



The Swaffham Crier

Volume 24 Number 2

February 2000



Editorial

'The world is run by people who turn up'. **Pat Cunningham** *always* turned up, closely followed by two large felines, or latterly, just one. She turned up in our kitchen 2 years ago and announced that, as newcomers and computer literates, we had little chance of escaping duty on the **Crier**, so we might as well volunteer. She had worked very hard for the **Crier** for many years and continued to do so right up until the last. We will miss her contributions very much. We will miss *her* very much, she was an inspired and great character. Maybe, as many suggested at her funeral lunch, there should be some memorial to her in the Village Hall?

As well as Pat Cunningham, we have also seen the recent departure of Doreen Bishop, Dora O'Dowd and Nora Bartlett. Our sympathies go to their families. We include extracts from the Vicar's Funeral Addresses for Doreen and Pat, Dora's Funeral Address is promised for the next edition and there will be a Memorial Service for Nora on 11th February (see *Diary*).

Apologies to our **advertisers** - the move to a more "advanced" version of our publishing software is causing problems even when reprinting unchanged material. We hope that we have finally tracked down all these errors but they can be hard to spot so please bear with us.

The **shop and tea-room** will continue on Thursday afternoons, manned by volunteers (see *Letters* page 3 and article page 5). Meanwhile, see the Post Office Counters notice (page 10) for current PO arrangements. On a more general note, James Fitch (page 25) and Cambridgeshire ACRE (page 20) discuss the problems facing village shops.

Congratulations to **Vera Scrutton** on receipt of this year's **Gay Bulleid Award**, and commiserations that illness prevented her from attending the award ceremony. We know this applied to quite a number of us for the Carol service and over Christmas, but we're glad to see that many had recovered for the New Year's Day *Lunch*. We hope that the real Millennium Bug (flu!) is finally on the retreat.

The final tally for the **Christmas Fayre** profits was a stunning £1060! Well done to the organisers, and let's hope the forthcoming **Jumble Sale** (Feb 19) does equally well for the **Millennium Map** fund.

Caroline and James Matheson

Cover Picture: *New Millennium* by Brenda Wilson



Letters to the Editors



Dear Editors

Pat Cunningham

We would like to convey our sincere thanks for all the wonderful messages and cards we received following our recent sad loss.

It was heart warming to see so many of Pat's friends at the service at St Mary's and at the reception at the Village Hall.

We also thank you for your generous donations to Cancer Research.

Peter, Linda, Colin and family
Carters Cottage

Dear Editors,

Doreen Bishop

On behalf of my family and myself, I would like to thank all our friends in the village who gave and offered support during Doreen's illness. Also for the many cards and messages of sympathy received following our sad loss.

Many thanks also to Mark Haworth whose service in our lovely church was as Doreen would have wished.

I would also like to pay tribute to the excellent medical services in our area. Addenbrooke's Hospital, the doctors at Bottisham surgery, the District Nurses based at Burwell, CAMDOC, Macmillan and Marie Curie nurses and Arthur Rank House, all played their part in providing proficient and loving care - very reassuring in these days of so much criticism of the NHS.

Some of the above have charitable status and most depend on additional voluntary support. My own contribution has been very minor in the past but will certainly be more active from now on.

Alan Bishop
15 Mill Hill

Dear Editors

Swaffham Prior Post Office & Shop

Last month's letter from Meryl Moore regarding the Post Office and Shop may have left some people with the impression that the Village Hall Management Committee was not keen on saving the Post Office for the Village. Nothing could be further from the truth, so we would like to take this opportunity of setting the record straight.

It has been inferred through the village grapevine that the Village Hall wanted to profit from the Post Office. This is totally inaccurate. For the sake of the Village we accepted a rent offer which did not even cover the oil and

electricity consumed. The Post Office/Shop would have used the hall *rent free*, with *no contribution towards overheads*, and with the *consumables subsidised*. It was not even a peppercorn rent.

It has also been inferred that a number of unacceptable conditions were imposed. We are puzzled that the cleaning requirement should have been highlighted. The request to leave the building clean and tidy is contained in all hire agreements. There appeared to be no reason to exclude the PO/Shop from this condition. If hirers find the hall clean and tidy they usually leave it so. If they find it a little grotty, so they leave it. We could not afford to subsidise the PO/Shop further by increasing our cleaning bill which is already in excess of £1,500 per annum.

In any village there will always be occasions when stories circulate which have not been based on the facts. We are very fortunate in Swaffham Prior that the record can be put straight by means of the *Crier* without causing animosity.

Meanwhile there is good news on the volunteer shop/teas front which is reported elsewhere in this issue.

Trevor Jones
Alastair Everitt

Dear Editors,

Hour Chime in St Cyriac's

I am responding to the invitation on p.19 of the January issue of the *Crier* to comment on the proposal to rehang the chiming-bell to chime the hours, in connection with the clock in the tower of St. Cyriac's Church

I hope this will be done The clock chimed the hours for many years and I am sure there must be plenty of us in the village who remember this sound. The bell was removed about 1988 during major tower restoration work, and if re-instated a new location within the tower would have to be found for it, but this should be perfectly possible. The bell itself and its clock-hammer are in store in the bell chamber.

The bell replacement will cost money: some hundreds but not thousands. I am prepared to make a donation to this cause, and even to organise a fund, if there is any enthusiasm for this project.

Margaret Stanier

<p>Booking the Village Hall? Bookings should be made through Elisabeth Everitt, telephone 742974.</p>
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Dear Editors,

Gay Bulleid Award

I am so sorry I was unable to be present for my “Gay Bullied” award. I had a very nasty cough, and once I started coughing, I could not stop.

I am very pleased and delighted to receive this award.

Vera Scrutton

Dear Editors,

Carol Singing

What a pity that so few people were able to get to the village hall for the carol singing on 24th December. Those that didn’t make it missed a treat.

We were accompanied by the Village Orchestra no less than thirteen very accomplished musicians. As well as the piano there was a string section consisting of violins, a double base and a guitar. The woodwinds comprised clarinet, recorder and bassoon and a triangle represented the percussion section.

Please, please can we see and hear more of this talented group of people.

Betty Prime

Dear Editors,

Village Lunch

It was with some trepidation that we organised the Village Hall for the New Year’s Day “Bring and Share Lunch”. Would anyone come, we wondered? Would enough food be brought?

Our fears were unfounded, as over one hundred people came, enjoying a wonderful selection of food and liquid refreshment, to say nothing of conversation.

Thank you all for coming. We hope you thought it worthwhile.

Elaine, Elisabeth, Shirley, Margaret

Dear Editors,

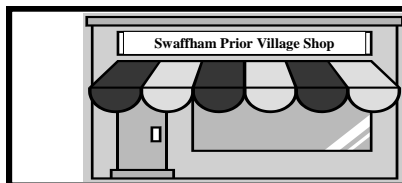
S.O.S ‘The Times’

I have an urgent need for a copy of *The Times* newspaper for the 9th December 1999 to consult an article. If any subscriber is still in possession of this issue, I should be very grateful for the loan of it.

I searched through the piles of old newspapers in the Village Newspaper recycling store, the black shed on the driveway beside the playground. *The Times* for the whole of October and the whole of November were there, but

not (yet) December. *The Times* subscriber who faithfully deposits old newspapers in the shed for recycling is asked to pick out Dec 9th for me, before taking the remainder of that month's issues down to the shed.

Margaret Stanier



Village Shop, and Tea Room

"But what of the Post Office?" we hear you cry. As there has been no demand for the collection of pensions we have dropped this. But all the same, thank you to everyone who volunteered to run the pension collection facility.

However, the Shop, the Teas, and Graham's vegetable stall will continue as before every Thursday afternoon. June Wolfenden and her team will provide the normal tea service. The Shop, under "new management", may take a week or two to find its feet but it also will be open on schedule on Thursday 3rd February.

Alastair Everitt

Trevor Jones

Police Warning

If you receive a telephone call from an individual who identifies himself as being an AT & T Service Technician conducting a test on that telephone line, or anyone else who asks you to do the following, **DON'T!** They will state that in order to complete the test you should press nine, zero, the hash (90#) and then hang up.

If you do this it gives them full access to your phone line, allowing them to make LONG DISTANCE, INTERNATIONAL or CHAT LINE calls billed to your account.

Remember -- **DO NOT press 90# for ANYONE.**

Anyone reading this article please pass the information on to friends and family -- it could cost someone a lot of money.

Histon Police Station is manned between 8.00 am and 8.00 pm Monday to Friday. Ring 01223 358966 and ask for Histon.

Annual Prior versus Bulbeck Hockey Match

Having been defeated two years in a row we could not allow it to happen again. So Prior appointed a new captain, tripled the number of women players, and supplied the two umpires. The result was a 3-0 win to Prior. But it was all left a bit late with the three goals coming in the last five minutes. Thanks again to Bulbeck for being our gracious hosts

Alastair Everitt

At the Parish Council Meeting

At 7.25pm on 13 January, I walked down the village street and looked up at the clear sky. There was a sliver of moon and a mass of stars: Capella sparkling high and bright to the north-east, the Twins to the north, Aldebaran the eye of the Bull over above the church towers, all with wonderful clarity. Was I stargazing with the idea of an astronomy report for the 'Crier'? I was not. I spent the evening gazing at the Nine Worthies of Swaffham Prior at their monthly meeting. As beautiful as the night sky? No. As interesting? Perhaps. Well...not really. But as they say, we can't all be stars.



Pat Cunningham was mentioned (with sorrow, appreciation and respect) at the beginning of the meeting, and again during the evening; it was good that her work for Swaffham Prior over the years was recognised.

Much time was devoted to paths, mostly to a particular path. Somebody asked 'Which path are we talking about?' and the Chairman waved his arms about with circular gestures and said 'The one going along behind the houses and down the hill'. Behind which houses? Down which hill? No street names were mentioned, and I was baffled for the next half-hour. There is a strong case for a village map to be on view during meetings.

The official Millennium Map, and the funding for it, were mentioned. There was also much talk of the funding for the automatic-winding and chiming of the clock on St. Cyriac's. Did we really want the clock to chime again? Since the mention of this in the Crier, nobody had commented, either for or against. The parish was being asked by the Churches Conservation Trust to produce something towards the cost. What funds could we draw on for such a purpose? Would the Parochial Church Council give anything towards it? What did the PCC think of the clock business, anyway? Eric, who had been at a PCC meeting the previous evening, remarked that it is impossible to discover what the PCC thinks about anything, because nobody except Mark ever says anything.

Councillor Fitch updated us on County Council matters: rates might go up slightly but there would certainly be no cuts in services. The Fordham by-pass had been given the go-ahead, but it was unlikely that any action would be seen on the ground until this time next year. A move was being made by the Government to have all pensions and benefits paid directly into people's personal bank accounts or building societies; Mr. Fitch considered this preposterous and would fight it tooth-and-nail, because it would be the death of many rural post-offices. He did not mention the equally valid reason for opposing it: that many people would not believe that they had received the money unless they saw and handled coins and bank-notes.

A person from the Youth Club came in and talked about it. It seems that the Youth Club would like to put up a large net alongside a hedge at the far end of the club's field, to prevent the loss of balls during ball games down that end. The Youth Club organiser was pleased that the Parish Council should take an interest in it, and the Club man departed amid mutual expressions of good wishes. I am sure that, like the P.C itself, many people in the village would be pleased to see and hear more about the Youth Club and its activities.

Under 'Planning Applications' the chairman read a letter from the Planning Authority asking for information about a particular building in the Parish. Had that building been on its present site in 1950? Had it been continuously on that site until 1956, or had it been taken away and brought back again? Only Eric Day had a long enough memory to know the answer, and he said 'Yes' to both questions. I asked my fellow-occupant of the Public Gallery *which* building; he murmured 'The last on the left as you cross the bridge at Upware Lock'. And everyone had thought that that building was in Wicken Parish anyway. All in all it was a typical Parish Council meeting.

Margaret Stanier



Lost Property

The necklace illustrated was found between Christmas and the New Year on the pathway running parallel to the High Street. If anyone knows who it belongs to, please could they contact the Editors at Kent House where it was handed in.

Tea

JUMBLE

bric-a-brac

&

NEARLY NEW

bargains

SALE

Nearly New

In aid of the Village Millennium Map Fund

Books

VILLAGE HALL

Toys



**SATURDAY 19TH FEBRUARY
2.30pm**

***Bargains galore!! Something for
everyone***

Meet your friends and have a cup of tea

bric-a-brac

Bring the family

books



ENGLISH PEN FRIENDS WANTED URGENTLY

The Committee have been asked to find English penfriends for the following young ladies from Lizzy:

Camille Bellenoue

Camille is 12 years old and has been learning English for 2 years. Her favourite subjects are Physics and Biology. She likes listening to music, playing the piano, reading, and keeping pets.

Dorothee Suret (e-mail dorelie@aol.com)

Dorothee is nearly 17 and has been learning English for 4 years. Her favourite subjects are English, History, Geography and Sociology. Her hobbies are swimming, drawing, TV and listening to music.

Aurélie Suret (e-mail dorelie@aol.com)

Aurélie is Dorothee's 16 year-old-sister. She likes Science, playing tennis and reading. Her favourite pop groups are Offspring and Prodigy.

If you would like to begin corresponding with any of these extremely keen young ladies, please contact me for postal address and further details (tel: 01638-742817 [leave message], e-mail gml24@hermes.cam.ac.uk).

Trudi Lamb

For Burwell Village Twinning Association

Wanted

A pen friend for Julio Ricci between 14-16 years old with a view to exchange visits this summer. Beautiful location for river swimming, Kayaking, fishing etc.

Please write to Julio at: *Le Ferme, 30630, Montclus, Gard 33, France.*

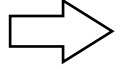
Holly at Christmas

In spite of the shortage of berries and the vociferous protests of the blackbirds during cutting, £144 was raised for the Church flower fund.

Elisabeth Everitt

Who Are They?

Does anyone recognise any of those pictured on the page facing this in a photograph of the village (copied from the Cambridgeshire Collection with the kind permission of Cambridgeshire Libraries). Elisabeth Everitt (742974) would be very grateful for any information anyone might have about this picture.



SPECIAL NOTICE

to all our customers

Temporary Post Office Closure

This post office will close temporarily on Thursday 27 January 2000. This situation will continue until a suitable agent can be found.

THE ALTERNATIVE POST OFFICES ARE:

Pension and Allowance books will be transferred to:

Swaffham Bulbeck Post Office
31 High Street
Swaffham Bulbeck
Cambridge
CB5 OHP

An alternative service will be provided at:

Burwell Post Office
11 The Causeway
Burwell
Cambridge
CB5 ODU

For further information please contact Post Office Counters Helpline on 0845 6031515.



Our Man of the Millennium - V

We saw in my last piece that the great Edmond Malone had spent 36 years searching records and had come up with nothing showing that Shakspere of Stratford was author of the plays.

In the 19th century there was an explosion of studies on Shakespeare (hereinafter WS). I continue to use as my source Schoenbaum's *Shakespeare's Lives* (1993) and, like him, only select the major figures. The Romantics searched for the heart and soul of WS in his writings and were not concerned with dry-as-dust documents and evidence. So we can ignore them.

The first progress was with John Payne Collier. Born in 1809, Collier joined *The Times* at 19, played billiards with Keats and beat him, became an antiquarian, and in 1820 published his first book. About 1832 he was given unrestrained access to the Ellesmere Papers at Bridgewater House which contained important 16th and 17th century documents. In 1840, with three others, he founded the Shakespeare Society and shortly afterwards borrowed the Henslowe *Diary* and Alleyn Papers from Dulwich College. In 1844 he published a life of WS, in 1847 he was secretary to the Royal Commission on the British Museum, and in 1850 he received a £100 civil list pension. Sounds like a model citizen!

The only problem is that he was a crook, and a forger who far exceeded the youthful efforts of William Henry Ireland. Collier not only added thousands of false annotations in the Ellesmere Papers but he also inserted forged documents. The only references to WS in the Henslowe *Diary* ("the most precious of playhouse documents" says Schoenbaum) are those inserted by Collier, as is also the case with the Alleyn Papers. Collier even forged away in the State Papers Domestic.

Some few private doubts were held about Collier's integrity, but he was pretty impregnable. It was not until 1861, 30 years after he began forging, that C.M. Inglesby finally exposed him, and speaking of the Alleyn *Memoirs* and the Henslowe *Diary* he remarked "We know that the great literary slug has crawled over both. What wonder if we shall still be able to trace his slime."

Next we come to another prodigious Victorian scholar, John Halliwell (later Halliwell-Phillipps and hereinafter H-P). Schoenbaum introduces H-P by saying he "did not invent manuscripts. Instead he stole them." I suppose that's an improvement! Born in 1820, H-P was a child prodigy, started collecting books and manuscripts when he was 15, was writing articles at 16, a Fellow of Society of Antiquarians at 18, and had ten titles ready for press at 20. At 17 he had entered Trinity College, Cambridge and was given free access to the usually locked up manuscripts. Next year he prudently transferred to Jesus College, Cambridge after it was discovered a number of volumes of manuscripts he worked on had gone missing. Later H-P sold them to a bookseller who sold some to the British Museum who contacted Trinity College. Disaster seemed certain, but H-P scrambled his way out of it. Even though H-P was involved in later thefts he became the most famous WS scholar of the 19th century with the largest number of publications on Shakespeare to his name, albeit in very small editions..

Many of these publications however were besmirched with Collier's forgeries as were those of other writers. But most significantly, in 1884 (he died in 1889) H-P lamented that the WS biographer is "baffled in every quarter by the want of graphical documents."

Now we turn to the most influential WS scholars of the late 19th century and the first half of the 20th century.

Edward Dowden published *Shakspeare: A Critical Study of His Mind and Art* in 1875 and it remained in print for nearly a century. Schoenbaum is quietly enraged with this book and its pernicious influence in the school classroom. Dowden put forward the happy theory about the poets 'four periods' - when he's sad he writes tragedies, when he's happy he writes comedies, etc. As Schoenbaum says sarcastically "how tidy and unambiguous that formulation is" and regrets that Dowden can still haunt the classroom.

Sidney Lee, another notable Shakespearian scholar, is no better. His *Life of Shakespeare* was published in 1898 and the last edition appeared in 1927. Lee asserted that "The scantiness of contemporary records of Shakespeare's career has been much exaggerated." Yet he came up with no new evidence and Schoenbaum says "He is disinclined as ever to make essential distinctions between fact and fiction." But it is worse than this as he freely sprinkles his account with the word "doubtless". For example "It was *doubtless* to WS's personal relations with men and women of the Court that his sonnets owed their existence." The work is filled with such statements, made without any evidence.

The next great Shakespearian scholar is E.K.Chambers who, after his day at the Board of Education, worked with enormous application to produce *The Medieval Stage* (2 vols. 1903), *The Elizabethan Stage* (4 vols. 1923), and *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems* (2 vols. 1930). This last is over 1,000 pages, yet by page 91 WS is dead. However, Chambers honestly acknowledges "the scanty biography data" and insists "it is no use guessing." It's a pity John Dover Wilson did not take note of this advice as his *The Essential Shakespeare* (1932) is described by Schoenbaum as "not a Life but a fantasia on the life."

All the scholars I have mentioned to date are famous and are familiar names to anyone who has been involved in Shakespearian studies. It is a remarkable and very sorry fact that after 250 years of diligent labour, make-believe and forgery, not one shred of evidence has been produced showing that the Stratford businessman had written the plays, or could even write.

Next month: The 1990's. Has anything improved?

Alastair Everitt

The Mobile Library—Not Just Books!

Apart from a wide range of fiction and non-fiction, we also carry local information, "what's on", timetables, audio-cassettes and children's videos. See diary for times.

USE IT OR LOSE IT!

Doreen Bishop 1931-1999

Doreen did not wish her funeral to be too solemn an occasion. Although she and Alan could reasonably have hoped for five or ten more years together, they both recognise that they have had a full and very happy life together and would like to give thanks for this. They went through the same schools in Chingford, Essex and started going out together at the age of sixteen. Doreen went on to Goldsmiths College to qualify as a primary school teacher and taught at various schools in the London area.

When they married in 1957 Doreen moved to Wolverhampton where Alan was working and they were to remain in the West Midlands area for 27 years. Soon Doreen retired from teaching to concentrate on raising her growing family. Having had no brothers or sisters herself, she was pleased to have four children to be a source of companionship and help to each other throughout life.

When Alan's work brought them to East Anglia, Doreen was very reluctant to leave the many good friends they had made in the West Midlands. On moving to Swaffham Prior they were advised by a local resident that, if they wanted to meet people, they should go to church or join the Conservatives! In the event Doreen was invited to join the W.I. Almost overnight she and Alan had a new circle of friends in the village and Doreen grew to love Swaffham Prior and the surrounding area.

Doreen was a great believer in the institution of marriage and family unity and was thankful that three of her children have already made happy and lasting marriages. Also that, in the process, she gained two wonderful daughters in law and a fine son in law. Janet and James' wedding in April 1994 was my first in Swaffham Prior and Philip and Katherine's daughter Madeline was baptised on 16 Aug 1998. Her cup was full with the arrival of grandchildren and she was never happier than when, at Christmas or on special occasions, she was surrounded by the whole family.

Doreen and Alan enjoyed nearly ten years of retirement and travelled extensively but, for Doreen, no holiday was allowed to interrupt continued contact by phone with the family. Doreen's strong family life was complemented by a wide and valued circle of friends. Apart from those already mentioned there were friends from family ties, schooldays, Doreen's and Alan's work and, more recently, from Doreen's love of bridge and enjoyment of swimming.

Doreen mentioned to me that she specifically wished to thank her family, friends and all medical staff for the love and care she received during her illness. Alan has requested that any donations should go to Marie Curie who not only provided invaluable nursing care but also carry out vital research into the causes of cancer.

Mark Haworth

Pat Cunningham 1933-2000

As TS Elliot said “What life have you if not lived in community?”. As we shall see, the hallmark of Pat’s life was born out of that same understanding, and in particular her time here in Swaffham Prior since she and *her* Pete moved here in 1991.

But we need to go back, briefly. Pat was born in Heston, West London, the youngest of three children. She attended the local Girls’ Grammar School, where her daughter Linda also went. She was an evacuee, close to Connie, her mother, whose great character she mirrored - the person we have known and loved.

Linda and Ian were born in Ealing, and Pat had a tough time bringing them up as well as working as a buyer for Firestone Tyres (There! You didn’t know all her skills!!).

Her life took off when she met Pete in 1981 in W. London, life taking them to Hampshire, then Heswall (Liverpool) with Pete’s work, but her wish to be near Ian and Linda and Robert and Clare, her grandchildren, dictated a move back south - here.

Her very well-developed sense of helping other people had begun in Hampshire, if not before, but it was here where she focussed love and compassion into her total involvement with the civic life of this village.

The Crier, with her Pat Pourri and the Upright who wears Skirts (always chasing me for late copy!) the PC, the Garden Society, the Village Hall, the Millennium Committee (with Elisabeth, Elaine and me) and lately the fight to save the village shop/PO. She even joined in with Church Cleaning (just as long as she wasn’t expected to come to church!). Her doughty fighting spirit gave great energy to everything she was involved in - the refurbished Village Hall stands in testimony to this (with Alastair, Trevor and the Committee). She won the Gay Bulleid Award in 1998, presented at the Carol Service, to which we had to make sure she would come.

Pat *enjoyed life*. She loved her garden at Carter’s Cottage (which I joked would make a good Vicarage!), she loved her gin and tonic and a cigarette, and I feel sure she would want us to celebrate her life, not grieve too much.

Brave in the face of illness, her hopes were lifted when she heard treatment and an operation were possible, and the fighting spirit was called upon to cope with the daily trips to Marsden Hospital and its consequences. At West Suffolk, she fought to the end, but now she is at peace, and we might recall St. Paul’s words: “hard pressed on every side, we are never hemmed in”.

No wonder we do not lose heart.

Mark Haworth

New Bus Pass Regulations

Concessionary bus passes are obtainable from any Post-Office or from East Cambs District Council. New rates apply as follows:

Travel:	Conditional on:	Cost
FREE	Registered blind or partially sighted	£5.50
HALF-	Registered deaf (or proof of being without speech)	£5.50
FARE	In receipt of disability living allowance	£5.50
	Prevented from obtaining a driving licence on medical grounds	£5.50
	Undertaking training for return to work following absence on grounds of mental health.	£5.50
	65+ male or 60+ female receiving Housing, Council Tax Benefit or Income Support.	£5.50
	65+ male or 60+ female other than above.	£11.00



STAINED HUNDRED

“The Curse of Cromwell?” was the subject of a well-attended talk to the Stained Hundred by Prof. J. Morrill, Professor of English and Irish History who lives in Bottisham. Although Cromwell spent the first 42 of his 59 years within a day’s ride from Bottisham (Huntingdon, St Ives, Ely), there is no evidence that he ever rode through it. However, in 1650 he signed an order for his militia to protect the dykes which for 18 months the local men were attacking as destroying their traditional way of life. Cromwell continues to be a controversial figure in history and Professor Morrill has received hate mail and even been attacked in New York by a woman with an umbrella because Cromwell killed off all her Irish ancestors in Monaghan (though in fact he had never been there). It is said that the only time Churchill and George VI disagreed was when Churchill wanted to call a battleship “Cromwell” and the king refused to sanction it. Cromwell is hated because of the brutal killings of the Irish Catholics. At Drogheda 300 people were killed in hot blood, and in cold blood after the battle by clubbing to death to save the bullets. He is also hated because he killed the King and because of the devastation of the churches.

Born in 1599, little is known of his childhood. In 1630 his business failed, and he became a poor farmer at St Ives, and he would have emigrated but was refused permission to leave the country. All this resulted in him having a nervous breakdown, during which he had a religious experience which deeply affected his later actions. Like Moses, he felt that the country must be led through a long period of suffering before it reached the promised land. He fought on 28 battlefields and was victorious every time - how could this not be part of God's plan?

Professor Morrill went a long way to explaining the thinking behind Cromwell's actions, and backed up his theory with a mass of fascinating detail. Yet, at the end, Cromwell still remained a controversial figure.

The next talk will be on Wednesday, February 9th at 7.30pm in the BVC Lecture room, when P. Hawes will be talking about the Cambridge Brick and Tile Works.

Peggy Day



WI Notes

As predicted the W.I. Christmas party in December was great fun. Trying to make reindeer out of balloons caused much laughter and the supper was great.

After Christmas there was a trip to the Corn Exchange to see 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat' which was thoroughly enjoyed -- a very colourful and energetic production if a trifle noisy!

We started the New Year with a talk by Chiropodist Anne Mallan on 'Healthy Feet'. We learned about the construction of the foot and that it has no less than 26 bones, the toes being the only ones that are moveable. Wearing well fitting shoes seems to be the best way of keeping the feet in good condition. Even today's Trainers are much better than the narrow winkle-picker types some of us used to wear when we were young.

Two W.I. members acted as guinea pigs and had their feet examined. One had very little trouble but the other (and I'm not mentioning any names!) has decided that a regular visit to the Chiropodist is a necessity!

Next month Mike Pike will be talking to us on the 'History of Burwell Museum'. We feel that many people other than W.I. members might be interested so it will be an **'open meeting'** for husbands, friends, anyone who'd like to come. 21st February, 7.30pm, Swaffham Prior village hall, £1.50. See you there.

Betty Prime

Swaffham Prior and Reach Mother and Toddler Group

We meet every Wednesday at Reach Village Centre between 2.00 and 3.00 pm and would love to see some new Mums with toddlers, babies or bumps!

Don't sit at home feeling isolated — join us for a cuppa whilst the children play. You will receive a very warm welcome!

Admission £1.00 per child/ 50p per second child.



FEBRUARY 2000 WILDLIFE SNIPPETS BUTTERFLIES IN WINTER

Have you ever stopped to think what happens to butterflies in winter? How do they survive until the warmth of next spring or summer arrives?

Like all other insects, butterflies and moths have to survive the winter either as egg, larva (caterpillar), pupa (chrysalis) or, in a few species, as adults. Eggs are hard to spot and larvae and pupae hibernate underground so only adults may be seen during the winter months.

Commonly Brimstones, Peacocks and Small Tortoiseshells can be found tucked away in garages, barns, outbuildings and hollows of trees. If you discover a butterfly, don't move it, as it will not survive outside.

As a nation we look after more than two million acres of garden and, with our countryside increasingly under threat, every garden - big or small - is a potential nature reserve, especially for butterflies.

February is the month for making plans for wildlife in your garden so why not think about getting a few plants that will help them? Nettles are the food plants of the caterpillars of some butterflies. Site a clump of nettles in a sunny spot, as they don't like to lay the eggs in the shade. Other examples of food plants for caterpillars are cabbages, Lady's smock, hedge garlic and hedge mustard, and bird's foot trefoil. Nectar giving plants can be planted to provide a food source throughout the season. Spring: aubretia, primrose and sweet rocket; summer: lavender, cat mint, thyme heliotrope, hebe, buddleia and knapweed; and autumn: sweet scabious, hyssop, michaelmas daisy and ice plant.



VILLAGE GARDENERS

After welcoming several new members to the Village Gardeners' meeting in January the Chairman, Michael Limb, introduced the speaker, Peter Lewis. Mr. Lewis, together with his wife, holds the national collection of campanulas in their garden at West Wrating and has grown around 300 varieties.

His talk, however was on organic gardening and this he tackled from a rather unusual angle. Instead of telling us what we should and should not use on our soil he suggested we find out the natural environment of the plants we want to grow and to try and re-create those conditions. He illustrated this with some excellent slides.

As we all know, compost heaps are an excellent source of mulch and a way of improving the soil, especially if they are moistened with - well, I won't go into that!

Next month, on 15th February, Mr. Peter Jackson, a director of Scotsdales's and a B.B.C. Radio gardener, will be teaching us how to prune garden trees and shrubs. The meeting will be at Reach Village Centre at 8pm.

Betty Prime

Bottisham Village College Music Society Celebrity Concert 2000

Lass of Peaties Mill
VIRTUOUSO RECORDER MUSIC
16th—20th Century Recorder by:
PAMELA THORNBY (recorder)
and
WILLIAM CARTER (lute/guitar)
FRIDAY 11th FEBRUARY at 8pm
Main Hall BVC

Entry: £5 (£2.50 concessions)
Season Ticket Holder and accompanied children under 16 FREE

WHERE'S THE POST OFFICE?

The trickle of Post Office closures could become a flood when government plans to stop paying benefits and pensions at Post Offices come into effect in 2003. This will directly hit the income of every Post Office.



Running a small Post Office is already a marginal operation and depends on a lively associated trade to keep it afloat. The worse news is that small shops are also finding it hard to make ends meet. The well-publicised travails of Marks & Spencer and Sainsbury are reflected on a smaller scale in local shops in towns and villages all over the country.

If the Post Office is to survive as a focal point for local communities it needs a New Deal which not only defines its role but ensures that the money is there to support it. This requires central government to put some commitment behind the Post Office business. It also requires local authorities to ensure that local planning policies don't strangle existing or replacement local Post Offices with needless restrictions and conditions.

Rural Communities need services and jobs if they are to be more than dormitories serving the nearest science, business or retail park. We must reverse the trend to 'out of town' to put life back into our communities. That's not a bad resolution for a new millennium.

What is MAGPAS?

MAGPAS is Cambridgeshire's volunteer doctor accident service. If you are involved in a serious road accident in Cambridgeshire or around its borders, it is almost certain that a MAGPAS volunteer doctor will be called out by the Ambulance Service to provide additional specialist help. And it's not only road accidents that they go to - if you are badly hurt in an industrial or agricultural incident, or as a result of a plane or rail crash or boating incident they will be on hand. They are even called to fires, felonies, sieges and suicides - in fact wherever their special medical skills are needed.

There are 40-50 doctors in the service and nowadays they are not only GPs but also hospital doctors, often from an Accident & Emergency Department. They all give their services absolutely free while MAGPAS provides them with all the specialist medical and communications equipment they need. Additionally there is driver training to allow them to get to the scene quickly and safely because immediate care and treatment at the scene often determines the ultimate survival and degree of recovery of the casualty. All this makes the MAGPAS immediate care service arguably one of the best in the country.

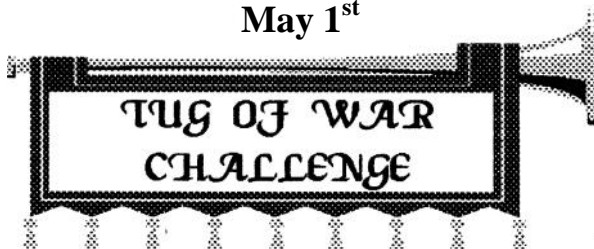
To provide this service costs over £200,000 per year and in 1998 MAGPAS doctors were called out to support the emergency services at nearly 1500 incidents. MAGPAS is a registered charity, founded in 1972, which receives no government funding and, for the past 27 years, has relied totally on the continuing support and remarkable generosity of the people of Cambridgeshire.

Those who support MAGPAS often say they do so because “ I might need them one day!”. We hope this won't happen but if you would like to help MAGPAS doctors keep saving lives by volunteering a few hours of your time or making a donation, or if you would like more information, please do call us on 01223 413477 or write to us at:

*MAGPAS (Mid Anglia General Practitioner Accident Service),
4 Adkins Chambers, Perne Road, CAMBRIDGE CB1 3RU*

REACH FAIR'S 800th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

May 1st



One of the traditions being revived for this special occasion is the Tug of War competition. It used to take place over Reach Lode with the unfortunate losers getting a soaking for their efforts! This time, however, it will be a fun event held on the lower Green starting at around 6 o'clock. There will be music and refreshments as well, and the funfair will be going on into the evening, so there will be plenty of entertainment for the whole family if they are not watching the contest. And of course there will be the time-honoured prize of a firkin of beer!

What is needed now are plenty of local teams, 8 to a team. If you can get one together, such as a pub, club, village or works team, please get in touch with Grahame Miller (tel. 01638 742428) as soon as possible. Register early! The number of teams will be limited, as it is hoped the event will finish at about 8.30. There is a registration fee of £1 per head to help cover costs, returnable if there is no space left.

So get your competitive spirit going and join in the fun!

Notes from the Parish Council January Meeting

Mr Andrew Badcock chaired the meeting with 7 members and 2 members of the Public. Before starting the meeting, the Chairman expressed the P.C.'s sadness at the loss of Pat Cunningham. He asked that it become a matter of record the P.C.'s appreciation and gratitude for Pat's many contributions to the Village.

Matters Arising

Parish Council Vacancy: A letter had been received from ECDC to say that no applications have been received for the vacancy on the Parish Council. This vacancy stills remains open. Anyone wishing to join the Parish Council should contact the Clerk.

Playground Equipment: A further estimate has been received for the works necessary to the Playground area. An application form had been applied for and received from the Hanson environment fund. The Clerk was asked to complete this form and return to see if any funding could be raised towards the cost of the works needed.

Public Footpaths: A letter had been received from CCC Highways Division acknowledging the P.C.'s concerns over the safety of the footpath at the Beeches. They said that the footpath would be made safe temporarily until the matter was resolved. This was discussed at length and everyone generally agreed that the footpath should not be closed and that a further approach should be made to CCC to ask when, or if, repair work would be carried out. In the meantime, it was felt that maybe a warning sign at each end of the footpath should be considered.

Sports & Recreational Committee: Malcolm Hall joined the meeting to discuss the possibility of helping the Youth Club with some funding for sporting projects. The Clerk had spoken with the Youth Club Leader, Alan Badcock and he explained that there were many ways in which extra funds could help. Further report at next P.C. meeting.

The Millennium: Mrs Malster told the meeting that a Jumble and Nearly New Sale was to be held on Saturday, February 19th to help raise funds towards the Village Map. The New Years Day event at the Village Hall had been a huge success and everyone had a lovely time.

Church Clock: The funding of this project was discussed at length. The footnote to the December P.C. meeting notes about the chiming mechanism had received no response. It was felt that several points needed clarifying so the Chairman said he would discuss further with Mark Haworth.

Cemetery Path: There were further discussions on the cost of extending the cemetery path.

Reports

Councillor Fitch reported to the meeting.

Correspondence Received: No further correspondence was received.

Accounts for Payment: These were agreed.

Planning Applications Received

30 Green Head Road: Extension to non-clinical veterinary practice to create additional office.

Planning Approval

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

Any other Business

Neighbourhood Watch: There has been no further meeting.

Village Shop: A letter had been received from Post Office Counters Ltd informing the P.C. that the Post Office would close on the 27th January 2000.

Open Question Time

The question of the ditch along Lower End was raised. The cutting and clearing of this ditch will be put in hand.

The next Parish Council meeting will be on Thursday, 10th February 2000 at the Village Hall.

Karen King
Clerk of the Parish Council

Application

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982

Notice and application for Renewal of Public Entertainments Licence

I, Janet Mary Cooper, of 41 High Street, Swaffham Prior, propose to make an application for a public entertainments licence for Swaffham Prior Village Hall, 36 High Street, Swaffham Prior, Cambridgeshire 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, Cambridgeshire CB7 4PL.



The District Council published its first newspaper for residents in December. Unfortunately, there have been distribution problems and many residents have not received their copy. I am sorry if you did not receive your copy, we will be using a different distribution system next time. As well as the standard newspaper there is also a newspaper available on tape. If you know of someone who would like the tape version, or if you would find it useful, please let me know and I will arrange for you to be sent the tape for this and future editions.

The Council's systems all came through to the Year 2000 unscathed by the 'Millennium Bug'. But we are continuing to monitor things carefully to ensure that no post-new year 'Millennium Bugs' emerge.

Having opened up our meetings to the public, we have now started to look at ways of making the meetings more interesting. In March we will be introducing a new format to meetings of the full Council. The first 15 minutes will be devoted to the public, who can ask questions about the work of the Council. This will be in addition to the right to present petitions and speak to them. Then, instead of ploughing through the minutes of every committee meeting page by page each Committee Chairman will summarise the work that their Committee has done since their last report to full Council. Members will then debate the key issues arising that need the approval of full Council. The Council Leader will similarly report on the progress the Council has made in meeting our Corporate Plan objectives and highlight the work the Council will be doing over the coming month. And we are bringing Council meetings outside from Ely. Our meeting on the 28th March will be held in Bottisham Village College at 3.00pm. We hope that by coming out into the district we will enable more residents to come to put your point of view across to us and to hear our debates. We hope to meet outside of Ely at least twice a year, if we can find suitable venues across the District.

It is sad to think that Pat Cunningham will not be reading this edition of the *Crier* and will no longer be involved in the life of Swaffham Prior. She was a lively, enthusiastic and determined person always willing to fight for what she believed to be right. I shall miss her friendship and support.

I will not be having Councillor's surgeries for a few months, because I am expecting our first child in early May. But I am still happy to receive 'phone calls (01638 742509), e-mails (ccane@cix.co.uk) or letters (34 Swaffham Road, Reach, CB5 0HZ) with any problems, ideas or queries.

Charlotte Cane



From all reports, most people enjoyed the arrival of New Year, New Century and New Millenium. Round here it arrived with explosions in the sky, not the computer — and lots of goodwill in the days after.

During the break from council routines I caught up with most of my papers and was gratified to find that the expectation of life continues to rise for both males and females. It seems to go up at the same rate as the passing years, although I know this is nonsense. Nevertheless, in spite of all our complaints and sometimes unreal expectations, we should be thankful we live now and not a hundred years ago in times of no old-age pensions, poorer health, lower levels of medical knowledge and, above all for men, wars.

Following that last line of thought and having vivid memories of the last war, it is maybe understandable that I find full-blooded membership of the European Union essential for the inhabitants of these islands of ours. If anything can lessen the likelihood of war, being part of a strong international group of European states tops the list of essential safeguards. That the European Union should have a common currency is common sense and a great reassurance to our commerce and industry which is so dependent on export to the rest of the continent. If we can trade within Europe using a common currency, as in the State of America, life should be much more predictable, secure and, to use a modern word, sustainable. No doubt, you can now guess how I shall vote in the coming currency referendum!

Returning to a lower, local level, some of us are becoming alarmed at the thought that our smaller **post offices** are in danger. It seems that the payment of benefits are to be switched to automatic credit transfer. This means payments to bank or building society with the resultant loss of business to the post offices particularly in rural areas.

In recent memory **Reach** and **Swaffham Prior** have lost their post offices and we must do all we can to preserve the remaining ones in **Lode**, **Swaffham Bulbeck**, **Bottisham**, and **Burwell**. I am working towards a programme of protest to the Government and will report further next month as things develop. If Ely can lose its post office and have its services transferred to a nearby shop, you can see the possibilities for much smaller communities such as our own.

Fordham By-pass project has been awarded a quarter of a million pounds to cover the design costs of building a new road from south of Fordham to the bottom of the Soham by-pass running alongside the railway. It is unlikely that the Government will fail to follow up this initial allocation

with the remaining (approx) £12m. needed. When completed the road will not only relieve the centre of Fordham but make it easier for people from our villages travelling to Ely, Mildenhall and Newmarket. Roll on that day.

A word on **winter gritting** and **snow clearing**: reckon on salting of A and B roads and only in village centres if icy conditions persist for several days. The County will provide salt for local icy spots, if the parish council will supply the bins.

James Fitch

Swaffham Prior with Reach

Extracts from Minutes of Parochial Church Council Meeting

Wednesday 12 January, 2000

The **bells** at Swaffham Bulbeck were not ready in time so they were not installed or rung for the New Millennium. All related social functions were also cancelled. The bells would be ready to be installed in the Spring. Bishop John would be coming to Swaffham Bulbeck on Sunday 4th June to commemorate their installation in a service at 4.00 p.m. followed by tea at 5.00 p.m.

Education: There had been no requests from any family to prepare children for taking communion before confirmation. The Vicar would produce a leaflet for people's information to encourage them to take this step for their children. No confirmation candidates had come forward for this year from Swaffham Prior or Reach but there were three candidates from Swaffham Bulbeck. The Confirmation in June would probably be held in Bulbeck Church. **Emmaus Christian Education:** The Vicar proposed to go on a workshop course to teach him how to run an Emmaus Group. **Lambeth Palace trip:** A deposit had been paid for 50 places for the trip on Saturday 6th May, and a coach would be organised. Entry should be between 1.15 and 1.30. People were encouraged to sign up quickly now.

Church in Community Working Group

At their meeting on 25th November, Charitable Giving was discussed. The Vicar and Treasurer would consult the list and allocate monies to the designated charities. The distribution of the Millennium Gospel and bookmark was also organised. The Vicar thanked all who had helped in this.

Social Working Groups' Reports

Reach: Social events had been arranged as follows:

Moveable Feast 15th April; Reach Fair Stall 1st May; Family Barbecue @ Spring Hall Farm 1st July, Refreshments at Songs of Praise 2nd July; Harvest Supper 29th September; Gift Day and St Etheldreda's Fair 14th October.

Recipes were being collected for a Church Recipe Book to be published in the Spring. Contributions would be welcome (closing date March 7th).

Swaffham Prior

Past Events: The Quiz Night on 20th November had raised £162. Advent By Candlelight had raised £500 to be shared between Salvation Army and the Church.

The next meeting would be on February 9th.

Future events:

9th March Coffee Morning at the Manor (Rosalind Wood's);

18th March Spring Quiz Night; 24th June Fete and Grand Draw.

It had been decided not to combine Swaffham Prior Feast and the Church Fete. The Fete would probably be different in character this year.

Fabric Working Groups' Reports

St Cyriac's: The Churches' Conservation Trust were anxious to get on with the winding mechanism and chiming of the clock, which the PCC may have to help in financing. There have been some problems finding Grant Aid for this. The rope up the staircase of St Cyriac's tower will be installed in February. The PCC agreed with a suggestion from John Norris that the contractors hired by the CCT for cleaning the gutters in St Cyriac's should also be asked to clean those of St Mary's at the same time.

Churchyard lighting: John Norris had also suggested that lamp brackets should be attached to the wall of St Cyriac's to light the path coming from the back gate through the churchyard. The PCC agreed to consider this.

Vestry Chimney and tower gutters: DAC approval had been given for both of these schemes, and also to the vestry re-ordering and toilet arrangements.

Tree-management: E.C.D.C were proving difficult about tree-management, and refusing permission to trim the lime tree obscuring the clock face. They were also reluctant to rebuild the flint wall at the back of the churchyard, which was in a dangerous condition.

Kneelers: Hilary Mengham might be asked to prepare an explanatory leaflet about the kneelers with which she had been so involved at Swaffham Prior while she was here.

Jenny Moseley

NO HOME TO GO TO: YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Do we have any idea of the level and the nature of rural homelessness amongst the young in our county? The nature of youth homelessness in rural England is emerging. The picture is one quite different from that experienced in the cities. The homeless young people are not begging or sleeping rough in the same way. They are entirely missed in the 'Rough Sleepers Initiative'. The young homeless people in our villages and small towns are 'hidden' from view. They are in 'unsettled accommodation' moving around from relative to friend, from shed to straw-stack. They are a transient population that shift from place to place.

There is no statutory requirement for Councils to keep and collate data on young people presenting themselves as homeless if they are not priority cases within the narrow definition. We need to know the level of youth homelessness and make provision for it. To discuss this further contact Roger Symonds, Rural Housing Enabler, Cambridgeshire ACRE, 3 Station Approach, Station Road, March, Cambs PE15 8SJ. Tel: 01354 651188.



Church Services

January 2000

ST MARY'S Swaffham Bulbeck

ST MARY'S Swaffham Prior

ST ETHELREDA & THE HOLY TRINITY

EPIPHANY
5

8:00am
Sun Holy Communion[†]
6 **9:30am**
Family Service

11:00am
Parish Communion^B

6pm
Evening Service

EPIPHANY
6

9:30am
Sun Parish Communion^A
13 *Celebrant and Preacher:*
The Revd Dr. Stuart
Ments????

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

8:00am
Holy Communion[†]

3RD
BEFORE
LENT
SEPTUAGIS
SIMA

9:30am
Sun Village Communion^A
20

8:00am
Holy Communion[†]
6:00pm
Evensong[†] and Sermon
Preacher: Canon Bill Loveless

11:00am
Family Service

2ND
BEFORE
LENT

9:30am
Sun Parish Communion^A
27

11:00am
Mattins[†] and Sermon
6:00pm
Evensong[†] and Sermon

8:00am
Holy Communion[†]

Evening Prayer

Tuesdays, 5:30pm, Swaffham Bulbeck, Wednesdays, 5:30pm, Reach
Thursdays, 5:30pm, Swaffham Prior

Holy Communion

1st Thursdays 10am, Swaffham Bulbeck Church

Sunday School

Not meeting this term. Creche facilities available 9.30am 3rd Sunday [SB].

Bellringing

Tuesdays, fortnightly 8pm. St. Cyriacs. Contact: Dr Margaret Stanier on 741328.

Housegroup

Tuesdays, 8pm, fortnightly in Reach.

Contact Olivia Cole 743434, Juliet Vickery 742676

Mothers Union

1st Mondays, 2:15pm, c/o Free Church, Commercial End.

Contact Win Norton on 01223 811509

Toddlers Service

3rd Thursdays @ 11:30am for 15 minutes in Reach Church or Centre

The vicar is never too busy to **visit** anyone on urgent pastoral or spiritual matters.

Dear Friends,

TIME TO LEARN

The recent millennial celebrations enabled us to reflect on the past, and to look forward to new opportunities in the future. While a lot of time and energy went into marking the ‘Millennium Moment’, many of us nurse the thought that the need is for a longer-term process of *growth and renewal*.

Education Sunday falls this year on 20th February; on that day we are reminded of the call to recognise that *the time to learn is now*. This relates not only to formal schooling and college life, but also to adult life. In the Church, we try to provide that sense of nurture in an ongoing *teaching ministry*, both from the pulpit and in our work with young people, not least via our Church Schools. *Lent Groups* are an additional, annual way of commitment to such a process for adults; next month’s *Crier* will carry the details. It seems though, that this millennial year, should have a particular focus on *christian education*, to provide an opportunity for everyone to find a way into what Church is all about. How is this going to be done?

After Easter, the hope is that the Lent Groups will have provided a spring-board for ‘*Emmaus*’, *The Way of Faith*. This is a course designed to nurture new christians, which also allows existing church-folk to deepen their level of faith and discipleship. Please give some serious thought to this; now is the time to learn. One of the besetting problems of the Church is that its own members have become less articulate in an information age; every member ministry demands that we should know more about what we believe than what we learnt in Sunday School or at granny’s knee. In this way, people might re-find their confidence in church, understand better the shape and meaning of the words and forms (e.g. “what is the significance of the Easter Eve ceremonies?”), and carry that confidence in the Gospel back into their daily lives, in a form of *personal renewal*.

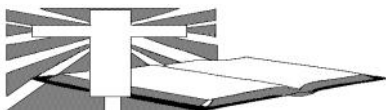
What of the young? *Confirmation Classes* begin on Sunday 6th February at 4.30pm at The Vicarage. These are fortnightly, last 70 minutes and lead to being presented to the Bishop for confirmation on Saturday 13th May at 5.30pm, probably in St Mary’s, Swaffham Bulbeck. If your youngsters aged 11 or over, baptised or not, might be interested, please telephone me now.

A leaflet is available in each church on the subject of *The Admission of Baptised Children, aged 7 and over, to Holy Communion before Confirmation*. I have written on this here before; now it is a real possibility. Please be in touch if your children would like to explore this, so that you can more easily worship as a family around the Holy Table.

Finally, an educational trip! A ‘benefice bus’ has been booked to take 50 of us to have a unique chance to look round *Lambeth Palace*, the Archbishop of Canterbury’s London residence, on Saturday 6th May. We will leave here around 10.15am, returning late afternoon; the hour’s tour begins at 1.15pm. Please let me have your name *now* if you would like to go.

Yours sincerely,

Mark



Zion Baptist Chapel

Services for February 2000:

Sunday	6 th	10.30am	<i>No Service</i>
		6.30pm	David Bousfield (Communion)
Sunday	13 th	6.30pm	David Bousfield
Sunday	20 th	6.30pm	John Martin
Sunday	30 th	6.30pm	Paul Giddings
Wednesdays		7.30pm	Alpha Course as announced

Arabian Nights

David Bousfield

This true story was sent to me by a friend, Douglas Else-Jack, who went to work in Saudi Arabia last year. He writes:-

Here is a story that I heard from a British Army Officer who was relating an experience he had recently had in the middle of the desert. He was sat in a tent in the early evening, beneath him was a Persian rug and sand, above him was the tent canopy and a beautiful clear sky with the stars shining brightly in the heaven above. For company there were some hunting dogs, camels and of course his hosts some Saudi Bedouin. These were no ordinary Bedouin as one of them was a Prince of the Realm and another was a General in their Interior Ministry.

As is the way of the Saudi's they savoured their cardamom flavoured coffee and enjoyed their iced fruit juices. As the night passed their conversation switched subject many times and eventually the Prince said to my friend, "I as a Muslim I worship Allah, the one and only God but you as a Christian worship three but claim he is one why is this so?" Rather taken aback and more used to talking on easier subjects he eventually answered, "Well your Highness we see God the Father, the Son and Holy Ghost as different parts or personalities of the same being" Quickly the retort was "But you pray in one breath to God and the next to his Son..... These are not the same but very different people."

Once again my friend struggled for an answer and gulped down heavily on his glass of juice until there was none left. The silence was painful to him but he knew the Arabs out of politeness would allow him to marshal his thoughts....."Your highness what is within this glass?" Rather surprised at this question the Emir replied, "Only the ice of your drink Sidique" Leaning towards the fire with his glass my friend swirled the ice around for a while. "And now your Highness?" "It is now water Sidique" Once again he returned the glass close to the fire and this time left it there. After an even longer silence, "And now my Emir?"

"It is gone Sidique, there is nothing" "But where has the water gone?" "It is everywhere Sidique" My friend smiled as one who had realised his goal, "Your Highness the Ice is like the Father, it is there for all to see, recognised by all. The water is like our Lord Christ the Son, in fact he described himself as the water of life and the Holy Ghost..... he is like the evaporated water.....he is everywhere. They are all of the same basic makeup and yet clearly have their own features."

Of the rest of the nights discussion I can tell you little but I can tell you that not only did a Prince and a General learn something of God that night but in the telling of this story I learnt more of the simplicity of the Trinity than years of complex theories had ever taught me.

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

Four hundred and fifty years ago, King Henry VIII decided to take over all the monasteries and abbeys and convents in England and put their vast wealth to better use (ie gifts for his friends and a war chest for his wars). And he did the obvious thing. He appointed a group of his mates, men who hoped for a share of the spoils and who believed in Henry's war-mongering, and he made them his commissioners for inspecting the monasteries and deciding whether they fulfilled any useful purpose. It was like asking a firm of property developers to advise on which schools should be closed down and sold. They found failure everywhere. And no doubt in many of the monasteries, the standard of religious commitment and moral probity fell far short of the ideal. If you find yourself in Much Wenlock in deepest (I almost said darkest) Shropshire, visit the Priory. It is one of the best preserved of monastic sites and they do a brilliant audio tour. But I have just been reading about the abbey of Hailes in Gloucestershire; and that haunts me even more. The fame of Hailes rested on a claim to possess a phial of Christ's blood gathered from the Cross. When Henry VIII sent in his commissioners, they opened the phial and found it to be full of honey; and they made the locals sniff it. Subsequently there was a heated exchange in the pub that led to fisticuffs and the arrest of sundry persons who then found themselves arraigned in the court of Star Chamber in the records of which their witness statements are preserved. Some argued that the King's men were to blame, and that they had fraudulently substituted the phial of honey for the phial of blood; others thought it was an honest mistake by the monks, who had got phials mixed up centuries before; others thought the monks might have made it up, but never mind, one fraud did not wreck the whole of their Catholic Faith and, in any case, it had brought in good business to the town. And others thought it was typical of the old religion, trading on and exploiting superstition, and that the sooner Catholicism with its smells and bells was replaced by a bible-centred 'reasonable' protestantism, the better. Now it so happens that when the Abbey was shut down a few months later, we have a record of who bought what at the clearance sale. And interestingly, everyone in the court case bought *something*. But those who had continued to support the Abbey and the old religion had been careful only to buy the stone from the perimeter walls or the outbuildings. It was those who had called for the New Religion, for Protestantism, for the good young C of E who claimed the material from the abbey church and it was a Protestant butcher who bought the high altar! But everyone bought something, and within a generation, all the local community had become slowly but surely brought into the new religion and all had become, slowly but surely, members of the Protestant church.

I just found that a fascinating story of how human beings are. Few of us are the stuff of martyrs. We will stand up for our beliefs in the pub, and may occasionally blow our tops. But we will normally collude and take advantage of whatever comes our way. We do not realise that any collusion with 'the other' will cause us to be contaminated by it. Fortunately that works both ways; collusion with good contaminates just as much as collusion with evil. But if property developers bought half the parish churches from the diocese of Ely (to create a fund to preserve the rest) and offered all the fabric and contents for sale, which bits would you buy and which would you feel queasy about buying; and what line would you take in the *Red Lion* when the subject came up?

Dates for Your Diary - February 2000

Tue	8	Mobile Library, 2.40-3.30 Cage Hill, 3.35-4.00 Chapel
Wed	9	Staine Hundred: 'Cambridge Brick and Tile Works', 7.30 BVC Social Working Group, The Barn, 44 High St, 8pm.
Thu	10	PC Meeting, Village Hall,
Fri	11	Millennium Music Hall, Victoria Hall, Fordham, 7.00pm BVCMS: "Celebrity Concert 2000", BVC Main Hall, 8pm Memorial Service for Nora Bartlett, St. Edward's Ch, Camb. 2.30.
Sat	12	Millennium Music Hall, Victoria Hall, Fordham, 7.00pm
Sun	13	
Mon	14	<i>Crier Copy Deadline</i>
Tue	15	Village Gardeners: 'Pruning Trees and Shrubs', Reach VC, 8pm
Wed	16	PCC Meeting. Village Hall, 7.30pm
Thu	17	
Fri	18	
Sat	19	Jumble Sale in aid of Millennium Map, Village Hall, 2.30pm.
Sun	20	
Mon	21	WI: 'History of Burwell Museum', Village Hall, 7.30pm.
Tue	22	Mobile Library, 2.40-3.30 Cage Hill, 3.35-4.00 Chapel
Wed	23	
Thu	24	<i>Crier</i> Collating, Village Hall, 2:30pm
Fri	25	
Sat	26	
Sun	27	

Advance Dates:

Mar	9	Coffee Morning at the Manor
Mar	18	Spring Quiz Night Concert by Peterborough Male Voice Choir, St James Ch., Lode
Apr	22	Stainers Crucifixion Choral Workshop, St James Ch., Lode
May	1	Reach Fair
June	24	Summer Fete and Grand Draw
Sept	9	Gift Day and Coffee Morning
Oct	7	Harvest Supper
Nov	18	Quiz Night
Dec	3	Advent by Candlelight