



The Swaffham Crier

Volume 29 Number 1

January 2005



Editorial

2005, New Year Resolution time, and the *Crier* is resolving again! In 2003, we resolved to get a regular crossword, in 2004 we resolved to get a photographer and new columnists, and in 2005? Read on.....

In the early days, *Crier* production — typing, setting, printing, and so forth—was so hard that it required a whole horde of villagers to get it done.

In those days, the editor rose at noon, and, suitably equipped with his velvet smoking jacket and small cigar, sauntered out to see how things were going on. But new technology (and the wherewithal to pay for it: thank-you, advertisers) soon changed all that. As the years flew by in a flurry of restructuring and redundancy notices—in 2004, even our collators had to go — it seemed that we might be in danger of **centralisation**.

But not quite. Most unusually, the *Crier* did keep its New Year resolutions of 2003 and 2004, and if you'd like to know *how*, cast your eyes to the page on the left, where all will be revealed. New staff! But now on the editorial side, and that's 2005's Resolution....*more* new staff! Just like our District Council in fact.

We need new **photographers** to join our



*Frank Readhead's Egg Shot
Village Feast, June 2004*

existing team, two new **section editors** (School News and Village Events) to ensure that events are covered by the *Crier* team (and no, you *don't* have to be computer literate), **layout/photo mangling** help — the Eds are bad at this! and, last but not least, **IT staff**, for the long-proposed *Crier* WEB-SITE. To help, get in touch now, before our agents call round inconveniently at 6am....

Meanwhile, great carols, wonderful Advent by Candlelight (£1008!!), and many congratulations to Tricia Harrison, much deserving Gay Bulleid

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winner, 2004.

**HAPPY NEW YEAR
ALL!**

Caroline Matheson

Cover Picture: *Bad chocolate day* by **Clare Newbolt** (with apologies to Stanley Spencer)

COFFEE MORNING

10.30 am – 12.00 noon
18th January 2005

The Fencock

High Street, Swaffham Prior

(By kind permission of Catie & Peter Whiteley)

Raffle * Bring & Buy * Produce Stall

Entrance donation to include coffee and biscuits

Proceeds to St Mary's Church Fabric Fund

Parish Councillor chosen as Parliamentary Candidate

SANDRA WILSON, one of our Parish Councillors has been selected by South Cambridgeshire Labour Party to be their Parliamentary Candidate at the next General Election.

Sandra told the *Crier* that she is 'extremely honoured and excited to be given this opportunity, and would ask the village to forgive her if she misses a few Parish Council meetings to attend events in South Cambs in the forthcoming months'.

Sandra has been a Parish Councillor here for more than 4 years, and prior to moving to the village had served Cambridge City Council as a District Councillor.

Sandra will be taking on Andrew Lansley, who is currently the Health Shadow for the Opposition.

Anyone interested in helping Sandra in this role—or indeed the East Cambridgeshire Prospective Parliamentary Candidate Fiona Ross, can contact Sandra at home on 01638 742091.



Heavenly Hockey Player joins the fray at Boxing Day Prior/Bulbeck match (on OUR side, of course).

**Many thanks
to Walter
Bradley for
his kind
donation to
the Crier!**

GRAND JUMBLE & NEARLY NEW SALE

IN AID OF THE VILLAGE HALL

on 5th of March 2005

Full details in the next Crier

Don't throw it away - save it for the jumble sale

From our Reporter at the Parish Council Meeting

WITH so many people anxious to report our Parish Council meetings I dared not miss my turn and flew back to Swaffham Prior for this rare privilege. Having arrived back two hours early and having seen the Agenda I decided that only two or three double whiskies would enable me to cope with the forthcoming excitement. And, did the PC let me down? What do you think?

I was especially excited because the new 'Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Bill', published only the day before, gave parish councils the right to impose fixed penalties *of their own choosing* for offences such as dropping litter, dog fouling and graffiti. As for Light Pollution the polluters are really in for it. Having smacked the smokers round the ear hole with some highly suspect figures (did you know that 70% of deaths each year are smoking related!! ho ho, pull the other one) *they* are now aiming to save the stars. Not even street lighting will be exempt. Anyone, yes anyone, who finds that artificial light emitting from premises is "prejudicial to health or a nuisance" will be able to complain to the council and if no remedial action is taken the fine could be up to £50,000. This must be all to the good, but aren't the lawyers going to have fun.

It could only have been expected that our PC would have been trembling with overwhelming joy at the thought of having this extra power in their hands. No longer would their one single commercial triumph be the earning of a few extra bob out of the cemetery water. Now they can really clean up and I expected to hear a discussion on the potential income from minor crime. But not a bit of it. They appeared not to know that they were now very special

people.

Having spent so much space on this blather means I can report less on the actual meeting—which may not be a bad thing.

James Fitch was his usual informative self as his report will show. He was delighted to know that the government grant to the CCC had moved at last to a more reasonable level, and he was gentleman enough to forbear reminding the meeting about the forthcoming general election which the cynical may relate to this welcome increase. Our new ECDC representative also made his report which you are able to read in this issue.

Regular readers may remember that the Dencora Field owners had responded to the enquiry whether they would sell the field by quoting a price of £1 million. PC had replied "Thanks, but no thanks". To which the recent response was – well if you can't afford £1 million, what will you pay? The price is obviously going to be something between £10,000 and £1 million but the PC didn't know what. Alan Alderson said there was no chance of there being any development of the field for 20 years at least so Steve wondered why the village wanted to buy it. The PC is replying to say that it is not in a position



to make any offer at the moment. A few major benefactors may be needed.

There was some interesting incoming correspondence. ECDC have

produced an absolutely stunning glossy 64 page "Official Guide – East Cambridgeshire". I am so impressed and didn't realise that we lived in such an attractive and interesting part of the country. Do try to see a copy. ECDC also sent three forms covering vandalism, unruly behaviour and graffiti and invited the PC to complete these if they come across any examples. What on earth will ECDC do with them? It can only be to produce yet another useless statistic. Alan Alderson was anxious that a hooligan expert from ECDC should talk to the PC about how to handle hooligans. Our PC thought hard but declined.

The National Cycling Network, like the Millennium Commission, is also blowing its own trumpet and wants to erect a high profile sign in the village and the chosen site is that tiny bit of green at the bottom of Cage Hill. As there are already two signs there another separate one could easily make it an unsightly clutter. But what do *they* care – all *they* want are more signs and more forms and more regulations.

Fairly topically a new Code of Conduct has just been issued to the PC

"A new Code of Conduct has just been issued to the PC no doubt making it very clear what can be done with travel vouchers. This seems to be part of a constant push to improve every organisation especially if it results in many extra forms being completed."

no doubt making it very clear what can be done with travel vouchers. This seems to be part of a constant push to improve every organisation especially if it results in many extra forms being completed. For instance the "Quality Parish Initiative" is still being promoted and money is now even being offered to try to bribe PCs to aim for this status. Fortunately our PC knows its true roots and will have nothing to do with this "quality" rubbish.

In 'Open Question Time' John Norris, who was one of the three attending members of the public, reminded those new PC members that he had had a long serving experience with the PC and he just wanted to point out that a mistake was being made with the new barrier to be set up at the cemetery end of Coopers Lane. He maintained that putting the new barrier in the same position as the old barrier was wrong and that it ought to be lined up with the fencing of the horses' field. Apart from this he also thought a double padlocked gate with a single pedestrian gate at the side was the answer and not the wooden chicane to be erected at any moment by the CCC. The PC were

Stop Junk Mail and Unwanted Calls

Junk Mail: ring 0207291 3310 (Mailing Preference Service)

stunned by this very late advice especially as the work is now a month overdue. John, having said his piece, gave his farewells and left with the words "Gates is what you want."

As a slight diversion Karen mentioned that she has received complaints about the hole left by the missing post. Horses or people could put their feet in it, and even worse, it was reported that hedgehogs kept falling in to the hole and have to be rescued with great difficulty. The PC was a bit down in the mouth at this very late and unexpected advice and were pleased to close the

meeting so that everyone could enjoy Karen's delicious mince pies washed down with a glass of port. After a bit of port and a bit of thought someone asked who was responsible for putting the Coopers Lane barrier in its original position. After very little extra thought someone else said "It was him, him who has just gone" Everyone felt happier about this, decided it was too late to make any change, and that if there was any fault it was him who had selected the original position. Everyone drank to that.

Alastair Everitt

The Reading Group Reads— The Da Vinci Code

ABOUT 10 of us met up at the Mathesons' on 1st December to discuss Dan Brown's novel, *The Da Vinci Code*. I emphasise the word 'novel' as this book has caused much discussion among its readership about the authenticity of events and information contained within it. (Over Christmas I have been reading *The Rough Guide to The Da Vinci Code* and would recommend it to anyone wishing to following up Brown's story). But I digress: the reading group declared it to be a 'page turner' and perhaps written with the aim of seeing it produced as a film. We have agreed to make a reading group outing to the cinema when it is shown in Cambridge, perhaps in 2005. Much was said about Brown's writing, his characters, plot and loose use of vague scholarship. It was worth the read, if only to understand what the fuss is all about. Apparently something like 17 books



Is that John, or is it Mary?

have been written about *The Da Vinci Code* since it was published in 2003. It gave us plenty to talk about that evening.

If you enjoy reading and would like the opportunity to discuss a book with some friends and neighbours, please join in at one of the future meetings. The intention is to meet on the first Wednesday of every month and it is Janet Cooper's turn to host the next meeting on Wednesday, 5th January at 41 High Street. We will be talking about Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*. After that, the proposal is Anthony Trollope's *He Knew He Was Right* on the 2nd February.

Ann Hollingsworth



School News

THE FoSPS Christmas Fair marked the start of our Christmas activities – this social and fundraising event raised over £300.00. Fund raising this year is supporting ICT and the trim trail.

Children's dance ideas were used for a truly wonderful performance of "The Light Shines Through the Darkness".

The mood of the dance changed as the birth of Jesus drew near and the joy in the children's faces and movement reflected the wonder of the nativity. Thanks to Jo Buffery who led this project as well as all the staff, but most of all to the children whose energy and enthusiasm was so apparent.

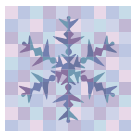
Our traditional Christmas Service was also a lovely event with the older children leading the singing. They had worked with music teacher Thanea Hodges to learn some traditional and modern carols.

Many of you may have noticed that phase one of the trim trail is complete. Three pieces of equipment have been installed for children's play time use. Phase two includes two additional pieces which will replace the boat and the train.

Marie Newman, our cleaner has seen many changes at the school and last month received her longstanding service award. Marie was awarded a vase at a ceremony at Shire Hall in Cambridge. Congratulations on twenty eight year's service Marie.



Spoils of the Fair!



Snow alert - should there be snow then the decision to open or close the school is taken on that morning. We are in a fortunate position that the majority of staff are local and so we may be able to keep the school open when other schools in the area close. However parents must make the decision whether their particular journey means that it is safe to travel. Where possible the school will open, but may have a delayed start/finish early. This allows people to assess conditions and travel to and from school safely.

To find out whether the school has been closed or is opening late, listen to Q103 or DAB digital radio; announcements are made after the news. Closures can also be checked on line at musicradio.com.

Wishing everyone a Happy New Year. Term starts for children on Wednesday 5th January. Half term is the w/c 14th February with a staff training day on Monday 21st February.

Joanna Lakey

www.swaffhamprior.cambs.sch.uk

01638 741 529

A Little Checkered History of Swaffham Prior School

THE school was originally run entirely by the church and situated at the bottom of the church steps, but in the 1920s, the LEA decided that it was in a very poor state of repair and should be replaced. They offered to build a



*Christmas Play rehearsal, 2004.
It'll be alright on the night.....*

new school - but under their control. There was a great deal of opposition to this loss of control, which resulted in the local squire and the vicar putting up the money to build the present school in 1928. This is the building which now houses our hall, offices and kitchen.

As the school was nearing completion, Henry Morris began the Village Colleges and it was decided that the senior children should transfer to Burwell, rather than Bottisham. This caused such uproar in the village that the police put a guard on the new school to prevent the senior pupils from entering. Parents retaliated by employing a teacher privately to work with the seniors in the village hall, although some children did attend Swaffham Bulbeck School instead.

There followed a period of great unrest, which resulted finally in the head teacher's resignation in 1934. There were then 60 children on roll. Gradually things began to settle down but with the advent of the war in 1939, evacuees began to



.....and it was!

arrive, and numbers fluctuated between 60 and

100. After the war, in 1947, the school finally came under the control of the Local Education Authority although retaining its Church of England status. At the same time school meals were delivered from Burwell.

Children from Reach started attending the school in 1960 with the closure of their village school.

The classrooms in present use were built in 1966, and the two sections connected by a covered way at a later date. The mobile classroom was added as numbers increased. In the last few years, further modifications have made the school accessible to disabled children. The library extension was added in 1997 and the new classroom in 1998, to be followed by a new staffroom in 2003. We now have a school which is comfortably adapted to its present use, but one which reflects and reminds us of its past.

Joanna Lakey

Mother Goose Jan 27, 28 & 29		Spring Production 2005
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COME and see a traditional family pantomime "Mother Goose" by Peter Denyer. This is an unusual panto as it is the only one where the leading character is the dame

"Mother Goose" is shown to be a less than perfect person tempted by the Demon of Discontent she sacrifices her best friend the Goose in search of beauty. Is she forgiven for this selfish Act?

The other ingredients include a young hero in love with the squire's daughter and characters from Gooseland. Join the villagers of Little Hassle and be transferred on a magic journey to Gooseland. But beware of Ghosts and the forest of desolation. Rest assured there will be a happy ending.

Support your neighbours (Ali White, Deanne Haynes, Jennie Fatibene, David Fisher, Ted Sketchley, Linda Lamer, Chris Clarke, Sue Tennant and many more). We will be performing in the **Bottisham Village College Main Hall, Thursday, Friday 27th and 28th 7.30p.m. and Saturday 29th January 2005 at 2.30 p.m. and 7.30 p.m.** Ticket prices will be £7.00 with concessions at £5.00 on Thursday and Saturday Matinee only (no concessions on Friday and Saturday night)

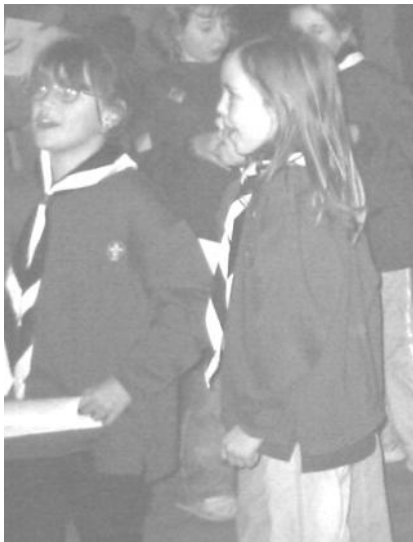
Behind the cameras this time around will be David Coles who has a long history of successful Pantomimes. The setting will be in the traditional format with refreshments served in the interval.

Purchase your tickets personally from Lushers Newsagents in Bottisham, The Burwell Fireplace shop, North Street Burwell, and via our own telephone booking line 01223 812779 (not Lushers). Tickets will be available at the door subject to availability. Please book early to avoid disappointment, as numbers will be limited



The Village Carols

GET your kicks on Route 66? No, get your fun on Route 51! With its new National Cycle Route 51 signs on a post at the front, your Village Hall once more did us proud. Advertised as a Carols event, it often seemed like another Panto', with cubs, scouts and the rest struggling to control an overwhelming instinct to indulge in audience participation, and failing. Everybody did their thing, even with unfamiliar words to JINGLE BELLS, and FIVE GOLD RINGS are still ringing this morning, but ——



How is it that only about 60 young and old bodies were able to resist the temptations of TV and enjoy real live fun? On TV there was only UEFA Cup Football (OK. That comes close) or the Royal Variety Pathetics (No chance with a line up of has-beens, and should never have been's - except Ozzy, of course). A few of the real people with us actually made the trip in from outside the village, and a very warm welcome these friends always receive. They rightly rejected virtual reality for the real thing. This was the real thing, and it was great!





The Band played....

**From Our Reporter
Frank Readhead**



Everybody sang, and it was.....



KNOCKOUT!



ADVENT BY CANDLELIGHT RAISES £1008 FOR LOCAL CHARITY

YOU may remember that, in November last year, Swaffham Prior hosted the annual "Advent by Candlelight", with choral music presented by Cambridge Voices, readings by members of the congregation, and mulled wine and minced pies provided by the village social committee.

Elisabeth and Alistair Everitt did a superb job in providing the candlelight, and Hilary Sage organised the readers most efficiently. The concert was closely followed

by a repeat performance in St Columba's Church, Cambridge. Despite numbers being slightly down at both events (doubtless due to the adverse weather conditions), together, we were able to give £1,008.70 to the local charity, EMMAUS. This is a remarkable achievement, and Emmaus have expressed their great unreserved thanks

"Emmaus were astonished when I turned up with the money in a plastic bag from Tesco's. Perhaps they were expecting a Waitrose bag, for that amount of money!"

to all who attended and so helped to raise this magnificent amount. Indeed, they were somewhat astonished when I turned up at their offices early one morning with the money, mainly in coins, in a plastic bag from Tesco!

Perhaps they were expecting a Waitrose bag, for that amount of money?!

I think the large amount of money (more than ever before) was partly due to the choir offering to give their services for

free for both concerts, and even waiving all their expenses as they had sold so many of their new CD that they were launching at these very concerts (almost 400 CDs sold in one day!). Also, St Columba's Church allowed itself to be hired for free for this event this year.

For next year's "Advent by Candlelight" the theme will be "St

By Ian de Massini

Director, Cambridge Voices



CHILDMINDER VACANCIES

Swaffham Prior based childminder has vacancies for all ages from July. OFSTED inspected and qualified.

Please contact Sandra on 742091 for more details.

Nicolas", whose feastday (November 6th) is always very close to the First Sunday in Advent. He is one of the patron saints of King's College Chapel, Cambridge, and the inspiration behind the myth of Santa Claus: Benjamin Britten wrote a, now oft-performed, cantata about the legends surrounding St Nicolas, and we will perform it in its entirety as part of our Advent concert, together with music associated with King's Chapel, so providing a rich feast of music both popular and flamboyant.

As for readings, I am always seeking new ideas and sources so, if anyone has something they would like to read (or have

read on their behalf) during the concert, please let me know, the sooner the better, in fact. We will also invite someone who has benefited from Emmaus's care in the past to come and tell us, during the concert, something of the work that the charity does in our community: I know that their Landbeach base has greatly expanded this past year and is employing and housing many more people than ever before. And don't forget that, if you have any defunct electrical equipment that you want to be rid off, just pop it over to their community in Landbeach and they'll try and fix it and make use of it in some way.

Music in the Church

A programme of concerts at St James' Church, Lode

Friday 7 January 2005
7.30p.m.

ST MARY'S PLAYERS

Roz Chalmers – violin
Jenny Sewell – oboe
Hanna Wilkinson – recorder
Laurie Friday – horn, double bass
Chris Nex – bassoon
Jonathan Cook – harpsichord

Ticket: £8

Buy your tickets
Post Office, Lode
Lusher's News, Bottisham
or at the door

Season tickets: tel 01223 813070

HELP!

Cubs now URGENTLY needs an assistant each Wednesday evening 6 to 7.30 at school to help *Jemima South*, the Akela, run the evening. *Jemima* has started college and is under pressure in terms of her time. It is not fair that she should have soldier all the responsibility for the Cubs on her own and needs someone each week to help. The parent rota is good but an assistant Cub leader is now urgently needed.



Age and sex not an issue - just a willingness to help and be able to work with 8 to 10 year olds for just 90 minutes a week. **Otherwise I fear *Jemima* will pack it in and that would be bad news for there is no one else to fill her shoes.**

Contact me in the first instance

Dee Noyes
743864

A Poem

By Our Poet in Residence

'Twas on a Monday mo-orning
When I beheld my da-arling
Staggering out with the Washing Machine and
Merrily driving away!
With skill so great, she took her freight
And lobbed it out by Marshall's gate
Dashing away with her *fly-tipping*, she stole my hea-art away!

'Twas on a Tuesday Morning....
Repeat for smoothing-iron, old ironing board, clapped-out mangle....

Are they travellers? No-ooo. Are they horrid yobbos in beat-up Cavaliers? No-ooo. Are they perfectly-respectable-30-40-something-Cambridge-residents-in-smart-little-runabouts? YES!!!

Our Aim Is To Get You In Business

HOW TO COME UP WITH AN IDEA FOR A BUSINESS

**If you would like to set up your own business,
but haven't yet thought of the right business to start,
then this unique FREE course is for YOU.**

We Come Up With Business Ideas Two days that reveal a whole range of approaches and techniques you can use to generate ideas for a business. On previous courses the trainers and delegates came up with a great number of ideas for a new enterprise: many are now successful established businesses. If you *already have a business idea, come on this course and come up with a better one!*

What To Expect?

An enjoyable and absorbing two days backed up by a Course Manual with full set of course notes, business histories, check-lists and blue-prints, plus valuable post-course projects. You will hear from people who attended a previous course and then set up a successful business.

Not Much Capital?

Or almost no capital? You can come up with business ideas that can be started on a shoestring: others before you have done it!

Business Empire or Part-Time?

Don't wish to devote yourself full-time to a small business? Then turn up a part-time opportunity. Don't want to risk throwing up your job? Then start part-time an idea with potential for growth.

The Trainers

Course Leader is the writer Barns Hawkins, author of four acclaimed business books, including *Think Up A Business*. Barrie draws on personal experience for the course: after being made redundant he set up his own business, which he later sold. He wrote and presented a 10-week series for BBC Radio on how to set up and run a small business. Dorothy Hawkins is a qualified trainer whose special interest is maximizing the skills and information delegates acquire in a short space of time.

What Others Thought Of The Course:

- *I will definitely recommend this to others."*
- *"The best course I have ever attended."*
- *"Fantastic."*
- *It may have changed my life."*
- *"Absolutely incredible course. It has given me the confidence, the motivation and the vision to set up my own business."*

The course has been the subject of a two-page feature in Ideal Home magazine:

"If you think you've thought of everything, go on this course and surprise yourself."

Held at Soham 20th & 21st January 2005, 9.30—5.00 each day

Littleport 17th and 18th March 2005, 9.30—5.00 each day

Contact Sally Bonnett, Regeneration Officer at East Cambs

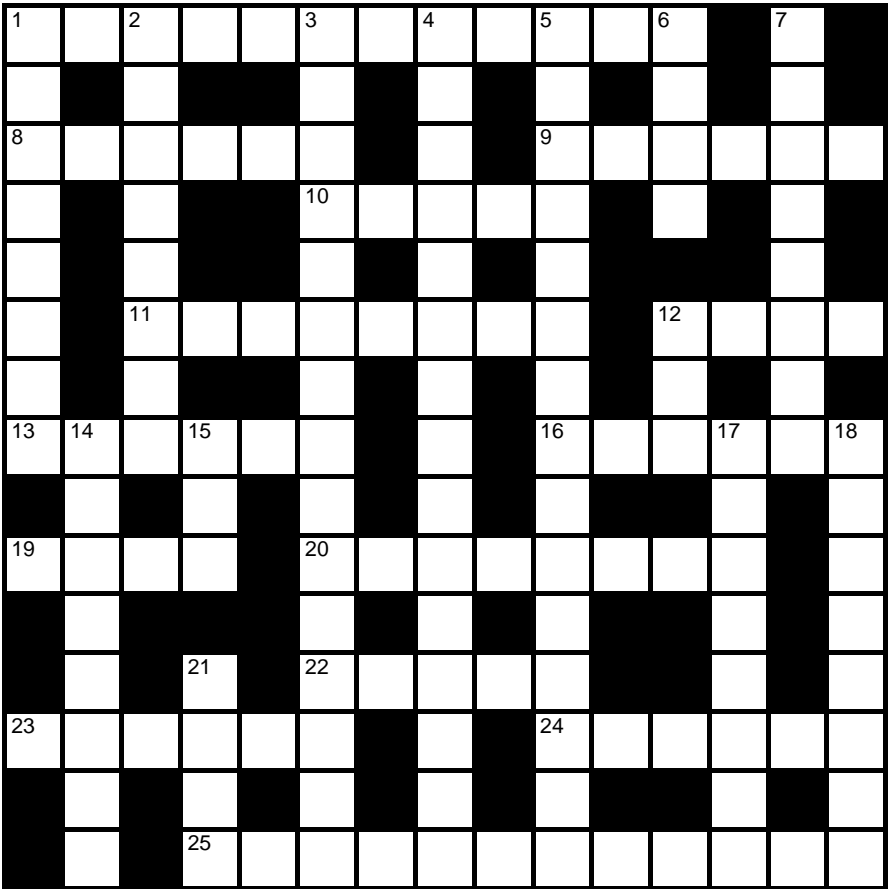
District Council on 01353 616381 .

Crossword Number 18

Compiled by
OUNCE

Sponsored by **The Red Lion**

We have a straightforward cryptic crossword for you this month. Send your answers to the editors by 14th January 2005. The first correct solution out of the hat will win a free meal at the Red Lion – See Lorraine at the pub for full details.



Name:.....

Address :

.....Tel:.....

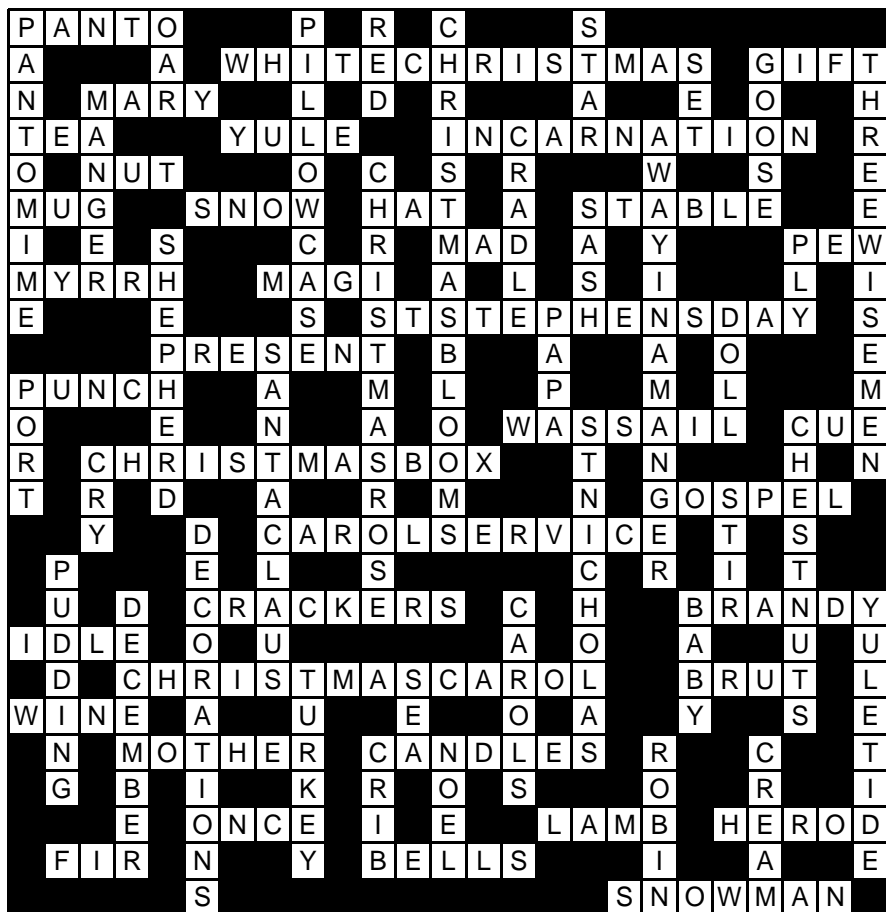
Across

- 1** Mad Ugandan yells seasonal song (4,4,4)
- 8** Aristocratic bird went first (6)
- 9** County under fringe in Oklahoma? (6)
- 10** Demand from Tex, actually (5)
- 11** Ruin ease to become less comfortable (8)
- 12** Song - "Happiness" (4)
- 13** Sweetheart takes the old cover for fringed flap (6)
- 16** Rebellious Dale no good in short when slanted (6)
- 19** Plead, we hear, for victim (4)
- 20** Fuss Bill makes to be supremely happy (8)
- 22** Greek character hidden in the tangled web (5)
- 23** Teenage bride disturbed in Juvenile Courts when sun cover is withdrawn (6)
- 24** Violet asks for maple syrup cooked without yams (6)
- 25** Pierre bid cop "Create romantic thriller" (6,6)

Down

- 1** Oriental cut in stake for game (8)
- 2** Leeway allowed by worldly measure (8)
- 3** Attended a baddie at sea and helped him (5,3,7)
- 4** Varies coin Gavin tosses for tennis player (5,10)
- 5** McCartney song possibly, reaps quiet old news here (10,5)
- 6** String-coloured pits removed from piecrust and stirred (4)
- 7** I follow five, six ways. Waltz or whirl? (8)
- 12** Horsedrawn performance. (Like 9?) (3)
- 14** Young man surrounds appendage in resort (8)
- 15** Amateur song (3)
- 17** In song, my boy is sweet (8)
- 18** Browbeat queen after "at home" in St Paul's feature (8)
- 21** Mary's pet exchanges article for one leg (4)

Nibor has now committed hari-kari due to an error that he allowed to creep into 5 Down of last month's bumper Christmas crossword competition. This did not disconcert winners **Bob and Julie Nunn**, though, who should collect their prize certificate from the editors. Runner-up was Shirley Wilkins.



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A la carte Thai & English menu available too!!

*Open for food & Drink Monday ~ Saturday
(specials on Monday & Tuesday)*

12~2pm & 6.30 ~ 9.30pm (last orders)

Sunday 12~2pm (last Orders) Traditional Sunday Lunch

*Takeaway available hours as above
Excluding Sunday*

Open as normal in January 2005





What's it all about?

WE live in an age when people are exploring alternative religions in unprecedented numbers, wanting to find purpose, a spiritual dimension, to their lives and turning to alternative religions, philosophies and ways of life. And I got to wondering why it is that people are rejecting the religion they have closest cultural links to?

Is it easier to find fault with the one you know best? Is it a rejection from a position of knowledge or from ignorance and if so, why is their understanding of Christianity so limited?

Christianity is about an inner life of the spirit reflected in practical daily living with other people: it gives life meaning. So: Why are people ignorant of its true meaning? Schools, both state and religious, have a poor history of religious education and the institutions of the Church have made some spectacular mistakes in the name of Christ. But are such incidents a true reflection of what Jesus was teaching? How is it that Christianity has survived this long in spite of the bad publicity? What was Jesus teaching? The only way to know what Christ was about is to go back to source. How many Christians know the Bible as well as Muslims know the Koran? The Bible is a very different book from the Koran; it's a record of one particular people's gradual understanding of their relationship between man and God, written by fallible people of their times. A book inspired by, rather than dictated by God. And it took a long time to reach the point at which Christ was teaching. Is it any wonder then that it is full of contradictions? It is however, frequently quoted, often selectively and invariably without interpretation.

The Bible offers a very firm

Fresh from the Reading Group's foray into *The Da Vinci Code*, **Brenda Wilson** asks: What's wrong with Christianity?

foundation on — which to build one's life. It's about answering to a higher purpose, looking to the good of others, caring about how people live and are governed. So go back to source; read Mark's gospel for a first hand 'I was there' account of Jesus' life and teaching. Read John for an intellectual interpretation of Jesus' words and his understanding of God's message. Read Acts and Paul's letters for an interpretation of that message into daily life. Then go back to the Old Testament to see where it all came from. Then you are better informed to choose or reject. The Church doesn't have all the answers, nor does it always get things right, but Christianity is bigger than it is often perceived and shouldn't be rejected out of hand.

Down on the Farm – Sweet ‘n’ sour

By Our Farming Correspondent James Wilmot

WHEN most of you sit down to read the *Crier* you will probably have a cup of tea or coffee at the same time. Some of you will have no sugar in it, others will have an artificial sweetener and the rest will have one hundred percent real sugar.

Many people in this part of the country think that all the sugar sold in the UK is grown here – with the dirty roads and numerous sugar beet lorries at this time of the year that is a fair assumption! However, since the Second World War, as a country, we have only produced fifty percent of what we consume. This is due to an agreement that was made whereby we make up the shortfall by buying sugar from the Caribbean and some African nations to help their economies. This arrangement has worked well up to now but in my opinion it is all about to change for the worse.

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) has said that the European Sugar regime must change. Most farmers will grudgingly agree that this is right, but only if done in the right way. At the time of writing the European Commission has lodged an appeal with the WTO against the reforms. Brazil, Australia and Thailand have complained that they are not happy with the EU's appeal. If the EU fails in its appeal, the three aforementioned countries will produce virtually all the world's sugar, in the process decimating not only

Europe's sugar industry but also the Caribbean and some African nations, with the obvious consequences for their economies. We wait to see what will happen.

In the meantime, we have started out beet harvesting for this year. We share a machine with three other farms in the area. This is due to the very high cost of owning a machine – with four of us we can spread the costs over a larger area.

The harvest generally starts in mid

*“If the WTO has its way **all** our sugar will come from Brazil, Australia or Thailand, putting approximately 20,000 people in the UK out of work”*

September and goes right through to mid February when the sugar beet factory in Bury St Edmunds closes. This allows us as a lifting group to determine when we start and on which farm. Factors such as which crop is going in after the beet, soil type (heavy soil is easier to lift from earlier in the year before it gets too wet and unmanageable and the following crop will not establish so easily) and logistics (transport considerations particularly

where the sugar beet clamp is in relation to the field) are all taken into account.

When the beets are lifted they are loaded on to lorries by machines, which will partly clean away any mud and stones. This prevents us paying haulage on non-beet weight and therefore saving money. Once at the factory the beets are tipped in to a huge pile. Bury takes approximately 15,000 tones a day – big pile!!

The beet is pushed into flumes of water that transports it to the first point of processing. During this journey they are cleaned and any remaining solids are removed. Once clean they are sliced into chip size portions and fed into a huge heated revolving drum. The end result of this process is a very thick juice and a dry sweet smelling cake. This by-product is sold as cattle food.

The juice is further refined and will either be stored as a thick syrup or it will be processed into granulated sugar – the

When buying sugar, check the label. Silver Spoon produces sugar from our homegrown sugar beet, Tate and Lyle is cane sugar and will have come from abroad.

sort we all buy in the supermarket. When buying sugar, check the label. Silver Spoon produces sugar from our homegrown sugar beet, **Tate and Lyle is cane** sugar and will have come from abroad. If the WTO has its way *all* our sugar will come from Brazil, Australia or Thailand, putting approximately 20,000 people in the UK out of work and causing the Caribbean nations a huge loss in foreign exchange.

We wait with interest....



Messy Play

Art and craft club for under 3s

**Collages/Hand prints/Finger painting/
Splash painting/Salt-dough modelling/
Card making/Printing/Gluing etc. etc.**

Thursdays 2.30-3.15pm

Swaffham Prior Village Hall

(Term-time only)

£1.00 per session to cover hire of hall and materials

**Please note that both mums and children should
come prepared to get quite messy!**

Old clothes and/or aprons are recommended!

**For further details call Fleur on 743992
or Nicola on 742184**



IF I may start on a light note, ECDC has won eight “Loo of the Year” awards, six in Ely, one in Littleport, and one in Wicken Fen. Visitors to Ely’s Tourist Board at Oliver Cromwell’s house comment very favourably on the area’s toilets. The cleaning and maintenance staff should be congratulated on the continuing high standards they are achieving.

East Cambs planners have now passed the revised landscaping scheme for the new E.D.F. energy power-line which is to run from Burwell to Horningsea. The line will run parallel to the existing line, and is needed to meet the increased demand for electricity in the Cambridge area.



Landscaped Power-lines, Burwell to
Horningsea

Did you know that East Cambs now has 38 plastic bottle recycling banks installed throughout the district? We are currently collecting 1.3 tonnes per week. To try and give an indication of the volume of plastic bottles we are diverting from landfill over a year, this would equate to 73,000 sacks of rubbish or 156 full refuse trucks.

Since my election in May 2004 I have been involved in a number of issues locally. Namely housing, travellers, refuse disposal, traffic, planning, recycling, leisure facilities and benefits.

As a District Councillor, there will be many important issues to address in 2005. Principally insuring East Cambs Office accommodation meets the needs of the years ahead.

Also planning for the population growth in East Cambs and how Ely in particular can adapt to cope with it. There will be increased pressure on Ely’s parking facilities and this must be addressed.

The office for national statistics has confirmed that our district is the fastest growing area in England. From June 2002 to June 2003 they have estimated that our resident population has grown from 74,400 to almost 78,000, a staggering 4.8% increase.

Tourism is also an important growth area. The region now attracts two and three-quarter million tourists per year, with a value of 95 million pounds and supports two and a half thousand jobs.

Also, we must increase all forms of recycling in order to meet government land fill targets — more on this issue during 2005.



It does not take a political genius to see a connection between a more generous **Government grant** and the probability of a General Election in 2005. Nevertheless, “don’t look a gift box in the mouth”, the increase given from the Government side is over 11%, raising Cambridgeshire’s portion from £305m in 04/05 to £339m for the year 2005/6. Since inflation is lower than these amounts we may be able to keep threatened services going and even recover some recently lost ground. These are early days, so a lot more will be revealed in the next month.

All very well, but you will want to know what effect this will have on Council Tax. My councillor colleagues will want to be cautious, but I’ll gamble that it is not more than 5% on the County portion. Let’s see if I am anywhere near my forecast.

In association with the revenue increases mentioned above, we have been told that the Government will give us almost £26m for transport improvement. This means more money for maintenance (e.g. resurfacing and pothole mending), some more money for, as yet unspecified, projects and just less than £5m to complete the Fordham bypass. The section from Fordham Road north to the roundabout in south Soham should be open in the Spring. The section south towards Newmarket will come in a couple of months later when delays connected with public service pipework allow.

“As a pensioner myself I was interested to read that Gordon Brown was adding £50 to the over 70’s winter fuel payment. He omitted to mention that he was abolishing a £100 council tax allowance”

Early in 2005 I hope to tell you how the village bids for jointly funded schemes fares. I spent two days recently as the only elected member helping officers to judge their merit. As we had over 30 bids there will be, inevitably, some disappointment.

This month I have supported **Bottisham** and **Lode** parish council pleas for higher traffic control, diverted footpaths and in the case of **Burwell Museum** a sponsorship of their bid for Lottery help.

As a pensioner myself I was interested in a press article which explained that Gordon Brown was adding £50 to the over 70’s winter fuel payment. He omitted to mention in Parliament that he was abolishing a £100 council tax allowance. Thus older pensioners will be £50 worse off next year compared with this one. The cut will not be experienced until later next year — after any election in the meantime!

Seasonal greetings to everyone. Get in touch if you think I can help on any County problems—01223 811425.

James Fitch

They Came to Mock.....

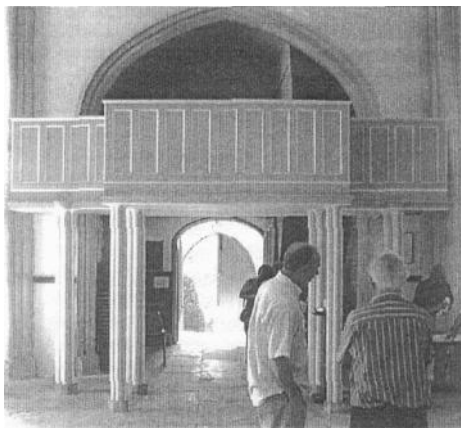
By Chris Gutteridge

Prior would not be Prior without Cambridge Voices and, of course, *The Maestro*. In this New Year Edition, we reprint, with kind permission of the West Gallery Music Association, an account of a previous 2003 Festival performance some of us may remember.....

THE band had been asked to help with a concert of West Gallery music by Cambridge Voices for a village festival at Swaffham Prior, near Cambridge. This pretty little village has two churches in the one graveyard, and we were to perform in the West Gallery of the Georgian church of St Cyriac and St Julitta.

As a redundant church, everything but the gallery has been stripped out, which has the advantage that chairs can be set out for an audience to face the gallery, so things were looking good. However, there was no sign of conductor or choir. The festival organiser asked what time we had been told for the rehearsal: “because Ian’s told some people 3 o’clock and others 3:30, and he’s flying back from a concert tour in Germany, so I hope he’ll make it. It’s typical of him!”.

Ian de Massini, conductor of Cambridge Voices, had been to visit me to discuss the music, so I was already aware of his eccentricities to some extent. His answerphone had advised me to ring his mobile “which is always on unless I’m rehearsing, or giving a concert, or having hanky-panky... Ooooh!” However, he was very charming and great fun and he had done West Gallery with his choir before, and was very taken with the Norfolk



St. Cyriac's West Gallery photo: C. Gutteridge

examples I offered him. With hindsight, warning bells should have rung when, flicking through the index of the red book, he pounced on the Psalm XLI paraphrase known affectionately as “Gordon’s Bowels”, Perhaps it was just as well that he didn’t spot *Spanking Rodger*.

We were drinking tea in the organiser’s kitchen next door to the church when, at 3.30 precisely, Ian appeared at the back door, exclaiming, come on! We’re supposed to be rehearsing.

Cambridge Voices are internationally famous, and were well able to cope with the music on one short rehearsal, but it soon became apparent that the theme of the concert was *Mocking West Gallery Music*. Ian encouraged his singers to do greatly

exaggerated, bleating trills, sing deliberately out of tune, and sing strident, ‘nasal’ solos. However, I was pleased to notice that when he came to the *Anthem Taken Out of the 67 Psalm* from the Briston Manuscript, Ian announced that he wanted it ‘sung straight’, as it was too good to spoil, and when he came to the hymn “Thee Will I Love” by John Wesley, sung to the Briston tune *Bury*, both he and the singers were quite overcome by its beauty, and he decided it should be sung gently, with solo flute accompaniment. Richard rose to the challenge with a beautiful rendition, liberally scattered with delightful ‘folky’ grace notes and ornaments.

During the rehearsal I found it necessary to empty the condensation out of my serpent, and decided it was better to let it fall on the stone floor of the church below, rather than the wooden floor of the gallery. Ian was delighted, and insisted I did it during the performance.

We had been told to perform in Georgian dress, and after the rehearsal we discovered the choirs ideas of Georgian dress were, to say the least, unusual. Nothing, however, prepared us for Ian’s costume for the performance. He appeared among us, as we gathered outside the church, dressed in one blue sandal and one red, trousers tucked into white woolly socks, a pink silk shirt,

white cotton gloves, spiky gelled hair and bright red lipstick. Richard and I decided that he looked like a cross between a Macedonian shepherd and a gay traffic cop.

Ian’s programme notes commenced with: “Maestro de Massini introduces each choir-member in turn, with each one then going up into the gallery after their humiliation”, and after we had done that we performed our pieces, interspersed with bitchy comments from the Maestro, and West Gallery anecdotes read by the Reverend Roy Tricker, a retired canon with a genuine interest in church history. It was all very amusing, especially when I emptied my serpent over the front of the gallery at the precise moment that a lady usher walked out from underneath, but I was gratified afterwards to hear members of the audience, and even of the choir, saying that they would have preferred ‘less messing about’, and to heard the music done straight.

We were invited to a splendid supper afterwards, where Vina drank two glasses of wine and giggled uncontrollably every time Ian said anything, and on the whole we all had a pleasant time, but I feel we need to go back some time, without the Maestro’s influence, and do a proper concert of West Gallery music, to set the record straight.

Mobile Library



All welcome. Free non-fiction loans. Good variety of children’s videos for hire.

Cards and stamps for sale.

Calls fortnightly on Tuesdays (see diary).

Notes from the Parish Council October Meeting

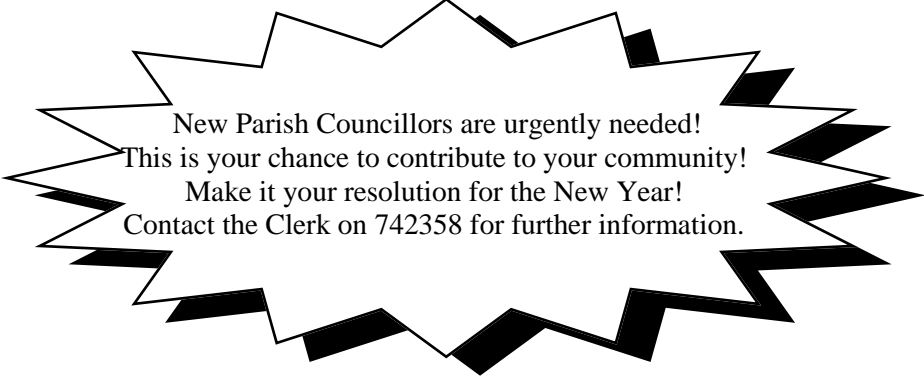
Notes from the Parish Council December Meeting

Mr John Covill chaired the meeting with 5 members and 3 members of the public.

CCC Report: Councillor Fitch reported to the meeting.

ECDC Report: Councillor Alderson reported to the meeting.

Parish Council Vacancies: Two vacancies still remain.



New Parish Councillors are urgently needed!
This is your chance to contribute to your community!
Make it your resolution for the New Year!
Contact the Clerk on 742358 for further information.

Matters Arising – *for information only*

a) **Parish Forum:** Andrew Camps reported on this.

Cambridgeshire ACRE – renewal of membership: £25 subscription was agreed.

Recreation Ground – use by Burwell Tigers F.C: Steve Kent-Phillips reported that plans were progressing well. Full scheme plans and details are in hand and it is hoped these will be available by Christmas for consideration and approval.

Land at Lower End: A letter was received from Drift Road Ltd., the owners of the land, asking what the village would be willing and able to offer for this land. After discussion, it was agreed to reply confirming that the village was not in a position to purchase the field.

Correspondence Received: This was reported to the meeting.

Planning Matters:

67 High Street – *this application has been submitted for mediation.*

Accounts for Payment: These were agreed.

Any Other Business:

A Community Services Team has carried out tidying up work in the Cemetery.

It is hoped that the lantern over the Church steps will soon be installed and work completed as part of the Enhancement Scheme.

The new barrier on Coopers Lane has been ordered and will be installed shortly.

Hereward Housing Maintenance Supervisor had contacted the Clerk confirming that the wall at The Beeches is to be repaired early in the New Year.

The bench seat installed in the wrong position at the play area is to be repositioned by ECDC in the New Year.

Open Question Time:

It was reported that dumped rubbish, including some asbestos, has still not been removed from the footpath running from Coopers Green to Cage Hill. The Clerk will again contact ECDC to have this removed.

It was suggested that the barrier on Coopers Lane should take the form of a gate rather than just a barrier.

The next Parish Council meeting will take place on Thursday, 13th January 2005 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

**Karen King – Clerk of the Parish Council,
Tel: 742358. Email: karen.king5@bopenworld.com**

St. Mary's Church Social and Fund raising Events 2005

DATE	EVENT	VENUE
18 th January	Coffee Morning	The Fencock
26 th February	Quiz Night	Village Hall
12 th March	After You Claud" (Geoff Hales)	Village Hall
19 th March	Talus Lamentation (Cantetena)	St. Cyriacs
2 nd May	Reach Fair	Reach
13 th May	Grand Auction	St Cyriacs
21 st / 22 nd May	Display of wedding dresses and flowers Refreshments	The Church Village Hall
19 th June	Open Gardens	
18 th /19 th June	Patchwork and Quilting Exhibition	St. Cyriacs
2 nd July	Jazz Evening	The Red Lion
16 th July	Moveable Feast	
8 th October	Harvest Celebration	Village Hall
12 th November	Village Variety	Village Hall
19 th November	Christmas Market	Village Hall
27 th November	Advent by Candlelight	Both churches

I THOUGHT it would be helpful if you had the diary of events for 2005 now, as I know some of you like to book your holidays in advance and not be away when something is happening in the village. You will appreciate that as the dates are for the entire year, should there be any alterations this is entirely beyond my control. It should be noted that the programme is purposefully varies, hopefully to suit all tastes and ages; the aim is to have an enjoyable time and simultaneously raise money. Any ideas for future events would be more than welcome, likewise any help in any capacity. WATCH THIS SPACE in the Crier each month when specific details will be given, likewise posters on the telegraph poles. Once again, A SPECIAL PLEA

FOR THEM NOT TO BE REMOVED UNTIL AFTER

THE EVENT (*who does this??? Eds*) — we are meticulous about removing them afterwards!

18th January Coffee Morning (see details on page X)

Should you have any surplus unwanted Christams presents, we would love to have them for the Bring and Buy Stall or Raffle. They can be dropped off at 73 High St any time (ring first, I have a habit of going out!) Cakes and produce will be welcome on the day. Helpers are also needed for the stalls.

21st/22nd May Display of Wedding Dresses in the Church

Please give me a ring by the end of January if you can contribute a wedding dress for display as we need to have an idea of numbers for planning.

Finally, a sincere thank-you to the members of the social working group who generously give their time and energy in helping compile and support these activities. They are:

Dee Noyes, Mark Lewinski, Hilary Sage, Betty Prime, Shirley Wilkins, Jenny Brand and Sue Rust.

May Display of Wedding Dresses

- Were you married in St. Mary's Swaffham Prior?
- Have you still got your wedding dress?
- **Would you be willing to display it?**



Kate Child
743983

Roman Catholic Church, Newmarket Parish

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



Church of England Services

January 2005

	ST MARY'S Swaffham Prior	ST MARY'S Swaffham Bulbeck	Bottisham
Sun 9	8:00am Holy Communion 11:00am Family Service	9:30am Holy Communion	11:00am Holy Communion 6.30pm Special service celebrating the creation of the benefice of five churches.
Sun 16	11:00am Holy Communion	9.30am Village Communion 6.30am Christian Unity Service	11:00am Holy Communion
Sun 23	11:00am Matins	9:30am Holy Communion	8:00am Holy Communion 11:00am Family Service
Sun 30	11:00am Matins	9:30am Holy Communion	8:00am Holy Communion 11:00am Family Service

New Benefice links our five villages

IN June 2003, Rev'd David Lewis was appointed as Priest in Charge of the five villages of Lode, Bottisham, Quy, Swaffham Bulbeck and Swaffham Prior. The congregations in the churches of these five villages have been working together, under David's leadership, to create a mission community for our area.

By the end of November 2004, the legal processes within the Church of England had been completed for the formal recognition of this grouping of churches. In November 2004, the Queen in council, as Supreme Head of the Church of England, declared the five churches to be formally constituted as a new benefice, known as "The United Benefice of the Anglesey Group". Immediately following this, Rev'd David Lewis was appointed by Bishop Anthony, Bishop of Ely, as Vicar of the five parishes, whereas he had previously been Priest in Charge.

The churchwardens and the congregations in the five parishes look forward to working together in the new Benefice.

On Sunday 9 January 2005 at 6.30 pm a service of celebration will be held for the whole Benefice in Holy Trinity Church, Bottisham. The service will be followed by a small buffet in the adjoining hall. We send a cordial welcome to attend to all who live in the five parishes.

PASTORAL LETTER, January 2005 The Vicarage

Dear Friends,

Well, a new year has begun, and another year has passed into the history books. A lot of people look at horoscopes at this time of the year looking for signs of hope for the future, but we don't always receive good news when we look at horoscopes. As someone once wrote:

'Now I don't know what will happen to me. My fortune cookie contradicted my horoscope.'

I remember years ago, before I became a Christian, I looked at my horoscope for the coming year in a moment of depression, looking for some comfort and hope for the future. All I found was the even more depressing news that the coming year was going to be my worst yet! Needless to say, I felt even more depressed after reading that horoscope than I did before! Nowadays I never look at horoscopes, because I don't believe that they can offer me any hope. I trust in my faith, which helps me so much more – as someone wrote:

'A vital faith gives us the courage to face the present with confidence and the future with expectancy.'

I am very much looking forward to 2005 because it is the year that Holy Trinity Church in Bottisham celebrates its 800th anniversary and I am very excited about the prospect. Watch this space for further details over the next few months!

I am also excited because 2005 is the year in which the 'Alpha Course' comes to these parishes, and again I ask you to watch this space for more details. The Alpha course is now a worldwide phenomenon that has helped thousands and thousands of people come to a new and living faith in God, by helping them to find out more about the Christian faith, and by helping them address issues of doubt, uncertainty and ignorance in the context of a loving and caring fellowship. I hope that some of you will want to take advantage of the opportunity to 'Explore the meaning of life' and enrol on the Alpha Course when it starts in February – look out for further details.

So I say to you, never be afraid of the future, but look forward with anticipation and hope, remembering always as William and Gloria Gaither so eloquently put it as they rejoice in the risen Christ:

'Because he lives I can face tomorrow,

Because he lives all fear is gone.

Because I know he holds the future,

And life is worth the living,

Just because he lives.'

May I wish you all a happy and hopeful new year. May God bless you all.

Dates for Your Diary - January 2005

Fri	7	St Mary's Players, Music in the Church, 7.30pm, St James, Lode
Thu	13	PC Meeting, 7.30pm, VH.
Fri	14	Crier Copy Deadline
Mon	17	WI, 7.30pm, VH
Tue	18	Coffee Morning, 10.30-12 noon. The Fencock. Village Gardeners, 8pm, VH Mobile Library, Cage Hill 2:40-3:30, Chapel 3:35-4:00pm
Thu	20	ECDC Start Your Own Business Course, 9.30—5pm, Soham
Fri	21	ECDC Start Your Own Business Course, 9.30—5pm, Soham
Thu	27	(& 28) Mother Goose, 7.30pm, BVC Main Hall
Sat	29	Mother Goose, 2.30 & 7.30pm, BVC Main Hall
Wed	2	(February): Reading Group, Kent House, 8pm.

Weekly Events

Tue	2.30-4pm Baby & Toddler Group, Village Hall Jamsing, 10-10.45 (0-18mnths), 11-11.45 (18-38mnths), Village Hall 7-8.30pm, Youth Club
Wed	Cubs, Village School, 6pm-8pm. Scouts, 7.45-9.15, School
Thu	Messy Play, 2.00-2.35, Village Hall 2.30-4.30pm Teas Village Hall 7-10pm, Youth Club



Back to school! BVC girls and boys wait "together" at the Bus Stop.

Mark Lewinski will be back next month with a new Crier Profile.