

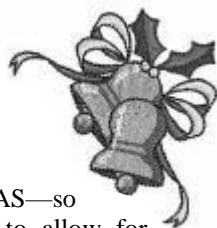


# The Swaffham Crier

Volume XXX1 Number 12

December 2007

## Editorial



WE CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S NEARLY CHRISTMAS—so says the school, and so say we, if at greater length, to allow for decorative seasonal ornament. Anticipating the usual distribution problems with our much-acclaimed *Crier's The Best of Christmas* FREE CD, another sample:

**"Tis the Season to be Sinking  
Tra-la-la-la laa, with Great Regret,  
Deeply into What I'm Thinking,  
Tra-la-la-la-la, Humungous DEBT!**

**Sparkly Visa,  
Twinkly Master Card,  
Gold and Platinum, Silver too  
But here's a Wish from your  
FREE Crier,  
Merry Christmas All, from Us to You!"**

Seasons Greeting from all the *Crier* Team!

**Mike Phillips, Rodger Connan, Ruth Stinton,  
Caroline & James Matheson**



**Cover Picture: Happy Christmas by Claire Newbolt**

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# Letters to the Editors



Dear Eds

## Crier News and Views

I'd understood that there was no censorship of letters with names at the bottom of them in the *Crier* but for the record, I did try to reply regarding the bizarre Cambridge bicycle theft figures back in the summer. Further research suggests it is very likely that the figures of 4500 thefts per week were in fact the figures per year. You will have to wonder what I envisioned if there really were six hundred and something thefts per day, every day of the year, because if I say much more this letter might disappear too. Who might have an interest in the suppression of truthful data?

But things bizarre are still out there. I come from the small neighbouring county of Bedfordshire, also a farming one, and not of any great geographical significance. I remember some hill meadows disappearing under the barley when I was about eight but there are some square miles of chalk hills that have not gone under the plough, and some decent woodland between Luton and Bedford. Someone thought it will be good to plonk a Center Parcs in the middle of that, so they haven't ceased trying to take up the remaining uncultivated land with 'facilities'.

When I moved into Cambridgeshire I was struck by how little meadow or woodland there is. What wildlife there is here around Swaffham Prior out towards Ely lives – no, sorry, clings – on the margins: hedgerows and Devil's Ditch/Dyke. (I don't go up there much because of the dog sh\*\* every few yards (*Sheep sh\*\* surely? Mark doesn't go up there much... Eds*) – evidence of the lack of walking space here) What lives out the back of my garden is ravaged by crows and magpies (does nobody manage their numbers any more?) and cats, of course, including my own. The lengths I have gone to to discourage the evil beast from murdering what's out there are not worth recording but I bet there aren't many cats out there that jingle more than mine. It only gets mice now. Not much point getting rid of it – plenty of others out there to take up the slack. It's a pretty precarious existence, and it's not getting better, or even staying the same. We're not yet at 'Silent Spring', but I'm not exaggerating when I say it's quiet and getting quieter. I can't show you even sparrows in the trees at the end of my garden. There's still collared doves, pigeons, wrens, the odd robin, blue tits and great tits and a few blackbirds, but precious little else. I'm not making it up. It's depressing. I'm not sorry the bikes have gone from the field but that doesn't balance with being probably the last person to see a slow worm out there before the cultivation ended any chance of seeing one again.

Oh yes, and there's Wicken Fen. That fantastic tiny little scrap of once huge wetland, a last small refuge of the amazing small native wildlife of this area. Are there people who wouldn't want to expand it and arrest the decline of Cambridgeshire's native animals and maybe even give them a chance to expand enough to establish numbers and habitat adequate enough to hold out against the global warming that's coming down on us? Well, there are, ►



## CAROLS AT THE VILLAGE HALL

Please come and join us for the traditional singing of carols  
and Christmas songs at the Village Hall.  
And enjoy as much fine mulled wine as you can drink  
with a few mince pies.



Again we will be singing inside the hall.

**MR ANDREW NOYES**

*With his quite Remarkable Band  
Provides the music*

**AND**

*We also have the services of  
Amazing, Masterly, Incomparable  
HILARY SAGE*



Put a bit of tinsel in your hair and please come,  
It's Free.

**WEDNESDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER at 7.00pm**

*The Gay Bulleid Good Neighbour Award  
Will be presented during the Evening*



## HOCKEY ON BOXING DAY MORNING

IT IS COMING UP TO THAT TIME OF YEAR when we stretch out a hand of peace and goodwill to our neighbours in Swaffham Bulbeck and we then pass the time of day beating each other round the head with a lot of very hard sticks.

Last year it was very close and we not only need the old-stagers (remember they brought Beckham back) but also some younger talent. Do phone me on 742974 if you want to play..

As usual the match will take place on Boxing Day, on the Denny at Swaffham Bulbeck, at 11.00am. Don't forget, there will be a collection for Magpas.

*Alastair Everitt*

***Come and support your local team!***

and I read the views of one of them in the last *Crier*. ‘silliness’ ‘severe practical difficulties’ ‘loss of thousands of acres of the finest food-growing land’ (I was told by someone who farms it that a lot of it is in its last decades of usefulness) ‘uncertainty...fen roads...properties...lodes...midges...mosquitoes...travellers...hare coursing...thousands of visiting vehicles...ill-conceived, unnecessary and unwanted’.

Oh, and a poem from Ophir. Best not say anything about that, had I?

**Mark Lewinski**

You can find reasons to suppress anything if you really try. But if there is to be any wildlife worth seeing left for our children, then it’s necessary, I support it and I for one want it.

*Oh alright ! The sinisterly suppressing Eds seem to have also censored an interesting May Village Gardeners report (mysteriously entitled WI 2005), which they have just discovered hiding between two telephone books. Many apologies for any copy unintentionally omitted this year. And see page 30. Eds*

## HOLLY NOT MUCH HOLLY



After three bountiful years  
The holly is very sparse this year.

Whatever the reason, the berries came early  
and ripened during August, September and October.

If a little holly is available during December  
we shall phone our loyal customers of the last few years  
(or they may phone us on 742974)  
And give them first choice.



Should anything change and we find another source  
Posters will be displayed throughout the Village.

**Elisabeth Everitt**

### Village Talking Point—A Poem

The *Crier* received a scurrilous little poem this month which readers will be very disappointed we can’t publish because it’s not signed. Not all copy that goes in the *Crier* is signed (editors’ decision) but we must always know who wrote it. Sender, please send name and telephone number, and it can go in the New Year’s issue.

# A WINTER THOUGHT ON NIGHTCAPS

UNTIL 1964 the Canon Laws of the Church of England, **drawn up in 1603**, legislated on what headwear clergy were allowed to wear in bed. “Not a coif or wrought nightcap, but only plain nightcaps of black silk, satin or velvet.” These detailed rules were set “not to attribute any holiness or special worthiness to the said garments, but for decency, gravity and order.”

So now you know!



---

## VILLAGE CAROL SERVICE

on

**SUNDAY**

**DECEMBER 16<sup>th</sup> at 4.30pm**

in

**St Mary's Church**

**Swaffham Prior**

**ALL WELCOME**



*Hear the Christmas story*  
*Sing the traditional Carols*

## From our Reporter at the Parish Council Meeting

IN ADDITION TO THE USUAL TWO SUSPECTS in the public gallery were three representatives from Ashwell to give yet another presentation on the Water Tower development. They – Simon, Tony and Amanda—entertained the hope that they would be moved forward from No 8 on the Agenda to the beginning of the meeting but it was not to be and they witnessed over an hour of exciting village debate. None had ever attended a parish council meeting before, so I suppose they left Swaffham Prior that night greatly enriched by the unexpected experience, or saying “never again”.



After the usual formalities Hazel Williams gave her CCC report which was packed with information some of which I cover just in case her busy schedule prevents a CCC report going to the *Crier*. While much of her news has been covered by the *Cambridge Evening News* the *Crier* sometimes gets *exclusives*, as it is always interesting to hear the forceful comments of our CCC representative. For example Hazel's fury about the £47,000 spent on selecting a new CCC chief executive with an unanimous vote in favour, only for it to be scuppered by Shona Johnstone, Leader of the Council, who phoned the candidate up after the appointment in such a way that he declined to accept the offer. The new Guided Bus is to be clobbered with a £1 million business rate charge which had not been anticipated. Hazel did not say how the oversight occurred or whether there has been a recent change of rules but it seems that business rates will also be applied to the Park and Ride sites. The CCC is now exploring the possibility of making the two forms of transport charitable trusts which would escape business rates. She also broke the bad news that there will be a six month delay in the refurbishment of the Cambridge Public Library because of defects in the original building and the discovery of asbestos.

Geoffrey Woollard now intervened with a question “specifically for Mrs Williams”, and asked whether she knew that Hurdle Farm in Reach, with its hundred plus acres, had been sold to the National Trust, whether her opinion had been sought, and whether she knew the selling price. Hazel gave a negative to each question. Geoffrey now raised the stakes by saying he understood the price to be around £2,900 an acre which he thought was possibly a modest price. He asked Hazel to find out who valued the property and how it was sold. This Hazel readily agreed to do because she felt embarrassed and angry that she had not been told and consulted. Geoffrey had put all this on paper and he then said/wrote:

*“It is probably just coincidence, but the man who used to be in charge of the Cambridgeshire County Council Farms was Mr Jon Megginson, and the man in charge of the National Trust's ‘Wicken Vision’ is Mr Jon Megginson.”*

A member asked “Are you saying it's a fix?” “No”, said Geoffrey, “I have chosen my words very carefully.”

His last paragraph went on:

*“I am, of course, concerned at the possibility of there having been some kind of*

***“It is probably just coincidence, but the man who used to be in charge of the Cambridgeshire County Council Farms was Mr Jon Megginson, and the man in charge of the National Trust’s ‘Wicken Vision’ is Mr Jon Megginson.”***

**A member asked “Are you saying it’s a fix?” “No”, said Geoffrey, “I have chosen my words very carefully.”**

*collusion between CCC and the NT to the benefit of the latter and to the disbenefit of the public, the finances of the County Council, and those of Council Tax payers.”*

It will be a very interesting December PC meeting when we hear the answers.

CALC has written to say that if a bus shelter is more than 50% enclosed a ‘No Smoking’ sign has to appear. Taking into account the floor, the back, the top and the sides a sign will be put up in our bus shelter. Members didn’t expect the sign to stay up long and most appeared to feel it was a bit of a nonsense.

Meanwhile Simon, Tony and Amanda were looking increasingly anxious as the time passed and at 8.05 we were only at 5a on the Agenda. Allen Alderson then presented his report in a very unusual way.

He seemed to be reading slowly and steadily pages and pages of an official report and when there was a murmur of concern from a member he explained that it was all very complicated and that he had shortened and simplified it immensely. I think few were convinced. Maybe he’ll return to his usual style next time. However he did enliven the meeting when he announced that Swaffham Prior was scheduled to have a 26% increase in its travellers. Geoffrey received this news in his usual calm and considered way, and stabbing a finger at our two District and County councillors thundered:- “IF THAT HAPPENS YOU ARE BOTH DEAD MEAT, AND I MEAN DEAD MEAT”. Geoffrey still remains a farmer at heart.

After that Amanda became really concerned and was not reassured when I showed her the list of correspondence to be discussed. She gave a wan smile but distinctly paled.

As it happens most of the correspondence had been distributed previous to the meeting and they spent the time admiring the letter from Alex Kirby about “Bee Orchids”. All thought it an excellent letter and that he would make a very good PC member. As a vacancy had just occurred Alex’s letter was very timely as this was the finger of destiny pointing him the way. Because Alex’s letter has a great local significance it is reproduced separately after this report.

At last, at 8.35, we reached item No 8 and Ashwell began their presentation. Having been to all their presentations I have never witnessed a property company so anxious not to offend and to agree to almost all comments in a positive way. They have done everything asked of them, reduced the height of some houses, ensured that no-one overlooks existing houses, and are



making a £10,000 grant towards any Mill Hill traffic scheme agreed with the CCC. So they were a bit startled to hear from one member that they had made a mistake by not putting in large windows opening up the view over the fens when at all previous meetings everyone had been binding on about the necessity not to overlook existing houses. Simon was speechless especially when told “I wouldn’t buy one of your houses because of that.” But he was very gracious and said he had never come across such a positive and constructive group of residents.

David Almond again raised the question of affordable housing and the PC confirmed its determination to provide some if suitable cheap land becomes available. They welcome hearing about any possible suitable sites.

The High Street signs came up again and at the time of the meeting No 2 sign had still not been removed. During the October meeting street names had been discussed and there was a lot of evidence showing whether and when the High Street is the High Street. This was not reported in the *Crier* nor by the Clerk in her *Crier* report, but there is an excellent account in the Clerk’s full minutes. This again is of great local interest and together with Alex’s letter is reproduced at the end of this report.

Much else happened before the meeting ended so read the Clerk’s report. It’s worth it.

*Alastair Everitt*

## **Appendix One – BEE ORCHIDS**

Karen King  
5 November 2007  
Clerk to the Parish Council

Dear Karen

Four years ago I counted seventeen Bee Orchids on the northern (cemetery side) verge of the B1102 where it by-passes the village. This year I counted only nine. Next summer I fear there will be even fewer; the reason, in part, will be because of some insensitive ground clearance work undertaken to the verge and ditch in October.

Does the Parish Council know why this scalping has been undertaken; who commissioned the work – have they inspected the results; who did it; what has been achieved; how much has it cost the tax payer? Why have large quantities of soil, which is of a different nature and type to our local chalky marl, been spread and compacted onto the ground? Will this imported soil support the specialized soil dwelling fungus on which the Bee Orchid relies for its existence?

Will the Parish Councillors be able to prevent further damage; indeed, will they be able to instigate a verge improvement plan that will encourage more orchids and native wild flowers? Can the Council save our orchids as well as the Lodes?

Yours sincerely  
Alex Kirby



*Yes, they really do  
look like bees.*



## Appendix Two – WHAT’S IN A NAME

An extract (*italics added*) taken from the Clerk’s full Minutes  
of the Swaffham Prior PC Meeting held on 11 October 2007

### 158(a) High Street Signs & Naming

“G. Woollard introduced a further discussion on Street Signs and Naming following earlier comments by A. Camps to the effect that the South-Western end of the road/street through the village fronting the Swaffham Prior House Estate ‘has always been Swaffham Bulbeck Road’. The discussion was assisted by an 1887 Ordnance Survey large-scale map of the village which showed clearly that the then High Street was central to the village and included what is now called Lower End. The South-Western end of the road/street through the village fronting Swaffham Prior House Estate was not ‘labelled’ on this 1887 map. Further assistance was provided by copies of two other and older maps that had been obtained from the Cambridge Record Office by a researcher for Mr Michael Marshall of Swaffham Prior House. One of these, dated 1805, showed clearly the South-Western end of the road/street through the village fronting the Swaffham Prior House Estate labelled ‘Swaffham Bulbeck Road’. ‘High Street’ was not labelled at all. The final map, dated 18?? but assumed to be a copy of the Swaffham Prior Enclosure Award Map of 1815, also showed clearly the South-Western end of the road /street through the village fronting Swaffham Prior House Estate labelled ‘Swaffham Bulbeck Road’ and ‘High Street’ not labelled at all.”

*(“In the light of this historic evidence” the PC agreed unanimously to ask ECDC to change the current signage and reinstate ‘Swaffham Bulbeck Road’)*

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## POSTAL SCAM

THE TRADING STANDARDS OFFICE are making people aware of the following scam:

A card is posted through your door from a company called PDS (Parcel Delivery Service) suggesting that they were unable to deliver a parcel and that you need to contact them on 0906 6611911 (a premium rate number).

**DO NOT call this number.**

**This is a mail scam originating from Belize.**



If you do call the number and you start to hear a recorded message you will already have been billed £15 for the phone call. If you do receive a card with these details, then please contact Royal Mail Fraud on 02072396655 or ICSTIS (the premium rate service regulator) at [www.icstis.org.uk](http://www.icstis.org.uk) <[file:///www.icstis.org.uk](mailto:file:///www.icstis.org.uk)> .

*Janet Willmott*

# A CALL TO ALL POETS

Last year readers were offered the chance add another verse  
to that old favourite *I'm dreaming of a White Christmas*,  
with the chance of having it premiered at the Village Hall Carol Singing.  
No-one took up the offer.

This is sad because we have some very fine poets such as  
Chris Carrington, Ophir Catling, Hilary Sage, Caroline Matheson  
amongst others.

Maybe even some from the School.

There is still time before the 19<sup>th</sup> December  
so sharpen up your pencil stubs and make a name.



**I'm dreaming of a white Christmas  
Just like the ones I used to know  
Where the treetops glisten  
And children listen  
To hear sleigh bells in the snow.**

**I'm dreaming of a white Christmas  
With every Christmas card I write  
May your days be merry and bright  
And may all our Christmases be white.**

*Alastair Everitt*

## THE WALL

I noticed in the November 'CRIER',  
that Hadrian's wall rated a rare but  
honourable mention.

This reminded me of the real reason  
for 'The Wall'.

**Hadrian, his stay in England  
beginning to pall**

**Built, with help, a garden wall.**

**It stretched from Newcastle for  
many a mile**

**Until it eventually reached  
Carlisle.**

*Ophir*

## CINDERELLA

Arts Theatre Cambridge

**TICKETS FOR SALE!**

Thursday 27 December 11am  
performance

Stalls, Row C 7-10  
(3<sup>rd</sup> row back)

2 adult tickets £30 (cost £50)

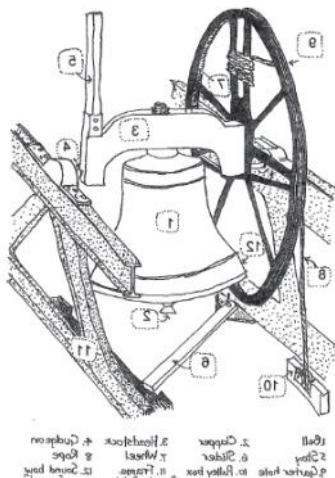
2 child tickets £15 (cost £25)

Please contact Mary Hart 741681

# LET THE BELLS RING OUT

THERE WILL BE NO bell practice in November or December. On 10th November a Quarter Peal by teachers of and ringers with Margaret Stanier was attempted - only to fail in the final three minutes. They were distraught. On Saturday 1st December at 11.00pm the same band will make another attempt to ring a Quarter Peal of Cambridge Surprise Minor which will last about 45 minutes. Anyone with any interest in bells will hear 98% perfect striking, so do listen.

There have been a number of Peals (lasting about 3 hours) and Quarter Peals (45 minutes) in memory of Margaret Stanier rung over the last two months and these are listed below.



September 17th. St Peter and St Mary Magdalene, Fordham.

Quarter Peal. Plain Bob Triples.

September 21st. The Old Rectory, Inverary, Argyll.

Peal. Kent Treble Bob Doubles on Hand Bells.

September 22nd. St Mary, Swaffham Bulbeck.

Quarter Peal. Plain Bob Major.

September 23rd. St Peter, Duxford.

Quarter Peal. Plain Bob Doubles.

September 23rd. Holy Trinity, Meldreth.

Quarter Peal. Plain Bob Major.

September 26th. St Edward King and Martyr, Cambridge.

Quarter Peal. St Simon's Doubles.

October 9th. St Peter and St Paul, Bassingbourn.

Peal. Plain Bob Minor.

*Alastair Everitt*

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## Brief Encounter

A certain resident of Swaffham Prior, on seeing a woman approaching from the other side of plate glass doors in a Cambridge store, courteously opened them for her.

“Did you do that on account of my *sex*?” snapped the ungrateful besom.

“Certainly not, Madam.” replied our resident, quick as a flash. “It was on account of your *age*.”

# Crier Profile: Brenda Wilson

In the first instalment of this profile, Brenda Wilson, Headmistress of Swaffham Prior School from 1991 to 2002, tells us about the early years and how she first became a reception teacher.

I WAS BORN IN MANCHESTER. I knew I wanted to be a teacher so I applied to training college rather than university, although in those days it was seen very much as second best to university. I enjoyed Sheffield very much but as far as classroom management goes, I learnt more watching a warm-up comedian at a summer seaside show. I could see how he worked the audience and I remember

**“ I enjoyed  
[training college]  
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warm-up  
comedian at a  
summer seaside  
show.”**

thinking, if I can see those techniques, then they could be taught and used in the classroom. I did art and RE at Sheffield, followed by a Divinity course for graduate teachers at Westminster College, Oxford. I'd had a religious experience when I was 15 and felt that if RE was compulsory (as it was in those days – the only subject in the 1944 Education act that was specified, it was just assumed all the other subjects would be taught) then it should be taught properly. It was often just put on the timetable and used for other things!

Then I went back to Oldham, teaching in a secondary modern school for two years until I got married. I'd come straight from Oxford – a lot of my course was based in the training college but there were lecturers at the university as well, so I was on an academic high...

I taught basic English and maths with the first year, and RE throughout the school. We had some pupils doing it as an exam subject for CSE...I had all of the non-exam fifth form classes (five of them) and I was talking about the origins of religion and Mesopotamian fertility symbols, when some pupils could hardly read!

It was tragic, really. So I came down with a thump. I was studious...I hadn't come from a booky home: my father was a bus driver, my mother worked in wholesale warehouse for hairdressers – she became a buyer eventually. I was the only one from my road who went to grammar school – I dutifully studied, got all my exams – it was quite a shock to realise there were people who couldn't read. But we did have fun! Do you remember the Spinners? Folk group with one chap who was six foot seven – had to have his national service uniform made to measure! Well, we organised with a local vicar a kind of religious day in school, and we had David Frost – he's the son of a Methodist minister. And a pop group, and different activities all day. It was great fun. The Spinners were a bit put out because we'd put

them a bit too close to the pop group, and they complained about the noise – but they were lovely people!

I'd met my husband to be, Conrad, at Oxford; he lived in Birmingham; he was a teacher too; we both went back to our respective parents for two years... duty, I felt I had to go back to my parents, to pay back for the investment they'd put in...then we got married, and went down to Hampshire. My husband taught in a comprehensive there, and I taught in the girls' Grammar in Basingstoke. Right next to Aldermaston, the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment, AWRE – where all the boffins were making the atomic bombs – and my husband was teaching RE to the children of the people who were making the bombs! Quite a contradiction really. Greenham Common was nearby. During political crises the American planes had their bombs loaded and engines running...there was always one of them in the air. I fell pregnant and gave up the following February. We were very hard up, we hadn't intended to have children for another couple of years. Teachers earned less than the average wage...very badly paid at the time. Just under two years later we had our second child ...By that time my husband was becoming disenchanted teaching RE, and to earn extra money he started working at the evening centre in the school. He was Head of Centre and this became more important to him than the day job. He decided to apply for a job as deputy principal in Birmingham. We bought a house in Handsworth Wood, four miles from the city centre. I was doing odds and sods, home teaching – quite an eye-opener. The saddest one was the boy who'd got a form of cancer. His life expectancy was short, and he'd given up, he wasn't interested in anything.

After my third child was born I started working with adults. In the Adult Literacy movement I had a group of physically disabled people, with a wide range of ability level. One, Iqbal, lovely man, very tall, literate in his own language but not in English. We started talking about football, and one of my heroes was Bert Trautman, a German ex-prisoner-of-war who'd stayed on after the war, and he played for Manchester City. He broke his neck in a cup final, three minutes before the end of the match. I was telling them this story, how all the newspapers had shown a photo of him as part of the team holding up the cup at the end. It was the first time I'd realised that not everything in newspapers was true, and they'd doctored this picture. Iqbal just smiled ruefully and said 'that's what happened to me.' He'd been watching TV, stood up, fell over and broken his neck but the injury wasn't seen to for several days, by which time the damage was permanent and he was confined to a wheelchair for the rest of his life.

Then I was asked if I would do an O'level English class. 1972-ish. The literacy movement was going strong. It was the time in education when adults were having opportunities they hadn't had before. There was one lad who was an inspiration – and a thorn in my side. He'd gone through secondary modern school, without ever reading a book. Left school at 15. When he was 19 or 20 he'd got in with a group of students from Birmingham University in his local pub, and he'd got interested in what they were talking about. The first book that he read was Nietzsche's philosophy, with a little Collins pocket dictionary and a set of felt pens, red green, blue and yellow, and as he read through the book, every time he came across a word he didn't know he would look it up, colour code it and classify it. He was now 22-23

and the reason he was in my class, was that he had been provisionally accepted at Birmingham University on the condition that he could get Maths and English O Level. And he did.

After that I did English as a Foreign Language, again in evening classes. I looked after the boys in the day then went out two nights a week, much to the chagrin of my eldest boy who by then was old enough not to want to be in his pyjamas at half past six. But I really enjoyed working with adults. The nice thing about Birmingham was that we were living near Conrad's family. Family is good to have nearby – you don't have to make an appointment to go and see them.

Teaching EFL made me realise that communication was what was important - it didn't matter if you made mistakes. If you could get the sense of what you wanted to say across...I had French, and Germans, and South Americans, Indians...it was great fun. And the joy of it was that we had a textbook but you didn't have to follow it. As long as you got them talking, it didn't matter. We used to go for a drink afterwards. It was very subtle – in the class I was the one that was deciding what we were going to do, but going into the pub, the roles reversed. I was the woman, and they were the men, and they probably did more talking there. And so it was good. I really enjoyed that time.

We were there at the time of the IRA bomb in New Street. The adult Education Centre was very close to the town centre. I used to wait for Conrad to finish for the evening (he was deputy principal) and that particular evening, one of the other chaps rang home for some reason and his wife had the TV on and saw the news flashes. We'd heard police sirens earlier but obviously didn't know what had happened. We decided we weren't going to let this stop us going for our drink for the evening – at *The Dublin Man o' War*, would you believe. It was the most uncomfortable drink I've had in my life. There was a queue for the phone, everyone calling home to say that they were all right, everyone was looking at bags on the floor. Really strange. In the end I said look, Con, we'd better go home. If my mother sees this on TV and phones and we're not home, she's going to worry. So we went home. It was very uncomfortable.

We next lived in Kent, my husband got a job as principal in the Adult Education centre in Folkestone. We bought a house in Hythe. I learned to crochet – because it was dead boring before I got a job! I was thinking that because I'd enjoyed EFL that that was the way I was going to go. Folkestone being what it is, with all the language schools there was plenty of opportunity. However, I went to an official function with my husband at the Leas Cliff Hall. I was sitting next to the Chief Education Officer, and just making conversation, I told him I was a teacher. The next day Con came home and 'Bren, how do you fancy teaching at Hythe Infants school? Because there's a job going there.' And I said, "No way! I'm not trained for infants. It's not me. Why?" He said that the CEO had asked him if I might be interested, as it was the week before term started and they hadn't got a teacher. And he came back the next day, saying 'Tom says please don't say no, think about it, because we're desperate.' I thought about it on the Thursday and said 'I'll do it for the summer term, to give you time to find somebody else'. So I started on my first infant class the following Wednesday, absolutely terrified, and at the end of the summer term the Head teacher asked me to stay on. And by that time I was enjoying it. I was taking the middle infants; there was a brilliant teacher in reception, and I learned a lot from her.

**Mark Lewinski**

from an interview with Brenda Wilson



# The Sleeping Beauty

by Peter Denyer

**January 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>  
2008**

YES, IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN when we start thinking about Christmas, New Year and PANTOMIME! So please come along to Bottisham Village College on either 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, or 26<sup>th</sup> January 2008 and watch The Sleeping Beauty. Based on a typical pantomime story this one covers 118 years! You can side with the villain, (or villainess in this case), we don't mind. You can cheer the good fairies and hopefully laugh at all the jokes, but most of all we want you to enjoy yourselves, which is what Pantomime is all about. Remember, it's not just for children, it is for "kids" of all ages, so come along children and bring Mum, Dad, Granny, Grandad, Aunties and Uncles and have a couple of hours of fun and laughter.

We will be performing in the Bottisham Village College Main Hall on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> and Friday 25<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 pm and Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> at 2.30 pm and 7.30 pm. Ticket prices are £7.00 for adults, £5.00 for children and senior citizens on Thursday night and Saturday Matinee only (no concessions on Friday and Saturday night).

Seating will be in the traditional format with refreshments served in the interval.

Purchase your tickets from early December from Bottisham Post office and stores, Tina's North Street Burwell and via our own telephone booking line 01223 8110 (not post office) or this year through a link on our web site at [www.bottishamplayers.org.uk](http://www.bottishamplayers.org.uk)

Tickets must be paid for prior to production. Tickets will be available at the door subject to availability.

Please book early to avoid disappointment, as numbers will be limited.



## Opening the Churches

SIMPLY TO THANK all the volunteers that help with the opening rota of St Mary's and St Cyriac's. It means that the buildings are open to all, yet kept safe. If anyone would like to join the rota, they would be most welcome. It entails opening and locking the Churches for a week at a stretch. Timings to suit your needs as long as they are open from 9pm until 5pm. There are eleven people on the list, so not too onerous a task, simple to switch and amenable to change. Thank-you to those concerned.

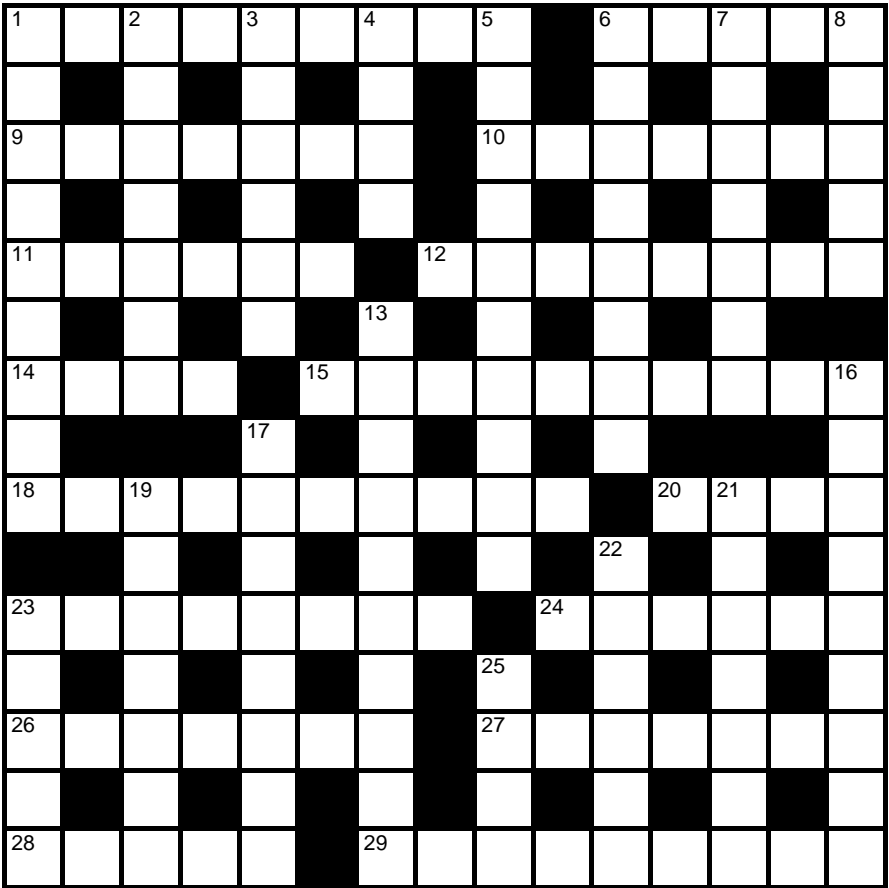
**Tricia Harrison**  
742850

# Crossword Number 48

Sponsored by **The Red Lion**

Compiled by  
**NIBOR**

You get extra time this month as there is no crossword in the January issue. Send your answers to the editors by 18 January 2008. The first correct solution out of the hat will win a free meal at the Red Lion—See Ian or June at the pub for full details.



|                |
|----------------|
| Name:.....     |
| Address.....   |
| .....Tel:..... |



## Across

- 1 Genuine ones twitch; how practical (9)
- 6 Start shooting cowboys. Run up behind bushes (5)
- 9 Eyelet found by a friend of Wallace, one hears (7)
- 10 Being superior, moved quickly to join top man (7)
- 11 Small things go back in Shanghai virtually every day (6)
- 12 Metal used by wayward miniaturist? no sir (8)
- 14 Gory problem at wild party (4)
- 15 Dray is upset; so hires her (5,5)
- 18 Strange? Sober actor uses foreign language (5-5)
- 20 Structure from which Basil obtains cattle food (4)
- 23 Animal eats tree and part of America profits (4,4)
- 24 Pollen receptor shows mark of shame (6)
- 26 Perform in drama? do! (7)
- 27 Japanese art in tandoori gaming parlour (7)
- 28 Pilot in trouble might turn out (5)
- 29 Looks good on TV but loaner doesn't enter rigged general election (9)

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

## Down

- 1 Good Conservative English leader gives nothing to America (9)
- 2 Loving a party band (7)
- 3 I am getting a pen to write verse (6)
- 4 Shoddy article; goodbye (2-2)
- 5 Grumpy old woman on big ship gets the sack (7,3)
- 6 Star has racquet and he might get a tan (8)
- 7 Prince is seen in wetter weather (7)
- 8 Bless you! Get us moving first for goodness sake (2,3)
- 13 Controller sees the ring leader most, starting after tea (10)
- 16 Self-obsessed person? Come again doctor (9)
- 17 Fab fun to concoct hairstyle (8)
- 19 Red stood up and swallowed (7)
- 21 Impress upon one in the pouring rain (7)
- 22 Call after a good man with pearls (6)
- 23 Thicket where police find note (5)
- 25 Bun register (4)

## Solution to crossword no. 47

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

## FREE TO A GOOD HOME

Large black wood Habitat shelf and cupboard unit—still in good condition though 20 years old.

Big (7 foot) tp children's slide—best but we ever made! Also long plastic aqua-slide 'runway' to go with it. These have afforded grandchildren a HUGE amount of fun. Need space.

Very large — 10 foot in diameter—Easy Set paddling /swimming pool with electric filter unit. All ready for that real summer that must surely be on the way! Needs space, as above.

Slightly chewed — by dog, not me!—lovely pine rocking chair.

Please contact Hilary Sage on 742978.

## Donations!

Many thanks to the Village Hall for their very kind donation to the *Crier* this month. Although largely funded by advertising, the *Crier* could not do without donations such as these.

## Noyes & Noyes

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Farmers' & Fine Food Fayres

# FIRST MARKET

## 8th December 2007

Together with separate gift fair

**Burwell**

**9.30—12.30**

Village College—The Causeway

|              |              |           |
|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| January 12th | February 9th | March 8th |
| April 12th   | May 10th     | June 14th |

*(2nd Saturday every month)*

[www.farmersfayres.co.uk](http://www.farmersfayres.co.uk)

**Why not buy Fairly Traded gifts this Christmas with Traidcraft and Lode Chapel...?**



Contact me on (01223) 812881 or at [simon.goddard@lodechapel.org.uk](mailto:simon.goddard@lodechapel.org.uk) and let me know your address so that I can drop round a free catalogue and order form. Browse the wide selection of fairly traded crafts, clothes, toys and food and then either phone/email me with your order.

I have some Christmas cards and food in stock, although for other items I will need to place an order directly with Traidcraft. Delivery is normally swift, but orders should be placed early in December so as to avoid disappointment.

**The Cantilena Singers**  
**Daniel Spreadbury, director**  
**Margaret Jones, organ**

A concert of seasonal music and readings, including Bach's Advent motet 'Komm, Jesu, komm', and Christmas settings by Rutter, Warlock, Joubert, Howells and others

Tickets £7 and £5 concessions

Refreshments

Proceeds to church and charity

Holy Trinity Church, Bottisham, Saturday 8 December, 7.30 pm Tickets on the door or contact Derek Metz 01223 812671 or visit [www.cantilena.info](http://www.cantilena.info) Charity - Emmaus

Bassingbourn Parish Church, Saturday 15 December, 7.30 pm

## **Burwell Surgery News**

### **Child Health Clinic**

The Child and Family team has made an alteration to the Child Health Clinic which is held in the waiting room on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. Since it is a popular clinic and, in order to ensure that every mother is able to have their baby weighed and have time with the Health Visitor, if necessary, they have decided to hold the clinic earlier in the afternoon from 1.00 pm to 2.45 pm as of January 2008. Your co-operation by keeping to these times will be much appreciated.

### **Flu Vaccinations**

There are still plenty of flu jabs available. It is recommended that patients with any of the following conditions: heart disease, diabetes, asthma, chronic renal or liver disease or immunosuppression, any patients who are aged 65 years or over and any patients who are carers should have a flu vaccination. Please contact the surgery for an appointment.

### **Ordering Prescriptions**

The prescription phone line tends to be extremely busy on Monday mornings. Please could patients ring later in the day, if possible. Alternatively, you may deliver, post, fax or order repeat prescriptions over the internet. Our fax number is 01638 743948. If you would more information about using the internet or would like a registration form for this service, please ask at reception.

### **Christmas and New Year Closing Times**

The surgery will be closing for the Christmas break at 3.00 pm on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> December and will reopen at 8.30 am on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> December. It will also be closed on New Year's Day. If you need a doctor when we are closed, please ring 01638 741234 or, for advice, please ring NHS Direct on 0845 4647.

## School News



WE CAN'T BELIEVE it is nearly Christmas, although we have started the celebrations early at school this year. Rehearsals are underway for our nativity play. The children in Class 1 and 2 are putting on a nativity play called 'The Gigantic Star'. They will be performing this on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> December. If you would like to come along to a performance, or to the dress rehearsal on 4<sup>th</sup> December, please contact the office. Other Christmas celebrations include our annual Christmas Fair, which this year is joining with our monthly CC Café. This will be held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> December at 3pm. Come along and start (or finish!) your Christmas shopping. The choir will also be singing a medley of Christmas songs. Our Christmas church service is being held on 13<sup>th</sup> December at 11am. We welcome all members of the community to come and join us.

Friday 16<sup>th</sup> November brought our annual fund raising for Children In Need. This year the School Council decided they wanted to hold a drawing competition for the children to send in pictures of famous people. They were also given the challenge of dressing up as a famous person. A lot of fun was had by all, as well as raising a lot of money for the charity.

During the week beginning the 19<sup>th</sup> November the school held an Anti-Bullying Week. The theme was, 'Safer together, safer wherever.' The aim was to raise the children's awareness of any bullying issues and to give them the skills to deal with it in and out of school. We were visited by the Playright theatre company who performed an Anti-Bullying play and the community police visited to raise awareness of 'Stranger Danger'. The children were all involved in re-writing our anti-bullying leaflet and a copy went home to all parents.

Class 3 and 4 have made a very special visit to the Cambridgeshire Proms at the Cambridge Corn Exchange. They were invited to go and 'Meet the Orchestra' and thoroughly enjoyed listening to a wide range of music from a variety of different instruments.

Three children from class 4 were specially chosen to go to the Diocesan Offices



*2006 Carol Singers*

in Ely on 23<sup>rd</sup> November as part of the national '11 million Takeover Day'. They went to the Diocese offices to do an Eco-study of the centre and they fed back to a panel at the end of the day.

We look forward to seeing you at some of our Christmas celebrations.

**Emma Vincent**  
Head Teacher



## VILLAGE GARDENERS

THE VILLAGE GARDENERS had their A.G.M. in October. We had a review of the past year and a lively discussion on our finances "not bad-but could do better"—to quote our treasurer and proposed outings and speakers for next year. We shall be having a trip to Beth Chatto's garden in Essex and are very much hoping to have "Open Gardens" again in June. If there is anyone who would like to open their garden, then please let me know.

Our evening ended with nice wine and sharing the books, that we'd especially enjoyed and which had inspired, informed and encouraged us in our labours; there was a veritable pile of them, which possibly was because one member, unable to choose a favourite, had brought the entire horticultural section of her library!

A full programme for 2008 will be published in the January Crier, but can already say that we are getting off to a good start in the New Year, with Dr Twiggs Way talking on "An Incentive to Early Marriage—the Social History of the Allotment". Not to be missed.

New members are always welcome.

*Margaret Joyce*

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## The Anglesey Group Mothers' Union

AT OUR LAST MEETING on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> November, Mrs Ros Wright came to speak to us about Christmas Customs. We had the most informative and interesting afternoon learning about these and it is intriguing how many of the customs are pagan in origin. We are grateful to Ros for being so thorough in her research and spending the afternoon sharing her knowledge with us.

As a group we are flourishing with membership continually increasing, and on Thursday afternoon we had 35 ladies listening to Ros. It was a joy to have two new people with us, and it's a lovely way to meet up with friends and always of course sharing in that essential refreshment after listening to our Speaker!

Our next Meeting is on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> December and we will be having a "Bring & Share" Christmas Lunch, to which husbands are also invited! We will be meeting in Lode Chapel for our Lunch and are grateful to Simon Goddard and the members of the Chapel for making this possible for us. The next Programme begins on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2008 when we will be having a Service at 2.30pm in St. Mary's Church - Swaffham Bulbeck. We have a very interesting and varied

Programme planned for next year so do come along and join us. You are welcome!



*Pauline Lewis*



## BURWELL MUSEUM

BURWELL MUSEUM is now closed for the winter but the Friends are hosting a concert to be given by the Minden Band of the Queen's Division on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm in St Mary's Church, Burwell. The Band have taken as their theme Dickens' 'Christmas Carol' and will be playing a programme of varied and interesting Christmas music. No doubt we will be encouraged to sing at this point! The proceeds of the concert are shared between the Band's Benevolent Band and the Friends of the Museum. Many of this regiment have seen service abroad recently and calls on the Benevolent Fund from soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan are on the increase, So we do hope that many of you will choose to begin your Christmas celebrations by joining us at the concert. The Band has some wonderful musicians and the acoustics of the Church are ideal.

Tickets (£10 each), accompanied children under 12 free) will be available from Burwell Post Office or by telephoning 01638 741705.

## The Reading Group Reads.....

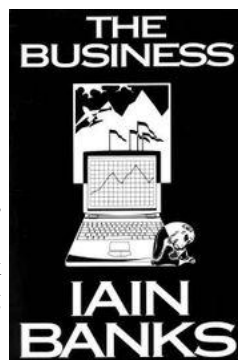
### The Business by Iain Banks

IAIN BANKS IS A PROLIFIC WRITER, who writes as Iain M Banks as well. *I think* the distinction is that the 'M' books are science fiction but as the person who chose this book was not at our session I can't verify that. But a fascinating writer; highly imaginative; sinister; amusing; but always totally involving you in whichever world he is inventing, carrying you along by the sheer quality of his writing.

Kate is a high flier in a man's world, jetting around the world with compunction; rich enough to travel wherever she pleases in absolute luxury; clever enough to tangle with the best brains in the business; sophisticated enough to move in any circles, even royal; and yet still manages to retain her compassion for those not as fortunate as herself. Unbelievable? Perhaps, but it doesn't spoil the story and it's an exhilarating read.

*Complicity* and *The Crow Road* are probably better books to start with if you haven't read Banks before but whichever one you choose you'll be carried along by the sheer talent of the man.

Next month's book is *Over* by Margaret Forster, and it's our Christmas special. Do come along.



**Brenda Wilson**

## DON'T DITCH OUR LODES

THERE WAS FURTHER FAVOURABLE COVERAGE of our cause in the Cambridge Evening News on the 9th of November and the case for truth and accuracy was again highlighted. Go to -

[http://w3.cambridge-news.co.uk/news/region\\_wide/2007/11/09/5cf26ee3-5099-4861-afd4-4fbc76a11d45.lpf](http://w3.cambridge-news.co.uk/news/region_wide/2007/11/09/5cf26ee3-5099-4861-afd4-4fbc76a11d45.lpf)

**It is clear that the seemingly all-powerful National Trust 'got at' the Government, which altered its original response to my on-line E-Petition (961 signatures to today's date) and, as you may be aware, I wrote to the Prime Minister about it asking that the Government's response to my E-Petition be altered again. Sadly, there has as yet been no response from 10, Downing Street.**

More good news has emanated from this area, however, in that last week Swaffham Prior Parish Council unanimously supported the Environment Agency's published and preferred option for the future of The Cambridgeshire Lodes, "to continue to maintain them at their current level," but this is, as we know, subject to a five-yearly review. I have called the five-year review period 'a reprieve.'

This week, at a meeting of The Swaffham Internal Drainage Board, I had the honour to propose the same support for the preferred option. The proposal was seconded by Cllr. Mike Mason (Independent, Histon & Impington), a member of the Board appointed by South Cambridgeshire District Council, endorsed by Mr Ross Chilvers, the Board's engineer, and agreed unanimously. Interestingly and intriguingly, one of the votes in favour was cast by Mr Jon Megginson, a new member of the Board who is also in charge of the National Trust's so-called 'Wicken Vision.'

To be fair to Mr Megginson, he was not party to the instigation of this scheme, which was approved by those much higher up in the National Trust's command structure and which I have described as 'ill-conceived, unnecessary and unwanted,' but it will now be interesting and intriguing to see if and how the 'Wicken Vision' can be pursued at all whilst at the same time preserving The Cambridgeshire Lodes as they are.

**It is widely known and understood, especially by the Environment Agency, that the greatest danger to the banks of The Lodes is from future changes of land use and flooding from their outsiders. Ominously, the Environment Agency has made it all too clear that "if changes in land use alter the risk of embankment failure, it will be necessary to consider other options," though Mr Jonathan Fearnley, of the Agency, has recently emphasised "We won't abandon the Lodes," which is good.**

We live in interesting times!

My on-line E-Petition is still active and I ask one and all to obtain yet more signatures for it. Go to -

<http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/OurLODES/>

*Geoffrey Woollard*



# Starting Your Own Business?

CONSIDERING SELF EMPLOYMENT or running your own business? [UKVillages.co.uk](http://UKVillages.co.uk) is working with Business Link - a government funded organisation offering a range of free workshops designed to help small businesses and self employed people to get the best possible start.

Did you know that almost 10,000\* people start their own business every week? That's more than 500,000 per year. Business Link provides free support, advice and workshops to help these businesses succeed.

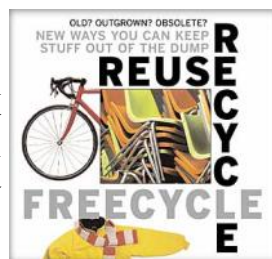
Research has shown that 81% of businesses that used Business Link services to help them start survived beyond three years. This compares to the national average of 66%\*. The range of free workshops has been designed to help small businesses and self employed people get the best possible start.

There are FREE ½ day 'Starting Your Own Business' workshops near to you, call 0845 601 1000 to find when and where.

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## FREECYCLE

PLEASE CONTINUE to look through your house/garden for things that you haven't used in years. If you have any offers or wants, please contact me on [jun.thompson@tesco.net](mailto:jun.thompson@tesco.net), phone on 01223 813362, or drop a note through 23 Longmeadow. As a quick reminder, everything is free and nothing is expected in return.



| Offers  | Wants                              | Details:                        |
|---|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| -   | Old pram wheels for go-kart racing | Peter Jones, 0797 973 5401      |
| Stepper-type exercise machine   | -                                  | Christine Hammond, 01223 812568 |
| Huge box of Mega blocks (3 years +), also with Winnie the Pooh characters                                       | Woodland violet plants             | Luisa (Lode), 01223 813793      |
| BMW Haynes manual (3-series 1983 – 1991, 5-series 1981 – 1991)<br>7 Creda electric panel heaters (wall-hanging) | -                                  | Jun Thompson, 01223 813362      |

**Joint Minor Highways improvements 2008/9**

Burwell (£10,00) and Swaffham Prior (£30,000) were two of 6 successful projects awarded funding.

**Fire Service**

After a review it was decided that there would be no benefit in closing Burwell and Swaffham Bulbeck Fire Stations to relocate them to a central point.

**Resignation of Leader of council**

Shona Johnston, conservative leader of the council has been reported to the standards board. After interviews a candidate accepted the job as Chief Executive of Cambridgeshire County Council but the candidate withdrew after a telephone call the following morning from the Cllr Johnston. She has accepted that this was inappropriate behaviour and resigned from the job of leader. The council will now have to re-advertise in the New Year and so far the recruitment has already cost £48,000. Keith Walters, who was leader for 10 years, will stand in until May when a new leader will be appointed.

**Guided Bus**

The financial case for the Guided Bus assumed that no business rates would be payable on the busway. It now emerges that the business rates for the busway could cost the County Council up to £1m per annum - a sum for which no budget had been provided, and which had not been disclosed at the outset to the bus operators. With no County Council money available to pay these business rates, the money will have to be recovered through higher charges to the bus operators, which means higher fares for the passengers.

**Recycling**

(1) Cambridgeshire County Council Rights of Way Officers have reused shavings from road material from highways maintenance work in the county to improve the surface of rural paths and rights of way.

(2) Figures show that nearly a quarter of what goes in Cambridgeshire residents' bins is food that hasn't been eaten or past its sell by date. At least putting food into brown bags (cooked as well as raw) would be better than letting it go to landfill.

**Central Library Redevelopment**

During the course of the building work at Cambridge Central Library serious defects have come to light, which date from the original construction of the Lion Yard shopping centre.

The current estimate of the delay this will cause is up to 6 months. This delay also takes account of extra time needed earlier in the project to remove significant additional areas of asbestos revealed during the demolition work. Autumn 2008 is now the likely time of opening.



## Neighbourhood Committees

Committees including all Parish Councils, District and County, Housing, Police, Health and Education are being set up and will address concerns of communities. They will be open to the public and the southern area includes Burwell, Swaffhams, Reach, Bottisham, Lode and villages south of Newmarket.

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## Notes from the Parish Council November Meeting



Chairman Mr John Covill chaired the meeting with 7 Parish Councillors plus 5 members of the public were in attendance.

**Minutes of Meetings:** These were agreed.

**Parish Council Vacancy due to Resignation:** Mrs Sandra Wilson had confirmed in writing to the Clerk that she was resigning as Parish Councillor. The Clerk was asked to reply to Mrs Wilson and thank her for her input and interest in village matters during her time as Parish Councillor.

**Reports:** CCC – Cllr Hazel Williams

ECDC – Cllr Allen Alderson

**Correspondence Received:** This was reported.

**Matters Arising (for information only)**

Steve Kent-Phillips brought to the meeting's attention the requirement under the new 'No Smoking' regulations to place 'No Smoking' signs in bus shelters that were enclosed by 50%. The Clerk was asked to clarify with current regulations.

**Open Forum:**

*At this point the meeting was suspended to allow members of the public to consider and put their views with reference to the next item on the agenda. Three representatives from Ashwell Homes attended the meeting to reply to any queries that arose. Following this, the formal meeting continued.*

**Planning Application Received:**

Land adjacent to Water Tower, Mill Hill – *erection of 5 No dwellings, garages, associated infrastructure and landscaping.* There were no objections to this application.

**Road Safety Measures/Traffic Calming, Mill Hill:** Following on from the October notes, the Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council's bid to the CCC's "Jointly Funded Minor Highways Improvement Schemes 2008/09" had been successful. It was also confirmed that Swaffham Prior had been shortlisted for further consideration under the "Traffic Management & Road Safety Schemes Programme 2008/09".

**High Street – Signs & Naming:** As reported in October, there still remained one sign to be removed. The Clerk had again written to ECDC about the removal of the sign plus the follow up about the road name at the south end of the High Street. An acknowledgement letter was received but a full reply was still awaited.

**Consideration of Draft Budget/Precept for 2008/09:** It was agreed that no increase was required and that the Precept for 2008/09 would remain at £14,500 subject to final approval at the January 2008 meeting. Full details available on request.

**Upgrading of the Play Area:** A start date was unknown but it was hoped that the work would go ahead in the next few weeks. The cost of a new roundabout and associated surfacing proved to be very high at approximately £7,000. Steve Kent-Phillips told the meeting that next favourite item from the survey carried out at the School was a picnic table. An estimate had been obtained for a covered picnic table in the sum of approximately £1,150. It was agreed to look at this further once the works by Anglian Playground Services had been completed.

**The Lodes & The Fens:** A further consultation report was received from Halcrow on behalf of the Environment Agency. An accompanying summary booklet was circulated. The Environment Agency preferred option of continuing to maintain the Lodes for the next 5 years and then review was reported and it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk should write a letter to the Environment Agency in support of the preferred option.

**Affordable Housing – follow up from presentation by Hastoe Housing:** Following discussion about the need for affordable housing within the Parish, the Parish Council would welcome parishioners' views. If anyone is aware of or would like to suggest an area of land that might be suitable for such a scheme, the Parish Council would very much like to hear from them.

**Accounts for payment:** These were agreed.

**Planning Approvals:**

a) 18 Cage Hill – *single-storey side extension.*

**Items for the Next Agenda will include:**

Upgrading works to Play Area

The Lodes & The Fens

Mill Hill - Road Safety/Traffic Calming

High Street Signs & Naming

Neighbourhood Panels

**Open Question Time:**

It was noted that the verge from Fairview Grove to the speed limit sign was in need of cutting. The Clerk to action.

Hedge cutting required on Station Road. J Covill to action.

**The next Parish Council meeting will take place on Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> December 2007 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.**

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



## THAT MISSING COPY

**Although not everything sent to the *Crier* gets into print, everything from the village does, as a rule—unless we mislay it! Here's some lost Summer roses from our Gardeners...**

### Summer Gardeners

OUR SPEAKER, MARGARET WADDY, gave us a highly entertaining talk “about roses” at our May meeting. It was really a glorious ramble about people, places and plants, coming as it did from a horticulturist who in a previous life had studied classical languages and plant science.

Roses are a native only of the northern hemisphere and have evolved over the millennia. They are still a fairly primitive plant, with lots of stamens and pollen, but have developed what we so love—their colour and scent.

The Romans and the Greeks grew roses, and they came back to this country in the 13th and 14th century with soldiers who had been fighting in the crusades. During the War of the Roses, of course these were the emblems—the Rose Alba for York, and Damisina (*Damascena?* *Oh, the perils of hand-written copy — Rosa gallica officinalis according to Wiki. Eds*) for Lancashire. In the 13th century, the Chinese developed repeat and long-flowering roses.

By the 19th Century, they were being bred with great enthusiasm in both America and France, where the Empress Josephine greatly encouraged a nursery man called Noisette to crossbreed plants, which resulted in the first yellow rose, Soleil d'Or.

Breeders have continued to produce more and more varieties—especially hybrid teas in the late half of the 20th century.

The fashion once again however is for the old-fashioned roses, bred by growers like David Asten. They are disease resistant, delicate, and gently coloured.

Hatfield house has a lovely rose garden, but our speaker recommends Motisfont—an RHS garden in Hampshire where they hold the National Collection of old-fashioned roses. The perfume in this garden (where smoking is forbidden!) is unbelievable.

### And for June...

We had a lovely evening visit to the garden of Roy and Angela Nunn of Cambridge. They specialise in growing and breeding Clematis. Which were climbing and rambling all over their 400 foot of



fence. Many were of course in full flower, joined by innumerable varieties of Alstromena, geraniums and roses.

As we drank our coffee, the scent of philadelphus and a thrush's evening song filled the air: two little frogs were peeping out of their pond and looked as appreciative as we all felt.

*Margaret Joyce*

**...and some bicycles from Mark Lewinski, in response to a poem by Ophir which ended:**

***"...in Cambridge there's the peace I seek;  
They have but 4500 bicycles stolen, every week."***

## On Yer Bike

OPHIR'S BICYCLE THEFT STATISTICS put me in mind of a conversation I had with my mother about thirty years ago, when I was trying to explain to her that something she'd read in Daily Mail was—well, if not a load of rubbish, at least some distance from the situation as balanced people would be inclined to accept it. 'But why would they put it in a newspaper if it wasn't true?' she somewhat plaintively responded.



It may well be that the Cambridge Evening News printed the figure of 4500 bicycles being stolen in Cambridge every week. The logistics thereof are as I said - truckloads of bikes coming in and going out—an average of 642.85 daily — to-maintain the balance of supply.

That doesn't even allow for the wastage—the wrecked and abandoned bikes seen around the town. I know that there is a river full of the things too, but I think it has probably reached saturation point by now. Anymore would be causing punts to run aground — or a bike, if there is such a term; so I think we have to leave the river out of the calculations. Or alternatively, the same number per day is being stolen by the truckload, fenced and stolen again, at the same daily average figure, which would make Cambridge a town - sorry, city - full of riders of stolen bicycles within a few weeks. Or some mixture of the two: bikes constantly traded in and out, bikes fenced, bikes bought. You'd have bikes being hawked on street corners —wanna buy a bike, guy? -- or at the very least you'd need an illicit market place — perhaps there is such a place but I don't know where is. Either way, it would make Cambridge a city of criminal bicycle obsessives, either as perpetrators or receivers. You'd be hard put to drive round Cambridge without observing some fairly frantic bicycle acquiring of/ disposing of activity, assuming more is happening at some times of the day than

others. Anyone with boltcutters ca a bike rack at 3am would be likely to attract the attention of any gentlemen of blue flashing light persuasion, for example

Moreover, the liberal democratic party have just released figures stating that a bicycle is stolen in Britain every five minutes. This is 288 per day, 2016 per week, 104,832 per year. those Evening News figures have the veracity my mother would ascribe to such things (4 per week, so 234,000 per year) and the Lib Dem's are true too; then Cambridge is in a More parlous state than any of us had previously realised: to wit, that ***more than twice the number of all bicycles stolen in this country are being stolen In Cambridge!***

Why isn't anything being done?? Clean up Cambridge, and bicycle crime in the UK will be slashed, by an amount of more than twice what is physically possible in the universe as we understand it. Tina Jost, on yer bike and get your party some publicity by getting something done. It'd be a major publicity coup, and I'd like to hear what the Physics dept of Cambridge University would say, but I claim to be the first to postulate the theory that dark matter in the Universe can be accounted for at least in part by the number of bicycles being stolen in Cambridge: you read it first in the Crier. I will add that I recently visited the Astronomy bit of the 'versity on Madingley Road and was struck by the astonishing beauty and serenity of the place. But that's not the point. They had a photo of Einstein sitting on the bench in the garden with the director of the Physics dept who'd proved his theory of Relativity. I'm saying now that when they prove my theory, I want my photo taken on that bench too.

Alternatively, as I dared to suggest previously, there is the remote, inexplicable possibility that that set - or worse still now, both sets - of figures are as I put it to my mother, are somewhat wildly off the mark despite being published in a newspaper. (I should add that I never found a way of explaining to her why or how this could be, that she was able or willing to accept).

I half considered phoning Parkside Police Station to ask them what the figures are for bicycle theft in Cambridge. However, it occurred to me before I reached the phone that there is a prosecutable offence entitled Wasting Police Time. Excuse enough not to risk it, I thought.

***Mark Lewinski***

PS I am also deeply indebted to the correspondent on the letters page of the Guardian on July 6 who responded to the Lib Dems' figures, observing that if a bicycle is being stolen every five minutes, its owner must be getting extremely cross.

PPS Statistics are sneaky, devious little beasties. Best avoided in any serious matter, but quite fun to play with if you don't want anything useful out of them.





## Lode Baptist Chapel

# Airbrushing Christmas!

I GUESS YOU'RE AWARE that the photos in glossy magazines are often airbrushed so that the glamorous models seem to be perfect in their appearance. When we compare ourselves to them we are often left feeling inadequate at being unable to attain such a high and unrealistic ideal – and perhaps that's exactly why we end up buying the products that such models are often used to advertise.

I want to suggest that something similar is true of Christmas – somewhere along the line the real story has been airbrushed. Rather than being the perfect little nativity scene that we imagine, the truth is more like a series of newspaper headlines: “Young Mum’s Extraordinary Claims About Baby’s Father!”, “Homeless Woman Forced To Give Birth In Smelly Farmyard!”, “Refugee Family Seeks Asylum To Escape Baby-Killing Dictator!”.

Now, you might be about to accuse me of spoiling Christmas for you, but I want to suggest that by understanding the reality of that first Christmas we can more fully grasp its significance for us today. If we expect our festive season to be ‘perfect’ we are often left disappointed – whether it’s the family argument, the discarded present, or the burnt turkey, something always seems to ruin it for us. No matter how much we spend – it seems impossible for Christmas to live up to the airbrushed ideal.

The reality of the first Christmas is stark – the agony of the childbirth, the stench



Airbrushing *par excellence* from the Master of Bruges



of the stable and the fear of violence – and that, in fact, is the whole point of the story! At Christmas, we remember that God entered our humanity by being born into an imperfect world. It is into the midst of darkness and anger and despair and pain that Christ comes as God's personal message of love and hope and peace and joy!

For many, Christmas is a difficult time... perhaps because money is tight or families separated, or perhaps because a loved one is absent for the first time. For such people it is the reality of Christmas and not the airbrushed ideal that brings hope. The Christmas baby was 'born to die' in order to tell an imperfect world just how much God loves us, and to show us the way to a place where "He will wipe every tear from our eyes" and where "there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain".

So rather than wishing you a 'Happy Christmas' this year, I'm praying that you might be blessed with a 'Real Christmas' instead!

*Simon Goddard*

P.S. Thanks to all who contributed to the Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child!

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

Morning Worship every Sunday at 10.30am with Sunday School,

(except for the 4th Sunday of each month).

**Special 'Awesome' Christmas Club at 10.30am on 23rd December with carols and activities for all of the family,**

**Bottisham Primary School.**

## **Roman Catholic Church, Newmarket Parish**

**Masses:** Newmarket: Sat 1830; Sun 1030;

Kirtling: Sun 0900;

In Bottisham Parish Church, Sun 0900 (Served from Cambridge).

## **MOBILE LIBRARY DATES**

**December 4<sup>th</sup> and December 18<sup>th</sup>**

**Cage Hill: 15.05-15.45,**

**Chapel: 15.50-16-10**

**Book Club requests welcomed. Stamps, cards  
and Children's videos for sale.. Friendly Helpful service.**

*Use it or Lose it*



## Church of England Services

### December 2007

|                   | <b>ST MARY'S<br/>Swaffham Prior</b>  | <b>ST MARY'S<br/>Swaffham Bulbeck</b>                                 | <b>Bottisham</b>   |
|-------------------|--|---|--|
| <b>Sun<br/>9</b>  | <b>8:00am</b><br>Holy Communion<br><b>11:00pm</b><br>Christingle Service   | <b>8:00am</b><br>Holy Communion<br><b>9:30am</b><br>Family Service    | <b>11:00am</b><br>Holy Communion<br><b>4:00pm</b><br>Christingle Service |
| <b>Sun<br/>16</b> | <b>11:00am</b><br>Holy Communion<br><b>4:30am</b><br>Carols by Candlelight | <b>9:30am</b><br>Village Communion                                    | <b>8:00am</b><br>Holy Communion<br><b>11:00am</b><br>Family Communion    |
| <b>Sun<br/>23</b> | <b>11:00am</b><br>Matins   | <b>9:30am</b><br>Holy Communion<br><b>6:30am</b>                      | <b>11:00am</b><br>Holy Communion<br><b>6.30pm</b>                        |
| <b>Mon<br/>24</b> | <b>3:00pm</b><br>Crib Service  | <b>4:00pm</b><br>Crib Service<br><b>11:30pm</b><br>Midnight Communion | <b>4:00pm</b><br>Crib Service<br><b>11:30pm</b><br>Midnight Communion    |
| <b>Tue<br/>25</b> | <b>10:00am</b><br>Benefice Communion                                       |   |  |
| <b>Sun<br/>30</b> |  | <b>10:30am</b><br>Benefice Communion                                  |  |

#### **PASTORAL LETTER, December 2007**

### **A Message from the Reverend Jonathan Dowman**

THIS CHRISTMAS, I wonder what exciting present will be sitting under trees across the world, taken from some form of action or superhero movie, but why are such movies about super heroes so popular? Superman, Spiderman, the X Men, Batman, to name a few, all save humanity from one disaster or another, from planes falling out of the sky to villains bent on money, power, world domination, or worse! In each story, humanity needs saving as it is powerless against some kind of foe. While sometimes it is unaware of the danger and our hero fights away in the background, in other movies people actually cry out to be saved – remember the

searchlight of the old Batman series piercing the night sky calling for his aid?

Pretty soon after the movie comes the merchandise. Lunchboxes, pencils and pens, watches and stickers, the DVD and most importantly the **‘action figure!’**

That’s right you too can re-enact and be part of saving the world, from the comfort of your own home!

So... why shouldn’t the church get in on the act? Recently I saw the figure below in a well known stationer in Cambridge. An advert for it on the internet reads:

### **“Jesus Action Figure!**

*Everyone has a different take on Jesus. Muslims saw him as a prophet; Buddhists say he was enlightened; Hindus consider him an avatar (the incarnation of a deity in human form) while Christians hail him as the Son of God. But, wherever your theological compass points, you will agree that this is the coolest action figure since G.I. Joe. Each hard plastic Jesus Action Figure stands 5" tall with poseable arms to reach toward the heavens and wheels in his base for smooth gliding action. Comes in our illustrated package with biblical quotes on the back.”*

Now you may find this, unbelievable, humorous or even offensive, but I can assure you that the makers of this figure have created it in all seriousness.

However, this hero is quite unlike other heroes in a box. Re-enacting the triumphs of a saviour from the comfort of one’s own room through a, ‘5 inch figure with ‘poseable’ arms’, simply doesn’t work. Why? Because it assumes that he is either fictitious or dead; someone whose legacy can only be lived out in boxed form.

Christians believe that born 2000 years ago, Jesus lived (quite literally) a superhero’s life, carrying out miraculous deeds. He was executed aged 33, yet unlike any other hero, fictional or otherwise, he rose again three days later and people put their faith and hope in him today, calling out in prayer and praise, believing that he answers them – often, ironically from the comfort of their own living room or as a regular part of everyday life! Surely a saviour so full of life makes mockery of his boxed double.

So why should this matter at this time of year; the season of ‘peace and goodwill’ to all people? Well, one question is prevalent: does the world still need a saviour? We need look no further than the reality of war, terrorism, poverty, crime and climate-change to realise that the answer is: ‘yes’. But more than this: do we *personally* need to be saved? A death in the family, illness, family break up, financial concerns, depression; sometimes we all hope for someone who could spare us, help us and save us. We all have a choice to make: the predictability and convenience of the boxed hero or a relationship with the living saviour: Jesus Christ.

As the carol proclaims, the ‘*Lord has come,*’ we can ‘*receive the King*’ and the ‘*Saviour reigns!*’ God’s hero is here and This Christmas we all have the opportunity to meet him for ourselves. Why don’t you come along to any of our Christmas services to find out more...

**Jonathan Dowman**



## ***Dates for Your Diary December 2007***

|     |    |   |
|-----|----|---|
| Sun | 2  | Advent by Candlelight, 4.00pm                               |
| Tue | 4  | Mobile Library, Cage Hill: 15.05-15.45, Chapel: 15.50-16-10 |
| Wed | 12 | <b>Crier Copy Deadline</b>                                  |
| Thu | 13 | Mothers' Union Lunch, Lode Chapel<br>PC Meeting, 7.30 VH    |
| Sun | 16 | Village Carol Service, 4.30pm, St Mary's                    |
| Tue | 18 | Mobile Library, Cage Hill: 15.05-15.45, Chapel: 15.50-16-10 |
| Wed | 19 | Carols at the Village Hall, 7pm, VH                         |
| Tue | 25 | CHRISTMAS DAY   |
| Wed | 26 | Hockey on Boxing Day Morning, 11.00am                       |

| <b>Club</b>       | <b>Contact</b>    | <b>Tel.</b> | <b>Date</b>                   | <b>Time</b>  | <b>Place</b>   |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| FOSPS             | Clare             | 741316      | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Mon           | 8pm          | Village Hall   |
| Baby & Toddlers   | Fleur Routley     | 743992      | Fri                           | 9.30-11.30am | Village Hall   |
| Jamsing           | Jo Pumfrey        | 741376      | Tues (term)                   | 9.20-12      | Village Hall   |
| Cubs              | Andrew Noyes      | 743864      | Weds (term)                   | 6:00-7:30pm  | Village School |
| Reading Group     | Brenda Wilson     | 743937      | 1 <sup>st</sup> Weds of month | 8:00pm       | (See Crier)    |
| Scouts            | Andrew Noyes      | 743864      | Weds (term)                   | 7:45-9:15pm  | Village School |
| Village Gardeners | Margaret Joyce    | 744390      | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tues of month | 8:00pm       | Village Hall   |
| WI                | Margaret Phillips | 741495      | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Mon of month  | 7.30 pm      | Village Hall   |
| Youth Club        | Alan Badcock      | 742228      | Tues                          | 7-8:30pm     | Youth Club Hut |
|                   |                   |             | Thurs                         | 7-10:00pm    |                |

***Village  
Clubs  
&  
Societies***

