held at the home of Mary Cook as the Chapel Vestry was having some renovation work carried out there. Joan Bradley from the village came along to tell us about her life as a Land Army girl. It was most interesting to hear about when she came to Swaffham Prior from Leigh, Greater Manchester to work on the land. Many of the girls travelled from Manchester and Lancashire to work here and felt quite alone when they arrived, but soon all became friends. The land army girls stayed at Swaffham Prior house, the home of Mr & Mrs Marshall, and worked on the land at Swaffham Prior and Burwell. Many of the girls married local boys and continued to live in the village. They continue to hold reunions to this day. Joan also brought along old newspaper cuttings and photo's depicting their lives on the land, driving tractors, riddling and generally working very hard.

May Cook, getting into the spirit of bygone years made us all Spam sandwiches, crushed crisps and served cups of tea. The evening was most enjoyable and we finished the evening with a raffle to help boost Ladies Circle.

Our December meeting will be a social evening.

Sandra Butcher



December Wildlife – Trees of Light

In deep winter it may seem to us that all of nature is either dead or asleep. However, some plants and trees do remain with us through the coldest months. They brighten the countryside, inspire many a superstition and tradition and stay true to their name, 'evergreen'.

The Yew tree, common to many churchyards and undisturbed places, can live for over a 1,000 years and many were mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1066. Thus the Yew has a reputation for immortality, which has made it a symbol for life after death.

This explains the ancient custom of putting sprigs of yew into the shrouds and graves of those being buried. Which in turn may explain why there are so many stories of Yews growing out of lover's graves.

The Yew is seen as a tree of light, its green foliage in the dead of winter showing that life will go on. To highlight this, all evergreens were traditionally dressed with shiny objects at Yuletide to call the light of the sun back in the coming year. This tradition we of course still practice, lighting up



our homes and the overcast skies with our Christmas trees.

The holly tree is also a tree of light. It has shiny leaves and bright berries and is traditionally a plant of good omen. According to legend, it is particularly lucky for a man to carry a leaf or berry, as he will then become quickly attractive to women.

On the higher branches of holly the leaves are a lot less prickly as they are out of the reach of animals. There is an old country saying that if the smoother holly is brought into the house first at Yuletide, then the woman shall rule the house for the coming year, if prickly, then it shall be the man. (It would be interesting to see if there was an increase in incidents of women falling off ladders at this time).



If you would like to know any more about your local wildlife or wish to join the wildlife trust, please telephone 01223 712400 for more information.



Lifelong Learning
Day and Weekend Courses

Saturday 4th December

Antiques, Collectables and Attending Auctions
*Arabic Dance * French Polishing * Life Drawing*
Sexuality Issues for those Working with Young People
The Magic of Play

Saturday 4th/Sunday 5th December

Database Workshop (Access)

Saturday 11th December

*Alexander Technique * Basic Food Hygiene*
Chinese Brush Painting



Wine Tasting!

Come and enjoy a pre-Christmas wine-tasting at Burwell Day Centre at 8pm on 18th December. It is organised by Burwell Twinning Association and there will be an entertaining introduction to wine tasting by a knowledgeable wine expert, Dr Martin of St. Catherine's College. Entry charge is only £5.00.

Whilst there, you might like to find out more about the Twinning Association — it really is entertainment all the way!

David Jackson

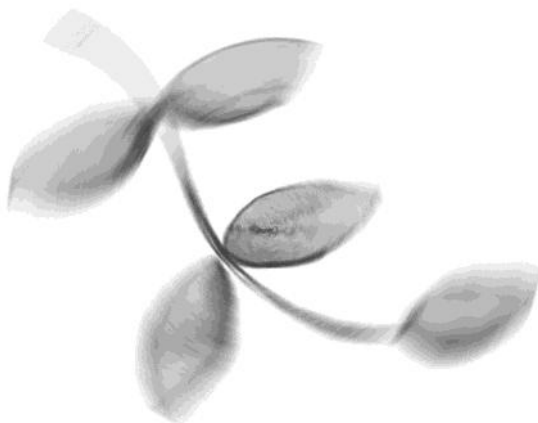
Masquerade

CHARACTER, CARNIVAL
and
PERIOD COSTUME
HIRE

avenue  b

e n t e r p r i s e s

p r o j e c t a s s i s t a n t s e r v i c e s



- document layout:
letters, memos, faxes ..

- a thesis

- a presentation

- a spreadsheet

- a curriculum vitae

- a poster

- out of hours
office work

- other
miscellaneous items

need some help?

c a l l B e a o n 01638 741 154

b

avenue

BURWELL SURGERY NEWSLETTER

Christmas and New Year Opening Hours

We will be open on 4 of the Bank Holidays as listed below. These sessions are for urgent cases only, not routine appointments.

If you need a doctor when we are closed, please telephone 741234, and your call will automatically be transferred to the duty doctor at “Suffolk Doctors On-Call.

December		January	
Friday 24	8.30-1.00	Saturday 1	CLOSED
Saturday 25	CLOSED	Sunday 2	CLOSED
Sunday 26	CLOSED	Monday 3	8.30-12.00
Monday 27	8.30-12.00		
Tuesday 28	8.30-12.00		
Wednesday 29	Normal Service		
Thursday 30	Normal Service		
Friday 31	8.30-12.00		

Please ensure you have enough medication to last you over the holiday period, but do not stockpile your tablets. Our dispensary will be open as above, please check with the chemist as to their opening hours.

We wish you all a happy and healthy Christmas and New Year..

Aileen Allen
Practice Manager

For Sale

6 BBC Cassette Tapes—Shakespeare Plays:-

Julius Caesar

Henry IV

Twelfth Night

Romeo & Juliet

A Midsummer Night's Dream

Hamlet

New—still in wrapping—unwanted gift.

£25 ONO

Mrs S Butcher, 7 Rogers Rd, tel: 742585

Notes from the Parish Council October Meeting

Mr Andrew Badcock chaired the meeting with 7 members and 5 members of the Public.

Matters Arising

The Precept: Following an earlier Precept meeting, this was reported to the PC and agreed.

Playground Equipment: It was agreed to wait for the annual inspection report from Wicksteed. This is to be carried out on the 12th November. Any decision on resurfacing works needed will be made at the next PC meeting.

Public Footpaths: The Clerk had contacted CCC for an update on the position of the footpath at the Beeches. After some discussion it was agreed to investigate further the cost of repairs or the possibility of closing the stretch of the footpath that had been marked as unsafe. The Clerk was asked to write to CCC. Rights of Way to seek their advice.

The Millennium: The sundial is now complete. There were further discussions about the village map. The funding of this last project was discussed at length.

Reports

Councillor Fitch reported to the meeting.

Councillor Cane was not present.

Correspondence Received: ECDC meetings are now open to the Public should they wish to attend. Meeting Agendas are displayed on the noticeboard. A letter was received asking about the possibility of continuing the footpath in the Cemetery to the Allotment boundary. This was discussed and it was agreed to obtain prices for this work.

The possibility of trimming/shaping the Yew trees over the Cemetery gate was discussed. This was to be further looked into. Also, it was brought to the PC's attention that Mr Sheldrick who has wound the church clock for many years was retiring from this task and that no-one local could be found to continue. It was unanimously agreed that the clock be kept working. The Churches Conservation Trust are aware of the situation and have made enquiries into the possibility of automatic electric winding. The Clerk was asked to investigate ways of funding such a project.

A letter had been received from the Bottisham Swimming Pool Association asking for help with funding equipment for the new swimming pool. The PC agreed to send a donation.

Planning Applications Received

9 Cage Hill - Remove existing sheds and build boundary wall and replacement shed.

Marinor, Prior Fen, Upware - Demolition and reconstruction of double garage on new piled raft foundation.

Heath Road (An amendment) - Four new terraced houses and associated access and landscaping.

There were no objections to the above but with reference to the houses on Heath Road, a letter was sent to ECDC recording the PC's continuing concerns about the additional traffic coming out onto Mill Hill.

Any Other Business

Village Shop: Mr Trevor Jones reported to the meeting.

School: Mr Peter Whitfield reported to the meeting on the recent visit by the OFSTED inspectors noting that very good progress was being made and everyone was very positive.

PC Vacancy: This was displayed on the noticeboard. To be reviewed at next PC meeting.

Village Hall Committee: It was agreed that Mr John Munda would represent the PC on this committee.

Open question time: It was asked if the water fountain that once stood by the Playground gate could be reinstated. It was agreed to discuss this further at the next PC meeting.

Karen King Clerk of the Parish Council

LOCAL GOVERNMENT MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS ACT 1982 NOTICE AND APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL OF PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENTS LICENCE.

I, Patricia Victoria Cunningham of Carters Cottage, High Street, Swaffham Prior, Cambs CB5 0LD propose to make application for a public entertainments licence for Swaffham Prior Village Hall to commence 1st April 2000.

Any objections should be submitted, in writing, to Mr. S.C. Clements, Environmental Services Manager, East Cambridgeshire District Council, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, Cambs, CB7 4PL.

From the Church Registers for October

Holy Matrimony: Peter Cecil Charles & Samantha Bocking [SB]
Steven William Struthers & Rebecca Clare Lewin [SB]

Holy Baptism: Fleur Katherine Hyaltun-Rayner [SB]



Our month in Queensland was memorable for its contrasts of whale watching, wallabies, wombats and kookaburras, added to three days in the Outback, the beauty of Sydney harbour and some idyllic days in a tropical garden hotel beside the beach in Bali. So we arrived back with a bump to chilly but brisk English autumn and over two stone weight of paper work, fifty e-mail and ten telephone messages. It has taken until now to catch my breath and get back into the County Council and its associated partners.

With the help of my District colleagues we have been negotiating some small changes to the local **bus services** between Cambridge and Newmarket. Overcrowded buses, we believe, are now reduced what with relief buses and slight rescheduling.

The long-awaited **cycleway improvements** in this area took a small step forward at a recent meeting I attended at Ely. All the missing links to what I call the "Fen Edge Way" from Quy to Burwell via Lode, Longmeadow, Swaffhams (Reach) to Burwell will be arranged in priority at a meeting in March 2000. By then costings and full appraisals will have been completed and some money is available with more to come. Another priority case for consideration is cycleway from Burwell to Exning.

In the meantime, the only money which will be spent in East Cambs. is to refurbish and create a proper cyclepath from Quy to Bottisham (including Bell Road) to enable Quy children to get to school safely away from the dangerous A1303 main road. In association with the cycleway, an improved junction Bell Road/A1303 will be constructed to help avoid more accidents caused by right-turning cars meeting others overtaking at that point.

On the education front a slight feeling of hope arising from some £3m extra for schools next year has been dashed by the announcement by the Local Government Minister Hilary Armstrong that the additional cost of government plans to introduce performance related pay for teachers will not be entirely funded by new money as previously expected. The effect may be as much as a £1.5m cut leaving only half the expected money available for schools. By the time you read this, perhaps the Government will have had second thoughts. Otherwise our schools in Burwell, Bottisham and the Swaffhams will be deeply disappointed at the prospect of receiving only half of what they had been led to expect.

In the **fastest growing District** within the fastest growing County, the lack of Government recognition and help is deplorable. If we cannot expect an overdue adjustment to the County's central grant in recognition of our long-term underfunding for all services, then we deserve some special financial help to at least relieve the near intolerable pressure on our schools.

It is ironic that in the face of financial misery there are encouraging signs that **Swaffham Prior school** is recovering well from its recent difficulties. The delays in new building at **Swaffham Bulbeck school** caused by a slow-moving Dept. of Environment are now behind us and **Bottisham Village College** has received a letter

from David Blunkett saying that the college is recognised as having been especially successful in the last year. The Warden will attend a celebration of this status in Westminster next month.



**EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

From our District
Councillor

Not just another year, but another Century is about to pass. I am lucky to have been born in the second half of this century, so I did not experience the horrors of the two world wars and the inter-war depression. Nor, as a woman, did I have to struggle for my right to vote, to work and to study for a degree. We have achieved much for the rights and well-being of people in this country over the last century. I hope we will be able to build on this in the next century to secure our peace and prosperity and to help other nations in the world achieve peace, prosperity and respect for human rights. I hope that you will all have a Happy Christmas and that you will enjoy the celebrations as we welcome in the new century.

The draft 2000 **Electoral Register** was published at the end of November and is available for inspection at the Council offices, with the Parish Clerk or with me, until mid December. If you are not on the register, you will not be able to vote in any elections or referenda that are held next year. Please check that you are included and if you are not, contact the Electoral Services on 01353 668833 extension 338.

The first **East Cambridgeshire District Newspaper** should hit your doormats about a week after this edition of the *Crier*. The aim of the paper is to let residents know what is happening across the District and what the District Council is doing. The first edition has been timed for December to provide you with a list of useful numbers if you need any Council services over the Christmas/New Year holiday.

The Council's staff have been working hard to ensure that all our systems are ready for the **Year 2000**. The auditors have been reviewing our work on this throughout the year. They have now given us 'Blue Status', which means that in their view our systems should continue to work despite the 'Millennium Bug'.

My **next surgery** will be at Reach Village Hall on Tuesday December 14th from 7.30-9.00. Please come if you wish to discuss any matters with me. Or, if you prefer you can contact me at home.

Charlotte Cane



Church Services

December 1999

ST MARY'S Swaffham Bulbeck

ADVENT
2

Sun
5

8:00am
Holy Communion
9:30am Christingle
Family Service

ADVENT
3

Sun
12

9:30am
Parish Communion

ADVENT
4

Sun
19

9:30am
Village Communion
And Nativity
6:30pm
Carol Service

Tue
21

CHRIST-
MAS EVE

Fri
24

4:00pm
Crib Service
11:30pm
Midnight Mass

CHRIST-
MAS DAY

Sun
25

8:00am
Holy Communion[†]

Sun
26

9:30am
Parish Communion^A

ST MARY'S Swaffham Prior

11:00am
Parish Communion^B

11:00am Christingle
Family Service
6:00pm Evensong[†] and
Sermon

8:00am
Holy Communion[†]
11:00am
Parish Communion^A

7:00pm
Carol Service

11:30pm
Midnight Mass

11:00am
Morning Service
12:15pm
Holy Communion
6:00pm
Evening Prayer (said)

6:00pm
Evensong[†] and Sermon

ST ETHELREDA Reach

3:30pm
Christingle
Family Service

8:00am
Holy Communion[†]

3:30pm
Carol Service

9:30am
Family
Communion

Fri 31 **MILLENNIUM EVE** The churches will be open and lit for private prayer until just after midnight.

Dear Friends,

I can keep my 'Millennium powder dry' as the January *Crier* is always published before Christmas, which means that this issue can properly focus on The Feast of the Nativity, the anniversary of the birth of the Saviour of the World, which we celebrate beginning with Christ's Mass, 11.30pm on Friday 24th December. This is truly *a parish communion*, there being no service in Reach on Christmas Eve.

It is a source of great encouragement to me that so many people feel they want to be at that service. While for the rest of the year, there (sadly) seems to be a reluctance to attend Parish Communion, no such barrier presents itself in peoples minds on December 24th as evidenced by the number who come and who *don't* receive Holy Communion ... last year out of a congregation of 97 + 3 young people, 55 received.

I am writing this on Remembrance Sunday evening, after a most moving performance of Durufle's Requiem in St Cyriac's Church by Cambridge Voices, in its proper liturgical context, a service of Holy Communion. The whole metaphor of sacrifice and memorial is bound up in such a service; "do this in remembrance of me" said Jesus, and we do so as the Church's proper response, and we receive the sacrament according to our own perception; for some it is a memorial meal, for others a more literal sense of The Real Presence. Either way, it feeds our spiritual hunger; and we meet God.

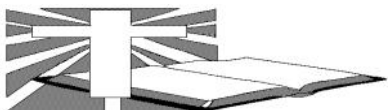
How do you go about receiving Holy Communion when you never have before? Many people were not *confirmed* in their teens, for a whole host of reasons, and, historically at least, this lack has disabled people from feeling they can come to the altar. The Church would always wish people to come who are confident of at least a rudimentary understanding; if that is you, and you're not confirmed, please feel that you can. Some of you might like to go forward and be confirmed by the Bishop on May 13th; others might like to consider joining our planned 'Emmaus' course of christian education next year. Either way, please get in touch with me.

The Bishop has given my 3 churches permission to proceed with *the admission to Holy Communion of baptised children aged 7 and over*, before confirmation. Preparatory sessions are now being planned from January, with a view to First Communion at Easter. This new venture accords with the practice of our Roman Catholic friends, and we look to it as the best way of families worshipping together, at the Lord's Table.

Much of this is looking into next year, and I hope some might avail themselves of such new provision. For now, please accept an invitation to "draw near" this Christmas, and to "see this thing that has come to pass", whether at Midnight Mass or at any of our services... God showing the world that He loves us so much, that He sent His only Son, who came among us in great humility, and who, when He grew up, taught and showed us what love really is.

Carolyn, Sarah, Lucy and Oliver join me in wishing you all a very joyful and blessed Christmas.

Mark



Zion Baptist Chapel

Chapel Services for December

Sunday 5 th	10.30am	Family service
	6:30pm	David Bousfield
Sunday 12 th	6:30pm	No service
<i>(6:30 pm Carol service at Swaffham Bulbeck Free Church)</i>		
Sunday 19 th	6:30pm	Candlelight Carol Service
Saturday 25 th	9:15am	Christmas day - David Bousfield
Sunday 26 th	6:30pm	No Service
<i>(10:30 am morning service at Lode Chapel)</i>		
Tuesdays:	8:00pm	Home Group venues as announced

The New Millennium

Less than a month to go now. How are you feeling about it? Worried ? Anxious? Excited? The arrival of the new millennium is being heralded in by the media with much excitement and preparation and considerable controversy over exactly *when* the new millennium should be celebrated. It is astounding to think that all this finds its origins in the birth of a Jewish man in Bethlehem two thousand years ago. What an outstanding person he must have been that we use his birthday to fix our calendars, date historical events, and order our lives in a timely fashion.

Yet the world we live in seems to have little time for the meaning behind the millennium. The story of this Jewish man who gives meaning to the millennium is recorded in the Bible. That man - Jesus Christ - who claimed to be the Son of God, was born into the world on that first Christmas. He had come to bring a message of hope for the world. His influence has completely changed my life, and I believe that Jesus and his message are as relevant today as they were two thousand years ago.

We live in a world where many people are worried and anxious about the future. And they can't see anything improving in the next millennium either. Crime, violence, financial worries, and human suffering show little sign of changing. Jesus Christ came to offer us real hope in the face of these circumstances. He came to tell us that God loves us and wants us to know him. But so often we want to do things our own way rather than God's way. This selfishness and sin separates us from God. However by giving his life for us, Jesus opened up the only way to restore our friendship with God. Therefore we need to recognise our need to accept Jesus Christ so that we can know God's forgiveness for the wrong things we have done, and regain his friendship.

So whether the new millennium slides in gently, or amidst the Millennium Bug or consumer stock-piling chaos, if we have the friendship of God we can live more securely and peacefully. So this Christmas find out more about the Jewish man who gives meaning to the millennium. I pray that through him you will discover a new friendship with God, and a new meaning for the next millennium.

David Bousfield

Roman Catholic Church, Newmarket Parish

Masses: Newmarket: Sat 1830; Sun 0900,1030,1700;

Kirtling: Sun 0945; Soham 1700

In Bottisham Parish Church, Sun 0900 (Served from Cambridge).

From John Morrill, Deacon to the Roman Catholic Community

Many readers will know that I am least as much at home in the mid seventeenth century as in the late twentieth. As Professor of British and Irish history at the University of Cambridge I certainly spend far more of my life thinking about the former than the latter; and I must read ten times as many words about the civil war as I do about our times. I was asked recently whether I would like to visit that period for a month. I said yes- so long as I was allowed to take some strong analgesics and some antibiotics with me! But I might have added: so long as I did not have to go back in December - because the Puritans abolished Christmas. In December 1644 the Parliament that was fighting the king decreed that the 25th should be observed as a day of fasting and humiliation and ‘the remembrance of our sins and the sins of our forefathers who have turned this memory of the birth of Christ into an extreame forgetfulness of him, by giving liberty to carnall and sensuall delights being contrary to the life which Christ himself led here on earth.’ Over the years that followed, soldiers broke up holy communion services, arresting those who were present; in Kent a second civil war began in 1648 when soldiers arrested a group of men and women for attending a Christmas football match near Canterbury; and up the road from us at Stretham, parishioners in 1647 broke into the vicarage and manhandled the vicar into the church and into the pulpit, threatening to throw him into a grave if he would not preach to them about the Christmas story. For 16 years it was a criminal offence to celebrate Christmas. God was to be worshipped on every sabbath day, and the puritans opposed the 25th December celebrations whenever it occurred other than on the Sabbath.

It is of course true that we have turned the memory of Christ into *some sort of forgetfulness* of him, and have given liberty to carnal and sensual delights being contrary to the life Christ himself led here on earth.’ In a recent school test of nine year olds shown a picture of a crib scene and of Father Christmas and his reindeer, 77% said that the latter ‘represented what Christmas as really about’. But if ever there was a case of cutting off your nose to spite your face, banning Christmas because it is misunderstood must be it. I shall take consolation under the mistletoe and cheer myself up with a mince pie. Oh, and wish you all a very happy Christmas. And if I don’t see you in church, you can buy me a drink in the pub!

***Dates for Your Diary* - December 1999**

Wed	1	
Thu	2	
Fri	3	BVC Music Society, Recital, Main Hall, BVC, 8:00pm
Sat	4	Christmas Fayre, Village Hall, 2:00-4:00pm
Sun	5	
Mon	6	
Tue	7	
Wed	8	School Governors, Swaffham Prior School, 7:30pm Staine Hundred, BVC, 7:30pm
Thu	9	
Fri	10	Crier Copy Deadline
Sat	11	Christmas Holly sales start (see Ad on page 17 for details)
Sun	12	School Nativity in St. Mary's
Mon	13	WI Christmas Party
Tue	14	Mobile Library, Cage Hill 2:40-3:30, Chapel 3:35-4:00pm Cllr Cane's Surgery, Reach Village Hall, 7:30pm-9:00pm
Wed	15	
Thu	16	
Fri	17	
Sat	18	
Sun	19	
Mon	20	
Tue	21	Carol Service and presentation of Gay Bulleid Award, 7:00pm
Wed	22	Carol Singing, Village Hall, 6:30-7:30pm
Thu	23	
Fri	24	
Sat	25	Christmas Day
Sun	26	Hockey vs Bulbeck, The Denny, S Bulbeck, 11:00am
Mon	27	
Tue	28	
Wed	29	
Thu	30	
Fri	31	Bell Ringing, 11:45pm
January		
Sat	1	New Year's Day Village Lunch, Village Hall, 12:30pm