



# The Swaffham Crier

Volume 24 Number 12

December 2000



## Editorial

It's the time of year for the Gay Bulleid 'Good Neighbour' Award again (see page 3) so nominations please to Margaret Phillips as soon as possible. There's also a *vacancy* for a Good Neighbour in this month's issue—Ron Prime gives notice that after ten years he's finally giving up Village Notice writing. Replacement urgently required.

Thanks to Francis Riggs for this month's 'From Our Archives' contribution, and to Greg Sage for his article about the proposed extensions to Wicken Fen. This makes interesting reading, especially in the light of recent catastrophic watery events. The Fen is one of those clever natural water management systems in the sense that it goes *up* when it's soaked with water and *down* when it's dry, thus preserving a nice equilibrium. We could do with some more of that. Splooshing through the Welney flood-plain the other day, I was glad to see that no-one has *yet* built any housing estates on it. Personally, I'm hoping that since Fenlanders have always been the experts when it comes to flooding, some of their devious defences might stand up a little longer than others.

New street lights for one half of the village but not the other! This is not fair, especially since *we* live in the less favoured half. There seems to be some confusion about the precise siting of the new lights though. Was the Parish Council consulted? Um....!

News in brief: the Pub — parents will be glad to know that children are now welcome again in the Red Lion, provided they're not in the bar, so that's good news; *plus* the clock-bells, which are under blankets for the time being. No unseemly disturbance from them then.

For those of us who guiltily contemplate the Christmas Season with the same joyous anticipation (not!) as we do, turn at once to the back page where we learn that it's mostly a load of Victorian hoo-ha and that the pre-Victorians had a much better version which the non-retail-trade classes might be a lot happier with, fasting and all.

But still, Happy Christmas, everyone! And remember, copy date strictly 10th December—don't be late! But if you do have *unavoidably* late copy, ring and tell us in advance.

*Caroline Matheson*

**Cover Picture: by Zoe Nunn**



## Letters to the Editors



Dear Editors,

I am pleased the local authority has finally agreed to call the site of the four new houses “Pulpit Corner”, surely a unique name with a little historical context.

I read with dismay the letter from “Name Withheld”. I think this is the first time we have had critical remarks presented in this cowardly fashion since the first edition 25 years ago, and I trust it will be the last.

If the “Dencora” site is causing so much trouble, may I suggest that 30 or so new residents in their houses on the site would soon preserve order and benefit the whole community.

**John Norris**

*‘Name Withheld’ intended his/her communication to amuse and felt that a signature might imply a more critical and serious slant. As mentioned before, we don’t publish material submitted anonymously. Perhaps we should also insist on the name being published. Anyhow, unreserved apologies to John and anyone else who was annoyed or upset by our decision this time. Eds.*

### **Attention!**

Instead of sending my personal Christmas Cards this year I shall be donating to a number of charities. So I am wishing now herewith to all my dear friends and family a **Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!**

**Ludmilla**

3 Adams Rd, Swaffham Prior

## **Swaffham Bulbeck and Swaffham Prior Branch**

### **Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal 2000**

We are pleased to announce the amount of £278 was collected in Swaffham Prior.

We would like to thank all who gave so generously, and we are most grateful to our collectors: Mrs Lewis, Mrs M. Moore, Miss Smith and Mrs Stinton.

Final details will appear in the January *Crier*.

**J. Chalkin, Chairman, RH Butler, Local Organiser**

## **GOOD NEIGHBOUR AWARD**

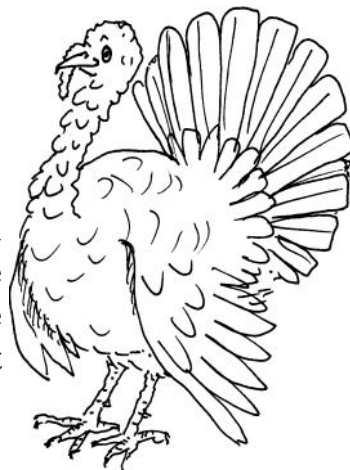
If you know of anyone in Swaffham Prior or Reach who you feel has been a 'Good Neighbour' to the residents or to the villages as a whole? If so would you please send your nomination with the reason for your choice to Margaret Phillips, 50 Lower End, or to any member of the W.I. as soon as possible.

The Gay Bulleid Award, a painting of the windmill that was once Gay's home, will be presented to the successful nominee at the Carol Service on Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> December.

### **PRIME WHITE NORFOLK**

## **TURKEYS**

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



Weight range about 8lbs to 20lbs +.

**Contact Marcia Miller in Swaffham Prior**

**Tel: 01638 741141 to place your order**

### **Donations!**

Many thanks to Mrs R Goddard, Mrs A. Bradford, Mrs Liz Kent and Ludmilla Von Trappe for their kind donations to the *Swaffham Crier*. The Crier runs on very narrow margins and sometimes at a loss. Donations are much appreciated!

## **S. O. S. Mince Pie Appeal**

### **Advent by Candlelight 3<sup>rd</sup> December at 4.00pm**

Once again mince-pies and mulled wine will be served. Once again donations of mince-pies will be welcomed (they don't have to be home-made!). It would be lovely to have offers other than from the faithful few. Please let me know the approximate quantity you are able to provide not later than 1<sup>st</sup> December.

Thank your (in anticipation).

***Kate Child***  
**743983**



### ***Christmas Holly***

Deck your halls with boughs of Swaffham Prior Holly, which will be for sale (£2.50 per bunch) from Saturday December 9<sup>th</sup>. 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 9 <sup>th</sup>	12.00-1.00	Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup>	12.00-1.00
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Saturday 16 <sup>th</sup>	12.00-1.00	Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup>	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***

## **SUMMER COURSES ON THE ISLE OF EIGG**

Eigg is a small island in the Inner Hebrides, just south of the Isle of Skye. Week-long study courses were run for the first time this year. Subjects included the natural environment and landscape history, the fauna, geology, painting, land reform; tutors were experts in their fields. All involved some rough walking. The cost per course varied from £245 to £310 and included accommodation (in an eighteenth century converted barn) and meals. It is not yet certain which courses will run next year. There are great views from Eigg of the mainland, Rhum, Canna, Skye and Outer Hebrides; and there are many shore and seabirds - you might see a golden eagle. Anyone interested please contact me on 742989 for more information.

***Meryl Moore***

# **CANTILENA SINGERS**

MARK DAWES, director  
CARRIE NEAL, harp

## **A CONCERT OF CHRISTMAS MUSIC**

SATURDAY DECEMBER 9<sup>TH</sup> at 7.30pm

ST JAMES' CHURCH, LODE

The programme will include Benjamin Britten's  
*"A Ceremony of Carols"*  
and music by Vaughan Williams, Howells and Leighton etc

A retiring collection will be held in aid of Winter Comfort  
no ticket purchase necessary.

## **I'M GIVING NOTICE**

For something like ten years now I've been painting notices to put up around the village advertising various Swaffham Prior events - exhibitions and festivals, dramatic performances, open gardens, feast days, church fetes, the village shop etc. etc. I'm not the only sign writer but I now have a collection of fifty-three such notice boards, fixed to their stakes and stored in my garage, that have been repainted many times, along with pots of white paint and spray cans of matt black. To do these notices I made myself an alphabet of cardboard stencils of capital and lower case Gill Sans letters.

Notices have to be put up a week or two before each event and taken down IMMEDIATELY AFTERWARDS. A metal hammer and strong stake to make the necessary holes in the grass verges are useful tools, together with adequate muscle and willing assistance to help with the job.

Why am I telling you all this? You must have guessed - in my eighty-first year I would like to pass the job on to someone else to start the new millennium with a new sign writer. Any offers?

***Ron Prime***

## From our Reporter at the Parish Council Meeting

As I walked down to the Village Hall to fulfil my role as this month's 'Crier' reporter, I looked forward to an evening's entertainment and a glass of wine, or at the very least a cup of coffee. It turned out that there were biscuits too (Cheers for Elaine).

High on the agenda came the Chairman's request that we should take anticipatory action about Travellers. Their regular camp-sites are becoming increasingly obstructed, so they might spread onto our recreation ground down the Station Road. How to prevent access? A five-barred gate and padlock? A single bar with padlock? A five-foot fence? Whatever is done should be done this winter, before the Traveller-problem arose. If the barrier were lockable, what legitimate users would have keys, and why? Or should it be a number-coded lock? There is no need for cars to enter the recreation ground but sometimes heavy equipment for (say) tree-felling would need access. A bar seemed to be the favoured idea, similar to the one at Ditchfield near the old railway bridge on the Reach Road.



After ten minutes or so on the recreation ground we transferred our attention to the children's playground, always one of the P.C.'s major preoccupations. It is to be upgraded to European standards of health-and-safety, slightly different from the British standards to which it already conforms. The chain-links of the swings must be small enough to prevent the insertion of a child's finger, but European children seem to be smaller than British children. (Or do they start swinging younger?). A regular weekly inspection is required by European Safety people and Eric kindly undertook this. The gate into the playground is being swung-on and damaged yet again, and if this goes on the whole gate-post will have to be renewed (replaced with metal, perhaps); and the supports of the baby swings are loose in the ground at one end. Oh dear.

Dead Cars! Our ECDC Councillor Mrs Cane told us how expensive it is becoming to remove abandoned cars. The number is rapidly increasing and now overwhelms the temporary pound into which they are shifted while awaiting information on their owners. Cars cannot be destroyed until the owner has been located, and this sometimes takes weeks. (Somebody remarked that the police could trace car owners within days, so why not ask the police? The ECDC did not seem to have thought of this.) We heard that people (?Travellers) go around offering to take an old car off your hands, then strip it out and abandon it elsewhere; and each abandoned car costs the ECDC £30. It mounts up.

The 'Correspondence' Item produced some pleasant surprises. A letter

came from an experienced architect, Frank Redhead, now retired, who is coming to live nearby and offered us help (free of charge) in handling planning applications, dealing with planning inspectors and local planning offices and appeals, and told us of his experience in these matters. Of course the P.C. gratefully accepted this offer, and wished that it had come 4 months ago.

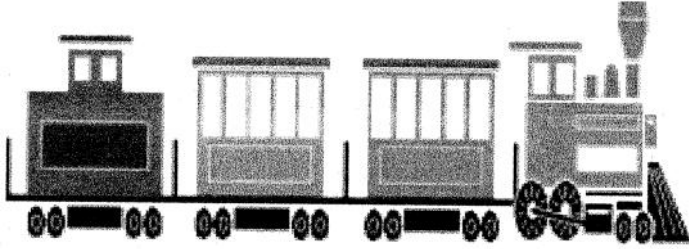
There was news that Hereward Housing is planning to hold a small Opening Ceremony for the 4 houses at Pulpit Corner (Heath Road/Mill Hill) and asking for local support. We were all pleased about this as we are hoping to get a chance of seeing the interior of these new dwellings, the outside of which is generally approved. But a sad little Correspondence item was the news that we are near the bottom of the Best Kept Village list. (Too much litter, apparently). Then came the interesting news that the bills for the Village Map have come in; and if we tot up all the various grants we have been promised in payment, the surplus which we have to find is £17.30p (Should we hold a Jumble Sale to raise it? asked the Chairman)

First dead cars, then dead people! Henry drew our attention to the condition of the cemetery. One particular grave is out-of-alignment, and has caused a bend in the path; at one time a small garden surrounded this grave plot. The garden must go but the grave itself cannot. But all future graves must be arranged on orderly lines to be planned beforehand. So future occupants or their relatives must choose a plot, not only on the map but on the ground. Accordingly 'new' plots must be marked on the ground in some way, but how? There was some discussion about the right kind of brick with which to mark the future position of the each body; engineering bricks were favoured, to be embedded in the turf. Cremation plots would also be identified beforehand; they are 4 feet by 3 feet, in the cemetery, which several people thought over-generous. It is more than is on offer in the churchyard but the Chairman told us that we must avoid being seen as competing with the churchyard in providing such facilities.

The Chairman decided to hold over the details of the cemetery question till next meeting, (and I hope that Henry will then have on display a large-scale plan of the cemetery for viewing, so that everybody will know what is being discussed.) The Chairman urged everyone to think hard about the cemetery in readiness for next month's meeting, when he will echo the words of Richard II: 'Let's talk of graves...'. Will this talk be accompanied by a hot toddy?

*Margaret Stanier*

## Burwell Toy Library



Burwell Toy Library is a community service, open to anyone from the surrounding areas of Burwell, to lend out toys of all kinds, suitable for children aged 0-5 years. The Toy Library was reopened on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2000 with a new committee, willing volunteers, lots of enthusiasm and a few new toys. It has been a very successful start to the Toy Library with over 25 new members and lots of toys being borrowed and enjoyed. From Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December we shall be taking a break over the Christmas and New Year period to audit, sort and clean all the toys ready to re-launch again on **Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2001**. From the New Year we hope to have many more new toys and to make borrowing simpler and clearer. We intend to produce a catalogue of all our toys so that everyone will be able to see what toys are on offer and reserve a toy or toys if they prove to be very popular. The toy Library will continue to open every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> **Thursday from 2.00pm to 3.15pm in the Phoenix Room (Burwell Village college)**. Membership costs £3 annually per family and then a borrowing fee is payable at the sessions. The borrowing fee depends on each toy and can range from 40p to £2. The toys can then be kept for two weeks until the next session or loaned out for up to six weeks if the borrowing fee is paid in advance. It is well worth a try and you are free to come and browse to see what we have on offer before you join. Toys can be also be borrowed for a special occasion like a child's party. So do join us for our special opening session on **Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2001**.

If you have any further questions or would be willing to help out with any of the sessions please contact Olivia Coles (PR officer) tel. 743434 or Hilary Betts (Membership Secretary) tel. 603656.

*Olivia Coles*

### WELCOME!

Welcome to Amanda and Adrian Parton, who with their children Christian, Aimee and Alicia, have recently moved to the Village from Exning.



## Hockey on Boxing Day Morning

Here we are again - getting ready for the annual hockey match against the Bulbeckians. Last year we started the millennium well by returning to our winning ways and beating them 3-0.

Come and support us on Boxing Day Tuesday 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. Even better, if an experienced umpire is available please get in touch.

*Alastair Everitt*

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## A Wet Camargue for Swaffham Prior?

On the 18<sup>th</sup> October I heard that the National Trust had a speaker at the Village Hall that evening, so, being now retired and given to acting on whim, I went along. Adrian Colston, who is Property Manager for the Wicken Fen National Nature Reserve, not only talked about how Wicken Fen has changed over the last hundred years but also about how it might change over the next hundred.

The farming that surrounds the reserve has changed drastically since it was set up; remnant rough areas have vanished, as fields and farms have become larger, water tables have been lowered, arable yields have increased so much that land set-aside has had to be introduced and fewer people are now economically dependent on farming. In addition, the remaining areas of peat land are wasting away fast. This means that, biologically, Wicken Fen is now more isolated than it has ever been. Because it is relatively small, only some 800 acres, accidents of disease or weather increasingly result in the complete extinction, at Wicken, of some of the wetland plant, insect, and animal species. Even if they still exist in other wetland reserves, these are now too far away to allow the lost species to re-colonise naturally. The increased prevalence and severity of storms that we are experiencing, possibly due to global warming, are a major threat to our east coast reserves such as Minsmere, and these may very well be reclaimed by the sea in the not too distant future. There is, therefore, an argument for making Wicken Fen larger so that it can accommodate more securely the species which it is our responsibility to conserve. This is exactly what the National Trust would

like to do over the next hundred years. The proposal is based on the highly detailed feasibility report of October 1999, 'Wicken Fen: the wider vision', written by L.E. Friday and T.P. Moorhouse of the Aquatic Ecology Group of the Zoology Department of Cambridge University (see [www.wicken.org.uk](http://www.wicken.org.uk)).

The 10,000 acres of fen, which stretch from Burwell to Quy, are, hydrologically, a single unit, because they are drained at a single point in Upware. If, over a hundred years, this land can be progressively acquired by the Trust, the drainage could be managed so that water tables could be maintained at a higher level than they are now. Gradually, a range of managed wild-life habitats could be produced without losing the road and building infrastructure. Wicken Fen and its denizens would then have room to spread, whilst the roaring urban economy of the Cambridge area would acquire a semi-wild lung for recreation. Initially much of the land would consist of damp rough grass. Large grazing animals, such as ancient varieties of cattle and horses who don't mind wet feet, would be used to preserve this habitat by preventing its turning to scrub. Ancient country skills, such as fishing and fowling, would also be maintained, as these would also be part of leisure provision and conservation.

Such a vision chimes well with not only our ratification of international treaties such as the 1992 Convention on Biological Biodiversity, but also the desire of the majority of those who live in towns, particularly the young, to run our lives and environment more sustainably. Of course the rights of the 120 landowners who currently own these fens must be respected, and several who were at the meeting were understandably afraid that this might be another blow of Town against Country. But this apprehension will rightly inspire caution, and this is why the process will take a hundred years. Wider society has a right to ask whether we any longer need this particular land to be farmed if we can produce sufficient food elsewhere. By taking advantage of the unique position and nature of our local fens, it is possible that the foresight of people like Adrian Colston will lead to a viable and usable resource that more adequately conserves a vital piece of East Anglian heritage.

*Greg Sage*

### **Lost Ball!**

Would the owner of the plastic football which found its way into our back garden while we were away like to call at 1 Adam's Road when it will be returned to them.

# SUNDAY 3rd DECEMBER

4.00pm: *The two churches,*  
**SWAFFHAM PRIOR**

7.00pm: *St. Columba's Church,*  
*Downing Street, CAMBRIDGE*

**Cambridge \* Voices**  
**The \* Classic \* Buskers**  
**Orchestra \* of \* the \* Age \* of \* Reason**

MAGNIFICAT
BACH
B MINOR MASS

£5 Admission (children free)

*in aid of*

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS  
BOSNIA



**A  
D  
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T**

***Candlelight***

## From The Archives

### Counterfeit Legends.



It is curious how legends get duplicated and localised. Whenever two churches are found side by side in the same churchyard the occurrence is almost sure to be accounted for by the legend that they were built by two sisters, one acting out of jealousy, or in opposition to the other. To the writer's own certain knowledge, this story which is told in Swaffham in Cambridgeshire is also told in at least half a dozen other places and in regard to none of these can it be said that the story if *not* true is *ben trovato* or "well invented". In the Illustrated Church News (March 31, 18??) the following legend is related in the most matter-of-fact manner:- "A Villager of Swaffham Prior, in very humble circumstances, a tinker by trade, dreamt on three successive nights, that if he went up to London, to a place indicated in the dream, he would hear something greatly to his advantage. The poor man, after mentioning the matter to his wife and neighbours, who treated it with scorn, resolved to act upon the mysterious directions he had received. Accordingly, he started out on his journey and arrived at his destination at the end of three days, where he took his stand on London Bridge (the place shown to him in his dream). Here he waited the whole of one day, nothing whatever happened to him; a second day of watching resulted with no more satisfaction; but on the afternoon of the third day, a City Gentleman, who was in the habit of frequently passing over the bridge, and who noticed this rough countryman standing in the same spot every day, approached him and said "My good man, how is it that I see you here every day with nothing to do? Are you out of employment, or what is it?" After some hesitation, the

man, prompted by the kindly interest shown in him, told the gentleman about his dream, but did not tell what part of the country he came from. Regarding the man as the victim of some local superstition, he advised him not to take any notice of such nonsense, and added "Why only the other night I dreamt that if I went down to a certain village in the country called Swaffham Prior, and dug under a certain tree in a certain field, I should find treasure there. It is not likely that I took any notice of it. No, my good man, you go back and attend to your business and don't bother yourself about these things." After holding a further conversation with the gentleman, obtaining from him a clearer direction as to the exact place referred to in the dream, the man replied, "All right, guvnor, I'll take your advice." The narrative goes on to say that "the man walked back to Swaffham Prior and dug under the tree in question, and found buried there two large chests of gold. He became thereby a rich man, and sometime afterwards restored the chancel of Swaffham Prior Church.

*"Urbs Camboritum"*

## **Bottisham, Burwell, Linton Village Colleges**

### ***Lifelong Learning***

#### **Day and Weekend Courses**

**The Spring Programme containing the usual wide range of certificated and general interest courses will be available shortly from your nearest Village College or library.**

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**We wish you all a Happy Christmas.**

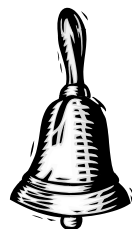
***Term starts Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2001***

**Further information from the Community Offices  
at the Village Colleges: Bottisham: 01223 811372  
Burwell: 01638 741901, Linton: 01223 892400**





## **The Handbells of the Swaffham Prior Bellringers**



The Bellringers possess a set of twelve handbells (one and a half octaves), which were cast - by the Whitechapel Foundry about 1870. They were given to the Bellringers (not to the Church or the parish or the PCC) by Charles Peter Allix of Swaffham Prior House, the father of John Peter Allix who died in 1959, the last of the Allixes. The gift was made in gratitude to the bellringers for their ringing at Mr. Allix's wedding. Mr. Allix first suggested the gift of two additional tower bells, but the ringers did not wish this as they were happy with the ring of six. So Mr. Allix gave the handbells instead.

The handbells were not much used, and at some time during or just after the Second World War they were tucked away at the house of one of the bellringers, Mr. Preston. After Mr. Preston's death, when his son was clearing out his house and disposing of his possessions, the handbells came to light, and an advertisement for a set of handbells for sale appeared in the local paper. Philip Sheldrick noticed the advertisement and proposed to buy them back, but his father (also a bellringer) said 'Don't *buy* them. They are ours'. So Philip brought them back to our ringing room where they have been ever since. They are in good condition. We had then re-furbished about 5 years ago, and new leather handles and pegs inserted.

The handbells are of the type used in tune-ringing; they are too heavy for change-ringing. They have been used from time to time at Swaffham Prior and at Lode, for ringing tunes of carols at Christmas services. One of the bells has been used as part of the accompaniment of a choral work by 'Cambridge Voices'. This work among many others has been recorded for a CD in St. Cyriac's Church during the weekend of 10-12 November 2000.

***Margaret Stanier .***

[Information from Philip Sheldrick]



## **WI Notes**

'Clothes and Make-up for the Over 50's' was the subject of Dilly Bradford's talk when she visited the W.I. in November. We were very pleased to welcome eight Swaffham Bulbeck W.I. members to swell our numbers.

Dilly advised us that we should concentrate on the head and shoulders to experiment with colour using more basic colours for the rest of our clothes.

This she demonstrated with scarves and jewellery. We were also told that a lot of make-up was not necessary but she gave us useful tips on how to apply what we did use.

Will we see a lot of changes in the appearance of the 'over 50's' ladies of the W.I.? Time will tell. I expect we shall all continue to wear what we are happiest in!

*Betty Prime.*

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## **School Report**

It was wonderful to start the term off with our confidence restored. Coming out of Special Measures so quickly has given to all the staff a tremendous boost - a great load lifted. We still have visits from the LEA on a regular basis but nowhere near as frequently.

The beginning of term also saw the start of three new members of staff. Mrs Veronica Hanke from Swaffham Bulbeck is now the Class 2 teacher; Mrs Beverley Q'Dowd is our new school secretary, and Mrs Sarah Northrop started as a General Assistant in Class 3. This last appointment has been made possible by the easing of the financial situation in schools. New Government money has meant there is more money to fund General Assistants, to buy extra resources and even to make improvements in the staffroom - though this is not yet completed.

The school perimeter fence is in the same state - started but not yet finished. It was continually being damaged as footballers (playing after school) broke through to retrieve balls. I have requested that a second stile be strategically placed in the hope that the problem will be resolved. If only the skateboarding problem could be resolved as easily! Youngsters are using the playground out of school hours which I have no objection to, but they are not removing their 'equipment' when they finish. This is a hazard to children in the morning. I have spoken to all the people I can about the problem to no avail. If it continues we will dispose of the equipment permanently.

Christmas will be upon us in no time and preparations for the children's performances are in hand. The Infant Nativity and the Junior performance will be held in the church on the same evenings, with a break in between, on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December.

*Brenda Wilson*  
Headteacher

PS. If there is a Russian speaker in the village I would be grateful if s/he would get in touch.



## VILLAGE GARDENERS

On Tuesday 21 November the Village Gardeners enjoyed a return visit by Geoff Hodge, the Radio Cambridgeshire broadcaster. He took on “Gardening on Chalk” a subject dear to our hearts! His description of chalk soils as a gardening opportunity gave us hope. We enjoyed an informative talk with a mix of technical information and practical advice enlivened by an excellent slide presentation. He also introduced us to promising new varieties of some reliable favorites such as buddleia. Tip of the evening – use sulphur chips (available by mail order) to acidify soil.

Next meeting at Swaffham Prior Village Hall on January 16 – Garden conservation by John Drake.

*Glenna Turner*

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## LADIES CIRCLE

The Ladies Circle met for their monthly meeting at Zion Baptist Chapel on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> October. Hilda the nurse from Bottisham Surgery came along to give a talk about first aid. We learnt how to deal with every day to day accidents around the home and how to deal with someone who may have fainted or suffered a heart attack. We all had a go at mouth to mouth resuscitation on a dummy, which we found to be quite interesting.

Our December meeting will be held at the home of one of our members Mrs Iris Stannett at Lode. We will have a social evening where each member will receive a little Christmas gift. Light snacks will also be served and there will of course be a few Christmas carols sung. Please feel free to join us if you wish. New members are always welcome.

*Sandra Butcher*

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## UKVillages.co.uk

Every village or community has its own home page within UKVillages, and local residents can post information on items for sale, local trades and Services, clubs and societies or diary dates directly from their own computer for free.

Any information posted to a village notice board will automatically appear on the notice boards of all the communities in a four-mile radius and also on that of the nearest town. This is free and offers a great way to advertise events and local trades to the whole surrounding area.





## STAINE HUNDRED

The November Meeting of the Staine Hundred Local History Society started with the misunderstanding that Chris Jakes, the speaker was unable to come but Peggy Day was just ready to start a stand-in talk on the History of Quy School when in he walked, apologizing for being late as his screen had fallen to pieces as he was putting it into his car.

Chris Jakes gave an interesting talk on Emigration from Cambridgeshire during the 19th Century which was well documented with pictures from the Illustrated London News of the ships, the overcrowded conditions, the prison hulks, the hardships and also with news items from the Cambridge Weekly papers of the mid 19th century.

The population of the country as a whole rose from 10½M in 1801 to 44M in 1911 although 20M emigrated, mainly to United States, Canada, Australia and other parts of the British Empire. In Cambridgeshire the population rose steadily during the first half of the century but it is estimated that around 120,000 people immigrated between the middle and the end of the century. Poverty, low wages and hard masters drove many of the more go-ahead to leave the country, and the Gold Rush in America in 1849 and in Australia in 1851 were a big attraction. Between 1840 and 1850 the Mormon Missionaries also tempted many more to emigrate. Once out there, letters home giving a rosy picture of improved conditions persuaded friends and relations to follow. Officially those emigrating had to pass a medical but the Medical Officer near the docks often had to vet 3,000 people a day, so if they could walk through they were fit. The sailing boat with its passengers would be towed out by a tug, then a search would be made for stowaways and if they could not pay the fare, they would be sent back on the tug. Sailing across the Atlantic took about 3 weeks and as the ship called at Plymouth 10 days after setting off, some had had enough by then. In 1853, 40 men left from Burwell for America, work being in short supply because of floods. As Canada was part of the British Empire, assisted passages could be had and from there many walked into USA. In 1896, A.E.Newman of Bottisham emigrated to South Africa and being a highly respected member of the community, he was presented with a gold watch. Emigration stopped during W.W.1 and in spite of the number killed ,the population grew between 1914 and 1918.

The speaker at the meeting on December 13<sup>th</sup> will be Margaret M. Haynes on “Ely and the Cathedral”.

## **Notes from the Parish Council November Meeting**

Mr T Jones chaired the meeting with 7 members and 4 members of the Public.

### **Matters Arising**

**Precept for 2001/2002:** Following a Precept meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2000, the new Precept figures were presented to the meeting for approval. An overall reduction in the Precept for 2001/2002 of 11.76% was agreed.

**Traffic Barrier for Recreation Ground:** Several options were discussed but it was generally agreed that steel posts with a steel bar across with padlock would be the best option. The Clerk is to obtain prices for the work necessary.

**Tree Planting - Black Drove:** The contribution of £25 towards the cost of trees for this scheme was agreed

**Playground Matters:** The Clerk had sought verification of the necessary standards required by Cornhill Insurance with regard to safety, maintenance, etc., for this area. It is required that a professional annual inspection is carried out as well as a weekly inspection by a member of the P.C. and a written record kept. This year's annual inspection was carried out on Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> November. The report is awaited. Some repair works will be necessary.

**Skating Ramp - report:** Discussions between Mrs Sandra Wilson and Oliver Haworth had taken place and the Clerk had discussed similar requests with other Parish Councils. Unfortunately Mrs Wilson was unavailable to report so further discussion was deferred until the December meeting.

**Reports:** Councillor Fitch and Councillor Cane reported to the meeting.

**General:** Village of the Year 2000 results have been received. Anyone wishing to see the results, please contact the Clerk.

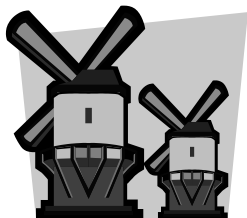
**Accounts for Payment:** These were agreed.

**Planning Applications Received:** There were no planning applications/ approvals this month.

**Any Other Business:** A large tree at the top of the footpath at the Beeches (leading onto Fairview Grove) is causing concern to residents. Andrew Camps is to contact Hereward housing.

**The next Parish Council meeting will be on Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> December 2000 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.**

*Karen King*  
Clerk to the Parish Council



## **Little Windmills Playgroup**

Reach Village Centre  
Monday to Thursday  
9.00—11.45 am

Little Windmills Playgroup has places for  
2½ to 5 year olds.

Come and visit one of our friendly sessions or for more  
information contact Brenda Doe (01223 860680)

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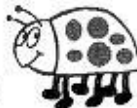
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We are launching our 'Local Agenda 21' Strategy on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December at The Maltings in Ely with a Christmas Fair from 10.00am to 4.00pm. As well as stalls selling local produce and crafts there will be face painting, music, clowns and circus and a children's workshop. Entry is free and it should be a good day out with a chance to buy some Christmas presents.

There will be two Farmers' Markets in December. The regular market will be on the 9<sup>th</sup> December and there will be a Christmas Farmers' Market on 23<sup>rd</sup> December.

By 1 November 1,213 budget questionnaires had been returned, with 88% of respondents saying that we should carry out more consultations of this sort. People felt that our highest priority for grants should be to provide more children's play equipment with provision of leisure facilities for the elderly and home improvement grants for disabled people coming a close second and third respectively. 53% of people think our grants to historic buildings are at the correct level. 51% think that we should spend the same as we currently do on creating more local jobs, with 41% thinking we should spend more. Only 19% thought we should be setting up computer facilities in local shops and community centres. 76% were against us introducing car parking charges, and 69% would want the money raised from such charges only used to improve car parks and traffic control measures. 70% felt we should fund affordable local housing. 46% thought we should maintain expenditure on Local Agenda 21 initiatives, with 40% thinking we should spend more. 89% felt we should spend more on initiatives to tackle crime and vandalism. Only 30% of people thought we should provide extra services if it meant an increase in Council Tax. These results will be used as part of our budget setting process.

As well as answering the questions, many of the 39 people in Swaffham Prior who replied also sent in comments. These included calls to take tougher action against anti-social and illegal behaviour by some Travellers, to improve the bus service, to introduce traffic calming at Mill Hill and to introduce short stay street parking restricted to 1 hour. Some of these comments relate more to services provided by the County Council and the Police so we will pass the comments on to them.

I have been receiving many complaints about abandoned vehicles and

the Council taking too long to clear them away. The problem is that the numbers have overwhelmed us this year. In 1998 we cleared 120 abandoned cars, last year 248 and so far this year we have dealt with 360. The delay is caused because we have to identify the owner and contact them before we can destroy the car, identifying the owner takes about 4 weeks. In an attempt to clear cars more quickly we took on a contract with someone who had space to store the cars while we identified the owner, but his storage space is now full. We are now discussing with the police and other local authorities to see if we can speed up the process of owner identification and disposal so that we can clear the cars from the roadside more promptly.

Jon and I are looking forward to our first Christmas with David, although he is too young to realise the festival's significance. I hope that you all have a very happy Christmas.

*Charlotte Cane*



Cambridgeshire  
County Council

## From our Local County Councillor

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Last month my optimism about early action on speeding in our villages ran away with my pen. The cold reality of limited money for **traffic calming** has resulted in the prospect of really effective action in **Burwell** slipping back by probably a year or two. All depends on Government grant and the latest signs are depressing.

What happened at the County Transport Committee meeting last month was that the Burwell scheme, guesstimated at a cost of about £235,000, was **placed fifteenth** in the County priority list (second in the East Cambs. area). The decision was to do the first seven projects, so that would then put Burwell up seven places for year 2002/3 provided no new schemes with better scores arose meantime. Tantalising and frustrating it may be but at least we are in contention next time.

Meanwhile, in a minor key, there has been a quick response by the Police to my request for **speed checks** on the three main entry roads to **Burwell** and the results will be useful extra evidence. Better signs warning of walkers crossing have been put up either side of the **Devil's Ditch**. There has been a decision to introduce more speed cameras and these will be placed at places where the Police think they will do most good. We do not know where yet.

The "T" junction at the top of **Bell Road, Bottisham**, is being altered to make it safer and work is in progress as I write.

I am still very hopeful of a new **cycle path** from Lode to **Swaffham Bulbeck** next year as this comes from a different fund. I am also carrying out a cycling and walking to school survey with the help of the staff of Bottisham Village College.

Lastly, on this topic, I am negotiating with Shire Hall about the possibility of a **cycle/foot/bridle path** around the railway bridge on the **Swaffham Prior to Reach road**. This is complicated because the Prospect Trust is also involved.

The **Police** have been mentioned already, so this is a suitable point to update you on recent news. First of all Cambridgeshire is **recruiting** 11 police officers per month. This will rise to 16 when new training places become available. The rate of 11 per month sounds helpful but remember we lost 107 last year through natural wastage and the freeze on recruitment.

In addition the Government has announced £30m in each of the next 3 years for policing **rural areas** (half that for the remaining 6 months of this financial year). Cambridgeshire's share is about £562,000. More news on that later.

Between April and July, 2000:

855 **fewer** crimes were reported (3.8% down on previous year).

1403 **fewer** domestic burglaries (16% down)

241 **more** violent crimes (10% up)

411 **fewer** recorded vehicle crimes (10% down)

Overall, Cambridgeshire recorded eleven and a half thousand immediate response incidents, nearly nine out of ten were responded to within the target time in rural areas. The cost of policing protests against the activities of Huntingdon Life Sciences has cost approx £lm. so far, as well as dragging away officers from other duties.

*James Fitch*

## From the Parish Registers for October

Holy Baptism:	Felicity Jane Blocksage [R] Isabella Keziah Lewinski-Grende [SP] Ashleigh Jade Cornwell [SB]
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In Memoriam:	Edna Greener (78) [SP]
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## Church Services December 2000

	<b>ST MARY'S Swaffham Bulbeck</b>	<b>ST MARY'S Swaffham Prior</b>	<b>HOLY TRINITY Reach</b>
<i>ADVENT SUNDAY</i>	<b>8:00am</b> Holy Communion <sup>†</sup> <b>9:30am</b> Christingle Family Service	<b>11:00am</b> Parish Communion <b>4:00am</b> Advent by Candlelight	<b>6:30pm</b> Compline
<i>ADVENT 2</i>	<b>Sun</b> <b>10</b> <b>9:30am</b> Parish Communion	<b>11:00am</b> Christingle <b>6:00pm</b> Evensong <sup>†</sup> and Sermon	<b>8:00am</b> Holy Communion <sup>†</sup>
<i>ADVENT 3</i>	<b>Sun</b> <b>17</b> <b>9:30am</b> Village Communion & Nativity <b>6:30pm</b> Candlelight Carol Service	<b>8:00am</b> Holy Communion <sup>†</sup> <b>11:00am</b> Mattins <sup>†</sup> and Sermon	<b>3:30pm</b> Candlelight Carol Service & Christingle
<b>Tue</b> <b>19</b>	<b>2:15pm</b> School Carol Service in Church <b>7:00pm</b> Candlelight Carol Service (presentation of Gay Bulleid Award) <i>(both in St. Mary's, Swaffham Prior)</i>		
<i>ADVENT 3</i>	<b>Sun</b> <b>24</b> <b>9:30am</b> Parish Communion	<b>11:00am</b> Mattins <sup>†</sup> and Sermon <b>6:00pm</b> Evensong <sup>†</sup> and Sermon	<b>8:00am</b> Holy Communion <sup>†</sup>
<i>CRISTMAS EVE</i>	<b>Sun</b> <b>24</b> <b>4:00pm</b> Blessing of the Crib Family Service <b>11:30am</b> First Communion of Christmas	<b>6:00pm</b> Evensong <sup>†</sup> and Sermon <b>11:30am</b> First Communion of Christmas	<b>8:00am</b> Holy Communion <sup>†</sup>
<i>CRISTMAS DAY</i>	<b>Mon</b> <b>25</b> <b>8:00am</b> Holy Communion <sup>†</sup>	<b>11:00am</b> Christmas Morning Service <b>12:15pm</b> Holy Communion <sup>†</sup>	<b>9:30am</b> Village Communion



	<b>ST MARY'S</b> <b>Swaffham Bulbeck</b>	<b>ST MARY'S</b> <b>Swaffham Prior</b>	<b>HOLY TRINITY</b> <b>Reach</b>
<i>1st SUN</i> <i>CHRISTMAS</i>	<b>6:00pm</b>	<b>10:00am</b> United Parish	<b>8:00am</b>
<b>Sun</b>	Evensong & Sermon	Communion	Holy Communion <sup>†</sup>
<b>31</b>			

## PASTORAL LETTER, December 2000 The Vicarage

Dear Friends,

### PRIORITIES

Once again the churches (hopefully!) will fill up for the festive services in the run up to, and over Christmas. I trust that no-one will feel unable to worship the birthday of God's Son because of any sense of unworthiness or awkwardness. **ALL ARE WELCOME** from whatever faith position, since Jesus **came to be Saviour of the World**, and not the Church.

Each home will be receiving a Parish Christmas Card early in December listing all the services, ecumenically, in the village, with some cross-references to benefice services such as the Blessing of the Crib at 4.00pm on Christmas Eve at Swaffham Bulbeck (the usual page in this issue of the 'Crier' of course gives all the services too). Communicant members of the Church of England are expected to make their communion at least three times per year, of which Christmas and Easter should each be one, and you should find ample opportunity to do this from the services listed. (Would aspiring singers please note the Carol Service date and practice times, as mentioned last month.)

What's it actually all about? Well, simply this. Love came down at Christmas, because 'God loved (loves) the world so much that he gave His only Son, that everyone who has faith in Him may not die but have eternal life. It was not to judge the world that God sent His Son onto the world, but that through Him, the world might be saved' (St John's Gospel 3:16-17) .....seems like something worth celebrating to me, and the Church is concerned to teach that faith as best it can for the best of reasons - that no-one should remain ignorant *or* indifferent to the most important event in the history of the world, which gives meaning and purpose to human existence.

If you would like *to* share your faith journey, or to learn more about christian basics, you know where to find me.

Carolyn, Sarah, Lucy & Oliver join me in wishing you and your families, near and far, a very joyful and blessed Christmas.

Your parish priest

*Mark*



## Zion Baptist Chapel

### Services for December

Sundays 3 <sup>rd</sup>	10:30am	No Service
Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup>	6:30pm	Communion - D.Bousfield
Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup>	6:30pm	<i>Joint service at Swaffham Bulbeck</i>
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup>	6:30pm	Carol Service
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup>	6:30pm	No Service
Monday 25 <sup>th</sup>	9:15am	Christmas service - D..Bousfield
Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup>	10:30am	Joint Family Service with Lode
Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup>	6:30pm	No service

### Is it really Christmas?

With an ever decreasing number of shopping days left until Christmas, I duly set about purchasing my presents. With my list in hand, I left my car in the car park and headed for the centre of town. No sooner had I started down the car park stairs (well I couldn't get parked in Lion Yard on any of the lower floors) I was confronted by a group of people huddled in a chilly concrete corner of the staircase behind a camera. Sitting on the cold uncomfortable floor was a disheveled man wrapped in a sleeping bag and at least two anoraks that I could see. The camera crew were asking him to look this way and that so they could take just the right shot. It all seemed so fake until I realised that the man on the concrete was not an actor but an authentic person.

It got me thinking how often I see things superficially without appreciating the true situation. At Christmas this can be especially true. I could easily be caught up in the glitter and bright lights, the cards and presents, the rush and the busyness of Christmas. The superficiality of Christmas would soon make me lose sight of the real situation.

The story of Jesus' birth explains many of the things we see and do at Christmas time. It explains why we sing carols about Jesus, why we put a star on top of the tree, to remind us about the star the wise men followed. It explains why we put on nativity plays, why we make Christmas cribs and why we give presents, just as the wise men gave gifts to Jesus.

On December 24<sup>th</sup> 1224 St. Francis of Assisi erected the first Christmas Crib in a cave on a hillside outside the town of Greccio, Italy. He tethered an ox and an ass by the cave and got real people to play the parts of Mary and Joseph. Hundreds of people came to see it. He was trying to get underneath the superficiality of Christmas and find its true meaning.

We will be doing the same at the Chapel celebrations. We will sing our carols, decorate our tree, complete with star, and give gifts. We will remember the real 2000 year old story of Jesus, the Son of God, coming to live on earth. Why don't you dig beneath the surface of Christmas this year and come and join us.

*David Bousfield*

## **Roman Catholic Church, Newmarket Parish**

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

Kirtling: Sun 0945;

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

### **Christmas Mass Times:**

Christmas Eve (Newmarket): 1800 Children's Christmas Mass; 2330 Vigil of Christmas; 2400 Christmas Mass

Christmas Day: 0900 Newmarket; 0945 Kirtling; 1030 Newmarket; No evening Mass

### **From John Morrill, Deacon to the Roman Catholic Community**

The Victorians were not only good at being sentimental; they were very good at inventing sentimental things that looked and felt very old from the time they invented it. Almost all our "royal ceremonial" is Victorian invention. And so is our Christmas. Christmas trees (and home decorations generally), the ingredients of our Christmas dinner (except for the turkey which has usurped the position of the goose), present-exchanging, the office party, and much Christmas worship - christingle, crib services, services of lessons of carols (actually post-Victorian) and so on.

If we go back 500 years, the period up to Christmas was a period of fasting and abstinence (and Christmas Eve a day of complete fasting): the celebration began on 25 December lasted for the 12 days of Christmas season proper (up to "Epiphany", the festival that recalls the visit of the wise men) and more generally for the 40 days up to Candlemas (2 Feb). The churches not the homes were richly decorated; the community gathered together to feast; gifts were exchanged not on 25 December but on 25 March, which was New Year's Day until 1753. St Nicholas (Santa) was not in the frame.

Christmas - the celebration of Christ's solidarity with our humanity was strictly second to the feast of Easter, the celebration of our solidarity with his divinity; and it was at Easter not Christmas that most people made their annual communion. If we go back to the very early centuries we find all the experts agreeing that Jesus was born on 20 April or 20 May. There was no support for a December birth until Roman Emperors made the empire Christian and the Church decided to take the pagan festival of the Winter Solstice (thought by Egyptian astrologers to be either 25 Dec or 6 Jan) and christianise it. Perhaps the best thing the churches could do would be discover an ancient papyrus proving conclusively that Jesus was born on July 25th. Then we could reclaim Christmas for Christ. (Only joking - have a very happy and joyful modern Christmas!)

## ***Dates for Your Diary - December 2000***

Fri	1	
Sat	2	
Sun	3	Cambridge Voices, The Two Churches, 4:00pm
Mon	4	
Tue	5	
Wed	6	
Thu	7	
Fri	8	
Sat	9	Farmers' Market, Market Place, Ely. 8:30am-3:3:30pm Cantilena Singers, St James', Lode, 7:30pm
Sun	10	<b><i>Crier</i> Copy Deadline</b> ECDC Christmas Fair, The Maltings, Ely, 10:00am-4:00pm
Mon	11	
Tue	12	Mobile Library, Cage Hill 2:40-3:30, Chapel 3:35-4:00pm School Play, St Mary's (and Wednesday)
Wed	13	Cambridgeshire Acre AGM, Abbots Ripton Village Hall, 2.30pm Staine Hundred, "Ely and the Cathedral"
Thu	14	PC, Village Hall, 7:30pm
Fri	15	
Sat	16	
Sun	17	
Mon	18	
Tue	19	Village Carol Service+ Gay Bulleid Award, St Mary's, 7:00pm School Carol Service, St Mary's, 2.15pm.
	20	
Thu	21	<b><i>Crier</i></b> Collating, Village Hall, 2:30pm
Fri	22	
Sat	23	Farmers' Market, Market Place, Ely. 8:30am-3:3:30pm
Sun	24	
Mon	25	<b>Christmas Day</b>
Tue	26	Boxing Day Hockey, The Denny, Swaffham Bulbeck, 11:00am
Wed	27	
Thu	28	
Fri	29	
Sat	30	
Sun	31	