



The Swaffham Crier

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Editorial

IF ONE LIVES in the centre of a very nice village, a stone's throw from the very nice village pub and very nice village school what sort of *ambi-aahn-ce* does one expect? Pleasant but not always entirely *hushed*, surely? So writes Sarah Dodge in this month's *Letters*, and she can't think who could want to complain about it.

Neither can we—
shame on you, complaining person! Read all about this sorry tale in Sarah's letter, meanwhile reflecting that it is no doubt because of institutions such as our exemplarily managed village pub that Swaffham Prior has yet to succumb to the delectable delights of...
Commuter Village Syndrome!

Crier Recruits New Proof Reader



Expertly trained young Harry Matheson chews up all pages containing errors...

In fact, this month's **Crier** might tell us something about where the syndrome originated as veteran Pat Cook gives us the low down on the 7.15 London trekkers. Yes, weary commuters haven't the energy to communicate, and spend quite a lot time seething silently. So now we know.

Many congratulations to (usually) unsung heroes Gillian and Alan Badcock, leaders of another venerable village institution, the Youth Club, and who won the much coveted Gay Bulleid Award this year.

This month's issue also contains our very first **SODOKU** (thanks to Chris Carrington for this), so don't stay up all night, more info on **RASP**, our local Broadband, and of course, a great deal more.

See you quizzing!

Caroline Matheson

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Cover Picture: *Sketch of a Parish Councillor* by Clive Riggs



Letters to the Editors



Dear Editors,

Music at the Lion

I am writing to express my dismay on hearing that a close neighbour of The Red Lion has complained to the Licensing Authority about Live Music being played on New Year's Eve.

Living as I do next door to The Red Lion I believe I am as justified as anybody in complaining should there be a genuine reason. In fact living within a stones throw of the pub/church/school/village hall and a busy road junction, I cannot think of anyone else who suffers as much disturbance as we do. However we have long learnt to accept it as all part of a vibrant village's life and we put up with it.

Whilst I accept that there is nothing more annoying or unpleasant as being kept awake at night by the sounds of other people partying, we do have to make allowances; this was an exception not the norm; it was New Year's Eve after all! I can only recall 2 other live music events held in the pub during 2005, is 3 nights out of 365 really so bad? I think not, believe me it could be a whole lot worse. To those of you who think this is just the start of something, and more music events would be held should they be allowed to get away with it, they should speak to the current landlords, Dave and Lorraine Nichols, who would tell them that the pub is far too small to hold such events regularly and they have no intention of doing so. They make far more money from the food side with a lot less hassle. These music events are run at a personal loss to them as they pay for the singer out of their own pockets, not the pub's, and do it as a thank you to their regulars for their support through the year.

I was in attendance on New Year's Eve along with my Husband and Mother and the pub was full with a broad cross-section of mainly village residents, young and old alike, all getting along and having a thoroughly good time. There was none of the trouble or bad behaviour that you read about so often in the newspapers. Even though the pub was licensed for entertainment to 2am and to serve drinks until 2.30am, my husband and I were some of the last to leave at 2.30am, the singer had long since finished and the bar closed, but according to the complainant the singer did not finish until well after 3am and the pub closed after 4am. So I would respectfully suggest they get their watch checked as it is obviously seriously malfunctioning.

Unfortunately the sorry outcome of this person's actions will be that future events will not take place, including the summer jazz night, which is an annual fund raising event in aid of the church.

We have already lost all our other village pubs and shops, the Red Lion is all we have left, is that to go too?

Sarah Dodge

Dear Editors

The Dencora Field

In my piece last month I was wrong about everything. “Who was your source about the price?” many asked. I never give my sources but I’ll be very careful next time. Take away a nought from the 1.5 and 5 million pounds and you have it about right. The English Land Partnership (look them up on the web) were the underbidders. The new owners of the field are three local people. So all is well.

Alastair Everitt

Dear Editors,

Pylons

“The” pylon down on the Fen road seems to have taken up an awful lot of space in the last edition of the Crier. There are several points that I would like to make.

Firstly, land owners have very little say as to where pylons are situated. The only stipulation that we made on this occasion was that if it was to be sited in our field the land drains would have to be made good as it was going to be erected over an outlet. We already have seven pylons on our fields so one more really makes no difference to us at all. It appeared that EDF was not willing to repair any damage that may be caused to our land drains and that is why they chose to place the pylon on the edge of the road.

Secondly, with reference to the excellent report from the Parish Council Meeting where it incorrectly stated that “some agricultural machinery is 6m wide even folded up”. Wrong – the maximum width is 3m, as stated in the 1986 Road Traffic Act. If it were much wider how would we get past the school? All the farmers that I know who either farm on the fen, or pass through with implements, do not breach these regulations.

Thirdly, when there were numerous travellers camped all the way along Station Road, for most of last summer (before moving onto the football pitch!), I don’t remember reading any letters from “Honest Tom” (*Tom Robson — we did say so, James! Eds*) then, whoever you may be. There were, if you can cast your mind back, children, vans, rubbish, human excrement, fires and some very neglected horses – ALL on the very edge of the road!!! I do not remember reading anything relating to the problems that we had to put up with then.

I suspect a pylon is an easy option to have a moan about.

James Willmott (aka Honest Jim)

Dear Editors,

Christmas Holly

Once again Elisabeth and Alastair Everitt organised, advertised and sold holly for us all to buy to decorate our homes for Christmas. It really is very much appreciated and we are very grateful for all their hard work. In spite of thoughts that there was not as much holly as in recent years the grand sum of £123 was raised which will be divided between the St Mary's Flower Fund and St Mary's Church.

Ruth Scovil, (Church Flowers)

Dear Editors,

Crier profile of Margaret Tattman

I was very interested in Margaret's memories of the Land Army. Arthur Thompson, the ganger from Swaffham Bulbeck, was my late father. He used to tell us all about the days he worked with them.

The tobacco he chewed was Magpie Shag, as I used to queue up in my lunchtime while working at Pye's all the war years. It was a habit he got when he emigrated to America as a young lad but he didn't stay out there very long. He came back and married a Swaffham Prior girl, Maud Sheldrick.

I am the last surviving member of the family, in my 88th year.

Yours sincerely

Frances Wiltshire

(Née known as Girlie Tompson).

Dear Editors,

Bella the Cat

Bella's a beautiful, friendly three-year-old spayed tabby cat. A vet friend found her months ago, with a number of injuries which could only have been deliberately inflicted. She's skillfully put Bella back together again, and the cat is now completely recovered.

The vet has four female cats of her own, however, who've taken against Bel now that she's fit and well, so we're looking for a permanent home with a family she can trust. Amazingly, she still loves people, but would probably prefer to be an only cat.

For further information call Maggie on 01638 743891, or 07947 805729.

Maggie Cotner

Collapse of Old Barn

Alas, January saw the collapse of the Old Barn in the High Street. Owners Lord and Lady Soulsby were disturbed by a strange *rumbling* in the night, but thought nothing of it... The sorry story was revealed in the morning light. Roof support beams are thought to have given away.



Before and...



After

QUIZ NIGHT

Swaffham Prior Village Hall
7.30 pm ♡ Saturday

25th FEBRUARY 2006

Tickets: £5 each ♡ To book a table contact

Jenny Brand ☎ (01638) 742161

or

Lynne Rand ☎ (01638) 741960

Jacket Potato Supper ♡ Raffle

Bring your own drinks and glasses

Proceeds in aid of St Mary's Church, Swaffham Prior

From our Reporter at the Parish Council Meeting

THAT WAS A CLOSE THING! The day before Friday 13th, but even so the Clerk was indisposed, so the Chairman had to face a large postbag without the usual, very able assistance, while at the same time himself disadvantaged by sickness.

Cllr Williams warned of cuts in the County budget, now out for consultation with little room for manoeuvre. The Lyons Local Government Review holds out the prospect of a shake up in boundaries and authorities. There is new government guidance on speed limits, but will we go for 20mph inside the village? Earlier a voice said 20mph would be unenforceable. So, what speed limit is enforceable, and is that the only criterion, or does safety get a mention? Some parishes have their own radar guns, operated by volunteers to redress the lack of police manpower (and will?) Fordham has new speed bumps, though it was alleged that there are already too many sleeping policemen around here. (Read that bit very carefully, or get entirely the wrong message).



Cllr Alderson spoke of his frustration occasioned by the rogue pylon down on the fen. Apparently, the decision to put it in the road was made by EDF to avoid the expense of moving land drains in the adjacent field. CCC Highways did not consider its location potentially hazardous to road users (inspected under a clear, blue sky, perhaps?) There will now be fluorescent markers on the pylon to alert the unwary driver but it is most likely to stay where it has been built.

Travellers in Headlake Drove - what do you think of it so far? Rubbish! Yes, and heaps of it have accumulated all around them, so they will have to move on, though they may not take the rubbish with them. The Pound, or Cage, has now received the offer of grant aid from ECDC for roof repairs and an early start on work will now be sought.

The mail included an invitation to go for ACRE's Village of the Year award, but do we really want to advertise our good fortune? Everyone will want to live here. The local crime report was pretty quiet; not one armed robbery. In an effort to



That Pylon — Cllr Allen Alderson, with village supporters, holds press conference

prevent delays at the Station Road junction our valiant police propose to monitor traffic control at the times when children arrive and leave the school. (More anon). We all wish to avoid repetition of the 20 minute hold-up experienced there by a TV camera crew coming to film the pylon protest. Good timing!

The Burwell Tigers have had internal ructions. Now, of the gang of three who did all the work to transfer the Recreation Ground, only our Steve remains; the two Tigers have both gone. However, this was not the cause of even more delay; while the surviving Tigers remain willing, their lawyers are simply not able (allegedly). It should have all happened on 1st January, but in the pantomime season we should expect no better. Meanwhile, the Parish decided to surrender the lease anyway, now relieved of all its responsibilities for the field, though not before reinforcing the defences.

The prevailing gloom lifted considerably when our own, our very own Head Teacher entered the room to propose a co-operative approach for a Travel Plan to address the problems generated by motor vehicles disgorging small people at the start of the school day, and then re-absorbing them at the end of it. Joanna Lakey has already consulted parents. Sadly without a magic wand, she confirmed that 40% of children at her school come from outside the catchment area! Clearly, this generates a lot of vehicles in a rural situation. The various requirements and constraints were then rehearsed, without the hoped-for inspiration. It seems that the best we can hope for is a relocation of the bus parking place, with parents then keeping their vehicles out of it. Parents within a short walking distance might also consider the benefits for their children and themselves, of – well, walking. Some parents drop off little ones on their way to work, probably in Cambridge, often turning right out of Station Road after turning the car around safely somewhere. These are not manoeuvres for the faint-hearted. It's ironic that some of the most vulnerable in society (small people) have to come so close to one of the most hazardous situations modern society can offer, but I have it! We convert the grass at the front of the Village Hall into a drop-off and turning point for parental motor vehicles. If the concrete is painted green, no-one will notice. Sorted! Next item, please.

Joanna Lakey was very pleased, and a little surprised, to learn how the Tigers' plans should benefit her charges.

Finally, the sad collapse of the barn at 'Old Barn House', High Street, was noted, now to be renamed 'Old House', perhaps. Rebuilding or replacement plans are awaited with interest. As the barn was photographed only last summer, the position of each and every stone and tile before the catastrophe is recorded. How very fortunate!

“The mail included an invitation to go for ACRE’s Village of the Year award, but do we really want to advertise our good fortune? Everyone will want to live here.”

“40% of Swaffham Prior School Children come from outside the catchment area”

Frank Readhead

GILLIAN AND ALAN BADCOCK WIN GAY BULLEID AWARD

THIS YEAR the W.I. had great pleasure in presenting the Gay Bulleid Award for 2006 to Gillian and Alan Badcock who run the Swaffham Prior Youth Club.

Alan started by helping Geoff Herring and teaching table tennis. He took over from Geoff in 1989, and Gillian joined him two weeks later. She runs the junior section on Tuesdays from 7-8.30 pm and Alan runs the seniors on Thursdays from 7-10 pm.

The Club's various activities have included bowling at Mildenhall and playing in a table tennis league which they won one year, also trips and meals have been organised. Gillian and Alan have hardly any financial assistance, have done most of the refurbishing of the Youth Club themselves or with the help of family members, and Gillian does all the cooking and cleaning.

Swaffham Prior is very fortunate to have a Club where the younger members of the village and surrounding area can meet, and in having such dedicated people to run it. We are told that the hut is in urgent need of repair or replacement, so perhaps it is time Swaffham Prior organised a fund-raising event for the Youth Club.

Betty Prime.

Crier Sudoku No 1

Medium

		4	5	1				
		2						
				6	4	7	3	
3		6		9		1		
2		5	4					
	4						9	
7			1					
5				8				9
						6		1

YES, WE HAD TO HAVE ONE TOO! Just fill in the rest of the numbers so that each row, column and box has all of the digits 1—9.

Set by Chris Carrington

Crier Profile: Pat Cook

“The train about to depart from Platform 1 will be the 7.15 to London King’s Cross....” Just retired this January, Pat Cook tells us something about her life as a *Swaffham Prior London Commuter*.

I WENT TO SCHOOL IN NOTTINGHAM. First of all to St Joseph’s preparatory school for girls... *convent* preparatory school! Then to St Catherine’s Grammar school for girls, near the cathedral, on Derby Road, just across the road from the boys’ school. A great joy for us and a worry for the nuns who would try to keep us in...I was very good at maths but staying on and going to university wasn’t an option for me, so they said ah, you should go to work for a bank. And the one thing you never had to do in a bank was add up numbers!

You had machines to do it for you. But the one thing that came out of it was, they had an opportunity to transfer to the bank in Cambridge, and I thought, well, the ratio of women to men in Nottingham was very high. And I had noted that it was the other way round in Cambridge – so life might be fairer if I moved down. But I didn’t like banking. Somebody said, I work in the labs and they’re looking for somebody, you should come and see my boss. That was back in the days where you got jobs like that, you know. You didn’t have to apply for a hundred and get turned down by ninety-eight of them!

I didn’t have to commute, I mean you’ve always got the choice. I work for the Medical Research Council, though I retire at the end of January. The powers that be decided to build a clinical trials unit to be a centre of excellence and they obviously wanted it to be in London. A bit of a shock, really, and about half the group decided they didn’t want to move but I thought, hang on a minute – I’m 57, I really like my job: do I really want to be going off to look for another job now or will I bite the bullet and commute? So I got my

“I was very good at maths but staying on and going to university wasn’t an option for me, so they said ah, you should go to work for a bank. And the one thing you never had to do in a bank was add up numbers!”

shiny new season ticket and car parking ticket and set about it. That was seven years ago and I’ve been on the 7.15 train ever since. I have to be thinking about going to bed between half-past nine and ten, so social life doesn’t really exist. And weekends you’re just catching up on things you couldn’t do in the week! I haven’t missed the train once in seven years. Pathetic, isn’t it. When you work in Cambridge, well okay, five minutes either way doesn’t make any difference, but now five minutes late, then you miss the train.

Bringing the children up, I didn’t start working again till 1988. I kept reading articles about this empty nest syndrome – how the children would leave and I would have a nervous breakdown. I thought I’d better do something about it. I enrolled with the Open University to do a degree – biological subjects, that’s what I was good at. I’d worked in laboratories in Cambridge for a number of years. I liked biology but not lab biology – I had a habit of setting fire to things, often myself. I had a spectacular one once, using oxygen from a cylinder – I was in



People Soup in King's Cross Rush Hour

flames and my boss was putting my head in the sink and saying he was pleased he'd had the opportunity to do that because it was something he'd wanted to do for a long time...

I really didn't know what I wanted to do, so I thought I'd meander through a degree. Then this job came up, data manager. I continued doing the degree, and even better, the MRC said they'd pay for it! I did a maths course, and I found I could get up at five in the morning and do two hours maths before I went to work. I could only think in the morning. The chap I worked for used to do research into the structure for yeast. It was back in the days when they'd just got the Nobel prize for the DNA structure, worked out in the Cambridge labs – we had a sherry party for that, that was in my time, you see. There was a lot going on at the cellular level – we used to grow the yeast and put different chemicals on them and look at them under the microscope...and we used to gas ourselves on different things and generally have a good time. When we went to London I suppose we went down in the world because they're smaller than yeast. We looked at how antibiotics affected them. You spend so long getting the experiment set up, you run it for two hours and then you've got it all to clear up again. So it's like cooking, really. A bit more interesting outcomes but it's full of hazards for people like me, burning

themselves and things. I got carbon monoxide poisoning once and I had to be taken outside and walked round when someone noticed that my behaviour was even more irrational than usual and thought they'd better do something about it – fortunately my boss was well used to these things. He was the same one who threw water over me.

The unit moved around Cambridge – we were 'the Nomads'— at one

point we had a lovely spot over Games and Puzzles in Green Street, and our fire exit was through their shop and so we had wonderful notions that one day the fire bell was going to go and we were going to pile out with funny noses and hats on that we'd pick up on the way as fire engulfed everything...

They were very good: they wanted us to move, not to leave. So we got a building on Euston Road. We made a garden out the back, our little oasis.

I have to be out of the house by twenty to seven. The interesting thing is how much it's changed. When I first started seven years ago I could drive from here right down to Newmarket Road without seeing another car. Now there's a queue just to get onto the main road here. And the train's got busier. It's often full when it leaves Cambridge. The car park's fuller – sad souls with glazed looks on their faces. You see the same faces on the platform, sometimes for years, but you don't ever speak. Colleagues I travel with, we have a rule we don't speak on the train, because we don't want to start our working day in Cambridge. And that's my precious reading time! That's the upside – you have two solid hours when people don't interrupt you.

In the morning there are a goodly number who sleep, but there's a lot of people who'll be at their laptops, working – or doing

something! If there's one in front you can look through the gap in the seat and see just what they are doing. Then there's what I call the ugly ducklings. They get on the train in their raw state – ladies, this is – and they'll open up their Pandora's box, with mirror, and between Cambridge and King's Cross they transform themselves – starting with the cleansing cream, and the foundation ...everything. Now, I can't even write a card on the train, but they even do the mascara, without a blot. They're obviously very skilled. But it doesn't stop there – they'll have gas-heated brushes, and do their hair – don't forget you're all *packed* in here, people sitting next to you and opposite, but they're completely oblivious to it. Then the nail polish, and everyone's glaring because it smells, but with the headphones in they don't hear the tutting. By the time they get to Kings Cross, they look immaculate! Then of course, the mobile phone users. Not so much in the morning but in the evening people have conducted their entire business on the train, in a loud voice, and by the end you know a lot about them. One girl who was applying for jobs on the phone, arranging dates. She kept getting cut off in the tunnels but this didn't deter her – the whole spiel about what her attributes were and why she should be given the job – she had a couple of interviews lined up by the end but I'd had enough of hearing about her. The thing that really annoys people is if they get on the train with their supper – Burger King or whatever. Apart from anything else you're hungry and you want to steal it from them. But mostly it's the phones. People are just dozing off, then suddenly these extraordinary ring-tones! And they can't find it – they go through every pocket, and get their things down off the rack...

The thing people don't like is the fare dodgers. You always get them. They don't always come round stamping tickets but whenever they do, there's always at least one person who hasn't got a ticket. People really resent that, because the ones that are paying, in the end they pay more. Either that or they're thinking, I could have got away with that...

“ ...then there's what I call the ugly ducklings. They get on the train in their raw state – ladies, this is – and they'll open up their Pandora's box, with mirror, and between Cambridge and King's Cross they transform themselves... ”

There've been a number of bad things in recent years. There's been the train crash – for a whole year after that, a lot of disruption. Still is, sometimes. Worse than that, everybody was very nervous – every glitch as you're going along, people think 'what was that?' And even worse was the bombings. It was just round the corner from our building. The whole of the Euston Road was closed and all that went up and down it was ambulances and Police cars, and we had no idea what was happening. Something dreadful, but you didn't know what. The second time the Police made us lock our doors because the people had run up from Warren Street tube station and they were trying to catch them and they thought they might run into the office. I think people haven't got over the bombings.



...and in the aftermath of the bombs

There's a great nervousness now on the underground - not on the buses, strangely enough - People look to see who's standing near them. There's not as many people on the tube either. I think a lot more people walk. Not me, it's my age you see, and my gammy knee stops me walking sometimes...!

There's great vying for position on the platform, for the seasoned traveller. You know where the door is going to be, to the inch. And you have to be there, your shoulder in the right place.

There's always an argument about windows. Somebody will open it, somebody will close it. Especially if they've cycled to the station, all hot, they open all the vents, but they don't feel it - it's the people two seats along who get blown to death! And I don't think I'd ever been in big crowds before. When you get to Kings Cross and the doors open, it's just a sea of people and you don't have to think where you're going - it's just like a river of people moving down the platform. It takes some getting used to - you don't see the steps, you just find your way.

The MRC sent me on a retirement course - they tell you useful things like how to save for your retirement, which you needed to know about twenty years before you retire. And they say you must think about all the things you've got to do...but having had this seven years of clock-watching, I don't want to have to think about time. I just want to **be**.

Will I miss it? It'll be different. I've never been so aware of the seasons. You stand at the same place on the platform, you're almost like a sundial, a pointer, and you can see where the sun's coming up over the other side of the platform. You don't usually notice the subtle changes otherwise. In the fields between Quy and Bulbeck, in summer, there are poppies all the way along the edge. You come from Euston Road where it's all dog ends and discarded litter in doorways. And you get on the train and go to sleep, and you wake up - it's like a couple of minutes, like you've blinked your eyes - you get in the car, and it's just like living in a different world, like you've been picked up and dropped. That's why it's worth commuting, because an hour ago you were in that and now look at it! I love poppies, and when I see them all along the road it makes me know why I want to be here.

Mark Lewinski

from an interview with Pat Cook



CAMBRIDGESHIRE
CONSTABULARY
Creating a safer Cambridgeshire

Sue Loaker: PCSO

Sue Loaker is the new Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) for Swaffham Prior.

She is contactable while on duty on 07921 938046 or via 0845 456 4564. In emergency, call 999 as usual

FESTIVE SINGING AT THE VILLAGE HALL

THERE WAS A DISTINCT CHANGE OF TONE in this year's Festive Singing at the Village Hall. The gathering ranged from almost babes in arms to extremely fit octogenarians. The mulled wine (FREE) was distributed throughout the singing. The range of Christmas tunes had a broader range than heretofore with "*I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas*" and "*Jingle Bells*" being demanded as encores while "*In the Bleak Midwinter*" was met with a chorus of "*That's my favourite carol*".

In short, it was a very good evening. Andrew Noyse, Jochen and Karen were wonderful as the band, James Willmott always makes the most genial and warm host, Dave and Sue Jackson produced a mulled wine which received its usual acclaim, Janet Cooper made an enormous basket of mince pies (always better than shop ones) as also did Dee Noyse—who forgot to bring them. Something to look forward to next year.

Even that was not enough because music man Andrew Noyse spotted an absolutely furtive (meaning hidden) talent in the singers when he hauled out Frank Readhead to whistle the second verse of the encore of "*I'm dreaming of a White Christmas*." It was remarkable. Frank threw himself into it – trills, diminuendos, crescendos, the lot. His hips started to move, the elbows rose and fell, the fingers flickered and he would have been off into the clouds if Andrew had not cut him short with a nudge and a mutter "*Hold on old chap, you're not Gene Kelley*." I think that's what he said.

AE



**Friends of St Cyriac's
Inaugural meeting will take place
on 23rd February, 7pm in the
Village Hall Meeting Room. All
welcome.**

Not So

Sweet

By Our Farming Correspondent
James Willmott

SUGAR DOES NOT TASTE AS SWEET as it did a few weeks ago to me due to the sugar reforms that have just been agreed at the meeting with the European ministers and members of other World trade organisations. Most farmers in this country would acknowledge that the old sugar regime had to change, but virtually to wipe out European sugar production does not make sense.

At the present time a ton of sugar beet is worth about £28.60. In four years time this will fall dramatically to approximately £17.00 to £18.00. We can probably just about grow it for that price, but there will be no profit in doing the job, which obviously does not make good economic sense.

The idea was that some of the least developed nations in the World should grow the sugar so they would have means to trade on the Foreign Exchange market, but in reality most of the sugar production will go to Brazil, Thailand and Australia. This will of course be good for the economies of these nations but there is a price to pay. Brazil already produces a vast amount of raw sugar and to increase production land will have to be cleared which will mean further areas of Rain Forest being decimated. It is also well known that the treatment of sugar plantation workers in this country falls far short of acceptable standards and a substantial increase in production would worsen their plight.



Sugar Beet

The Caribbean will suffer from these new reform measures as historically, when Great Britain had an Empire, the agreement was that sugar cane would be grown there for Britain and as a result, we as a nation, have only ever grown about 50% of what we consume while the rest has been grown in the West Indies and some African nations, thus supporting their economies. The price they are paid is more than the World base price so as to subsidise the production, but if this and sugar production was removed, along with the recent loss in the last couple of years of a considerable proportion of their banana production due to another trade agreement, the already fragile economies may never recover.

If no sugar beet is grown on farms here we will probably grow more cereals and this will be so very detrimental for wildlife in our area. As I have said in previous articles, the variation of bird life is always tremendous in a well managed

beet crop, and by leaving the previous year's crop residue over the winter you have the bonus of feeding birds and rodents in the harsher months.

It has been calculated that there may be as many as 21,000 people put out of work in this country because of this new regime, but because they all work for small enterprises such as farms, hauliers and suppliers to the industry, the general public appears to know very little about it. If this number of workers was amalgamated in one or two factories, all about to be made redundant, I am sure that there would have been a lot more press coverage about it.

The one hope we have is that the bio fuel industry will take off and that we can then continue to grow beet, not for sugar, but to turn into fuel. Apparently it is reasonably easy to convert existing beet factories for this purpose and I believe that the one near Downham Market may be converted which would mean that farmers in that part of the world would still have an outlet for their crop – however, that would not help us as all ours goes to Bury St. Edmunds!

James Willmott



EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Have you had your grant yet?

WITH the onset of what promises to be the coldest winter for at least a decade, compounded by two double-digit increases in fuel prices over the last two years with more rises to come, now is the time to ensure your home is an energy efficient home.

Insulation is still by far the most cost effective way of conserving heat in your home. Most of us have some insulation in the loft, but did you realise that the recommended depth is now over 10 inches (270mm), and that topping up your loft insulation from 2 inches to the recommended depth can save you up to £50 a year on your heating bills? In addition, many of our homes are suited to cavity wall insulation and this simple installation can save you in excess of £100 a year on your ever-increasing fuel bills!

At East Cambridgeshire District Council your energy conservation officer is able to provide you with free impartial energy advice, and can refer you to the energy efficiency **grant programme** most suited to your home and individual circumstances. Every home suitable for insulation attracts a grant, and in many cases insulation and heating improvements can be installed free of charge.

Home visits to ascertain the best solution for you are available, covering all aspects of your home energy use. Contact Ian Bowers on 01353 616251 for further details or email him at ian.bowers@eastcambs.gov.uk.

Further information is available by logging on to the Council's website at www.eastcambs.gov.uk.

THE HOCKEY MATCH

FOLLOWING HIS MUCH ACCLAIMED REPORTING success last year John Prescott asked if he could write the report again this year. In spite of claiming (do we believe him?) to have received a whole bag of fan mail he will never be allowed to darken the Hockey Match again because of that enormous monstrosity just twenty yards from our very own PC Chairman's house in Whiteway Drove. It is all down to "the office of the Deputy Prime Minister" I was informed by our ECDC councillor, who added that the PC, ECDC and CCC could only make comments on, and influence, the landscaping. Who would have thought that?

But, on to the Hockey Match, acclaimed by many of the supporters as the best for many years. This was partly because the pitch was quite good so that long balls could open up the game, partly because overall there was a higher level of skill and stick control with less pushing, eye-gouging and kicking, and partly because the weather was quite clement and, to quote one spectator, "there were so many interesting people to talk to and we didn't see much of the game."

The match was settled in the 5th minute when the re-signed Dave of the Red Lion, from far out, gave a hit/cross/pass (call it what you like) which made its gentle way towards goal, missing everyone, and being missed in turn as it bobbed forward across the ground as on a gentle stroll, with the Bulbeck goalkeeper carefully shepherding it over the line for a goal hit.

But, it was 2 inches just within the larger than usual hockey scoring area, and IT WAS A GOAL. Prior were surprised, Bulbeck were stunned, and afterwards one

could only feel sympathy for John Trapp, the Bulbeck captain and magnificent goalkeeper. The astonishment was so great that there was not the usual wailing and gnashing of teeth.

A lesser team might have collapsed but though thereafter Prior dominated much of the play they were unable to breach the stolid defensive play and grand goalkeeping of Bulbeck and the final score was 1-0



Alastiar in action



The Refs



Prior Attack

to Prior. Next year the game should be a corker. And people may discover the answer which so many ladies asked: “Who was that man who suddenly appeared for Prior in the second quarter?”. The dazzled ladies, young and old, were convinced he was a professional French or Italian footballer. They said he looked as if he had flown into Marshall’s airport, travelled down in a stretch limo, played in the match and then vanished like a prince charming. Do come next year.

Alastair Everitt



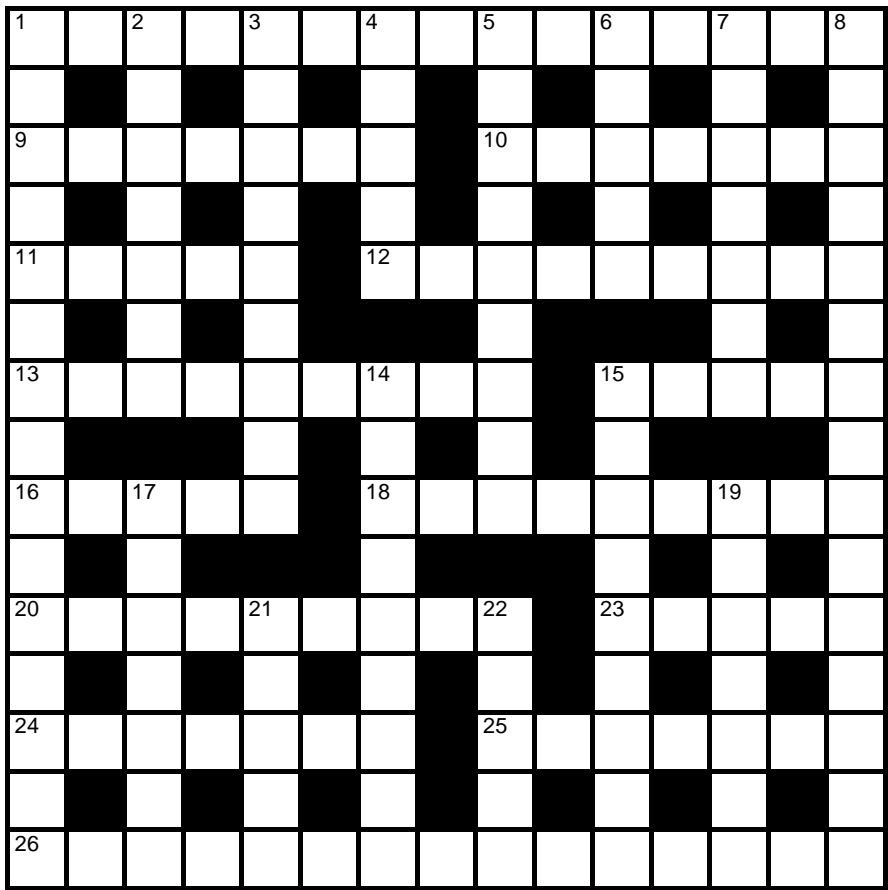
The Winning Team

Crossword Number 30

Sponsored by **The Red Lion**

Compiled by
NIBOR

A straightforward crossword this month. Send your answers to the editors by 14th February 2006. 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:.....
Adress:.....
.....Tel:.....

Across

- 1 Costa Rica models dance for politicians (6,9)
- 9 Book about tennis stroke (7)
- 10 Indifferent beginners never, ever, understand the real ale lover (7)
- 11 Redhead spat back about gins (5)
- 12 Piece of furniture set ashore on plateau (9)
- 13 Conceal warden, we hear – behind this bush? (9)
- 15 Logic requires rugs to be spread around fashion centre (5)
- 16 Mountains are a part of 13 (5)
- 18 Motoring organisation takes in first great vehicle, and it's a fast one (6-3)
- 20 We slither out – once (9)
- 23 Boy in charge it is heard (5)
- 24 Buccaneers (not students) are upset by Jacob's mother (7)
- 25 Oriental art of gold a soldier bought back to his French friend (7)
- 26 Tender young Reginald interprets rites with Edward and adapts runes (10,5)

Down

- 1 He carries the sick and he may draw the monarch and hold the monarch (9-6)
- 2 Joker goes round American square - What sauce! (7)
- 3 Abnormal overspecialisation violinist escapes from to find a place for high fliers (9)
- 4 Lived with team leader when rude characters returned (5)

- 5 Part of 16 is a high point in France (4,5)
- 6 Cured possibly by this type of oil (5)
- 7 Keep this to stay up-to-date with cunning Arab set (7)
- 8 If cleverest stud stumbles he may become suicidal (4-11)
- 14 A metering arrangement may evolve (9)
- 15 Dash! We object to small time archer (5,4)
- 17 Beans go off in this feeding device (7)
- 19 Horseman makes small change to a very old city (7)
- 21 Without talking, walking stick tapers (5)
- 22 Eat away the contents of white rodents (5)

Solution to crossword no. 29

H	O	G	M	A	N	A	Y			T		C		A
E		E		O		E		T	O	W	N	H	A	L
A		E		A	U	P	A	I	R		O		B	L
	D	O	Z	I	N	G		R		E		T	I	S
A		E		H				E		H		L		R
C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S	S	T	O	C	K	I
H		F		S		I		U		U		S		E
E	B	B	S		A		D		R		S		S	T
		L		U	N	D	E	R	G	R	A	D		I
R	O	U	X		D		M		E		N		S	C
O		E		C		E		O		D		K		U
C	O	M	P	A	R	T	M	E	N	T	A	L	I	S
K		U		O		O			N		A			E
D	A	R	I	U	S		I		E		D	U	B	L
O		D		S		R	E	M	I	S	S	A		E
V	I	E	N	N	E	S	E		I		I		M	S
E		R		S					L	U	X	U	R	I

We congratulate Anita Lang, the winner of last month's crossword competition, who should collect her prize certificate from the editors. Honourable mentions go to Jenny Brand, Bob and Julie Nunn and Shirley Wilkins.



RASP Community Network

your questions answered

What is RASP?

REACH AND SWAFFHAM PRIOR COMMUNITY NETWORK (RASP) is a not-for-profit organisation that provides a very fast, always-on broadband service to households and businesses within the villages of Reach and Swaffham Prior.

The community network is run and supported by a group of Reach and Swaffham Prior broadband enthusiasts and experts, who personally take care of each installation, and support the network 24 hours a day.

New Year offer

During February and March RASP is offering 10 free installations, these are on a first come first served basis so sign up fast! If you would like to take advantage of this offer please contact support@swaffham-prior.co.uk. Monthly charges after installation are £20 per month paid by standing order.

What is broadband?

Broadband is an always on, high-speed connection to the internet and email services. Broadband can reach the end user via ordinary telephone cables or by wireless network.

What is wireless broadband?

Wireless broadband is a symmetric broadband service which uses WiFi technology (radio waves), symmetric means that it delivers the same access speed uploading as downloading. Each user of the community broadband has an antenna in their house or office which connects via line-of-sight radio to a relay mast that in turn connects to the central transmitter mast at Reach and out on the internet via a 2MB Megastream connection to Mistral Internet.

The community broadband service covers the whole of Reach and Swaffham Prior and currently has over 70 home users and businesses, the majority of users have been with the service for over a year. Email accounts are in the form anymoneyouwant@reach-village.co.uk or anymoneyouwant@swaffham-prior.co.uk, alternatively they can be forwarded to your own domain name.

Does wireless work?

Yes it does extremely well, once the equipment is installed and the connection established there is very little that will interfere with the signal.

How secure is broadband?

Both wireless and cable broadband providers face the same security issues such as unauthorised access to their system and hacking attempts. The community network is very secure, all users have a unique IP address, they are also protected by a centrally located firewall (most other providers do not provide this service). Each device has its own unique MAC address (hardware address) which is registered with the relay masts so that no unauthorised users can access the system. The system is also protected by encryption ensuring all data transmitted to and from your computer is encrypted.

Users do have to take responsibility for their own equipment connected to the

network though so it is recommended that all users install anti-virus software and to be doubly sure, switch on the Windows firewall service. Contact support@rasp.org.uk for more information.

What downtime is there with broadband?

Very little, all broadband providers have downtime to do maintenance and upgrades this is usually under 1% of time, the majority of downtime is notified in advance and scheduled in off-peak times (eg 02.00 at night), wireless broadband provides the same level of service as any other broadband provider.

How fast is the community broadband?

The community broadband has access to 2Gbit/s 24hours per day, both uploading and downloading, this is ample speed for most home users and businesses.

How much does it cost?

And how does this compare with other providers?

The community network costs £20 per month with £150 for installation, the installation charge covers the investment in the mast and antenna equipment in each section of the community and so it is a necessary charge.

Other providers now offer broadband in Reach and Swaffham Prior, but there are various limitations with their service that you need to be aware of:

- 1) Limits on monthly usage
- 2) Speed uploading (email sending, file sharing) is substantially slower than downloading (viewing on the Web, receiving email)
- 2) contention ratio (ratio of users who share the line with you) could run into hundreds of users
- 3) Limited bandwidth dependent on the amount you pay

A comparable service to the RASP service from other providers could cost as much as £70 per month.

If you have any further questions or would like to speak to other RASP users please do not hesitate to contact us on info@rasp.org.uk

Sign up for FREE installation to *RASP*



WELCOME TO....

Claire Barclay and Duncan Morris, who
moved into Swaffham Prior (up by the
windmill) in December

School News

QUESTION: What can you do with four pencils, six pieces of spaghetti, four marshmallows and four sticky labels?

Answer: Build a vehicle to hold a tennis ball.

Early in January, Venn from Destination Imagination came to inspire children from Class 3 and 4



to design from a mismatch of unusual materials. Groups of 5 - 6 children had to work together to use the materials in new and varied ways. They were given a brief, a timescale and the materials to work with. Destination Imagination will be added to this term's clubs, along with football, gym, korf ball and nature club.

This term, children from Class 4 are studying World War II; if you have any artefacts or memories to share, please contact the school. Class 3 are studying Ancient Egyptians, whilst Class 1 and 2 are looking at Homes and have visited Rose Cottage to look at the building work.

We are pleased to receive our Bronze Eco Schools' Award which means that the school has audited areas for improvement to its environment and energy use. Our actions for the silver award are to reduce waste by improving paper recycling and composting; reduce water and electricity consumption; redesign our nature area to improve habitats and increase its use in the curriculum.

Please help by sending in your used ink cartridges, aluminium cans and old

Community dates:

February

6th Cake stall 3pm

13-17th Half Term

20th School closed for staff training

22nd - 28th Book Fair

27th FoSPS 8pm

March

24th Easter Egg Bingo

30th March Easter service 11am

31st 1.30pm end of term assembly

mobile phones for recycling.

The children are enjoying using the new pieces of trim trail which include a traverse pole and tyre challenge. The last piece is being purchased and will be installed by the end of term. Many thanks to FoSPS for all their fund raising.

Year 7s – please note the date of our Easter Egg Bingo; it's traditional that you return to the school to take your places at the back of the hall.

Joanna Lakey



JAMSING

Music Sessions for Babies and Toddlers



JAMSING MUSIC SESSIONS run on Tuesday mornings during term time at Swaffham Prior Village Hall. Each session provides a range of musical activities suited to the age of your child, including nursery and finger rhymes, action songs, percussion instruments for small hands and colourful puppets to bring the songs to life.

New parents are welcome to Join the special baby session - after the singing there is time to stay and chat and for the babies to make friends. The playsongs soon become familiar and many can easily be sung at home to comfort, encourage, distract and simply to have fun - no toys necessary!

As soon they can walk the toddlers begin to really enjoy the action songs and clap, stamp and jump enthusiastically - mum's get a free workout! The children learn to communicate and socialise and soon begin to know the words of the songs and rhymes. The older children are able to play more imaginative musical games and begin to share and take turns with larger percussion instruments and finger puppets.

So if you have a pre- school child and are looking for a friendly local group to attend, please come along. There's no need to book - each session costs just £3.00 per family.



9.20am	1 to 2+ years.
10.10am	birth to 1 year (pre-walking).
10.50am	2½ to 3½ years
11.40am	3½ years + (please phone for details)



For more information call Jo Pumfrey 01638 741376 or just turn up!!

Donations!

Many thanks to Ludmilla Trapp-Reynolds for her very kind donation to the *Crier* this month.



WI Notes

AT THE MEETING in January Mr Andrew Jackson gave the W.I. an illustrated A-Z Whistle-stop tour of Suffolk Villages.

We started at Aldeburgh with a slide of the Moot Hall where the first lady doctor, Elizabeth Garrett-Anderson, officiated as the Mayor. We also saw a slide of the shell-like sculpture on the beach, a memorial to Benjamin Britten. It was at The Plough Inn in Blundeston that Dickens got ideas for 'David Copperfield', and at Clare the Swan Inn has a sign which is the oldest inn sign in England actually built on to the inn itself. In Debenham there is a cider factory which first started business in 1738.

So many of the villages we visited have connections with famous people — Cockfield and Robert Louis Stevenson, Eye where Frederick Ashton lived behind a crinkle crankle wall, Hartest and Terry Waite, Long Melford and Beatrix Potter and Pettistree and Arthur Ransome. At every stop and every slide there was a story to tell. It was a most fascinating talk and made many of us want to spend a holiday touring Suffolk.

On the 20th February we shall be having a visit to Waitrose in Newmarket commencing at 6.30pm.

Betty Prime



VILLAGE GARDENERS

UNFORTUNATELY this month's meeting had to be cancelled because the speaker Mr Ken Harbutt, from Rougham Hall Nurseries was unable to come. However he has asked us to visit his nursery in June when the poppies are at their best.

At our February meeting on February 21st, Mr Oviatt Hamm will be talking about "Making the most of Clematis".

Margaret Joyce

News from Bottisham Royal British Legion

FOR BINGO FANS we have Bingo on Saturday 4th February and on Sundays 5th and 19th February.

On Saturday 11th February we have back by popular demand The 6 T's for a Valentines dance commencing at 8.00 pm . Members £3 and guests £5.

Saturday 18th February is Country and Western Night with Steelman and McBride commencing at 8.00 pm, it should be a good evening, members £4 and guests £6.

The annual pensioners' party is on Sunday 26th February.

The Poppy Restaurant is open on Tuesday 14th February so that you can treat your Valentine to a romantic meal and of course Sunday lunches. To reserve a table telephone 01223 812063.

Jacky Cameron

The Reading Group Reads.....

THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME

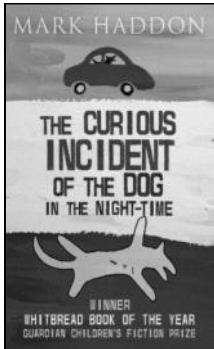
by MARK HADDON

....WAS THE BOOK GROUP'S CHOICE for January. The author has written many children's books, but won the Booker Prize for this in 2003.

"THE DOG WAS DEAD. THERE WAS A GARDEN FORK STICKING OUT OF THE DOG. THE DOG WAS CALLED WELLINGTON—IT BELONGED TO MRS SHEARS WHO WAS A FRIEND OF MINE—I WONDERED WHO HAD KILLED THE DOG."

So from the very first page we understood the pretty unusual title, and knew there was a mystery to be solved. In this case by 15 year old Christopher, who has Asperger's Syndrome and lived with his father and pet rat Toby. Christopher, who during the course of the book gets an "A" grade in "A" level Maths- but who has never gone beyond the end of his road alone; who will only eat red food; who hates to be touched who doesn't "get" jokes and finds it almost impossible to understand the facial expressions of others.

Not a lot of skills there for a "detective", but despite his father's desperate pleas not to become one, he does!



Mark Haddon's extraordinary insight into the mind of a child with Asperger's, enabled the nature of Christopher's life and his adventures to be agonizingly and painstakingly laid out before us and the mystery to be finally solved. We understood the finer points, the nuances, the feelings of his parents and of his oh so patient teacher, Siobahn, who tries to make sense of the world for him, but Christopher doesn't.

Some of us took this lad to our hearts in this moving story told with humour and pathos. Christopher unravelled a mystery and I think for some of us there was an unravelling and a little more understanding of what it is like to have Asperger's Syndrome.

Margaret Joyce

CAPTAINS OF INDUSTRY 1.

If you walk down the corridor
And peer 'round the door
You'll see my feet on the table
And my shoes on the floor.

And this is how you'll find me
At any time of day.
For my position, have respect
And please, just go away.

The Stress and Strain of
Industry
I'm trying to ignore
With my feet on the table
And my shoes on the floor.

Ophir

Notes from the Parish Council October Meeting

Mr John Covill chaired the meeting with 6 Parish Councillors and 3 members of the public.

CCC Report: Councillor Williams reported to the meeting.

ECDC Report: Councillor Alderson reported to the meeting.

Correspondence Received: This was reported to the meeting.

Matters Arising – for information only

a) Recreation Ground: Steve Kent-Phillips received an email informing him that the Chairman of Burwell Tigers Football, Richard Freeman, had stood down due to work pressures. A new Chairperson has been elected, Lesley Lebbon. A new Committee has also been set up of which Steve Kent-Phillips is a member. The lease agreement between BTFC and Mr Hurrell is still with Solicitors. Progress is slow but still moving forward.

b) Coopers Lane – Barrier. Upon inspection it was found that one arm of the barrier had been fixed with a nut and bolt and was already showing signs of rusting whereas all other fixings were oak dowels. The Contractor confirmed that this nut and bolt fixing was used so that the arm could easily be removed to allow grasscutting machinery access. The meeting felt that there was no need for grasscutting beyond the barrier point and thus requested that the Contractor replace the nut & bolt with an oak dowel and make a permanent fixing for the barrier arm.

The Pound – renovation works: Rosie Burton, Conservation Officer for ECDC wrote confirming the ECDC's grant offer of £1,578.50 or 50%, whichever is less towards the cost of repairs to The Pound. The PC agreed acceptance of this offer. The Clerk is to confirm with Kim Sheldrick Building Services a start date for the work.

Confirmation of Budget/Precept 2006/07: A final Precept figure of £13,750 was agreed.

Cambridgeshire ACRE – annual subscription: It was agreed to continue membership with an annual subscription of £25.

Accounts for Payment: These were agreed.

Planning Approval: The Bungalow, Prior Fen

Any Other Business: Pollarding of trees on the Village Hall driveway had been approved by the Tree Officer at ECDC. Estimates for the work to be obtained for consideration at February meeting.

Open Question Time: It was brought to the meeting's attention that the heaps of soil in the gateway of the Recreation Ground were beginning to subside and needed replenishing.

General discussion about High Street Parking. Also, Jo Lakey, School Headmistress, explained that she was putting together a travel plan as part of a Government initiative which would hopefully help towards this problem.

The next Parish Council meeting will take place on Thursday, 8th February 2006 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Karen King, Clerk of the Parish Council, karen.king5@btopenworld.com

A

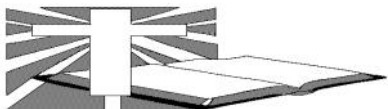


PILGRIMAGE to EGYPT

A RARE OPPORTUNITY to join in a "non-package" specialist study tour of the exotic and breathtakingly beautiful land of Egypt taking in many of its ancient wonders and venturing deeply in the "sacred landscape" of desert & mountain the cradle of the Judeo-Christian faith over 3000 years.

This exciting Special Programme is being offered by St George's College Jerusalem and will be jointly led by its Course Director Dr Henry Carse and Revd Stephen Earl Vicar of Burwell & Reach.

- We will follow in the steps of Moses and the Israelites as they journeyed "40 years" through arid, tough terrain to the Promised Land: a journey to freedom.
- We will discover the awesome, majestic splendour of Mount Sinai of the Burning Bush & Ten Commandments, with an early morning Eucharist near the summit, visiting St Catherine's monastery with its unique collection of ancient texts and icons.
- We will meet the local Bedouin tribe enjoying traditional desert hospitality, camel trekking and sleeping "under the stars".
- We will experience the piercing silence of the desert as a place of refuge, resistance and restoration, and visit the remote Coptic monasteries of Desert Fathers.
- We will tour the ancient Pyramids of Giza, the Sphinx, the old churches



Zion Baptist Chapel

Looking for Love?

ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO VALENTINE'S DAY? It has special meaning in our household as Lisa, my wife, and I met for the first time on 14th February 1998. We were 'just good friends' for a almost a year before 'we fell in love', but then things moved quickly and we were married on 12th February 2000. So this month we celebrate our 6th anniversary, and I can honestly say it's the *second best thing* I have ever done.

Those who have been together a lot longer than six years will tell you that 'falling in love' isn't what makes a relationship work in the long-term. It is said that "love is blind" and at first it is easy to overlook your partner's less than loveable characteristics or habits. Robert Winnett's poem 'Love's Insight' shows, however, that sooner or later our eyes need to be opened, not only to our partner's faults, but to our own as well.

*Love me as flesh and blood, not the ideal
Which vainly you imagine me to be;
Love me the mixed-up creature that you see;
Love not the man you dream of but the real.*

I have heard it said that 'true love' is when someone knows who you really are (warts and all) and still loves you anyway. The surprising thing is that loving somebody often motivates us into trying to be a better person, spurs us on to doing something about those unattractive parts of our own lives and personalities. True love is sacrificial, but when we really love someone we are willing to pay the price.

The Bible has a lot to say about love, and in particular how much God loves us. It says "this is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us" - "greater love has no one than this". He knew my faults, and in fact he died in my place because of them. The *best thing* I ever did was responding to God's love – when he asked me to love him back, I said 'I do!'. So, will God's love for you remain unrequited this Valentine's Day?

If you want to arrange your first date with Jesus, why not ask for an invitation to the Alpha Supper – details of which can be found elsewhere in this magazine.

We welcome you to any of our services or other midweek activities.

Morning Worship every Sunday at 10.30 with Sunday School.

For more information please contact:

Simon Goddard on 812881 or Peter Wells on 812388

Lode Chapel, High Street, Lode, CB5 9EW.

Email: simon.goddard@lodechapel.org.uk

Web: www.lodechapel.org.uk

Roman Catholic Church, Newmarket Parish

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

Don't miss the 10th

St Mary's Concert

Saturday 11th February 2006

at 7.30 pm in St Mary's Church Swaffham Bulbeck

St Mary's Singers & Players

With Peter Wadl and Martin Gent

Overture Don Giovanni : W A Mozart

Overture for Flute & Oboe : Antonio Salieri

Creation Mass by Josef Haydn

Vinea mea electa : Frederick Poulenc

Wine, soft drinks and refreshments

Retiring collection

St Mary's Church Coffee Morning

AN ENORMOUS THANK-YOU to everyone who made time to come to our coffee morning on January 17th, in Station Road. People came from all over the village bearing cakes, books, bric-a-brac, unwanted gifts and generously re-cycled well. It was great fun.

Our new neighbourhood Policewoman Sue came in and introduced herself so do make yourself known to her as she patrols the village.

The eventual total was £438 a marvellous testament to people's generosity. Thank you to everyone.

Tricia Harrison



Church of England Services

February 2006

	ST MARY'S Swaffham Prior	ST MARY'S Swaffham Bulbeck	Bottisham
Sun 5	11:00am Holy Communion	8:00am Holy Communion 9:30am Family Service	11:00am Holy Communion
Sun 12	8:00am Holy Communion [†] 11:00am Holy Communion	9:30am Holy Communion	11:00am Holy Communion
Sun 19	11:00am Holy Communion	9:30am Village Communion	11:00am Holy Communion
Sun 26	11:00am Matins	9:30am Holy Communion	8:00am Holy Communion 11:00am Family Service

PASTORAL LETTER, February 2006

Bottisham Vicarage

Dear Friends,

FEBRUARY is always remembered as the month of love because of Valentine's Day. According to legend, the valentine takes its name from a young Christian who once lived in ancient Rome. The Roman soldiers did not want to leave their homes to fight the emperor's wars. Emperor Claudius II ordered the young men not to marry. He thought that if they did not have homes, they would be willing to go away and fight. Valentine felt sorry for the unhappy young men and their sweethearts and so he married many of them secretly.

Like so many of the early Christians, Valentine was imprisoned because of his faith. Often and longingly he thought of his loved ones, and wanted to assure them of his well-being and his love. Legend tells us that beyond his cell window, and beyond reach, grew a cluster of violets. He picked some heart-shaped leaves and

pierced them to spell the words, "Remember your Valentine," then sent them off by a friendly dove. On the next day and the next, he sent more messages that simply said, "I love you." Thus did the valentine have its beginning. On Valentine's Day, people of all ages remember those they love by sending valentines.

Valentine's story reminds me of the story of a shy, quiet little boy called Chad. One day he came home and told his mother, he'd like to make a valentine for everyone in his class. Her heart sank. She thought, "I wish he wouldn't do that!" because she had watched the children when they walked home from school. Her Chad was always behind them. They laughed and hung on to each other and talked to each other. But Chad was never included. Nevertheless, she decided she would go along with her son. So she purchased the paper and glue and crayons. For three whole weeks, night after night, Chad painstakingly made thirty-five valentines.

Valentine's Day dawned, and Chad was beside himself with excitement! He carefully stacked them up, put them in a bag, and bolted out the door. His mum decided to bake him his favourite biscuits and serve them up warm and nice with a cool glass of milk when he came home from school. She just knew he would be disappointed -- maybe that would ease the pain a little. It hurt her to think that he wouldn't get many valentines -- maybe none at all.

That afternoon she had the biscuits and milk on the table. When she heard the children outside she looked out the window. Sure enough here they came, laughing and having the best time. And, as always, there was Chad in the rear. He walked a little faster than usual. She fully expected him to burst into tears as soon as he got inside. His arms were empty, she noticed, and when the door opened she choked back the tears. "Mummy has some warm biscuits and milk for you."

But he hardly heard her words. He just marched right on by, his face aglow, and all he could say was: "Not one -- not one." Her heart sank. And then he added, "I didn't forget one, not a single one!"

God loves us and He sends His blessings to show His affection and he never forgets a single one of us. Best of all, He sent us the gift of His Son to be our Saviour and Lord. As someone once wrote:

*It isn't a song until
it's sung.*

*It isn't a bell until
it's rung.*

*It isn't love until
it's given away!*

May God Bless you
all.

David



Alpha

Is there more to life than this?

If you want to explore the meaning of life then perhaps the Alpha Course is for you.

The next local course starts soon! For your personal invitation to the Introductory Alpha Supper on Wednesday 22nd February, please contact: Rev. David Lewis on (01223) 812367 or Mr. Simon Goddard on (01223) 812881.

***Dates for
Your Diary***

**February
2006**

Mon	6	SP School Cake Stall, 3pm
Wed	8	PC Meeting, VH, 8pm
Sat	11	St Mary's Singers, Bulbeck St Mary's, 7.30pm
Sun	12	Crier Copy Deadline
Mon	13	SP School half-term starts
Tue	14	Mobile Library, Cage Hill 2:40-3:30, Chapel 3:35-4:00pm Re-cycling 7am
Mon	20	WI Waitrose Visit, 6.30pm, Waitrose Newmarket
Tue	21	Alpha Supper Village Gardeners, VH
Wed	22	SP School Book fair (continues until 28th)
Thu	23	Friends of St Cyriac's, VH Meeting Room, 7pm
Sat	25	Quiz Night, VH, 7.30pm
Tue	28	Mobile Library, Cage Hill 2:40-3:30, Chapel 3:35-4:00pm Re-cycling 7am

***Village
Clubs
&
Societies***

Club	Contact	Tel.	Date	Time	Place
FOSPS	Clare Freeman	741316	2nd Mon of Term	8pm	Village School
Baby & Toddlers	Fleur Routley	743992	Tues	2:30-4:00pm	Village Hall
Messy Play	Julia Turner	742688	Thursday	2.00-2.45	Village Hall
Jamsing	Jo Pumfrey	741376	Term-time Tues	9.20-12	Village Hall
Cubs	Andrew Noyes	743864	Weds (term time)	6:00-7:30pm	Village School
Reading Group	Brenda Wilson	743937	1st Weds of month	8:00pm	(See Crier)
Scouts	Andrew Noyes	743864	Weds (term time)	7:45-9:15pm	Village School
Village Gardeners	Margaret Joyce	744390	3rd Tues of month	8:00pm	Village Hall
WI	Margaret Phillips	741495	3rd Mon of month	7.30 pm	Village Hall
Youth Club	Alan Badcock	742228	Tues	7:00-8:30pm	Youth Club Hut
			Thurs	7:00-10:00pm	