



The Swaffham Crier

Volume XXX Number 1

January 2006



Editorial

New Year, and now is the time for *mission statements* and *aspirational targets*, otherwise known as New Year Resolutions. As usual, we will commence with a Review of Last Year's Resolutions, and now we are in for a surprise—we *kept them!* Oh alright, the magnificent *Simon Andrews* kept them, with a little assistance from The Other Editor. Read on....

LAST YEAR, the *Crier* resolved to go on the Web and asked for help with the great amount of work entailed. Having done that, it might be true to say it *didn't do a great deal more*. But Simon did! Alone, single-handedly, overwhelmed as he was by huge support from other well-wishers (as in *NOT*) you will see that



Crier Editor sympathetically fielding **complaints** at the door of Head Office.

the *Crier* now beams out to the four corners of the world (try Google), and its *searchable archive* has magically extended itself back to April 2004 — yes! Just type in “motor-bikes”, “bonfires” or your *own name* even — maybe someone put something you missed!

So this Year's Resolution is: **MORE STAFF**, and get the *Crier* out on time.....many thanks to Ruth Stinton and all our distributors who have had an unusually tough job recently.

The magazine has now been going **30 years**, and this month we were very sorry to learn about the death of our founder, Canon Byrom. We would like to join with John Norris in paying tribute to this quite remarkable man—his memorial service will

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be on January 21st.

Take a look at our new advertisements (thank you advertisers) and.... Happy New Year!

Caroline Matheson

Cover Picture: The newly restored Village Sign



Letters to the Editors



Dear Editors,

Ely Offices

I was surprised to see the one item letter, about the office move, from Councillor Alderson in the last issue of *The Crier* as I know he normally covers all that is happening at East Cambs. I am writing because I think it might be fairer if you also had the facts that he missed out.

I was the lead member for Economic Development for many years and would like nothing more than the opportunity to draw more businesses and jobs into the district, and indeed voted in favour of the proposal originally because at that time I felt it would have delivered more working space, extra parking and given an economic boost to the district. How times changed – the costs increased to £14.5 million and in order to pay that sum we would use all our (your) reserves, sell off all the land we could, have a £6 million mortgage and use a grant of £3 million pounds. All this to buy a piece of land on a flood plain that has been vacant for many years as its present owners could not find a buyer.

In case you are confusing the parking issue with the office move we also found that the park and ride would be a mile from the railway station with no direct pedestrian access and over 100 spaces would be lost in the centre of town at the Grange Site at week-ends and evenings.

Your District Councillor is correct that 15 conservatives voted in favour but every Liberal Democrat, Independent and one conservative voted against – thank goodness for common sense and democracy.

Hazel Williams
County Councillor

Dear Editor,

FLAT FEN COUNTRY

I am deeply hurt that Angela Nisbet (*Crier*, Vol29 No 12.p13) thinks Clifford Edge was 'a boring bloke'.

Clifford Edge (allegedly) hated hills and loved the Flat Fens. Doesn't that tell us something?

Ophir

Dear Editors,

Crier Web Site

I must congratulate you upon the website. It looks great and I have recommended it to all my Christmas correspondents.

Frank. Readhead

Dear Editors,

Canon John K. Byrom

The Reverend Byrom was one of that rare breed of Holy men. He died on November 22nd after enduring sixteen years of Parkinsons' Disease. Whilst saying Mattins at 5.30 in the mornings as was his wont) he suffered a Pulmonary Embolism, and died. A Memorial Service has been arranged at Great Shelford Church on January 21st at twelve noon.

John was appointed to this parish in 1974, and served us well for the next fourteen years. I had the privilege of being his Warden for all that time. The village of Reach was also part of this parish, so the service pattern was adapted to suit both. Another important duty allocated to John was that of Director of Ordinands for the diocese of Ely

This latter duty was involved with the training, and selection of young folk for a career in the Church. It was in this capacity that his deep conviction and quiet manner influenced so many.

There are many instances of spontaneous kindnesses that John was able to perform, as he knew the needs of his parishioners from his frequent visits. The filling of coal buckets for the elderly, the car trips to Burwell, and the wise counselling he gave before marriage and after a death.

John and Jean suffered the loss of their only son Stephen in a road accident shortly before coming here, an event with which my wife and I can sympathise. The loss of a child affects the course of the rest of our lives.

When we lived at Anglesey House, we would hear the footsteps in the gravel of the church path every morning as John made his way to say the Offices, (Mattins and Evensong), in the church. It may have been because of those cold early mornings that the question of better heating was addressed, leading to the present heater, and a screen to keep the heat in the building, and not let it go up the tower!

John was ably supported by his wife Jean, who helped his ministry by encouraging music, and choral activities in the church, before the arrival of Ian de Massini, as well as flower arranging. Many of us will have derived benefit from this Holy man's sojourn amongst us, and I am sure his soul will rest in peace.

John Norris

Canon Byrom was the founder of the Crier — see editorial. Eds

Dear Editors,

Brands Hatch

Does the noise of motor bikes and fresh tyre tracks today on Dencora Field mean that ownership has been transferred to allow motocross events there?

Frank Readhead

From our Reporter at the Parish Council Meeting

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING NEWS

8th December 2005



ROAD OVERLOAD AT LODE NODE GOADS DRIVERS

(IT'S QUY ACTUALLY, but it doesn't sound right, and the back-up starts at Lode). It was suggested that the overloading of the B1102 results from rerouting habits arising from the new bypass. We are getting more through traffic, and it bodes no good. It's been bad before, and now it's bad again. To reach Cambridge during the morning rush hour, you must allow at least one hour (cycling is faster!). Is anyone doing something about it? We did not get to hear.

Cllr Williams said the bus service between Cambridge and Newmarket will soon run every 30 minutes and there will be some new buses too. (If you get stuck in Lode don't make a fuss on the bus). There will also be a major new traffic interchange at Cambridge Railway Station to remove some of the inconvenience caused by the University's opposition to a central location for the station when Queen Vic was more than just a pub.

Social care in CCC is failing children. Our support for deprived children comes in at 31st out of the 34 English Shires. At the same time, our position in the earnings league is 5th from the top, while only 2 Shires have lower Council Taxes. Got it? We are relatively under-taxed, and under-privileged kids carry the difference. Thanks kids. Central Government has allocated £2m. more in 2006, but it'll be £3.5m. less in 2007. CCC can no longer afford 5 grass annual cuts. It'll be only 4 cuts in 2006.

PILE ON THE PYLONS

Cllr Alderson raised the subject of the rogue electricity pylon on Whiteway Drove. A local farmer refused permission to site a pylon in his field as planned, so it's now at the very edge of the very narrow single carriageway. Recognising a very hazardous situation, a protective Armco barrier is being erected on the road side of the pylon. This compounds the error,



That Pylon—see Page 8

so perhaps the first passing 44 ton lorry will take it with it. Some agricultural machinery is 6m. wide, even folded up, so that's going to be interesting on a 4m. wide carriageway. Let's just divert the road around the pylon? The best news of the evening though was that one complete pylon kit has been stolen, perhaps for a kid's Christmas present, perhaps for its scrap value. Have you seen it?

We shall soon have a new SLOW sign approaching the village on Station Road, and HiViz replacement PASS signs along the Drove, made of material with no scrap value. The Rate Support grant will increase by £0.5m. There's a black hole in the ECDC pension scheme, so it's in line with most pension schemes. It is hoped to keep Council Tax increases to 2.5% in 2006, about the same rate as inflation. Watch this space.

SIGN UP FOR THE VILLAGE

The village sign is up again, a great credit to quite a large team – reported elsewhere - who managed a difficult operation at remarkably little cost to the PC. Thanks guys. The planning application for new houses at the AW water tower on Mill Hill has been withdrawn. They will now be licking their wounds and planning a new assault, probably. The Rogers Road footpath hard surface is now revealed for the first time this century, though a new surface must wait, possibly until it has become overgrown again? I remember surprise at discovering a hard surface under slippery leaves along the Lower End footpath, after more than a twelvemonth of use. The drain at the High Street bus stop is blocked, so bus wheels rinse the waiting passengers' shoes. It's a bonus really, if your shoes were brown to start with.

PARKING UP THE JUNCTION

A local resident asked for thought to be given to the parking situation at the junction of Station Road and the High Street. Worst at the start of the school day, when large vehicles turning into Station Road can face an almost impossible task. That very morning an 8-wheeler managed this feat with just inches (x 25.4mms) to spare on either side. Cars parked on both sides of both roads, much too close to the junction itself, effectively reduce the thoroughfare to a single carriageway pinch point. A discussion weighed up the interests and rights of parents with small children, of residents with no off-road parking facility, and of road users with somewhere to go. A plan of the road layout was circulated showing the RED LOIN, so some people clearly have gut feelings about this. The consensus view was for a parking prohibition on the south (Rose Cottage) side of Station Road from the junction to a point opposite the canopied school



That Parking

gate. This would apply from Monday to Friday during daytime and the PC will advise CCC of their wishes. While there were once double yellow lines on the east side of High Street, opposite Station Road, these were a mistake, and have been removed. They never had any statutory significance, and none is planned for them, perhaps because, at all times of day, the Highway Code says vehicles should not be parked opposite junctions:

217: DO NOT park your vehicle or trailer on the road where it would endanger, inconvenience or obstruct pedestrians or other road users.

— **do not stop opposite or within 10 metres (32 feet) of a junction, except in an authorised parking space**

(The GIVE WAY sign in Station Road is about 10 m. from the junction with High Street).

With best wishes and seasonal greetings, I remain your humble scribe,

Frank Readhead.

VILLAGE SIGN RESTORED

SEE THE FRONT COVER (or even better, the sign itself!) for the results of this superlative collaborative effort. Many thanks and congratulations are due to the following (and with reasons attached!):

Clive Riggs: Painting the sign

Clive's Mum: Doing the lettering



Peter Arksey: Renovation of
woodwork and metalwork

Lawrence Arksey (Peter's
Dad) : Supplying the new solid oak
plinth

Melvyn Barrett (Reach) :
Making the new plinth

Martin Mead: Getting the sign
back up there

Steve Kent-Phillips: Supplying
materials and generally bossing
everyone about by pointing and shouting
a lot.

Restoration work in progress. The sign is now bonded to the plinth and the plinth top is chamfered at 5 degrees to run off water.

THE DENCORA FIELD AGAIN

The Dencora Field has always been a subject of some uncertainty, mystery and (some think) skulduggery, and following the recent “SOLD” notice we’ve been waiting for the latest information



The *Crier* provided some but not all of the news. Frank Readhead in his PC Report mentioned that Allen Alderson commented on it at the last PC meeting and reported that when it seemed likely a moving company would make the purchase “others stepped in and bought it for about three times the asking price.” The official Parish Council report in the *Crier* *did not mention Dencora and* neither did Allen Alderson’s own *Crier* report. (His indignation about the abandonment of the ECDC office development could reasonably explain this).

But in the full PC minutes of the meeting, tucked away at the end of the usual full coverage of Allen’s ECDC report, was the following:

“Dencora Field. The Purchaser, The English Land Partnership, buys up fields that could obtain planning consent in the long-term, then divides the field into house size plots and sells them off to investors for £11,000 - £16,000.”

The asking price was about £1.5 million and the field was sold for nearly £5 million. Given the size of the field and the facts above someone should be able to produce some interesting figures.

So the uncertainty and mystery remains – who/what are English Land Partnership, is the usual clawback provision still in place, how many years will it be before the field is developed? I reckon that it will be about twenty years.

Alastair Everitt

A Christmussy Confusion of Carols. For 2006

The world in solemn stillness lay,
Come and worship night and day,
With a mangerful of hay;
Free from woe and danger.

‘What can I give him?’ thronged the air,
Beset with gold and jewels rare,
‘May we stroke the creatures there;
Poor and in a manger?’

Hark the herald angels sing,
All our costliest treasures bring,
Come swiftly on the wing;
To see the little stranger.

O! Strange indifference—low and high,
The earth was still but knew not why,
A number of angels stood in the sky;
But not a mountain ranger.

Ophir

Two Sandwiches Short of a Picnic?

AS PART OF ANY PLANNING APPLICATION, so we are told, one of the major areas which are reviewed is the impact the new construction might have on existing facilities. For that we, all of us, employ a planning department through our own, very generous, payment of taxes.

Applicants might, for example, apply to, erect a steel and concrete tower within inches of a road, on a bend, where there is regular mud, and an infamous winter fog. And where the road is single laned and already hard to negotiate. BUT our Planning departments weed out such silly ideas quickly and the applicants have to think again, taking into account not only their wishes, but the dangers that their ideas might bring to the location.

So why did Our beloved ECDC approve the erection of the Eiffel Tower on Prior Fen, within inches of the roadside, when there are zillions of Acres they could have chosen from? And then surround it with concrete blocks to protect it.. from traffic?

My inside informer from the local parish council informed me (no names, I have to protect my sources, but it cost me a few pints in the snug to obtain the empirical info) that our own LOCAL council objected, *yet the big boys, at Ely, ignored their pleas* in favour of EDF or the land owner.

Every month in this organ, (*The Crier*) we get a half page of self righteous "I've done this & we've done that" from our elected County Councillors, yet they seem to have slept through this one.

Has the same Planning Authority approved a car parking area adjacent to it, for visitors to this marvellous Parisian site or the new Swaffham Prior A&E Dept to service those who dare to pass it in the mud and fog? (Bilingual Nursing staff need only apply, must be fluent in French and Spanish, English would be a bonus).

I doubt it, but I am equally certain that, when they have their annual picnic aside it next year, they will be short of more than just a few sandwiches!

Honest Tom



New Prior Attraction under

Friends of St Cyriac's

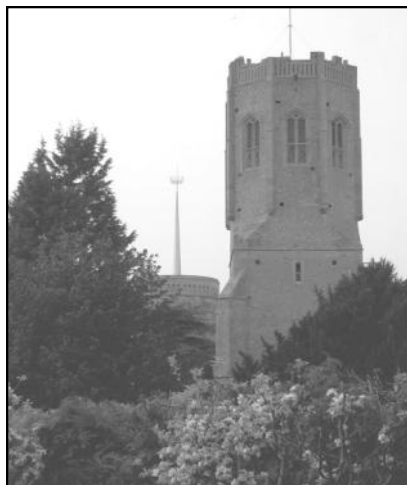
The creation of a local committee to work for St Cyriac's church took a big step forward at the meeting in the Village Hall on December 7th.

AS MEETINGS GO, it was well attended and, more encouragingly, there was a real outcome. This was thanks to strong leadership by the representatives of the Churches Conservation Trust, that owns the building: the Chairman of the meeting, David Britten, Kate Weaver, who has a long-standing involvement with the church, and her successor, Verity Stroud.

Along the way there was discussion of issues that have been the source of disquiet in various quarters. It was acknowledged by the CCT that there were "misunderstandings within the community" about the uses to which the church could be put and the impact of these on the village. For example, large events could cause parking and traffic problems. Late events could cause nuisance to neighbours. Fundraising events could diminish the amount of money spent on other fundraising exercises by the School, St Mary's Church or the Village Hall. However, it was pointed out that these and other organisations could hire the building for their own purposes, and profit, as has happened in the past.

The CCT representatives made it clear that their minds were open and they would respond to problems if and when these emerge.

Volunteers to join the Friends committee came slowly out of the shadows, with a marked reluctance to take on specific jobs (Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary). Who can blame



them? Their task will not be a sinecure. There are questions of insurance for those using the building; how to heat it adequately for winter events; and overriding all others, the need for toilet facilities. At this point the discussion impinged on plans for a lavatory already being made by the St Mary's church council.

For anyone reading this report, and totally confused, it should be pointed out that St Mary's Church, the village's parish church, is administered ultimately by the Diocese of Ely (I think). St Cyriac's, which is no longer needed for regular worship, has been taken in care by the Churches Conservation Trust, which is funded mainly by Government and the Church Commissioners, with help from smaller bodies and donations.

EE



Advent By Candlelight

Sunday November 27th

AT 3.15 ON A GREY NOVEMBER afternoon people began to arrive at St Mary's Church, eager to obtain a good seat for the annual village event, "Advent by Candlelight" masterminded by Ian de Massini. This concert draws an audience from all the nearby villages as well as from Cambridge — an excellent indication of the quality of the performance. One can feel the anticipation of an excellent and thought provoking entertainment, as well as a hushed reverence for the surroundings.

The programme was a joy with Britten's cantata "St Nicholas" being the main theme enhanced by readings from Eric Crozier's text enlightening the audience before each musical item. Cambridge Voices' interpretation and choreography were stunning and the soloist, as St Nicolas, gave a commanding and dramatic performance from the pulpit.

Audience participation was encouraged and we all enjoyed singing the first performance of the congregational "Hymn to St Nicklaus" specially translated into English verse by Ian for the concert.

After the second half in St Cyriac's, the congregation trooped down to St Mary's for mulled wine and mince pies — a welcome warmth after the chill of St Cyriac's.

Huge thanks must go to Ian de Massini for the enormous amount of time and energy he puts into creating a polished and highly professional concert, and also to Cambridge Voices for their effortless singing which we so enjoy listening to in our two lovely churches.

A heartfelt thank-you to all the readers organised so ably by Hilary Sage and to the team, of people who ensure the concert venues are set up properly as well as Kate Child and Francis Reeks who with their team of volunteers give us all such a pleasant end to the proceedings.

All in all a very special and memorable afternoon is created, which heralds the Christmas Season with everyone gathered together in our two unique churches.



From prison, drugs and homelessness to house, family and a decent job—just one of the many EMMAUS helps.

Jan Pattinson

And more.....

Advent Sunday 2005 was satisfyingly cold, compared with the globally warmed occasions of recent years, and Cambridge Voices and village voices served up a feast of music and words centred on Benjamin Britten's St Nicolas cantata. (Nitpickers, myself among them, might worry that St Nicholas's day is not until December 6th, but that is churlish because it does occur in the season of Advent.)

The format this year was slightly different, with the readers speaking the words which the choir then sang. For the sake of the audience this was a good thing, because we were fully armed to understand some of the more puzzling narrative — notably the sad events surrounding the pickling of three little boys, recalled to life by the Saint. Yes, you have read that correctly: mourned by their mothers they were laid down in salt like so many cucumbers. There was a certain ghastly tension in the audience at this point but we were moved forward into a lovely 13th century motet followed by the great hymn "All people that on earth do dwell" and then the traditional chilly walk through the churchyard into the stone vastness of St Cyriac's.

Special recipe mulled wine, and mince pies, followed later in the warmth of St Mary's church, and we went home humming. It was nevertheless a bitter-sweet evening. Anthony Tootal, for so long a leading member of the Cambridge Voices, died in the week before the concert and his absence was deeply felt.

Elisabeth Everitt

And more still.....

The Editors would like to put in a *special word* for the PIANO ACCOMPANIST, ORGANIST and ITALIAN CONCERTO PLAYER. The word is:

BRILLIANTISSIMO!

Eds

Thank you to everyone who braved the cold, to come to our magical "Advent by Candlelight". **£530** was taken at the door. Thanks to Ian de Massini and the Cambridge Voices, who give their time, Emmaus, a really good cause, benefits from all this plus the outcome of the subsequent concert in Cambridge.

Tricia Harrison



Ever thought about becoming a volunteer?

At this time of year when we are about to make a New Year's Resolution, why not make one that will take you out to meet people and to help your community?

Your local 'Patient and Public Involvement in Health Forum' is looking for new members in your area. If you have some time on your hands and are a user of the NHS, which most of us are, you are eligible. You don't need to have a background in healthcare, merely an interest in it.

The Forums are made up of local people who are interested and enthusiastic about the health of their local community making sure that the local NHS is able to effectively and efficiently meet the health needs in the area.

This is a government initiative which gives the Forum the right to examine services provided by all NHS providers and to make suggestions for improvements. They deal with a wide range of issues, yet many people have never heard of PPI Forums, which is a terrible shame.

If you would like further information on PPI Forums you can contact the Forum Support Organisation on 0845 0093477.

Why not make that New Years Resolution one that helps the whole community?

Hazel Peacock

POLITE NOTICE

IF YOU ARE PLANNING any kind of celebration with fireworks, would you please remember that there are thatched houses — though not many! — in the village and that these are very vulnerable to stray rockets.

Please do not let your rockets stray! Thank you very much.

Hilary Sage

CHRISTMAS GARDEN

Holly, with red berries.

Mistletoe, with white.

Fir trees, laden down with snow.

Rhubarb, with frost bite

Ophir

We congratulate **Julian Luttrell**, the winner (AGAIN!) of last month's crossword competition, who should collect his prize certificate from the editors. Honourable mentions go to Martyn & Debbie Clark, Steve Lang, Robert & Julie Nunn and Hilary Sage.

COFFEE MORNING

**10.30 AM — 12.00 NOON
TUESDAY
17TH JANUARY 2006**

**AT
GOODWIN MANOR
STATION ROAD, SWAFFHAM PRIOR
(opposite the school entrance)**

**Bring & Buy • Produce stall
Raffle • Bargains galore!**

All proceeds to St Mary's Church



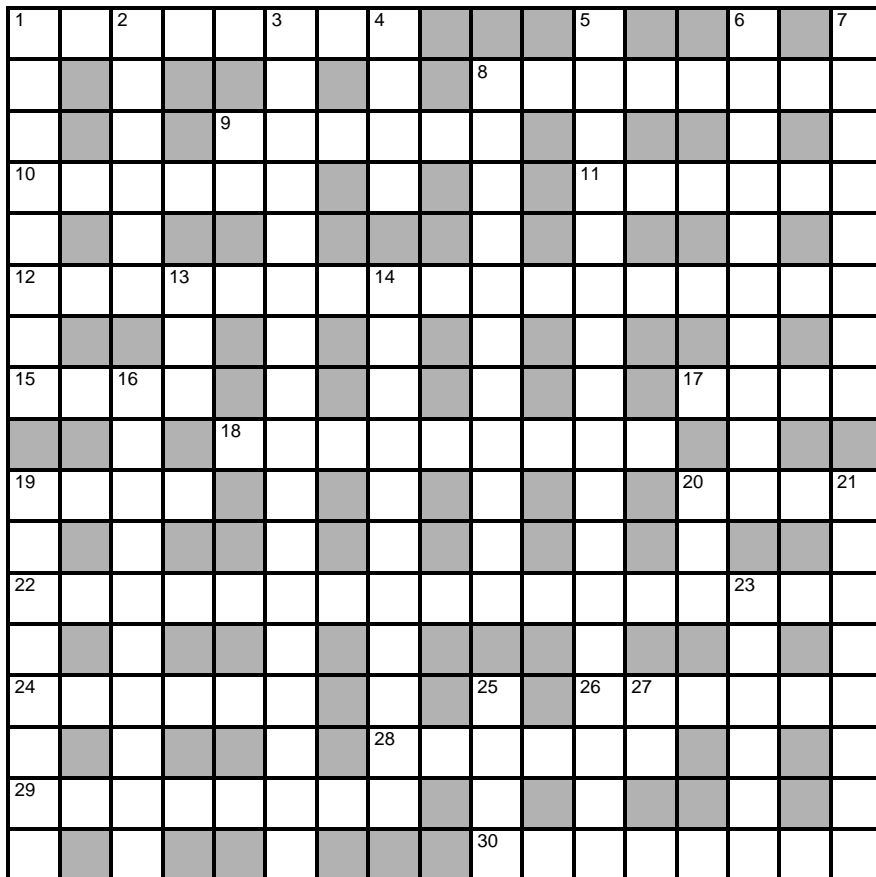
Crossword Number 29

Sponsored by ~~The Red Lion~~

Compiled by

OUNCE

Why not start the new year with a crossword from one of your favourite compilers. Send your answers to the editors by 14th January 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:.....

Address:.....

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

Across

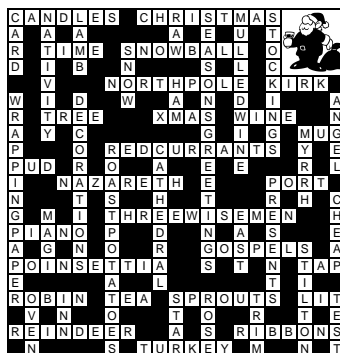
- 1 Mahogany puzzle for holiday time (8)
- 8 Editor removed, not held; law broken in Civic Centre (4,4)
- 9 "Oh...Fruit!" heard by foreign help (2,4)
- 10 Party with "pizazz"? Then why are you napping? (6)
- 11 Orders a stein of herbal tea (6)
- 12 Annual hangup? (9,8)
- 15 Old Bob, black bachelor egghead, flows back (4)
- 17 Boy stamps the album "new" initially (4)
- 18 Student: short, confused, rude, and good ringleader (9)
- 19 Sauce? Regret it, we hear (4)
- 20 Nothing taken from award, but mark left (4)
- 22 Come round. Semi-crazy is before 500 separated into categories (17)
- 24 Regal Persian pop idol (6)
- 26 Capital embraced by foreign food, pain perdu, blinis, crepes, etc (6)
- 28 Sire, Ms Wild is neglectful of her duty (6)
- 29 I leave intensive care with cart after whirling waltz (8)
- 30 Light unit I found in complex ruse to obtain indulgences (8)

Down

- 1 He precedes Native American, exchanging new coin for old coin. What a pain! (8)
- 2 Wow, last Queen, one of Terry's TOGs? (6)
- 3 Game for zeroes and hybrids? (7,3,7)

- 4 Within very early warning period (4)
- 5 Danish won't tax us? Do reshuffle now (3,8,3,3)
- 6 For Conservative sailor, Ali's twitch has hidden meaning (10)
- 7 Revealingly, disappearing ivy can cause a rash (8)
- 8 One to care for our greenest tangled growth (4,7)
- 9 Amateur bridge player finds article (2)
- 13 Found with butts, but not wanted? (3)
- 14 Eastern love rime I made to help me remember (4-7)
- 16 Scream if Cambridge crime committed? (4,6)
- 19 Gibraltar plunged for bird (4,4)
- 20 Keen beginner I found after first of September on slopes (3)
- 21 Lack of manners undisciplined nerds use? (8)
- 23 Italian delicacy revealed by little Sally, my French friend (6)
- 25 Backward, green boy (4)
- 27 We, the Americans (2)

Solution to crossword no. 28



Crier Profile Part III

Margaret Tattman

In this concluding part of Margaret's memoirs, Margaret tells about the bitterly hard conditions in which the land-girls worked—for just 10 pence a day.



WE HAD AN OLD GANGER from Swaffham Bulbeck, Arthur Thompson. He used to chew Black Twist. If it were windy when we got down Fen he'd say, 'Well are you b*****s getting out this morning or aren't you? – No, we're not getting out. Well, all right, he'd say. Well, would you want to stand at a riddle – have you ever seen the Fens blow?

This was dreadful. When we lived up Fairview Grove we used to have it on our windows. People who lived down the Fens had shutters to try and shut it out, years ago, cause it was a regular thing. Soon as ever they drilled the sugar beet the Fens blew, so they had to drill it again. No, we weren't going to go out and stand in that – what, for 10p a day? So of course he took us back to hostel and we didn't get paid. When it rained they used to put us in one of the garages with a two-handled saw, with bog oak, and the Italian prisoners of war used come with a tractor and trailer and take the wood – and that wanted some sawing. I mean, bog oak don't burn. Sid used to try and burn it when he lived up in Fairview Grove and they has a black range where you lifted t'lid and put it in, but that wouldn't burn – that only sizzles, bog oak does. The tractor with something on it used to find bog oak and we used used to dig, so they could get a chain round it to pull it out. And if they couldn't dig it out, well

"Well are you b***s getting out this morning or aren't you?" – "No, we're not getting out".... Well, would you want to stand at a riddle.... have you ever seen the Fens blow?**

then they blew them up, so they could use the land – they couldn't use it with all the bog oaks. And you could be in that much water cause you've not got to go far into Fen, have you, before you come to water.

I remember our old Doctor saying, Elliott, he come here in about 1944. He had a little Austin Ruby. Earlier in life he'd say, you wait till you get older. You'll know about it. I mean. You went sprout picking in your socks. They were big, like seamens' socks – you used to take 'em off and wring 'em, put 'em

back on again – you had no choice, had you? They didn't bring you home because you were cold and you were wet. Same as wi' carrot and wi' sugar beet, when they were frozen in you had to kick 'em out wi' your foot: and Arthur used to shout after us 'It's no use you putting it back in again because it won't grow' – that's when you were singling. Instead of pulling one out and leaving a gap like that you pull the other one out and leave a gap the other side. Poor old Arthur. He had something to put up with.

Can you imagine, sixty girls, waiting for a bath? I think there were four baths. It was nearly always me and my mates got there when the hot water was gone – they couldn't supply enough water in one day for sixty girls. When you'd been down the Fen all day you were filthy. And for days after you've got the Fen dirt coming out of your eyes. When you're seventeen it doesn't matter, does it?

The earlier ones – I don't know if Joan Bradley and Mary were here then – were in hostel grounds, under canvas. I think they had a good time, from what I can gather, those that came in 1939. There were some bedrooms on t'ground floor – I didn't know till t'other week, but Mary, she was there before me, she came '42 – the miserable warden we had, she had them not barred but she had 'em locked, cause I suppose some let y'know, soldiers in at night...



Margaret, age 17, with the spitfire (see Part I) on her lapel

“You girls smoking up there?” – “No, Mrs Norman”...

No heating, y'know...well, in winter there was a bit of fire with a bit of coke on it, and we used to empty sugar ashing on, because that'll get a fire going, but no, we were cold. Four slices, well, that's not much for all day, was it? We had another, Anghara, she worked in t'kitchen before she went on't land in t'morning and she'd tell you before there might be a bit of dripping. You'd get up before gong went, see if there might be a bit. Apple sandwiches, carrot sandwiches. Another ganger, Mr Waters, used to live in the first lodge of the drive, him and his wife, and he used to bring me food, because I was expecting...I worked on t'land nearly seven month, because we'd got no money...if you went down the pub you got back and there were nothing, you went to bed hungry. You couldn't get nothing - everything were rationed. But I went up to 11½ stone – it must've been t'beer! I can't tell you the nights that we had down there.

The last matron we had, Mrs Norman from Wicken, and her niece, well, we knew she

couldn't get up them stairs to the top floor. She used to stand at t'bottom, banging her stick, sedate lady with snow-white hair in a bun – I can see her now – 'You girls smoking up there? – No, Mrs Norman...and we used to sit...I still do, I still put ash in my hand now, and that's through habit. She knew we were smoking but she couldn't get up there. There was a chapel up there and a nursery, scenes all round the wall. You were the dog's dinner if you got put where t'nursery was. There were three of us. We've nearly all gone now: there's one



....and later, with husband Snowy

from Lode – she's lost her husband, she's gone to Burwell to live; another, Joyce Cadwallender, she was a scribe in the silver place at Sheffield, all the beautiful trays and things...very clever lady she was; she lives at Burwell now; then there's one at Reach; then there's Mary up there, and one at Bulbeck but she's had to go in a home. We make enquiries about her - her daughter lives up Greenhead Road, June. Another girl we had, Mina, and she was very deaf. We had a big room, it had a bow at one end to it, at the big house. That was called the common room. That's where we used to play cards and what not. And we were in there one night, doing a seance at midnight. It was ever such a creepy place, y'know. Somebody said listen, there's a doodlebug...course, we all got from table, and nobody thought to pull Mina under, she was still sat up at table! I don't know where it dropped, we never heard it stop. Good job, weren't it? Joan Bradley, she were a bit deaf, but she saw what we were doing - but poor Mina...!

You only got so many passes a year to go home. There weren't enough money out of...well, you worked five days a week, so all I got was the equivalent of 50p, ten bob, after they took me board out. Being only 17 I didn't get as much as the 18-year-olds, and I mean me mam and dad, they hadn't got the money – the other three had left home and there was only me dad's wages from the pit and that was never a lot, y'know.

So I don't begrudge anything the young ones have got. I mean, I'm better off than I've ever been in my life, even when I went to work 25 years...All right, a fiver went a long way, in 1962 when I started at Pye's, but now...

So that's all the memories that we've got, really – other than backache.

But we got through, didn't we?

*As told to Mark Lewinsky
by Margaret Tattman*



VILLAGE GARDENERS

LAST YEAR when Dr Twiggs Way talked to us, the topic was “Virgins, Weeders and Queens”—the history and influence of emancipated women in the garden. This year it was the turn of the men!

Her talk was entitled “Capability” Brown and Humphry Repton—local lads made good. “Local”, as Twiggs said, was rather a loose term, but Lancelot “Capability Brown (1783-1783), bom into a humble family in Northumberland, lived at the manor house in Fenstanton (a gift in lieu of payment for garden services rendered, from the Earl of Northampton). Brown had the good fortune to be around during a booming economy in this country, when the very wealthy on their huge estates were very keen to employ such a “genius” (or just someone with an extraordinary formula?).

He was a man of great personal charm; honest and socially at ease in all settings; had fantastic business acumen and was therefore able to set about “deformalising” the acres belonging to the great and the good: Chatsworth and Blenheim being two notable examples along with the gardens at Audley End and Maddingley Hall. He was a trees, turf and water man and drew up plans, none of which he ever published, to improve and transform land, by removing villages, submerging landscapes, creating lakes and islands to produce an entirely “natural” look. To quote from a Blenheim Palace guide “but what takes the eye and holds it is the great lake and it’s poplared island, like a becalmed frigate, with Sir John Vanbrugh’s Grand Bridge and Capability Brown’s hanging-beech woods beyond; all apparently so effortless and natural; all in reality so thoughtfully and laboriously contrived.”



*Capability’s lake at Blenheim with Grand Bridge: Brown’s nickname came from his habit of telling clients that their gardens had—you guessed it—great **capabilities**!*

Humphry Repton (1752-1818), Brown’s natural successor, was

born and went to school in Bury St Edmunds. By this time there were plenty of nouveau riche about but the economic boom was starting it’s decline. He was in many ways , very different to his illustrious predecessor; a terrible snob; sentimental and a consummate Victorian, before she was even born! He liked things fussy, formal and pretty-using lots of landscape tricks-fountains, raised borders, baskets and lots of flowers. A real “garden” man.

Having very little income at the age of thirty six, he decided to try his hand at

garden design. He was more rugged and picturesque than Brown and produced, not plans, but paintings of “before and after” for his clients. He was a prolific publisher and sold his “Red Book” on the aggrandisement he could offer to their properties. His gardens were floral, full of ornaments and adornments—very rustic. Ashridge in Hertfordshire is a Repton garden.

So the contrast in these two great men and their work, so eloquently set in the social context of the time was fascinatingly presented to us. A story that goes full circle—from Brown digging up lawns and flower beds, to produce the “natural” look, to Repton returning gardens to their very formal state.

Thanks as usual to our very patient projectionist—Ron Prime. We have many interesting speakers arranged for next year and in the summer will be visiting a Repton garden.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday **17th January** when Ken Harbutt, who regularly shows at Chelsea, will be giving us a talk on Poppies.

Margaret Joyce



WI Notes

We had a lovely time at our Christmas Party on 5th December. The free-flowing wine was accompanied by canapés — smoked salmon and caviare, cream cheese and crab. Then followed a scrumptious meal of cold turkey and salads and delectable puddings,

The competition for the craziest home-made Christmas ear-rings was won by Gwen Verlander who was presented with the silver cup by the President Margaret Phillips. We then had a riotous fun game, a quiz to rack our brains (but not too much) and an exchange of surprise presents.

Many thanks to Sheila Smith who joined us and coped with all the washing up,

Our next meeting is on 16th January when Andrew Jackson will talk about Suffolk Villages.

Betty Prime

Happy New Year from Bottisham Royal British Legion

A quiet month ahead starting with Bingo on Sunday 1st January. The children's party is on Saturday 14th January from 3 pm to 5 pm for member's children and grand children. The second Sunday Bingo session of the month is on 15th January.

The Poppy Restaurant is holding an Open Weekend on 28th and 29th January for non members. To book a table telephone 01223 812063. We look forward to seeing you there, you will want to join (it is only £11.50 a year)

Jacky Cameron



**EAST CAMBS
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

From our District
Councillor
Allen Alderson

FIGURES RELEASED by the National Audit Office have revealed that East Cambs District Council has one of the best and most successful collection rates of Council Tax across the eastern region. (*Hmm...that really **warms the cockles** of our hearts! Eds*)

Alex Colyer, Executive Director of Finance, said “We have been working with our revenues contractor Capita for several years in developing efficient council tax collection and payments systems, and have been awarded government Charter Mark status in recognition of the high quality of our service.



“From being one of the best collectors of council tax in the region, our target is now to become one of the best in Britain, and we are introducing new and easier ways for residents to be able to make their payments.”

The government proposes to replace our county police forces with a larger regional force. I suspect this is all part of their longer term aim of replacing our district and county councils with a much larger and remote East Anglian Regional Council.

Cambridgeshire’s three options on regional policing are —

1) Made up of six forces.

Cambs \ Norfolk \ Suffolk \ Hertfordshire \ Bedfordshire \ Essex.

2) North \ South split.

Cambridgeshire \ Norfolk \ Suffolk.

3) East \ West split.

Cambridgeshire \ Hertfordshire \ Bedfordshire.

At East Cambs District Council’s full Council Meeting on December 6th the Conservative group proposed the following motion.

“This Council rejects the Home Office’s three options to restructure Cambridgeshire Constabulary to create a strategic force which are:-

-A single force covering the Eastern Region.

-Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire, and Hertfordshire.

-Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, and Suffolk.

This Council supports the current single force option ie. no change, as it believes it is a simpler and more cost effective solution to ensure that the Force is fit for purpose. This Council is concerned at the travel time costs and pressures on Police Authority Members and Senior Officers who would have to travel more under each of the three Home Office options. Furthermore, these proposals could also lead to a geographic concentration of jobs out of the Cambridgeshire area. This Council also

believes it is not necessary for Forces to merge to ‘bring about efficiencies’ as this could be achieved through improved collaboration across boundaries.

However, if the Home Office are to pursue their proposal to continue with Regional Restructuring of the Force, this Council would prefer the third option to merge with the neighbouring counties of Norfolk and Suffolk with the assurance that the level of front-line policing in Cambridgeshire remains the same or higher”.

A large majority carried this motion. It is to be hoped that other local authorities make known their opposition to the Home Office’s proposals.

I would like to finish by wishing all of the residents of the Swaffhams Ward a happy new year and pledge to continue work diligently on your behalf.

Allen Alderson

St Mary’s Social Events Diary for 2006.

HERE ARE SOME DATES for your new diary. May I suggest you put them in now. We have tried very hard to avoid clashes with any other village activities and it would really be appreciated if other village organisations would do likewise.

17 th January	Coffee Morning	Goodwin Manor	(10.30am — noon)
25 th Feb	Quiz Night	Village Hall	(7.30pm— 10.00pm)
25 th March	Moveable Feast		(7.00pm— 1000pm)
1 st May	Raffle	Reach Fair	
21 st May	Barbecue,	Wilmott’s Farm	
	(Rogation Sunday Lunchtime)		
To Be Arranged	Jazz Night	The Red Lion	(7.00pm—10.00pm) (depending on entertainment license)
July	Children’s Concert,		
	(A date to be fixed by Ian de Massini early in 2006)		
23 rd September	Quiz Night	Village Hall	(7.30pm— 10.00pm)
7 th October	Harvest Supper	Village Hall	(6.00pm — 900pm)
18 th November	Village Variety	Village Hall	(7.00pm—10.00pm)
11 th November	Christmas Market	Village Hall	(2.30pm — 4.30pm)
3 rd December	Advent by Candlelight	Both Churches	(4.00pm)

REACH FAIR

For the past few years we have run a raffle. Has anyone out there a suggestion for this year’s raffle? It needs to be something which appeals to all ages and as it is a fund raiser it needs to be given. Do you know of any firm that would fit the bill and gain publicity at the same time?

Kate Child 743983



I REPORTED LAST TIME ON THE 2.5 MILLION POUND GRANT from government for improving public transport. One service that will benefit is the 111 Cambridge-Bottisham-Burwell-Newmarket route. From April this will run every 30 minutes (instead of hourly) and be renamed the number 11.

The Independent Commission for Social Care Inspection awarded the County Council only One Star in its assessment of Children's and Adult Social Care. This means that there are only three councils doing a worse job in the entire country. The Conservative Administration at Shire Hall has failed over a number of years to make any improvement in this crucial area of service delivery. The Corporate Performance Assessment for Cambridgeshire, undertaken by the Audit Commission, will fall from 'excellent' to 'good' this year partly as a result of inspections as damning these.



"...One service that will benefit is the 111 Cambridge-Bottisham-Burwell-Newmarket route (That's US! Eds) . From April this will run every 30 minutes (instead of hourly) and be renamed the number 11. "

Public consultation is taking place at the moment on the proposed redevelopment of about 24 acres around Cambridge Railway Station. It is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to provide an effective Transport Interchange and a long term view must be taken on the provision of bus bays to help relieve the congestion and pollution at Drummer Street. Cycle provision must also be adequate and as close to the station as possible.

It is budget time again for the County Council. Facts and figures I have been given tell me that last year Cambridgeshire had the 3rd lowest

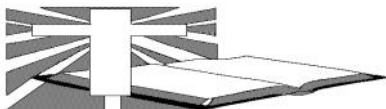
Council Tax for the 34 Shire Counties but when the same Shire Counties were measured for earnings we were 5th highest. In theory this means we are under taxed in relation to our ability to pay. I am sure however that theory and practice are not necessarily the same. The good news is that the government settlement has given the county £2 million pounds more for 2006/7 than expected but the bad news is that in 2007/8 there is likely to be a drop of £3.5 million.

In the Fire Service more sophisticated rescue equipment is being issued to a number of strategic stations across the county. This speeds up rescue time as, in many cases, it negates the need to wait for a specialist vehicle from Cambridge, Huntingdon or Peterborough.

Hazel Williams

01638 743897

Hazel.Williams@cambridgeshire.gov.uk



Zion Baptist Chapel

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

WHAT HOPE FOR 2006?

Well, Christmas is over and the New Year is here. It only seems like yesterday that we were celebrating the start of a new millenium, but already 2005 is consigned to the history books. Despite all of those lovely things we enjoyed over Christmas – somehow the first credit card bill of the year brings us back to earth with a bit of a bump! And what about those New Year's resolutions – some of us have given up making them because we know they all too often turn into New Year's disolutions!

Life sometimes seems like one long cycle of expectation and disappointment, of hope and despair. When we set out to change our lives for the better our *will* power often seems to be no match for our *won't* power. I recently read these words written by someone who clearly understands what it is to be human: "I obviously need help! I realise that I don't have what it takes. I can will it, but I can't *do* it. I decide to do good, but I don't *really* do it; I decide not to do bad, but then I do it anyway. My decisions, such as they are, don't result in actions. Something has gone wrong deep within me and gets the better of me every time. It happens so regularly that it's predictable."

How most of us long to break out of this and to see something dramatic happen to our life! How we long to 'live life to the full' and not just 'survive another year'! In the same book that I have just quoted from I also found these words: "Forget about

"Life sometimes seems like one long cycle of expectation and disappointment, of hope and despair....."

what's happened; don't keep going over old history. Be alert, be present." Each new day is the first day of the rest of our lives, we get another opportunity to take a couple of steps forward, even if we end up taking one step back in the process.

But we needn't take the journey alone. These quotes, perhaps surprisingly, both come from the Bible – and the second quote concludes "This is what God says: I'm about to do something brand-new. It's bursting out! Don't you see it? There it is!". Christians around the world will tell you how they have experienced the

miracle of life change as a result of meeting Jesus. If you're interested in meeting Jesus for yourself, then the Alpha Course is one way that this could happen. A course will be starting locally in February – more details will be in the next issue, or call us for more information. Here's hoping that 2006 will be a significant year in your life – Happy New Year!

Simon Goddard

Additional Notice

A ladies Bible study will be running over 10 Thursday evenings between January and July 2006. The study is based around a book by Beth Moore entitled 'To Live is Christ', and a video which is shown during each session. A fee of £5-£7 will be payable to cover the cost of the book. Anyone interested should leave their details on the Chapel Answerphone (01223 811524) and Denise Wells, who is facilitating the study, will call you back. All women are welcome.

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, Proceeds for St Mary's Church Restoration Fund and The
Macmillan Trust



Church of England Services

January 2006

	ST MARY'S Swaffham Prior	ST MARY'S Swaffham Bulbeck	Bottisham
Sun 1		8:00am Holy Communion 9:30am Family Service	11:00am Holy Communion
Sun 8	8:00am Holy Communion [†] 11:00am Family Service	9:30am Village Communion	11:00am Holy Communion
Sun 15	11:00am Holy Communion	9:30am Village Communion	11:00am Holy Communion
Sun 22	11:00am Matins	9:30am Holy Communion 6:30pm Christian Unity Service	8:00am Holy Communion 11:00am Family Service
Sun 29			10:00am Benefice Communion

PASTORAL LETTER, January 2006

Bottisham Vicarage

Dear Friends,

The beginning of a New Year is often a time for taking stock of where we are in our lives. When we take stock we can either say "well, that's life" and rationalise everything that happens to us and talk about 'fate', or we can reflect more deeply about why things happen to us and how we should respond to them.

In Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, Willie Loman found a way to justify everything he did. He refused to be concerned when his children got into trouble by their lying and stealing. He concluded, "It's no big deal. After all, that's what politicians do all the time." Eventually though Willie was fired from his job, and as a result he committed suicide. Rationalisation led to disaster.

The famous physician and author of the 'Dr Finlay' novels, A. J. Cronin, took the opposite path. Born in [Cardross](#), Scotland, Cronin was the only child of a

Catholic father and a Protestant mother. He was a precocious student at [Dumbarton Academy](#) and won many writing competitions. Due to his exceptional abilities, he was awarded a scholarship to study [medicine](#) at the [University of Glasgow](#). It was there that he met his future wife, Agnes Mary Gibson, who was also a medical student.

Cronin trained as a doctor in various hospitals before serving as a [Royal Navy surgeon](#) during [World War I](#). After the war he set up a practice in a [mining](#) area of [South Wales](#) and was appointed Medical Inspector of Mines.

In his autobiography he tells how he came to see that his own wisdom and resources were totally inadequate to meet his deepest spiritual needs. He finally surrendered his heart to Christ, or as he put it, to "the inexorable appeal of the Cross." Of his experience Cronin said, "I had made the immense discovery of why I was alive."

The Bible tells us: *"Because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved."* (Ephesians 2:4/5)

I believe God wants to help us get the most of out of life, to fulfil our true potential and make the best of our lives. That is why he came into the world in the form of his son Jesus Christ, in order to help us find that true fulfilment, through a loving and close relationship with him.

So, as we begin a new year, let us not be fatalistic, let us not shrug our shoulders and stagger on in the same old way. Why not consider allowing God to work in your life, to shape and guide the way you react and deal with the challenges this new year will bring. You never know - you might be in for a pleasant surprise!

I wish you all a very happy new year.

David



SOS HELP!!

A small group of us, mostly not in the first bloom of youth, take it in turns to keep St. Mary's Church looking spic and span. By the remarks in the visitors book this is much appreciated. However, we really do need some more volunteers, so that it doesn't come round too frequently — the more we have the better — it could be possibly every 6 or 7 weeks; we usually work in pairs, at a time that suits us, normally on a Friday or Saturday, so that the church is looking immaculate for Sunday. You don't have to be a regular Church attender, just someone with a public spirit. Please give me a call if you would be willing to help.

Kate Child

743983

PS: There is no sex discrimination: men are equally welcome to volunteer!

Dates for Your Diary - January 2006

Tue	3	Mobile Library, Cage Hill 2:40-3:30, Chapel 3:35-4:00pm
Thu	12	PC Meeting, 8pm VH Pied Piper of Hamelin, BVC Main Hall, 7.30pm (Tel: 742841)
Fri	13	Pied Piper of Hamelin, BVC Main Hall, 7.30pm
Sat	14	Pied Piper of Hamelin, BVC Main Hall, 2.30, 7.30pm
Sun	15	Crier Copy Deadline
Mon	16	WI VH, 7.30
Tue	17	Coffee Morning, 10am—noon, Goodwin Manor Village Gardener's, 8pm VH Mobile Library, Cage Hill 2:40-3:30, Chapel 3:35-4:00pm
Tues	31	Mobile Library, Cage Hill 2:40-3:30, Chapel 3:35-4:00pm

Village Clubs and Societies

Club	Contact	Tel.	Date	Time	Place
FOSPS	Clare Freeman	741316	2 nd 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
Cubs	Andrew Noyes	743864	Weds (term time)	6:00-7:30pm	Village School
Reading Group	Brenda Wilson	743937	1 st 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	3 rd Tues of month	8:00pm	Village Hall
WI	Margaret Phillips	741495	3 rd 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	