



The Swaffham Crier

Volume 25 Number 12

December 2001



Editorial



Happy Christmas, all our Readers,
And Correspondents, too,
Please forgive our misdemeanours,
Perhaps we've made a few
Yet in this Year's edition

XXV, without a doubt
Many Good Things have been written
And some things best left out!
Still, let's put all that behind us,

As we wish you all Good Cheer
Let's raise a glass to Christmas, and
Let's see you all next year!

Wishing all our readers a very Happy Christmas !

*Mike Phillips, James Matheson, Ruth Stinton, Roger Connon,
Caroline Matheson*

Cover Picture: Wassail Bowl, from "Old Christmas" (see p14)



Letters to the Editors



Dear Editors,

Cancelled Blues Event

We are writing on behalf of a lot of villagers who were very disappointed about the cancellation of the 'Blues' event at the Village Hall on 27th October. This was because some "Mr I am Important" objected to a bar licence, claiming that the event would be 'too noisy'. We find it difficult to claim it would be 'too noisy' before the event had even occurred and we feel it is a shame that people have to complain about any activities that go on there.

Is it not true that the younger people of the village are as much part of the community as anyone, especially those of us who have lived here all our lives?

We do hope that the people running the Village Hall appreciate our views about this, or otherwise bookings will go elsewhere, and that also would be a great shame. We also believe occasional events of this, or of whatever nature should be tolerated in the good spirit and community which Swaffham Prior bases its pride upon.

Julie Nunn & Barbara Doe

Dear Editors,

Will The Real David Dalla Costa Please Stand Up?

A good tip for those wishing to get to know their neighbours better - just put ambiguous messages through their doors. We discovered this quite unexpectedly when two misdirected letters arrived together. The first was for another house nearby. So far, so good, but the second displayed a mysterious foreign name with *our* house number. Thinking this could be an enduring mystery like 'who really did write all those Crier reports of PC meetings?' I dashed off a note saying something like: 'David Dalla Costa - there's a letter for you here - at number 36'. That was clear, or so I thought, dropping copies off en route to the first address. Later, no doubt wondering what idiot would deliver a note instead of the actual letter itself, callers began to arrive for 'their' letters, addressing *me* as Mr Costa! The eighth such caller and I agreed that this was amusing enough to share with everybody. Now I'm not so sure (and she may be having second thoughts too).

The real Frank Readhead

36, Lower End.

P.S For the curious - the real David Dalla Costa turned out to be an ex flat-mate of our son; mail for both of them eventually ends up here.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY MRS HIGHWOOD



WHO IS



100



ON DECEMBER 1st!



(and belated Birthday Wishes to the DOG, who was 16 on Nov 5!)

XXXXXX

The Crier Team (+ Bob)

Christmas Holly

Deck your halls again with boughs of Swaffham Prior Holly. Only £2.50 a bunch. All proceeds will go to the Church flower funds.

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

Saturday 15th December 12.00-1.00

Sunday 16th December 12.00-1.00



Please telephone 742974 if you would like to buy holly before December 15th

Elisabeth Everitt

From our Reporter at the Parish Council Meeting

Of Leaves and Grass and an Elephant

A major issue in Councillor Fitch's report concerned the future organisation of our local health service. The Cambridgeshire Health Authority has disregarded the over 6000 signatures and cards it received, plus the views of meetings held in Burwell and Ely objecting to the proposed merger of the East Cambridgeshire Primary Care Group with the Fenland Primary Care Trust. The CHA stated loftily that people had been misinformed and they saw no reason to change their 'favoured option'; the matter was not even put to the vote. So unless the Secretary of State sees fit to countermand this high-handed decision, the Burwell practice will be a part of a new East Fenland Primary Care Trust, and the Bottisham practice will be in a South Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust.



When there is heavy rainfall I watch with some satisfaction the rain pouring in twin rivers down Cage Hill, leaving my cottage high and dry; I am lucky. During the Weekend of the Floods, Councillor Fitch reported, there were 700 incidents in which firemen rescued 100 people, and animals as well. A downside of mobile phones seems to have been multiple reporting of these incidents, well meant but causing confusion and jamming switchboards. There are two exciting projects to report on the environment. The Heritage Lottery Fund has awarded £350,000 for the restoration of the chalk grassland habitat on the Devil's Dyke. There will be scrub clearance, work done on the path and steps built where necessary for public access. And the National Trust has bought the 415 acres of Burwell Farm and plans over time to convert the farmland back into a fenland habitat, thus saving Wicken Fen from drying out and making it more viable.

There were several items on roads. On 14 December work will start on a long overdue safety measure by the old railway bridge on the Reach road: a bridleway is to be made on the west side of the bridge (the left, as seen from Swaffham Prior) for pedestrians, bicycles and horses. It will not be of tarmac but will be 'made up'; the work is expected to take about 12 weeks. The cycleway system is also being extended. Burwell has put forward a scheme for traffic calming which would affect the B1102 and B1103. It will probably include areas like those north of Fordham or outside the stationer's in Burwell; there will be no 'sleeping policemen' outside houses. But it will all depend on whether they can get funding. There was also a mysterious reference to some plan for Mill Hill which would be jointly funded and would require Highways approval.

Travellers have parked near the grain stores at the junction of Black,

Little Fen and Barston Drove causing some damage. So, jointly with Mr Ames of Reach PC, it is planned to plant some trees in Black Drove reducing access to the grain stores to 5.5 metres. Our PC agreed to contribute £25 towards the cost of the trees; James Wilmott will plant them and Andrew Camps said he would help. Rubbish dumping is an increasing problem in the fen. Good travellers bag it up and take it away; but recent travellers in Whiteway Drove had a portaloo which they tipped into the ditch when they left. (While mentioning loos in conjunction with dumping: there is a spare loo if anyone wants it at the corner of Cadenham Lane. Travellers are not the only culprits.)

As a change from 'snow on the line' or 'the wrong kind of snow' there was an entertaining discussion on leaves. The Chairman said they could be dangerously slippery and they blocked gutters and drains; he had seen a good scheme in Exning where a man with a blower on the pavement blew the leaves into a machine. Councillor Fitch said the Cleanaway vehicle came every 3 weeks to do the roads and some local residents, getting wise to this, sweep leaves into gutter for the mechanical sweeper to gobble up. He added that there used to be human sweepers in the (bad?) old days. It doesn't sound as though we stand a chance of a pavement blower - Exning, of course, is in Suffolk. Grasscutting came up again and the PC considered various quotes from potential grass cutters. My main concern is with the footpath down Station Road, and I wish I had thought to mention it at Question Time. In places the tarmac is completely overgrown. I walk down there quite often, but I am not making any discernible difference. I suggest employing an elephant. Or resurfacing. Some people avoid the path and walk in the road because it is less bother than negotiating the tussocks.

On the Budget, Councillor Fitch said either there would have to be a Council Tax increase or a cutback in spending; while the PC discussing their Precept for the year ending in March 2003, said there had been increases in salaries and extra grass cutting. Their provisional figure was £10,000. There were various items on maintenance. Quotes were considered for repointing and whitewashing the wall round the pound and keep, and for repairs and painting or varnishing seats. There is also some work to be done in the cemetery; this can be undertaken by a Probation team (unchained!).

Note: Last month's PC reporter to the *Crier* assumed that because the meeting is closed before public question time, questions would not be recorded. I have been asked to explain that this is not the case: questions from the public appear as footnotes in the PC minutes and are therefore not off the official record.

Meryl Moore

BACK TO FRONT *PRESENTS*

WoodArt, Paintings, and
MetalArt.
At The Old Bakery, Lode.

DEC 1st/2nd and 8th/9th
10am till 4.30pm

For that special gift.

BOTTISHAM MUSIC SOCIETY

CADENZA

A CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY CHOIR
WILL SING
POPULAR MUSIC INCLUDING SOME
CHRISTAMS MUSIC
IN

BOTTISHAM PARISH CHURCH
ON
FRIDAY 7TH DECEMBER
AT 8PM

*TICKETS: £5 AT THE DOOR, ACCOMPANIED
CHILDREN UNDER 16 FREE.*

Donations!

Many thanks to Alan Bishop (who has just moved to Shrewsbury - hope all goes well!) and ANON for their very kind donations to the *Crier* this month.

MARMALADE JARS

Christmas will soon come, and go. Then in early January the Seville oranges are briefly on sale in the shops, and people will be making their year's supply of marmalade. Do you need any jam-jars? I have a dozen 1lb jars available, but if they are not needed I will put them in the glass-recycling bin.

*Margaret Stanier
(01638 741328)*

NEW TOYS! NEW TOYS! NEW TOYS!

The Burwell Toy Library is celebrating its most successful year by launching lots and lots of new toys for children aged 0 - 5 years.

Membership has grown substantially with only a small annual fee of £3.00 per family. Toys may be borrowed for periods of two, four or six weeks for a small charge depending on the size and type of toy. A wide range of toys and play equipment is available for hire from as little as 50p per session paid for in advance.

We welcome all new Mums, Dads, childminders, playgroups and nurseries to come browse and discover the Burwell Toy Library. New members are most welcome to come and try out the toys in our library before making an inappropriate or costly purchase at the shops. If your child enjoys a particular toy, you may borrow the toys over and over again. You may be having a birthday party and wish to hire a selection of large activity toys e.g. slides, tricycles etc to entertain the children so you may wish to book the toys in advance!

Toys from the Burwell Toy Library grow with your children with the kindness and support of funding, donations and grants from individuals and various organisations.

The Burwell Toy Library opens on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month 2.00pm - 3.15pm in the Phoenix Room, Burwell Village College, Burwell.

If you wish to find out more, please do not hesitate to contact one of the following Committee Members:

Olivia Coles 743434, Tina Jost 741750, Hilary Betts. 603656

Mince-Pies

Advent Service 2nd December at 4.00pm

A very big THANK YOU to the folk who have promised mince pies. By the time you receive this edition of the Crier it is still not too late to ring me with offers of home-made or bought. 01638 743983. (hopefully not later than Saturday 1st December).

Kate Child

PS. Bowls (which may be needed at Christmas): PLEASE, PLEASE will the owners of the lovely bowls used at the Harvest Supper come over and

The Fountain Site

When I came to live in Swaffham Prior in the 1960's, I noticed a gap or hollow in the roadside hedge on the right hand side coming in to the village. This, I was told, is the place where the drinking-fountain used to stand. The fountain, and the horse-trough beside it, were part of the water-supply brought to the village from Cadenham by old Mr. Allix. Among the photos of Old Swaffham Prior taken in the early 20th century by Mr. Cooper there is a photo of the Fountain. It shows a tiled conical roof above the drinking fountain, supported on handsome brickwork columns and arches; and the trough on the road-
verge nearby.

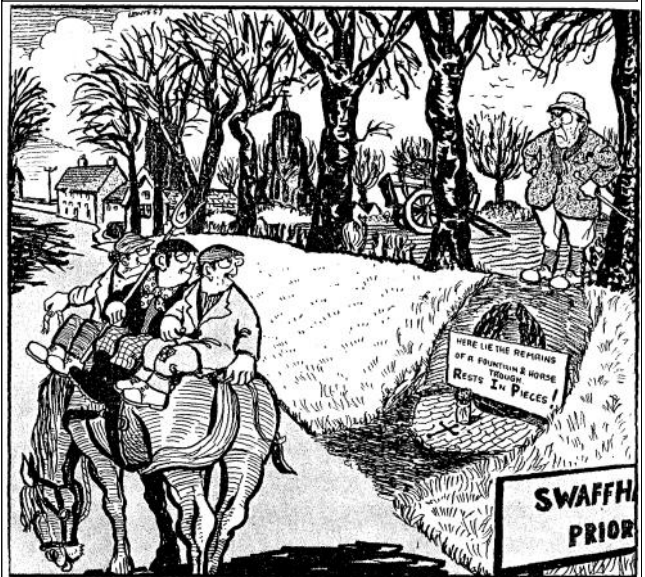
When the mains water supply reached the village after the Second World War, the fountain was less used and fell into disrepair. In 1957 it was destroyed on the orders of a local farmer who complained that it attracted the wrong kind of drinkers. But there was a lot of Feeling in the village: the fountain was a significant landmark.

The circular brick and concrete base of

the fountain, which was not destroyed, was marked for many years by an anonymous resident, who used to place a pot of flowers there to commemorate the place. Many people who have come to live in the village in recent and not-so-recent times do not know that we ever had a fountain.

The site is becoming overgrown by privet and ivy and young sycamore, making the hedgerow continuous. I have felt sad about the gradual obliteration of this historic site. For the last 3 or 4 autumns I have cleared a few square inches of the ground, and stuck-in a few daffodil bulbs left over from the annual garden-planting. This year by chance my clearance reached the level of the concrete base. So next spring's daffodils will find themselves

Cambridge Daily News, Saturday March 17, 1957



"Just of' to the Red Lion, Gaffer, to ask the landlord to give the old 'orse a drop 'o water."



growing around a small concrete plinth. Wait for them: on the shady side of the road they will be a month later than the WI daffodils on the opposite bank.

The original brickwork structure, built by those notable brickworkers the Adams brothers, had great charm. Swaffham Prior might consider rebuilding it, for some future celebratory occasion.

Margaret Stanier

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**

FOR SALE

WOODEN BEDSTEAD, NO MATTRESS, 3 Foot 6 inches (112 cm)

BOUGHT FROM

ROBERT SAYLE. £5.00. Phone 742974



Pantomime 2002

Hello boys and girls of all ages. It is Pantomime time again soon and you need to get your voices in training to help "Good" overcome "Evil".

This year down in Bottisham Wood (the main hall at the Village College) we will be helping "Robin Hood and the Babes in the wood " to make thing turnout right.

Peter Denyer of "Please Sir" fame again writes the pantomime and it is being directed by David Coles assisted by Val Quy of Burwell.

Dates for your diary are **Thursday 31st January, Friday 1st February** and **Saturday 2nd February** at 7.30pm and also **Saturday 2nd February** at 2.30 p.m.

Buy your tickets from Lushers Newsagents in Bottisham price £6.00 for adults and £4.00 concessionaires (not Saturday night). Telephone bookings 01223 812779.

Look out for the posters so you know when tickets are available, If you really want to plan ahead then make use of the telephone booking.



Advent by Candlelight

CAMBRIDGE VOICES' annual concert of music and readings to herald the Christmas season - ADVENT BY CANDLELIGHT - began eight years ago as a modest affair, exploiting the unusual feature of Swaffham Prior's two neighbouring churches of one hillside. Music spanning 1,000 years of England's unique choral heritage from the 11th-century Hildegard of Bingen to the living composer John Tavener has been presented by the choir, often with guest artists and orchestras at hand, interspersed with short seasonal readings, both sacred and humorously secular, by members of the audience. Over the years this ADVENT BY CANDELIGHT has become nationally recognised and many leading composers from both England and the Continent have written new works especially for the event. Indeed, it is so popular nowadays that a second performance on the same day is now given, nearby in Cambridge, to allow those from outside the parish to attend.

It would be marvellous to have readers from the village taking part in the event, both young and old: it would really help to keep the event truly

“local”. If you’d like to participate, please contact Hilary Sage (Stocks Barn West, 7 Lower End, Swaffham Prior. Tel: 01638 742978).

This year’s guest artists are the ensemble PRIME BRASS, Cambridgeshire’s leading Brass quintet who, with the choir, will present music by Bach, Gabrieli, Scheidt, Ruetti as well as the World Premiere of a new work from local composer Ian de Massini. There’ll also be mince pies and mulled wine afterwards and all proceeds go towards the work of EMMAUS, helping the employment of Cambridge’s homeless. Tickets are only available on the door: £5 for adults (children free). Do get there early (doors open 3.30pm in St. Mary’s church, the church nearer the High Street) as all the seats are normally taken

New Year’s Day Bring and Share Village Lunch

Village Hall, 12.30 pm on 1st January 2002

We look forward to seeing many of you at the above event.

Please bring enough finger type food for yourselves. This will be shared. It would also be helpful if you could bring your own drinks. Glasses will be available. Squash and coffee will be free and there will be a small supply of wine and beer for which we ask you to make a donation.

There will also be a Grand Raffle.

Please come and enjoy a Happy New Year with your friends!

Hockey on Boxing Day Morning

Here we are again getting ready for the annual hockey match against the Bulbeckians. Last year we continued our winning ways by beating them 3-0.

Come and support us on Boxing Day Wednesday 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

Advert Change - Please note that the telephone number for “Seasoned Logs” is now 01223 812625

Golden Jubilee Cricket Match

Plans are afoot to have a grand inter-village (4 villages) cricket competition to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee next year. It will be a spectacular and amusing limited over competition. The *probable* location will be Swaffham Bulbeck and the *possible* date will be the afternoon of Sunday 16th June 2001.

Swaffham Prior will be one of the four villages invited to compete **if we have a cricket enthusiast willing to put a team together and to be the village contact.** If there is such a person please ring 742974.

Alastair Everitt



Age Concern Cambridgeshire is constantly looking to develop the service it offers to older people in Age Concern Cambridgeshire. Over the past year a number of people have contacted Cambridgeshire looking for a handyman or gardener. At present we are unable to supply them with any contact details.

We would like to be able to put these people in touch with gardeners / handymen who will have been vetted by Age Concern Cambridgeshire by way of references and a police check.

If you would like to appear on our gardener /handyman list please

CAMTAD

FREE VOLUNTEER TRAINING COURSE

A Thursday morning, six-week training course for volunteers to help the hearing impaired starts on 10th January 2002. CAMTAD, Cambridge Campaign for tackling acquired deafness, runs hearing help sessions where volunteers clean, check and retube NHS hearing aids and advise on regular maintenance and best listening conditions. They also loan out equipment. They can help with hearing doorbells, telephone, television and household alarms. Training courses cover such subjects as the ear, types and causes of deafness, NHS hearing aids, procedures for assessment, communication methods and so on.

If you are interested in the training course or would like to discuss it further please phone, fax or minicom Sue Hempstead on 01223 460616 or write to her at Buchan House, Buchan Street, Cambridge CB4 2XF. We have facilities for hearing-impaired volunteers on the course and there will be



wheelchair access to the course. Training is compulsory for our volunteers but there is no obligation to volunteer at the end of the course. Most of our volunteers help at monthly sessions but many help in other ways.

We are most grateful for your co-operation. We are a small charity with limited means and depend on our volunteers to exist. We have many excellent people including one lady in her 90s but even she can't go on forever.

Sue Hempstead

After the War

3rd Instalment of Mavis Nickson's Memoirs

After the war came the Festival of Britain. A special train was arranged passing through all the villages. The booking of tickets was done through Mother. Everyone was provided with a packed lunch. The excitement was enormous and for many it was the first time on the underground.

Following the war people went mad taking up leisure activities. For the next six years my parents resumed their interest in Opera and Acting. At Bottisham Village College my Mother took leading parts in many plays and produced some of the productions. Evening classes were held in Swaffham Prior School. Other village girl friends and I made rugs, leather gloves etc. Mother became president of the newly founded WI.

In 1954/55, under Mother's supervision, prior to going to Teacher Training College I did a year as a student teacher in the school. The training I received from my Mother was excellent. By that time lunch was being eaten in the school. Classroom screens were pushed back, desks moved to one side and dining tables put in place. After the meal everything had to be returned to the original.

Unfortunately, it was at this time my Father was very seriously ill. Mother cared for him at home and during my first year at college he died. He was actually only 49 years old in 1956. After nearly 25 years of marriage Mother received 10 shillings widow's pension. Had he lived a mere seven months more to the age of 50 it would have been £2. 10s - an enormous difference in those days.

When my mother retired at the end of 1966 she was determined to still be a useful member of society. For years she helped the Blind and became the village welfare person. Her visits took her to Mrs Lil Webb at 2 the Beeches. Mother liked the bungalow and its position. Mrs Webb promised to try and arrange things with 'him up there'. Little did she know. Mrs Webb got her wish and Mother was thrilled to move to the bungalow.

Mavis Nickson (née Scott Dowdeswell)

Dad's Army



Back Row: Jack Simmons, Seth Badcock, Eddie Badcock, Ernest Taylor, Jack Whitmore, George Prince

Front Row: ?, Alfred Flack, Frank Aves, Henry Durant, Vernon Dowderswell, Richard Mead, Frank Simons, ?

Many thanks to John Clark and John Wilkins for above information—hope we've got it right! Eds

The Wassail Bowl

The Butler brought in a huge silver vessel of rare and curious workmanship, which he placed before the Squire. Its appearance was hailed with acclamation; being the Wassail Bowl, so renowned in Christmas festivity. The contents had been prepared by the Squire himself; for it was a beverage in the skilful mixture of which he particularly prided himself; alleging that it was too abstruse and complex for the comprehension of an ordinary servant. It was a potation, indeed,, that might well make the heart of a toper leap within him; being composed of the richest and raciest wines,

highly spiced and sweetened, with roasted apples bobbing about the surface.

Note: The Wassail Bowl was sometimes composed of ale instead of wine; with nutmeg, sugar, toast, ginger, and roasted crabs; in this way the nut-brown beverage is still prepared in some old families, and round the hearths of substantial farmers at Christmas. It is also called Lambs' Wool, and is celebrated by Herrick in his "Twelfth Night":

“Next crowne the bowle full
With gentle Lambs' Wool,
Add sugar, nutmeg, and ginger,
With store of ale too;
And thus ye must doe
To make the Wassaile a swinger.”

From: Old Christmas, by Washington Irving (pub. 1876, London)



Friends of Swaffham Prior School

Christmas Fayre

4 Dec 3.00pm — 4.30pm



**Come along to FoSPS Christmas Fayre
on Friday, Dec 7 in the School
Hall after school.**



**Cake Stall, Lucky Dip,
Decorations, Toys, Raffle
Mince Pies and Mulled Wine**



*Offers of cakes, mince-pies etc. very welcome....please
get in touch with Caroline Matheson on 744008.*

**Bottisham, Burwell, Linton Village
Colleges**
Adult Education
Weekend Courses

Saturday/Sunday 1st/2nd December
Excel

Saturday 8th December
A Day of Yoga; Computers and the Internet
Life Drawing

** ** *

**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**

Term starts Monday 7th January 2002

We wish you all a Happy Christmas

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





STAINED HUNDRED

John Whitmore; who has twice before been the speaker at the Stained Hundred, again provided enlightenment and entertainment with his latest talk on “Race Course and Fairground Swindles”. Cheating at cards was well established by the end of the 16th Century as was illustrated by three well known paintings with the crooks with spare aces tucked into the back of their trousers - cheating being known as “cozenage”.

Playing “Fast and Loose” meant putting a stick or finger through a hole in the centre of a folded rolled up belt which when unrolled would either leave the finger “fast” in the closed loop of the belt, or the belt would come away leaving one’s finger “loose”. Later the same idea was used with rope on a barrel head on ships or by the end of the 19th century with an endless chain. We were given tips on how to trick our friends using a tape-measure!

Thimble riggers were in operation at race courses during the nineteenth century and the practice was mentioned by Charles Dickens who was himself an amateur conjurer. Three thimbles were used with a “pea” placed under one which the punter had to identify. Later walnut shells were used instead of thimbles but it originated 5,000 years ago in Egypt with three cups and balls which John Whitmore also demonstrated.

Pitch and Toss is still played in Australia and in England it is recorded that Edward II had to borrow money from his barber to pay the debts he had incurred paying the game. Ancient Greeks played it with white shells with one side painted black with pitch. After the 1840s when more people travelled by railway, the tricksters had to obtain a permit which cost 5 or 10 shillings before they could operate on the course, but they also worked the trains going to the races with the Three Card Trick. Fairground rides at the race courses were usually run by gypsies, Jews or foreigners but as everyone knew “foreigners were not to be trusted”, the swindlers were British! After a summer going round the races, they would spend the winter with a pitch in London.

E & O boards, a kind of early roulette board on which people backed on the ball stopping on Odds or Evens, were very popular but cost the operators £125 for a licence to use them on a race course, but no doubt they still made a profit.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, December 12th when John Durrant will be showing slides of Cambridge Past and Present.

Peggy Day



LADIES CIRCLE

On Monday 22nd October the Ladies Circle met for their monthly meeting at Zion Baptist Chapel. Our speaker for the evening was Mr Evans from Newmarket. Mr Evans has been a regular visitor to the Ladies Circle and we always enjoy listening to him. Mr Evans is a keen photographer and usually shows us slides about his life working on a stud in Newmarket but on Monday evening he presented us with a variety of slides ranging from his visit to London to climbing the hills in Scotland. We experienced some excellent shots of the top of Nelsons Columns to winter scenes on the mountain tops of Scotland – a very interesting evening.

On Tuesday 11th December we are having our Christmas Meal at the Red Lion, Swaffham Prior - 7.30 pm for 8 o'clock. We look forward to seeing everyone there.

Sandra Butcher



WI Notes

Our speaker this month was Geoff Evens who, with the help of slides, gave us an intimate insight into the life of a racehorse, from birth to the winning of its first race. We saw conception, birth, training, preparation for Tattersalls Sales, breaking in and racing.

Our Christmas Party will be on 10th December. As we shall be having a proper meal, please do not eat before you come.

Margaret Phillips



VILLAGE GARDENERS

Diana and Terry Sewell, sweet pea specialists growers from Over, led us through an enthralling account of their beginning. A first prize at a village show in 1975, culminating in eight Gold Medals in eight successive years at Chelsea.

The members were fascinated by the delightful daily housekeeping details of the gradual building up of a nursery garden from their recently bought chaotic plot. We were led through the years of unremitting hard work, long years of developing better ways of growing vegetables and sweet peas and improving standards.

Onion growers need Johnsons baby powder!! Do come to the next Garden Club evening to find out why. You should join us. The talks are first rate

and lots of visits to interesting gardens are planned. You can be an annual member or pay by the evening. This is your chance to buy seeds, plants or whatever. A warm welcome awaits you!

1st Swaffham Prior Cubs Scouts

We have had a good term, with 9 new cubs joining the pack, bringing the number up to 16 cubs.

We have had a busy time with 7 Cubs achieving their Cub Scout Award badges and all the cubs are working towards various Activity badges. On the 31st October there was a Halloween theme night with the Cubs making turnip lanterns, wicked chocolate apple witches, spiders and puppets. The night was really good fun. On 5th November we had a firework display and bonfire. Thomas Barrett won the best Guy competition.

Just a few things we are doing leading up to Christmas, we are having a cross-country run, crafts evening and carol singing.

Debbie Cole, Akela

Bottisham Football Club

The under 16s are still unbeaten. They drew against Priory in a cup match, played magnificently to beat second in the league Girton 3-1 but found it difficult to make an impression on Chesterton and were somewhat fortunate to hold on to a 2-2 draw.

The under 15s have not had a good month losing 9-1 to A league Haverhill in a cup match and losing 7-1 to Cottenham. Any boys interested in playing for the Bottisham Colts under 15s can contact Doug Hodgson on 01223 812519.

The under 14s and under 13s combined despite losing 11-1 to Hardwick Harriers and 5-0 to Priory Parkside spirits are still high and the boys are still fighting. Any boys interested in playing for the Bottisham Colts under 14s & 13s can contact Jim Tideswell on 01223 812578.

The under 12s are still on that learning roller coaster losing their only match this month 4-0 although they were badly understrength as several team members were attending remembrance day services.

The under 10s are still going well. Apart from a 4-2 defeat to top of the league Burwell Swallows they have won 3-1 against Soham in the league cup and won 3-1 against Histon hornets.

The under 10s have a league cup 3 round match against ETS on 24/11/01 at Bottisham Village College 9.30 am kick off - supporters welcome.



You may remember that in my article for November's 'Swaffham Crier' I told you that over six thousand two hundred people signed the petition and over 1,000 people sent in cards to oppose the merger between East Cambridgeshire Primary Care Group and Fenland Primary Care Trust. Despite this overwhelming public opinion the Cambridgeshire Health Authority at its meeting on 17th October decided that East Cambridgeshire Primary Care Group should merge with Fenland Primary Care Trust. And that the Bottisham Practice should move to South Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust. I am disappointed by this decision, but it has to be approved by the Regional Health Authority and the Secretary of State for Health before it can be implemented, and I hope the Secretary of State can be persuaded to overturn the Health Authority's decision. If you want to comment, whether in favour or against, on the merger and/or on Bottisham being part of South Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust please write to Alan Milburn MP, Secretary of State for Health, The Department of Health, Richmond House, 79 Whitehall, London, SW1A 2NS.

The Government has congratulated East Cambridgeshire on our progress in moving towards e-government. This is especially good news because it could lead to East Cambs being given government grants to help us to become a fully electronic council. Our e-government strategy includes computers in some villages to give people without their own computers access to on-line learning courses, a computer mapping system (CAPS/GIS) to make our planning, building control, environmental services and land searches better, and our web site. The web site has been improved, so that it is now easier to find your way around - please visit it and let us know what you think:
<http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk>.

We are also 'flushed with success' as 8 of our public loos in Ely, Littleport and Wicken have been awarded Loo of the Year awards.

My next Councillor's Surgery will be at Reach Village Hall on Tuesday December 11th from 7.30-9.00pm. These Surgeries are an opportunity for you to come and discuss any District Council matters with me and I also have a selection of leaflets giving information about Council services and Planning matters as well as a copy of the Local Plan.

Jon and I are looking forward to our second Christmas with David, although he is still too young to realise the festival's significance. But at least this year he will start to share in the excitement of spending time with his grandparents and uncles and exchanging presents. I hope that you all have a very happy Christmas.

Charlotte Cane



No-one will forget the wonderful, selfless actions of the New York fire-fighters on and after September 11th. The **CAMBRIDGESHIRE FIRE SERVICE** quickly recognized their dangerous work with sympathy and support. Within a month our service was faced with its own extraordinary crisis in the form of unexpectedly severe floods months before they would normally be expected. Within 48 hours our fire-fighters were responding to an unheard of number of calls (700) rescuing a hundred people and many animals from frightening and hazardous situations. As always the whole of the service, uniformed or not, responded superbly to the demands on their skills and no lives were lost.

Whilst on the subject of the Fire Service, may I remind you that an average 270 people killed in accidental fires each year (66%) don't have a smoke alarm and over the last five years more than 70 people have been killed every year because their smoke alarm didn't work or the battery was flat or missing! Test your battery now!

ROADS AND TRAFFIC concerns feature at the top of my list this month since there are some encouraging matters to report. First, the County in partnership with other local bodies such as the Police, Health Authority and the Fire Service will now be able to recover from the Government the cost of providing and running **safety cameras** across the area. In Cambridgeshire accidents have dropped by **a fifth** at sites where safety cameras have been installed and seriously injured down by almost **a half**. Research has proved that every 1 mph reduction in speeds leads to 5% drop in accidents. Last year there was an increase in casualties on the county's roads of about 350 to 3,689 - a figure that surely alarms us all.

Second, after the Police responded to several requests I have made for speed checks (cables across the road) to give useful evidence that more traffic calming within our local villages is essential, a bid for substantial work has been made to the Cabinet for money to traffic calm the three main entry roads into **Burwell**. Obviously we are up against stiff competition for limited resources. Accident records have considerable bearing in the result. Over the last 3 years, 7 injury accidents have been reported on these three roads. Meanwhile, I am now pressing for calming in North Street, **Burwell** and Mill Road, **Swaffham Prior**.

Third, the long awaited **cycleway** programme has now started at the Cambridge end. The path from the city centre to Barnwell Bridge is now nearly complete. Barnwell Bridge to Marshall's will start around Christmas and be complete by end March 2002. The "Millennium" route across Stourbridge Common/Ditton Meadows to the Park & Ride will be finished by next Spring. Airport Way to Quoy has already started. Reckon on 12 weeks. Quoy to Bottisham should start today (12 Nov.) and together with traffic lights control on junction B1102/A1303 looks like ending in March. Lode to Swaffham Bulbeck will start in December and I have hopes that we may get the go-ahead for a short path round the railway bridge between Reach and Swaffham Prior.

James Fitch

Notes from the Parish Council November Meeting

The meeting was chaired by Mr Trevor Jones with 6 members + 1 member of the Public attending.

Reports:

Councillor Fitch reported to the meeting.

Councillor Cane reported to the meeting.

Precept: A provisional figure for 2002/2003 was agreed.

Standing Orders: This is an ongoing process.

Traffic Issues: The details for the 2002/2003 Bidding Round for the CCC Jointly Funded Minor Improvement Schemes were discussed. Several measures for slowing the traffic on Mill Hill have been put forward for funding through this scheme. Applications are to be considered at a CCC meeting next February.

Extra Grasscutting: Due to the considerable problems with the current grasscutting contractor, further estimates had been obtained for the extra grasscutting now needed. Mr Badcock of Burwell has been appointed to carry out this work as soon as possible.

Maintenance:

- a) **The Pound/Keep:** Mr Andy Martin is to carry out repair works in the near future.
- b) **Village Furniture:** Prices are to be obtained for the ongoing maintenance needed to seating, etc., in the village.
- c) **Cemetery:** Edging work to the pathway and general tidying up is to be carried out.

Correspondence Received: This was reported to the meeting

Accounts for Payment: These were agreed.

Planning Application: Kent House, 9 High Street (amendment). No objections.

Any Other Business: Following the report of damage to the wall at The Beeches, Hereward Housing has confirmed that this is the responsibility of CCC. *Subsequently, the Clerk has contacted Stephen Hill of CCC and he will be inspecting the wall in the near future.*

Following concerns about the lack of drainage in the High Street outside the School, the Clerk contacted CCC Highways. Stephen Hill is to inspect.

The next Parish Council meeting will be on Thursday, 13th December 2001 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Karen King
Clerk of the Parish Council



Church Services December 2001

	ST MARY'S Swaffham Bulbeck	ST MARY'S Swaffham Prior	ST ETHELREDA & THE HOLY TRINITY Reach
ADVENT SUNDAY Sun 2	8:00 am Holy Communion [†] 9:30 am Christingle Family Service	11:00am Parish Communion ^{CW} 4.00pm Advent by Candlelight	
ADVENT 2 Sun 9	9:30am Parish Communion ^{CW}	11:00am Family Service 6:00pm Evensong [†] and Sermon	8:00am Holy Communion [†]
ADVENT 3 Sun 16	9:30am Village Communion ^{CW} and Nativity	11:00am Parish Communion [†]	8:00am Holy Communion [†] 3:30pm Christingle Family Service
Thu 20		3:30pm Christingle Family Service	
ADVENT 4 Sun 23	9:30am Parish Communion ^{CW} 6:30pm Candlelight Carol Service	8:00am Holy Communion [†] 11:00am Family Carol Service	3:30pm Candlelight Carol Service

† — BCP

CW—Common Worship

From the Parish Registers for October 2001

Holy Baptism: Georgia Rose Stuart [SP]



Church Services

Christmas/New Year 2001

	ST MARY'S Swaffham Bulbeck	ST MARY'S Swaffham Prior	ST ETHELREDA & THE HOLY TRINITY Reach
CHRIST- MAS EVE Mon 24	4:00pm Blessing of the Crib Family Service 11:30pm First Communion of Christmas	11:30pm First Communion of Christmas	
CHRIST- MAS DAY Tue 25	8:00am Holy Communion [†]	11:00am Christmas Morning Service [†] (with Carols) 12:15pm Holy Communion [†]	9:30am Village Communion ^{cw}
CHRIST- MAS I Sun 30	10:00am United Parish Communion at St Mary's, Burwell		
	6:00pm Evening Service with Carols	8:00am Holy Communion [†]	
EPIPHANY Sun 6 Jan	8:00am Holy Communion [†] 9:30am Family Service	11:00am Parish Communion ^{cw} 6:00pm Epiphany Carol Service	

Holy Communion	1 st Thursdays 10am, Swaffham Bulbeck Church (followed by Home Communion)
Evening Prayer	Tuesdays, 5:30pm, Swaffham Bulbeck Wednesdays, 5:30pm, Reach Thursdays, 5:30pm, Swaffham Prior
Bellringing	Tuesdays, fortnightly 8pm. St. Cyriacs. Contact: Dr Margaret Stanier on 741328.
Housegroup	Tuesdays, 8pm, fortnightly in Reach. Contact Olivia Cole 743434 or Juliet Vickery 742676
Mothers Union	1 st Mondays, 2:15pm, c/o Free Church, Commercial End. Contact Win Norton on 01223 811509
Toddlers Service	3 rd Thursdays @ 11:30am for 15 minutes in Reach Church or Centre

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

Dear Friends,

TRAVELLING HOME

There comes a time in every family when the question as to where to spend Christmas becomes a matter of real decision-making. Where is “home”? For some, the parental home is somewhere they haven’t lived since setting sail for college and/or job years ago, and while the house or town may be where they grew up, it isn’t home now, or is it?

Home is where the heart is, and it may be that simply where you live is very much home, notwithstanding where parents and grandparents are. So, some opt to stay put, and invite relatives to join them, or not! Either way, the whole world seems to be on the move at, or before, Christmas, and the most important thing is to be together in whatever family group is possible, or indeed with friends. For some, a Christmas home may be a house-party at a hotel or centre or even a youth-hostel, so that they are not alone at this great festival.

The Travelling Crib (a Mexican tradition called ‘Posada’) has become something we do here, to remind ourselves of how it was that Mary & Joseph had nowhere to call home in the days before she gave birth to Jesus, the Saviour of the World. By offering hospitality to the knitted figures, a different family on each of the 24 days of December to Christmas Eve, identifies with the need to open home and heart to those in need, and to give God a resting-place. This year, courtesy of a group of ladies who have been working hard, each host family will keep a knitted sheep as a reminder of the visit of the Holy Family, as it journeys via our villages to Swaffham Bulbeck for the 4.00 pm Blessing of the Crib Family Service on Christmas Eve. (If you would like to be a host-family, there may still be time, so do ask Mandy Kingsmill (tel. 01638 742482), and if it’s too late for this year, she will be keen to know of your interest for next.)

So, in wishing you all a very Happy Christmas, wherever you travel, remember that God travels with you, if you will give him a place in your heart.

Yours sincerely,

Mark

Peeling potatoes with God...

Zion Baptist Chapel

The days leading up to Christmas are, for many of us, the most hectic of the year. So much has to be packed into so few hours, it seems. For Christians who long to focus on the true meaning of Christmas - the fact that at this time of year we remember that God sent his Son Jesus into the world to be our Saviour - this busyness presents a problem. How can we enjoy to the full the special joys of Christmas time: the fun, the festivities and family togetherness, and yet remain God-centred?

The apostle Paul writing a letter to his friends in the church at Colossae gives us a clue. *"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men."* (Colossians 3:23).

A cook in a busy thirteenth century monastery called Brother Lawrence testifies that he was as conscious of God's presence when he was elbow deep in potato peelings as he was when worshipping God in chapel. And it is said of St. Teresa of Avila that she found God so easily among the pots and pans that she rejoiced in an acute awareness of the God who was her constant companion even in the middle of chaos.

When the whole population of Israel was on the move to register for a census in their home town, God arrived in the hustle and bustle. The baby Jesus was born in a stable crowded with animals because the local hotels were packed out. The same God who came then, also came to the monk and the nun. And he still comes to us today in the midst of our busyness if we have eyes to see him and ears to hear him. You don't have to wait for Christmas to find him though. He may surprise you by being in the pots and pans and potato peelings. Watch out for him.



If you want to find God in the busyness of your lives then just call out to him. When he answers you I would love to hear about it. You can always contact me via the Chapel post-box or on the number below

David Bousfield

Sunday 2 nd 6:30pm	(Communion) D.Bousfield
Sunday 9 th 6:30pm	No service. (Join us instead at S. Bulbeck Free Church)
Sunday 16 th 6:30pm	Evening Worship
Sunday 23 th 6:30pm	Carol Service
Christmas day 9:15am	Morning Worship
Sunday 30 th 10:30am	Family Service
Sunday 30 th 6:30pm	No service.

For further information, transport, or a home visit please call
David & Janet Bousfield on 01223-563307.

Roman Catholic Church, Newmarket Parish

Masses: Newmarket: Sat 1830; Sun 0900, 1030; Kirtling: Sun 1700;
In Bottisham Parish Church, Sun 0900 (Served from Cambridge).

From John Morrill, Deacon to the Roman Catholic Community

Only two of the four gospels (St Matthew and St Luke) relate the birth of Jesus. And both contain important messages not so obvious to the modern reader as to the original readers. St Matthew's gospel begins: 'The genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham. Abraham was the father of father of Isaac, Isaac of Jacob, Jacob of Judah and his brothers, Judah of Perez and Zarah (*their mother was Tamar*). And so it goes on for 42 generation. And four times it has those little parentheses referring to women: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth and Bathsheba. All were sinners, all were victims, and all were foreigners to Israel (Tamar was a seductress, Rahab a prostitute, Ruth and Bathsheba engaged in unlawful sex). All came to terms with their sin and all were reconciled. God works through the repentant sinner, Matthew seems to be telling us. And in Mary, what the world took as teenage pregnancy was redeemed by the love and trust of a good man, the ageing widower Joseph. There was anguish, scandal and redemption in circumstances of Jesus's birth.

In St Luke's gospel, we get the beautiful story of the parallel pregnancies of the old and barren Elizabeth (mother of John the Baptist) and of her fertile young cousin Mary, and then the harrowing story of the journey from Nazareth to Jerusalem, the crowded inns, the birth in the outhouse amidst the stench of animals. And it begins: 'And it came to pass in those days that there went out a decree of Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed ... and all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.' Everyone, it seems, but the shepherds. The shepherds of ancient Israel were the poorest of the poor. It was poorly paid, dangerous, unending work under baking sun by day and freezing cold by night. No one could be bothered to tax shepherds. They stayed in the fields guarding their sheep. And it was to these disregarded shepherds, those that Caesar Augustus could not be bothered to tax for their pittance, that God revealed the glory of Jesus. God privileges the poor and the powerless. God values most highly those whom the world least regards. It was, it is and it always will be God's way.

That is just one more reason why we should privilege the poor, the homeless, the lonely, the abandoned this Christmas. Are we buying our Christmas cards so as to help the poor. As we stock up with turkey and all the trimmings, with wine and brandy, with all the good things, are we giving of our superfluity – of our cash, of our time, of our love – for the marginalized and those in need. God celebrated his decisive entry into human existence, taking upon himself the life and death, the love and the rejection, the fruits of love and the fruits of hatred that make up human life, not with a party but with a message of hope for the hopeless and affirmation for those at the bottom of the heap. Can we do more than party this Christmas?

Dates for Your Diary - December 2001

Sat	1	Mrs Highwood's 100 th Birthday - congratulations!
Sun	2	Advent by Candlelight, St Mary's, 4:00pm
Mon	3	
Tue	4	
Wed	5	Cubs, Village School, 6.30-8:00pm.
Thu	6	
Fri	7	Christmas Fayre, Village School, 3pm Cadenza Concert, Bottisham Church, 7:30pm
Sat	8	
Sun	9	
Mon	10	<i>Crier</i> Copy Deadline WI Christmas Party
Tue	11	School Infant Nativity, St Mary's, 6pm Mobile Library, Cage Hill 2:40-3:30, Chapel 3:35-4:00pm Charlotte Cane's Surgery, Reach Village Hall, 7:30pm Ladies Circle, Christmas Meal, Red Lion, 7:30 for 8:00pm
Wed	12	School Junior Christmas Play, Village School, 6pm Staine Hundred, "Cambridge Past and Present" - slides
Thu	13	PC Meeting, Village Hall, 7.30
Fri	14	
Sat	15	
Sun	16	
Mon	17	School Carol Service, St Mary's, 2.15pm
Tue	18	
Wed	19	
Thu	20	<i>Crier</i> Collating, Village Hall, 2:30pm
Fri	21	
Sat	22	
Sun	23	
Mon	24	
Tue	25	Christmas Day
Wed	26	Hockey v Swaffham Bulbeck (away), 11:00am
Thu	27	
Fri	28	
Sat	29	
Sun	30	
Mon	31	