



# The Swaffham Crier

Volume XXXI Number 2

February 2007



## Editorial

Welcome to Tigers! It's official, and you can read all about it in this month's magazine when Steve O'Rourke explains what the Tiger taker-over will mean for Swaffham Prior: proper recreation facilities at last.

As most villagers will know, the "village recreation field" down Station Road has not seen any *recreating* for a great many years now, but this is all set to change, thanks to the efforts of a number of hard-working stoics, especially the Tiger's Club itself. Many thanks to them: we wish all the very best in their endeavours.

Last month's two-hour power-cut sent everyone rushing for the Christmas Candles, those in the know quickly retiring to the Red Lion, where we hear hospitality and cuisine were most excellent. But it caught the *Crier* hopping: its "emergency numbers" being revealed as a bit prehistoric. Not that their modern equivalents (what are they? Advice

please!) fared any better, we hear..

The Seven Year springs! Who has heard of these? The *Crier* is informed that every seven years or so, when the water-table reaches a certain height, springs emerge in the region of the dyke, and that certainly seems to be the case at the moment, since the old railway-line is now sporting a stream *and* a pond. More information please...

There's a great deal to read in this month's packed *Crier*, we hope you enjoy it. Profuse apologies from the editors who inadvertently published last month's Christmas Crossword solutions in advance. Happy Valentines Day All!

*Caroline Matheson*

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**Cover Picture:** *Going to the Hockey Match, E. H. Shepard*



## Letters to the Editors



Dear Editors,

### **Christmas Holly**

This is to let you know that the sale of Christmas Holly raised an excellent £136 which will be divided between the Church Flower Fund and St Mary's. Thank you very much for once again supporting this cause. Alastair and Elisabeth Everitt work hard each year to organise the cutting of the holly and the sale of it and we are very grateful for their efforts. I understand that this year Andrew Camps was busy cutting the holly too so thanks must go to him as well. It was thought there would be fewer berries this year but when I went to buy mine there certainly seemed to be plenty. I hope you were all as lucky!

A belated, but none the less sincere, Happy New Year to you all.

***Ruth Scovil***

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Dear Editors,

### **St Mary's Church Electoral Role 2007**

Every sixth year, we prepare a new electoral role which means that all those at present on the role are removed and those members must reapply and complete another application form. New members are always welcome.

The role is St Mary's register of electors, the list of those qualified to attend and to vote at the Annual Parochial Meeting where elections take place for:

- a) the Parochial Church Council
- b) the parish representative on the deanery synod.

Any person may be on the role who is:

- 1) baptised
- 2) a member of the Church of England or a church in communion with the Church of England
- 3) of seventeen years or upwards
- 4) resident of the parish or who has regularly attended public worship in the parish during the period of six months prior to enrolment
- 5) has signed the form of application for enrolment

We have a lovely church; by putting your name on the electoral role, you can help to support it and play your part in decision making.

Application forms are available from Barbara Dennis (743939) who is the Electoral Role Officer.

***Barbara Dennis***

Dear Eds

## That S Word Again...

So Mr Everitt's new argument for the authorship of Shakespeare's plays, in summary, is that Shakespeare did write them because his name's on them, and the logic for this can be found in the *Just William* stories. Not swayed (in *Crier* correspondence - around the Millenium and since - ) by my ingenious, outrageous and sometimes even entirely rational arguments, suddenly he caves in. Something doesn't add up here. Hmmm...

Either: version I

(Thinks) Mr Everitt would never be persuaded by logic, not even the bizarre manifestations found in *Just William*. (Aloud) That's it! Mr Everitt would never think such a thing! That's not the real Mr Everitt! The Cybermen have replaced Mr Everitt with a robot to get control of the Village Hall! They want to turn it into a space-time portal by which they can bring an army of Cybermen to take over the Earth - to The Tardis, quickly, while there's still time!

...Alternatively, check the bookings to see what time they're arriving: but "Quick! Phone Barbara Dennis - tell her not to give any aliens the key" doesn't have the same ring, does it?

Or: version II

(thinks) He doesn't mean it. I pointed out years ago that Shakespeare was credited with having written his own plays. He has an ulterior motive...Apply Shakespearian word puzzle conspiracy techniques to seek the real meaning...Try taking the first letter of each sentence and see what it spells: Paragraph 1: DIIE. Well, that's fairly transparent, despite the misspelling, but hardly in the spirit of intelligent debate, now, is it? Perhaps it's the Daleks that got to him instead... Paragraph 2: E. Hm. Slightly more puzzling. Could it be a compass point? Paragraph 3: TJMBH. Obviously means something. 'That's Just My Brilliant Hieroglyphics' ie Mr E showing that it's a code. Paragraph 4: W. There. I said paragraph 2 was a compass point. So is Paragraph 4. Decide for yourselves what East & west signify in this story - I've done the hard work, after all.

(Or maybe it's 'East to West'! It's the space-time trajectory of the Cybermen! - to The Tardis, quickly, while there's still time!!)

Or else: version III

(thinks) It's a trap. He's trying to lull me into complacency and to slip something past me here...Apply more Shakespearian conspiracy logic...Ah - a section in different type in the second line - those Elizabethans did that sometimes: put things in different fonts to make it blindingly obvious for those who were useless at spotting clues...'*principally from the Lower End Quarter of the Village*' - well now. He means me, for sure, but he can't be referring to my address - I don't live in Lower End. So - Lower, is it? I think the world should know that my Ordnance Survey map puts my Fairview Grove residence at precisely the same height above sea level as his. Not a fag paper between 'em, my old dad would say (- and he smoked roll-ups, so he knew what he was on about). Or are we talking neither height nor address - but social order? Aha! Mr Everitt is trying to elevate

his end of the village over this one again. An ancient dispute rises from the ashes of *Criers* of yore! Sounds like grounds for a duel - in which case I challenge Mr Everitt to define the terms of his 'Quarter' of the village! As the wronged party I claim the right to choose the time, place and weaponry.

I throw down my gage! (will a motorbike glove do?) I demand satisfaction! (Isn't that what they usually say? If so, it seems a bit excessive). I will meet him – High noon, on St Valentine's Day, in the churchyard, with wet flannels!

Hm. We ought to make it a ticket do, proceeds to the flower fund...? ask the Social Working Group if it fits...hang on, check my diary...no, the 14<sup>th</sup>'s a school day, can't do that one... possibly rearrange it for the following Wednesday? No, no no - we've lost the moment. You can't do a duel by arranging diaries. It's an on-the-spur thing, all shoot first and ask questions afterwards stuff. That's the trouble with village events – you can't do anything without planning it all out first...

Phew.

All this Shakespearian conspiracy stuff can be quite wearing after a while. You have to really want to find something to get any kind of story out of it.

One more go.

Version IV:

It could be one of the last (– believe me, it's the last I'm up for) but also obvious typical Elizabethan/ Shakespearian tricks. Write a load of innocent-sounding stuff that no-one should get controversial about then put something dynamite in the postscript - your audience will lose interest in the main bit so they won't bother with the PS because they won't think there's anything there either. But of course, as you will have seen from the previous *Crier*, *Mr Everitt*, *postscripts* are a speciality of mine – (I am *trying* to resist the tendency to adopt a James Bond master-villain-type tone here, honest I am) So: what have we in your postscript? 'Full answer to be found in First Folio of 1623, anyone who has a copy should be able to discover what really happened...especially with copy of amended will...'

Oh right. So that is what it's all about. And he means me again, as he knows I have a copy (facsimile, that is). And if you think I'm going looking for the hidden meanings therein, think again. I've done my bit already, thanks. What's more, the introduction to the First Folio has seven separate passages or poems of dedication, and an engraving of Shakespeare. One of those seven is two sides of double-edged stuff from fellow (and rival) playwright/satirist Ben Jonson who could no more write a pair of lines without a double meaning, than would Messrs Corbett & Barker, foretitled Ronnie. So you'll be well away just on that one for starters.

And as you can see from my various forays into the writings of Mr Everitt, all you have to do is go through it all with the intention of finding stuff and believe me, you'll find it. Just try and remember that Dr Who wasn't around then...Or was he?

Diddlee-dee, diddlee-dee, diddlee-dee-dee, (Dr Who Theme Tune)

whoo-oo, woo! Diddlee-dee...diddlee-dee -dee

Diddlee-dee, diddlee-dee, Diddlee-dee...diddlee-dee -dee ...

- See? 10-syllable rhyming verse. Almost but not quite Iambic pentameter.

There you have it - the Time Lords invented Shakespearian verse form.

More proof positive if you need it: there are Doctors in a number of Shakespeare plays...Take that one in Macbeth. (or possibly two, if you think Malcolm would

have had a different GP to Macbeth. They hadn't many to go round even then, pre-NHS restructuring, and you were lucky to get an appointment at any time unless you were a king) Appearing out of nowhere, disappearing again just as quick, having made various expert noises but apparently otherwise doing nothing useful at all.

Probably saved the galaxy but nobody noticed. Classic Time Lord behaviour.

In vino et conspiratio veritas

*M.L.*

PS I just realised the 'E' in the DIIE letter-count of the first paragraph was actually part of a sentence. (But I bet he *meant* it to be part of the code!!)

PPS which just goes to show even I want to believe in my own bizarre conspiracy theories, once I've thought of 'em. Nasty addictive little things, they are.

PPPS ...Unless 'DII' is Diana....hang on - I think we've got a story for the Daily Mail here...

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## ARE THE TIGERS COMING? NO! THEY HAVE ARRIVED!!!

IT'S TAKEN A WHILE but at last we can say it – "The Tigers have landed!" Each time we thought we had made it another obstacle was put in our way, but Tigers are tenacious and we never give up! We now have a ground where we can develop and allow the children to play football.

A home for Tigers.

It does not stop there! Yes we will be playing football there at weekends but we wish the field to be what it should be – a recreation field; a field for the community. We have had talks with the school, they need a place for the children to play rounders, football, take part in athletics, somewhere for them to invite other schools to come for fun days. It's theirs to use. This is a community project. Yes we will benefit but we want the entire village to gain from this venture. Somewhere for the kids to play in safety, cubs to camp in in the summer, fly kites, just don't walk your dogs there!

Hopefully this will encourage more boys and girls from Swaffham Prior to take up football and where better to start than with Tigers!

We will need your help to do it though!

A big Thank You should go to Mr Hurrell for his patience and Steve Kent Phillips for all his help in getting us this far.

It's been a long road but it will be worth it in the end!

For further info log on to [www.burwelltigers.co.uk](http://www.burwelltigers.co.uk)

Or call Steve O'Rourke on 01638 743696.

*Steve O'Rourke*

BURWELL TIGERS F.C.



## From our Reporter at the Parish Council Meeting

MAYBE IT IS THE MILD JANUARY but the PC appeared to be in a particularly relaxed, confident and jovial mood which took the meeting through to 10.00pm.

After the initial formalities Jo Fitzpatrick from ACRE addressed the meeting about “Parish Plans” – an initiative (gosh, how that word sends shivers down the spine) controlled by DEFRA (does this give any confidence) which “gives everyone a chance to say what they think about the social, economic and environmental issues affecting their community.” Even better. “Parish Plans are holistic in scope.” Well, that’s alright then. There was a long discussion and while no report can give the full details, here goes.



A rural white paper was printed in November 2000 to help create “a vibrant countryside”. Initially, so Hazel Williams said, many completed Parish Plans were just left on the shelf – well, that’s a surprise. But all this has changed and there is now a big drive to complete as many as possible. It seems that just over a third in East Cambridgeshire have either completed or are completing the Plan. Lode and Bulbeck are just starting while the Burwell has had 80% of its completed Plan approved or actioned. Hazel was not asked what the items were.

DEFRA is going to hand out £1,500 to every participating village. Initially a village working party would be set up comprising a maximum of 2 PC members and representatives from a variety of organisations in the village. Hazel stressed that this would have to be a real working party and a lot of work and application was required. For £75 we would buy software containing up to 300 questions which would form a basis for a questionnaire circulated to the whole village.

Steve asked why the PC needed a Parish Plan if it is happy it represents village views. Hazel asked “how do you know this for certain?” She explained that the Plan would give an opportunity for those who never go to any event, who never take part in anything, who never read the local magazine, who are shy, or who just commute into Cambridge or elsewhere, drive home and never come out – it would give all these good people a chance to express an opinion. One example she gave was that 60% of Coton knew nothing about the Parish Council. Geoffrey jumped up at this point and said the difference between Coton and Swaffham Prior is that “*the Crier rams information about the PC down people’s throats.*”

It transpires that the Plan will include all personal details such as the number of people living in each house, how many cars, age, and possibly such details as eating habits, sex, sporting activities – at which point a noticeable caution began to creep into the PC. We know the government would like an electronic tab on everyone and is this just a backdoor entrance? “So it’s a kind of census?” asked Sandra Ginn. “Sort of” came the answer.

Steve asked what the £1,500 was for and would it cover all the costs. It was intended to cover the printing costs and the approximate £1,000 for the analysis which was strongly recommended should be carried out by one of a number of

professional companies. It was suggested that this would make the analysis impartial and make it much easier to obtain grants. I could not follow the argument here as we could well have someone in the village with the skills to do this. Probably DEFRA wanted the information in a format suitable for merging with all the other information the Government is amassing about us. Or was it just a gentle warning/threat – “Do as we say or you won’t get any funding.”

And so it went on. The PC would only be liable for 5% of the cost which under examination from Steve could be £3,000 -3,500. Geoffrey suggested leaving the decision until after the May election as it would give the new PC four years to reach a decision. Jo said the PC had only until March 2008 by which time any money from DEFRA will have had to be paid out.

After the meeting I read a handout provided by ACRE. As often with an offer there is a sting in the tail. There is probably enough money to fund 1,000 parish councils throughout the country and it is “first come first served”. Also it is a maximum of £1,500 and could be less. £1,500 multiplied by 1,000 could amount to one and a half million pounds and our Gordon could trumpet that the government had spent this amount on creating local “visions” for rural communities. Of this sum two thirds, or £1 million, would go to the information analysts which convinces me the whole scheme was drawn up by management consultants some of whom have been ripping off our public services for years.

The final sting is that:-

“Working with the community in the preparation of a ‘Parish or Town Plan’ is also one of the criteria needed to meet the new Quality Parish Council status developed to strengthen the most local tier of government.” Does our Parish Council know this?

Hastoe Housing Association has asked the PC if we have any need for social housing and it may be asked to address the village at the Village Assembly. Some points of procedure were tidied up on the Agenda and “Matters arising” is being moved from No 6 to No 3. Now that we are aiming at Quality Status we are not allowed to have “Any other Business” on the agenda. Most thought this ridiculous as it’s essential there is some slot to raise last minute concerns. To get round the problem it was agreed to include it in ‘Open Question Time’ after the meeting has closed. Someone insisted the PC should have its say before “that lot in the Public Gallery”.

**“ Steve asked why the PC needed a Parish Plan. Hazel explained...one example she gave was that 60% of Coton knew nothing about the Parish Council. Geoffrey jumped up at this point and said the difference between Coton and Swaffham Prior is that ‘the Crier rams information about the PC down people’s throats’....”**

The new rules about addresses requires everyone to have a street name and number (including Chatsworth House or a cottage on a Welsh hillside ?) though the name of the house can be included. Michael Marshall is concerned that the address of Swaffham Prior House is 86 High Street. It certainly is an anomaly but the PC thought it did not have the power to make any change. Geoffrey produced copies of the 1891 Census which is inconclusive as none of the High Street houses were given numbers. Perhaps Geoffrey could continue his research and tell us exactly when the High Street numbers were added and if there were any major changes during the twentieth century. The PC was sympathetic but could not go beyond that.

In the Report of the December Meeting I mentioned Saville's sketch of the seven houses they wish to have on the Water Tower Site. At this meeting they submitted a more detailed Outline Planning Application. The discussion went exactly the same way as the December meeting. Geoffrey observed that "The site is so obvious for development". "Why is it obvious?" asked Steve. Rarely is Geoffrey short of a word but after a splutter or two he suggested they should have a vote. Only Geoffrey was in favour. At the moment the proposed development history is:-

Applied for 13 houses. ECDC granted 2 houses.

Application to ECDC for 7 houses. Opposed by the PC.

Sandra Ginn noticed that since the edge of the Dencora field had been tidied up a mass of litter had been uncovered and she wondered who would be picking it up. Before this happens we must hope this historical litter is surveyed by Mark Lewinski who has cornered the market for this type of garbage survey. If he would also list out the sell- by-dates at the bottom of cans and on the packets of crisps the village would acquire an interesting overview which might even be "holistic in scope".

*Alastair Everitt*

## **St Mary's Concert**

### **St. Mary's Church Swaffham Bulbeck**

**Saturday 3rd of Feb 2007, 7.30 pm**

**Director Martin Gent**

**Bach Magnificat in D**

**Choral Works by Bardos**

**Orchestral pieces**

**Retiring collection**

**Refreshments available**

**contact Bob/Sylvia Thomson**

**[sylviathomson@btopenworld.com](mailto:sylviathomson@btopenworld.com)**



# Passion for puddings?

Indulge it at the Friends of Swaffham Prior School

## Spud and Pud Evening

Friday 9 March 2007

Reach Village Hall  
all waiting to be sampled

Yes there's a **healthy** baked potato supper to start with, but that's just an excuse for the slide into **decadence** that follows: a huge selection of fabulously **delicious** puddings provided our most talented cooks, all waiting to be sampled.

**Come on - you know you want to!**

Doors open 5.30pm, food served from 6.00-8.00pm  
Excellent value family tickets available. Bar for grown-ups.  
Contact: Clare Freeman (741316) or Catherine Wrench (742654)

# **DATES FOR VILLAGE HALL EVENTS IN 2007**

**The Village Feast    Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> May**

**THE AUTUMN SHOW    SATURDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER**

**CAROLS AT THE VILLAGE HALL    WEDNESDAY 19<sup>TH</sup>  
DECEMBER**

Ah, the Feast is on Cup Final Day again we hear some people say. And they are quite right because the FA declined to make any attempt to resolve the clash. We could not have it on the 12<sup>th</sup>, being far too close to Reach Fair, and the 26<sup>th</sup> was part of half term which would have lost many children. So the 19<sup>th</sup> it has to be.

*VHMC*

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## **A Helping Hand**

**A FREE easy to use  
guide to community  
transport**

WHAT IS A DIAL-A-RIDE service or a voluntary car scheme and am I eligible? If you've ever thought this then help is at hand. Cambridgeshire County Council has just published their indispensable Community Transport Guide for 2006 / 2007. And it's completely FREE.

The guide explains exactly what community transport is and who can use it; how it works alongside conventional public transport; and lists by district details of all community transport schemes operating throughout Cambridgeshire.

Laid out in an accessible reference format the guide is easy to read and understand. Three sections provide clear and concise information.

The first section describes the various types of community transport schemes throughout Cambridgeshire. Covering how they meet the needs of the communities they serve, how they operate and who can use such schemes. The section also has



useful information on other modes of transport throughout Cambridgeshire. For example how to get information on bus and rail services and how to obtain a bus pass. It also has a full explanation of the concessionary fare scheme.

The second section lists schemes by district and the type of scheme available. The third and final section lists details of other agencies involved in community transport. It also provides advice on transport for those with mobility difficulties.

A community transport scheme may serve your area and you may be eligible to use it. For instance it can be used to transport you to a medical appointment, or to the nearest post office or shop. The Community Transport Guide 2006 / 2007 is designed to provide you with information in an easy way.

For a **FREE** copy of the guide contact Gavin Moulton on 01223 717755. Or write to him at Cambridgeshire County Council, ET1015, Castle Court, Shire Hall, Cambridge CB3 0AP. Or email him at [gavin.moulton@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:gavin.moulton@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

*Gavin Moulton*

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## CAROLS AT THE VILLAGE HALL

THIS ANNUAL EVENT in the Village Hall is never the same, with the only constant feature being home made mince pies and free glasses of excellent hot punch. The band excelled itself, the singing moved between the modest and the boisterous, a wonderful crowd of cub/scout lads and lasses turned up, while, for the first time the event became the venue for the presentation of the Gay Bulleid Good Neighbour Award which was given to Andrew and Dee Noyes.

The evening began with a beautiful rendering of “Away in a manger” by the young and, as usual, “I’m dreaming of a white Christmas” brought out the sentimental best from nearly all. There are only two verses, given below, and what we need is a third one. So, polish up your little creative grey cells and please write a third verse.

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.

Send all your entries to the Editor and there is a bottle of wine for the writer of the verse adjudged to be best. You have a couple of months for this.

Thanks to all who helped to make it a success and the whole village owes a thank you to Dave and Sue Jackson who provided the lighting for the tree outside the Hall and also to the Tea Club which decorated the tree inside the Hall.

*Alastair Everitt*

# QUIZ NIGHT

**Swaffham Prior Village Hall**  
**7.30 pm ♡ Saturday**

*3rd March 2007*

**Tickets: £5 each ♡ To book a table contact**

**Jenny Brand ☎ (01638) 742161**

**or**

**Lynne Rand ☎ (01638) 741960**

**Jacket Potato Supper ♡ Raffle**

**Bring your own drinks and glasses**

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

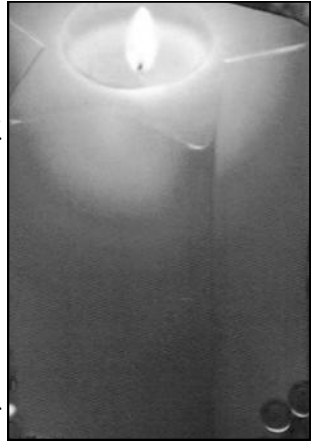
# Jim Henderson reviews December's ADVENT BY CANDLELIGHT

ON SUNDAY DECEMBER 3<sup>RD</sup> 2006 we were swept along a progress from Λογος to a strong affirmation that “In the beginning was the word”. Our skilful guides were Hilary Sage and Elisabeth Everitt. Our transporters were Ian De Massini with the Cambridge Voices, and a medley of other voices both rhetorical and sophist as Phaedrus might have contrived.

The first music came to us across four centuries and from several levels. A first and final soloist brought us, from on high and with great clarity of voice and import, hopeful instruction. The intervening passages, no less superbly executed, conveyed the undertone of watchful fearfulness.

The second reading came to us appropriately from Edwin Muir who, born in Orkney, was cast out of that paradise, through no apparent fault of his own, to fall into the industrial hell of Glasgow and the intellectual chaos of twentieth century Europe. The music and readings which followed, all again immaculately accomplished, surely conveyed, with increasing urgency, that the sky was falling until the Cambridge Voices' Kyrie eleison heralded a human submission. This was quickly and resolutely confirmed by the rousing call from all the people, “Quickly come dread Judge”.

A reading from Turgenev quickly brought the Him of the New Testament and an Evensong setting by Ian De Massini made Him warmly welcome. There followed a glorious celebration, in words and music, of manifold aspects of Advent. This being the twenty first century ladies were not neglected. Poetic and musical tribute was paid to Godes Mother and included a Massini choral resetting to celebrate the achievements of our own, angelic Lydia Smallwood. In such an evening the “Wachet auf” is a pure ornament. Who, resting unmoved, could slumber? Swaffham Prior knows how to throw a party.



*Jim Henderson*

# Michael Jeacock

**Michael Jeacock died on December 14<sup>th</sup>, in St Nicholas Hospice at Bury St Edmund's, having written his last column, *View From the Fen*, there a few days before. "Sorry, this is the last column folks", "the final inky scribblings of a very contented man", was published on the day of his death.**

HIS FUNERAL SERVICE, at St Mary's Church, Newmarket, was a true celebration of his life. Nothing could say more about him than the choice of hymns, 'I vow to thee my country', and 'Jerusalem', with 'Rule Britannia' to close, and that his final entrance and exit were to the haunting strains of Amadeus Boldwicket's Red Hot Peppers Jazz Band.

Michael and Janet lived in Swaffham Bulbeck from 1962 to 1990, first in Ivy Cottage, and then in the Merchant's House, where their lovely family, Sarah, Simon, Rachel and Naomi, grew up. The Merchant's House was surely the right setting for Michael and Janet: a house with a history, a walled garden, and a cellar, and comfortable eighteenth century rooms. There you can imagine Michael enjoying jugged fen hare and a decanter of claret, before reading Surtees or Dickens before a log fire, while one of a succession of black labradors dozes at his feet. The Jeacocks were all very much part of the village community - as mentioned in last month's *Beacon*, Janet edited the *Grapevine* column, as well as the *Beacon* itself - and Michael was an instantly recognizable and memorable figure as he strolled down Fen Lane or Commercial End with his dog, or across the Denny, a stroll always punctuated by lively conversation with everyone he met. Michael had a great gift

for friendship. He was an expert raconteur, with an apparently inexhaustible supply of jokes and anecdotes, all delivered with effortless timing and usually in a dead-pan, throwaway manner. He could also be serious, and there are many areas of daily life that he minded about with deep passion: the landscape and the natural world, country sports, the traditional English way of life, traditional values such as decency, fairness, loyalty, patriotism. He was a champion of the elderly, of those who were down on their luck, of the individual; and the enemy of the pompous, the bureaucratic, the corporate. All this you could deduce from his unique column, *View from the Fen*, destined to become a collector's item, but it was an added bonus to have it straight from Michael himself.

Michael was born in Buxton, and educated at Bakewell, and his roots were set firmly in the Derbyshire countryside. His love of country sports came from a deep conviction about their traditional role in the fabric of social life. His friends came from all areas of the Cambridge and Cambridgeshire community, the city and the university, the game fairs and the racecourse, East Anglian shoots, the Farmer's Club or Trinity High Table. In recent years, Michael, like Janet, became a Blue Badge tour guide in Cambridge, and his eyes would light up with mischief as he

pounced on some passing acquaintance, who would be transformed into an eminent scientist or eccentric don for the benefit of a group of foreign tourists. He and Janet collaborated on an excellent guide to Cambridge.

Michael was a great supporter and enthusiast. He must have lost count of the number of fetes he opened, cups he presented, after-dinner speeches he made. He did his National Service in the Joint Services School for Linguists at Bodmin, learning Russian, a mark of recognition for his razor-sharp intelligence - but talked little about it in public; however, he never missed joining the Remembrance Day parade with the British Legion. He was a long-term chairman of the Swaffhams cricket club - he would chair the AGM in ten minutes flat - and a faithful spectator and compere at the six-aside tournament long after he had moved to Newmarket. Afterwards, there might be a post-match wind-down in the Black Horse or the Royal Oak. Michael was especially fond of the Royal Oak, and of Bob and Vera Scrutton. The Oak was a place where you could celebrate a sporting achievement, commiserate about the disastrous running of a fancied horse., or genially set the world to rights.

And then there was his professional life. Michael was a notable journalist. He trained on the *Derbyshire Times*, joined the *Daily Express* in Manchester after his National Service, and then became the youngest news editor ever on the *Daily Express* in Fleet Street. Later, he went freelance, and some thirty years ago began writing his *View from the Fen* column for the *Town Crier*, before it also found a permanent home with the *Newmarket Weekly News*. Michael wrote these pieces in a richly idiosyncratic, slightly self-



mocking, style, which enabled him to give vent to some fairly extreme and certainly politically incorrect opinions without giving any - well, much - offence. (I wonder whether the lawyers had to scan his columns with special attention.) The book drawn from his columns is a perpetual delight, very funny, often moving, a self-deprecating, warm chronicle of his own family, and a vivid record of a way of life under siege from urban bureaucracy.

Michael bore his last illness with characteristic bravery, and he was cared for unwaveringly by Janet. In recent months, he had become very thin, but the old twinkle and teasing sense of humour never left him. His was a huge personality, generous, warm, relishing life and the amazingly broad range of people from all walks of life with whom he came in contact. He was a real character, who would have been at home in the stories of Chaucer, or the plays of Shakespeare: in Shakespeare's words, 'There's a great spirit gone'.

**Peter Raby**

# Hockey versus Honey

WHENEVER Christopher Robin was wearing his Big Boots, Pooh knew they were about to have an Adventure. Pooh liked adventures: of course, he did not know exactly what an adventure was, only that he liked them. So he put on his red jumper. 'Are we going somewhere?'

'I'm going to the annual hockey match between the Swaffhams,' said Christopher Robin.

'What's an animal hockey match?' asked a puzzled Pooh.

'A hockey match which only happens once every year, you silly old bear!'

Pooh scratched his nose. He really wanted to ask if you could use a hockey match to light a candle, but thought better of it. Perhaps Christopher Robin meant 'rocket match'. Might there then be a bon-fire? 'Is this once-in-a-year thingumee like Christmas?' he enquired. 'Because if so, shouldn't we invite all our friends to come along. No one's going to want to miss it if it's at all like Christmas, are they?'

'You mean Piglet?'

'Yes, and Eeyore, Tigger, Rabbit, Kanga and Roo, everyone.'

Christopher Robin nodded. 'It's true. Anyone who is anyone goes to the Boxing Day hockey match.'

'That's what you said when we went shopping in Waitrose,' muttered Eeyore.

'Oh, do come along. We shall miss the bully off at this rate.'



Watching the match

What's a bully off, Pooh?' asked Piglet.

'I think it's something you eat,' offered the ever-hopeful bear. It was the time of day when breakfast is a distant memory and lunch seems far away.

Christopher Robin, in his Big Boots and new woolly hat, led the little procession along the village street towards the football ground.

'Is it far?' Piglet questioned, puffing with the effort of keeping up.

'It's only a few big bounces.' It was Tigger, who nearly knocked Christopher Robin over in his boundful enthusiasm.

'Adventures are always great distances away, and usually concluded before arrival,' observed Eeyore, bringing up the rear reluctantly.

And so the people of the Forest came at last to the football field to watch the now legendary encounter: that is to say, some did and some didn't, as Pooh so



perceptively put it, for the motives of our old friends were as mixed as those of any inhabitant of the Swaffhams. Owl had overslept. Rabbit took one look at the motley miscellany of assorted dogs and hopped it home again. Kanga, preferring cricket, not surprisingly, stayed away. Christopher Robin was there out of a sense of obligation, while Piglet crept into his pocket 'just in case'.

Boisterous Tigger bounced excitedly. Pooh hoped for the best, and Eeyore feared the worst.

Naturally, it fell to Christopher R to explain whatever was going on to his companions. As those stoical devotees of the annual Swaffhams' ritual know well, it is taxing enough to interpret such arcane Boxing Day behaviour to an intelligent visiting guest. (They are, it is rumoured, sometimes to be found). Imagine C.R.'s difficulty having to enlighten creatures whose only sport was to hunt the elusive Woozle and the awesome Heffalump; whose only game was Poohsticks! Despite Christopher Robin's best endeavours, Piglet was convinced the ball was an orange and the Bulbeck goalie an Heffalump, no less! No one was able to decide upon the true nature of the Prior goalkeeper, a bafflement widely shared, as it happens.

After a characteristically profound effort of concentration, Pooh concluded it was not necessary for a Bear of Little Brain to understand something as pointless as hockey. However, he proposed that meaning might be given to the meaningless by serving honey at half-time, better yet at the end of each quarter, and, best of all, every time the umpire (whatever that was) blew his whistle.

Tigger sprang about as only Tiggers (and Airedales) can, trying to find a spare

**“Anyone who is anyone goes to the Boxing Day hockey match.**

**‘That’s what you said when we went shopping in Waitrose,’ muttered Eeyore.**



The Prior Team

**“ It’s a ball. Piglet, a ball, not an orange.’  
‘But they seem to be kicking the orange with their feet and using the sticks to hit one another.’”**

hockey stick and wanting very much to join in. Eeyore stood slowly shaking his head, every so often confiding a gloomy thought to Christopher Robin such as, ‘A donkey could starve in this place. I haven’t seen a thistle all morning. How do they expect thistles to grow in this field with so much rushing up and down, rolling about and digging of holes?’

Christopher Robin carried on gamely with his commentary.

‘The sticks are for hitting the orange, you said.’

‘It’s a ball. Piglet, a ball, not an orange.’

‘But they seem to be kicking the orange with their feet and using the sticks to hit one another.’

‘Things are not always what they seem,’ ventured Pooh, who could sometimes sound wise, but only by accident and then only if he had not thought too hard for too long.

‘What’s the point of it?’ grumbled Eeyore.

Christopher Robin considered this for a moment. ‘It doesn’t have a point. It’s fun, you see, just fun.’

Eeyore did not see and neither did Piglet, who by now considered hockey much more dangerous than catching Heffalumps.

‘What is the fun about?’ asked Pooh, for whom having fun was a very serious business.

‘The people in the white shirts are trying to hit the ball with their sticks past the man in the cap and between the flag and the post. And those in the coloured shirts must try and stop the white shirts doing it and hit the ball, well, past whoever or whatever it is in the goal at the other end. It’s really very simple.’

Pooh took time to consider this strange New Fun. ‘I think the Fun would be Funnier if they all tried to hit the ball in the same direction,’ he said at last.

‘Silly old bear!’ laughed Christopher Robin. ‘That wouldn’t be a game. Having two sides is a game, and the game is the Fun part.’

‘No, the knocking over and falling down is the Fun part,’ yelled Tigger bouncing up and down on the touchline.

Now Pooh knew something about sides; sides were what kept tops from bottoms, and so he wondered which side he and his friends were on.

‘We can’t be on any side,’ Christopher Robin told him. ‘We are not from the Swaffhams, so we must be neutral.’

‘What’s nootrul mean?’ posed Piglet from Christopher’s pocket.

‘It means we can’t be one thing or the other,’ came the reply.

Pooh suddenly felt disembodied. Having no sides and being neither one thing nor another can make a Bear of Little Brain feel like that: so he thought of honey and immediately felt better.

And that was how the friends watched the game unfold, or unravel, as Eeyore would doubtless have put it. People fell about, usually on top of one another and sometimes in heaps; players, especially those in white, seemed about to do something significant and then thought better of it; whistles blew, dogs barked, Tigger bounced, and one poor man left the field in need of ‘Kanga’s Special Strengthening Medicine’ according to Piglet. But there were no goals.



Umpire Intervenes (from a distance)

By the end of the Fun, Pooh felt in need of a large amount of lunch. Tigger, on the other hand, wanted the game to go on until ‘next Hot Cross Bunday’ and Piglet, who loved Hot Cross Buns, wondered when that might be. Eeyore gave his opinion that the goal posts should be set further apart, so that someone could score something quickly and everyone could stop all the fuss, thus proving that Eeyore is not the ass some believe him to be.

Christopher Robin declared the Boxing Day hockey to be an ‘Institushun’ which confused Pooh more than ever since he was still trying to understand a game with two sides and no top or bottom. ‘I think I shall call the playing field ‘Pooh’s Other Corner’ from now on. Right! Who’s for left-over Christmas pudding and mince pies?’ At which Pooh’s mind was at once emptied of hockey and filled with honey, and, as the happy friends hurried home, he sang this little hum.

Humpty, tumpty, humpty tum,  
Another hockey match is done,  
Priors and Bulbecks been and gone,  
Humpty, tumpty, humpty, tum.



Humpty, tumpty, humpty, tum  
Pooh and Piglet, Eeyore glum  
Saw a game which no one won,  
Home for honey, yum, yum, yum,  
Humpty, tumpty, humpty, tum.

**A.A.M.**

# FOOTNOTE TO THE HOCKEY REPORT

JOHN PRENTICE should have been there to write the hockey report. He had promised to come. However, to be fair, he did concoct a pretty convincing story with that kidney stone yarn which yielded him more headlines than our little local affair would have given him. Fortunately A.A.M. was present and he wrote something especially for the children – of all ages!!

There are several extra points to make. £82 was collected for MAGPAS because we gave the job to our best collector – Ruth Scovill. Even hard men blanch when they see Ruth coming with her collection tin. Again this year there was no mulled wine and I was told “if you want it bring it yourself”. Following the example of Shane Warne and Glenn McGrath who are retiring at the top, I am retiring from hockey umpiring. Our new captain Mike Carrington had to go to hospital after the first quarter, our Italian film star limped off in the third quarter never to return, and our goal keeper again put on a magnificent performance in his wig, wings and tutu. Several passing rugby players really fancied him and thought him a “braw lassie”.

*Alastair Everitt*

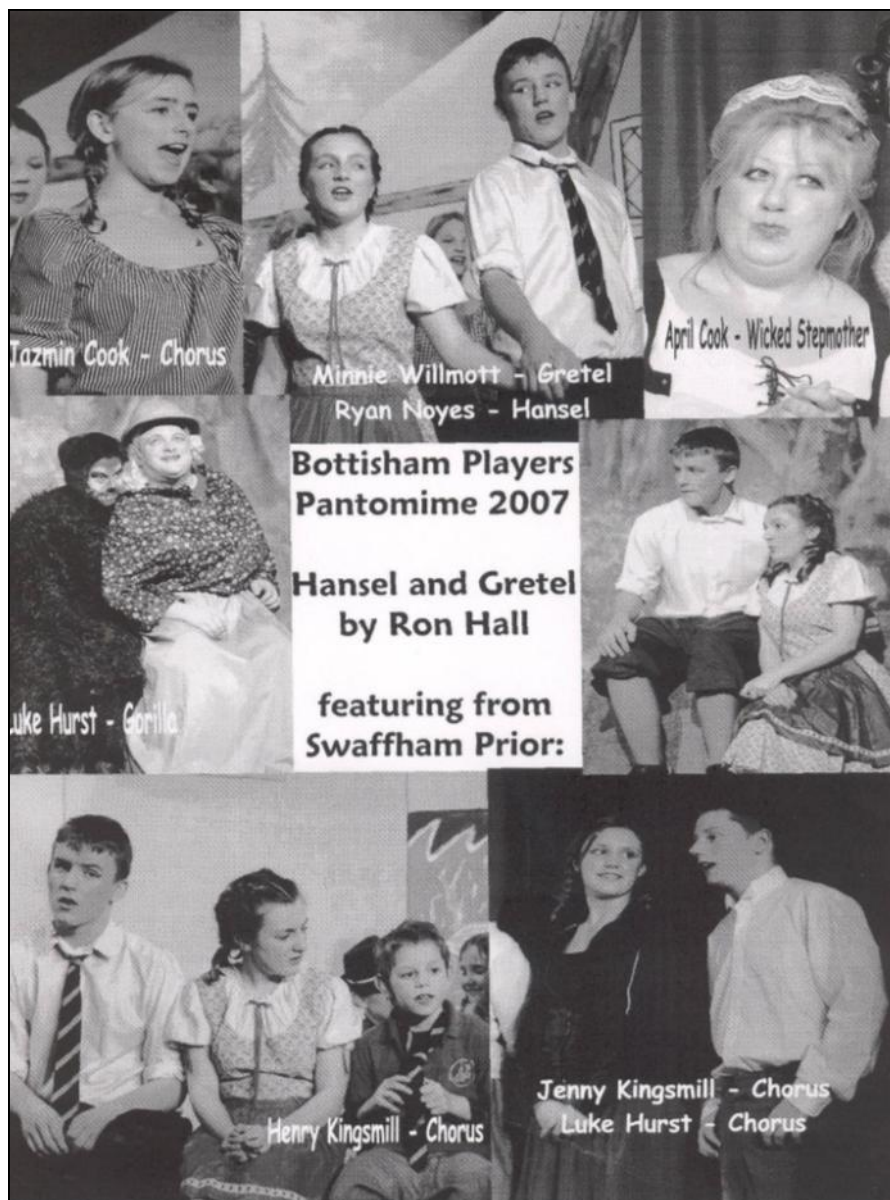


## Health, Safety and PC Insanity

CLEARLY THERE DO NEED TO BE SOME RULES AND REGULATIONS. But in an increasing “Blame Culture” and a growing army of health and safety “experts”, the rules and restrictions are oppressively weighing down on society. Whether it is the EU, our government, some unelected agency, or some pipsqueak local official who has nothing better to do than to think up a potential hazard, increasingly we appear to be no longer responsible for our actions. We may rage but there is nothing we can do.

The *Crier* is running an open column to which anyone may subscribe. So let us know if there is any H & S rule or PC recommendation which you find stupid, intrusive, unnecessary or just very laughable. All entries to the Editor. We thank Francis Reeks who submits the first one.

“Bristol City Council spent £5,000 planting one hundred yew trees at the Blaise Castle Estate. Several months later they were dug up after a “risk assessment” reckoned they could be a danger to children because the “safety experts” said that children could fall ill with diarrhoea if they ate “several handfuls” of the foliage.”



**Prior thespians starred in this year's Bottisham Pantomime—a great success, despite severe weather problems. The wind blew off BVC's gymnasium roof, so first night had to be cancelled.**

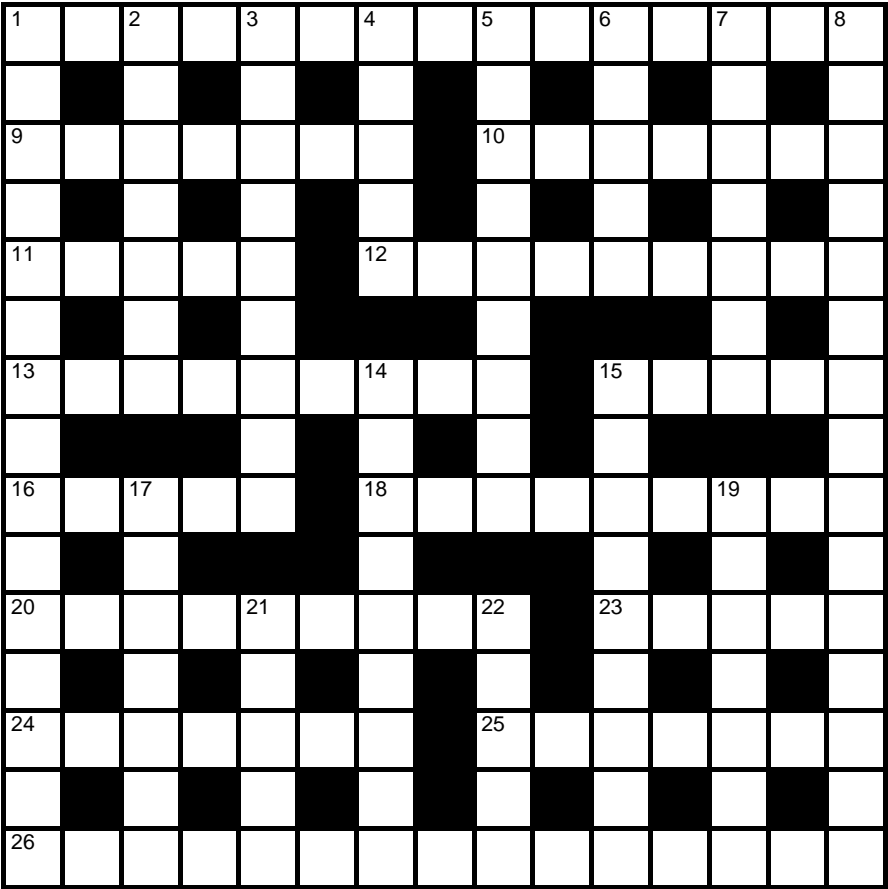
# Crossword Number 39

Sponsored by **The Red Lion**

Compiled by

**NIBOR**

We start the new year with a straightforward cryptic crossword. The first correct solution out of the hat will win a free meal at the Red Lion – See Lorraine at the pub for full details.



Name:.....
Adress.....
.....Tel:.....

## Across

- 1 An exact reference in the Bible (7,3,5)
- 9 Ivan ran in order to find contentment (7)
- 10 Let go; let again (7)
- 11 Culture from Newmarket Hospital (5)
- 12 Native American gets brain stem operation (9)
- 13 Charges for what Miss Geldof said (9)
- 15 Friend points first to floral leaf (5)
- 16 Many who follow space agency are nosy (5)
- 18 Writer bins Crier in error (9)
- 20 Turn the marrow to find a wiggler (9)
- 23 Man or crazy woman (5)
- 24 Top mail needs sorting; that's best (7)
- 25 The whole system contains the drums he bangs (7)
- 26 Servant has the knowledge to produce home economics (8,7)

## Down

- 1 Neo-con fed novice cooked pizza perhaps (11,4)
- 2 Balloon broadcasts? trendy! (7)
- 3 Naval star wandering in South Africa (9)
- 4 Caught in gunfire action? respond (5)
- 5 On reflection, a handsome young man might choose this plant (9)

- 6 The importance of a pound in sight (5)
- 7 Guidelines a traveller might follow (4,3)
- 8 Allen retreating after mixing with love rivals (7,8)
- 14 The masses first had opium in pipes or lava lamps or inhalers (3,6)
- 15 General strike ordered when Karl left wildlife park (9)
- 17 Band seems hesitant after seeing street vermin (7)
- 19 Make a good deal of pub profit (7)
- 21 We object to the sound of bees and soiled organic matter (5)
- 22 Was this prophet a basket case? (5)

## Solution to crossword no. 38

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

We congratulate Robert and Julie Nunn, the winner of last December's competition, who should collect their prize certificate from the editors. An honourable mention goes to Hilary Sage.

# John Norris Remembers

**In this concluding instalment of John Norris's memoirs, John tells us about how St Mary's tower was repaired, and the Trouble With Gargoyles that landed the village in the national news.**

THE STORY OF THE REPAIR of St Mary's tower started in early autumn 1963, after my wife heard a loud crash early in the morning whilst she was hanging out the washing. We wondered where this noise could have come from, hoping it was not from our house! I almost dismissed it, but thought it better to look around for trouble.

After finding nothing amiss at home, I went to the churchyard and found a large flint lying on the grass against the porch. This was the culprit, having fallen from the side of the tower, hitting the porch tin roof on its way to the ground.

We had just experienced a very sharp spell of cold weather with frost both day and night which no doubt had penetrated the walls, and loosened this flint. Over the years much of the clunch (chalk) had weathered away in this manner, so that the whole tower surface was insecure. This action was the likely cause of the spire falling down in the late eighteenth century, it also being built of clunch.

What to do next? The PCC under the guidance of Rev Francis Hicks sought help from the Diocesan

Advisory Committee. This resulted in Mr Bourne's partnership doing a survey, and recommending re-facing the tower and making good the ragged top. As with many things, what seemed a minor repair turned into a major project costing £200,000 in today's money, and taking just a year to complete.

Plans were prepared, and a model made, so that the design of the finish to the top could be studied. Several attempts were made, and finally the "Fleche" we see today was the preferred choice, mounted above a new arcaded final layer to the tower.

Much thought was given to the cost, and how we could meet it. Rattee & Kett were the preferred contractors – their estimate of £15000 had been accepted on the condition that only work that could be paid for was commissioned. The job of treasurer fell to me, and quite a worry it was. We were lucky in that funds had been slowly growing since the restoration in 1902, augmented by a gift from the Rev Fisher in the 1920s.

At this time, Brass Rubbing was very popular, especially with the Americans stationed at

Mildenhall. It was so oversubscribed that we had a booking arrangement, both for a day and time. The fees were set at £2 per person for three hours, and were enforced by my wife Marion. During 1964 nearly one thousand pounds was collected. The double yellow lines made parking difficult near the church, as they extended much further than today. The casual rubber (one who had not booked) was easily detected as they had to walk past our kitchen window: their shadow gave them away! This interest continued for some time until the Brass Rubbing Centre was opened in Cambridge, where many replicas were available. Not the same as doing the real thing, but conservation of the old ones was ensured. However, our little nest egg income was subsequently brought to an end.

With the money made, we were able to start work early in 1964. I had just purchased a cine-camera at the time, and resolved to make a record of the progress of the work. The opening scene is of the old building in a snow covered churchyard, and the end is the repaired church also surrounded by





"An' Oi reckon, furriner or not, wi' a face loike yourn, you ought to be up on that ruddy steeple!"

### The Great Gargoyle Dispute — as portrayed in the national press.

snow, just a year later.

The first sign of activity was the erection of scaffolding, surrounding the tower from top to bottom. Later workmen chopped away all the loose clunch and the remaining flint stones (not to be confused with the cartoon characters). The surface was replaced by Barnack stone and small flints bound in by a mortar of lime and flint grit, so that the surface you see to-day is all of this century, and very different from the black and white of the original.

Whilst all this was happening, the fundraising activity was to seek out grant aiding bodies and inform them of our plight. This was quite successful, and together with the Brass Rubbing money, and local donations after updates in the press, we were able to keep the work progressing. As treasurer it

was my duty to follow up any source of income, and press articles were very useful.

During the summer the newly carved arcading for the final course arrived. This was duly hoisted into position, and placed on a reinforced concrete ring cast over the top of the old work, to tie it in, and provide a firm foundation. This concrete ring also held the steel beams onto which the fleche was later fixed.

At this time scaffolding was also erected inside the tower so that the remaining beam of the old bell frame could be removed. A pity really, as it was so secure being fourteen inches square, and perfectly sound. It had to go so that the new ceiling could be seen uninterrupted. This scaffold also helped the workmen to raise up the steel beams.

It was during the

reconstruction of the upper parts that a gargoyle was found. It seemed that at one time there must have eight, one for each side. So seven more blocks, some eight inches square, were built into the stonework. These were to be carved later before the scaffold was taken away, by Mr Shuffleton the stonemason. He was given three days to carve an image on the seven new blocks, (the original one is directly over the porch). The Vicar suggested the seven deadly sins, but he was politely told that there was no time for any research. So the faces of those who were at work

**"It was during the reconstruction of the upper parts that a gargoyle was found...."**

**“ Mr Shuffleton was given three days to carve an image on the seven new blocks. The Vicar suggested the seven deadly sins, but he was politely told that there was no time...”**

there, or who were seen passing by, were used as models. The architect, the foreman, the Vicar, a director of Rattee & Kett, Mr Jim Sheldrick (the one with a lovely moustache,) one of the workmen, and myself.

My image is overlooking Anglesey House, on the south-west corner of the tower - to keep off all intruders and cowans! This selection was duly mulled over in the Red Lion, and accounts of the dissent reached the local papers. This also appealed to the National press, as the choice may have been somewhat undemocratic. A cartoon by Emmwood appeared in the Daily Mail on 15<sup>th</sup> December 1964. This sparked interest from many places: students who had biked out to see the two churches when they were students, and many others who sent ten pounds or so, saying well done!

As beer and I do not mix, I was not a patron of the Red Lion, but I tried to keep this story alive for the sake of the finances, "furrener" or not. We were beginning to get a small shortfall in funds, but the contractors said they were sure that in time they would be paid in full, so work carried on with the final phase of putting up the Fleche. The folk depicted in the cartoon are all identifiable, but the fifty year rule prevents me from naming them. (my image was a guess as I was not present).

This final adornment was made from stainless steel by Mackays to Mr Bourne's design. The six sides gave the spire a sense of depth, and were meant to provide extra stability by being welded with a fin at each

corner. After construction the forty foot long structure was still not stiff enough, so it was opened up and braces installed internally, substantially increasing the weight. The crown at the top is almost six feet in diameter, but as it is a hundred feet up, it looks much smaller. It arrived on site one misty November morning, with a team of strong men to carry it off the lorry up to the scaffolding.

Martin Bell, then a young reporter for Look East, was present with his cameraman to record the momentous event for the evening news. In the meantime two scaffolding frames had been erected over the top of the tower so that after the fleche had arrived at the top it could be transferred between these new frames which had a rail track on their sides. The upward hoist was electric and its rope fixed just above the point of balance of the fleche. This enabled it to be carried over the top wall and dropped onto the steel frame. After the event Martin Bell came into our garden room for coffee. He told us that his feet were so cold that even the stone slabs of the floor seemed hot to his frozen feet!

It was just as well that a helicopter was not used, as the fleche was three inches too short.

A secure weather joint had to be made at the bottom of the fleche, and this required space to make it. After an hour or so it was lowered onto its resting place where it is visible today.

It is worth mentioning that under the porch roof - an area of the original clunch face has been left unaltered except that the pointing has been replaced. Two other interesting features of the softness of clunch, are the grooves cut by a bell rope over the door lintel, and the wear on the steps going up to the old ringing floor. How they managed to get up there safely to ring the bells is a mystery.

On completion the Bishop was asked to rededicate the tower, but refused to do so until the final bill was paid. At the time two thousand pounds were owing, so I had a whip round of those with a bob or two. We raised the money by loans, repayable when we could. A year later fifty pounds each was in hand, but

they all refused the cash and converted their loan into a gift. So in 1965 a service of dedication was held just before the Vicar retired.

The churchwardens, Mr Ken Taylor and Mr Betts, also left the village at this time. So also did Mr Gill the PCC secretary. A new team was elected to welcome the new vicar, Rev Robin Ellis. He arrived with a young family, who found the old vicarage totally unsuitable for their needs: a large damp building with poor facilities, and in need of repairs everywhere. The house in Lower End where Mr Taylor lived was the vicarage until a new one was built next to the churchyard in Greenhead Road, several years later.

So many vicarages at that time were so unsuited to modern needs that they were sold for peanuts. The one in this village sold for six thousand pounds, together with six acres of land. Some forty years later the cognoscente occupy such buildings after expensive repairs; but their original grandeur usually shines through, and they are splendid homes.

This was the end of a very busy year and a half, and those involved – and there were many – felt it was a job well done

*John Norris*



HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL. 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:
Britax infant carrier Graco pushchair (birth to 4 years)		Luisa, 7 Fassage Close
5 newborn Pro-wrap nappy outers (6 – 10 lbs) – used for one baby for 3 months. 2 champagne flutes	Childrens' DVD/ videos (musicals) Any lego?	Jun Thompson, 23 Longmeadow, 01223 813362

# **VILLAGE GARDENERS**

## **2007 Programme**

**FEBRUARY 20th:**

**"THE TRADESCANT MUSEUM OF GARDEN HISTORY"**

**Mr John Drake.**

**MARCH 20th: "ORNAMENTAL GRASSES"**

**Mr Richard Ford.**

**APRIL 17th: "BORDER CAMPANULAS"**

**Mrs Margaret Lynch.**

**MAY 15th: "ABOUT ROSES" Miss Margaret Waddy.**

**JUNE 12th: Evening visit to the Nunn's garden in**

**Cambridge to see their scores of Clematis.**

**JULY 17th: Evening visit to Ousden House-the home of  
the Robinsons.( nr. Newmarket)**

**30th-: Day trip to GREAT DIXTER in Sussex.**

**SEPTEMBER 18th: "THE WORK OF THE PLANT  
VARIETY RIGHTS OFFICE"**

**Mr Rob Warlow.**

**OCTOBER 16th: A.G.M. and Entertainment.**

**NOVEMBER 20th: "WINTER HANGING BASKETS"**

**Mrs Lamorna Lewis.**

**All indoor meetings are held in the Village hall at 8.00pm  
on the third TUESDAY of each month- every one welcome.**



## The Reading Group Reads...

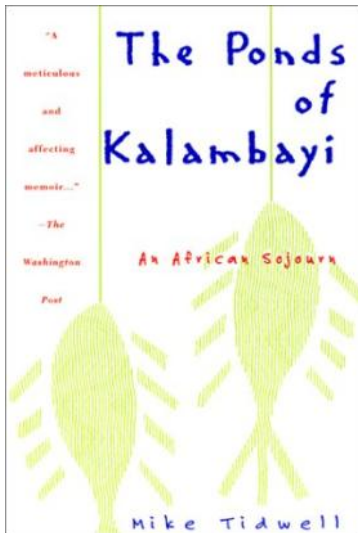
# The Ponds of Kalambayi

By Mike Tidwell



UNFORTUNATELY this turned out to be a bit of a non-starter. I couldn't get a copy before I went to Kenya so I borrowed the book from Barbara who had recommended it. I took it with me to read over Christmas, returning on the day of the meeting to find that nobody else had been able to get a copy either so Barbara and I were the only people who had actually read it! But you can't keep a good group down! The issues raised in the book, once brought to their attention, were fully examined.

The book is an account of the two years spent by a young American Peace Corps volunteer in Zaire, encouraging impoverished villagers to improve both their diet and their economic situation by creating ponds and stocking them with the local fish, tilapia. The ponds had to be dug by the



men themselves as proof of their commitment to the scheme, no small task with the limited tools available. When completed, the ponds are stocked with 500 'fingerlings', and then fed and nurtured for five months until the fish were big enough to be harvested. We're taken through the initial frustrations that he experiences and the gradual growth of working relationships with the inhabitants of a number of villages in the area. He catalogues his friendships and frustrations with great candour, without trying to embellish his own ego. The biggest problem he encounters is the difference between his values (and those of the first world from which he comes), and those of the third world society in which he finds himself. It's this issue which causes the most

heartsearching. And who is to say which are the more primitive?

An interesting read, which probes the values of the reader.

Next month's book is "The Egg and I" by Betty McDonald and it is at The Old School House in Burwell, 8pm, 7 Feb. Do join us if you can.

*Brenda Wilson*



## WI Notes

AT THE JANUARY MEETING we were pleased to welcome Suzy Green who talked to us about the history, origins and benefits of Aloe Vera. We heard that it had been used for centuries for medicinal purposes and to enhance beauty – Soldiers would use it to heal their wounds and even Cleopatra was rumoured to use it – never mind all that milk.. Well this news was quite enough for the members to enter enthusiastically in sampling all the products that Suzy had brought along to demonstrate. Over refreshments the debate continued as to which product would be best suited to our various needs. The next meeting will be on February 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 in the village hall when the speaker will talk about wild flowers and wild life.

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## BURWELL SURGERY NEWSLETTER

WE HOPE you all had a Merry Christmas and we wish you a very happy and healthy New Year. We would like to thank all the patients who have so generously given us boxes of biscuits and Christmas goodies. They are very much appreciated by us all. We would also like to thank everyone who has completed a patient questionnaire for us. These have now been sent off to a data analysis company and the results will be published later on.

I'm sure that you will be pleased to join us in welcoming back Dr Alison Evers who will be returning to the surgery for two days a week at the beginning of February. Dr Debbie Gilbert will remain with us for four days per week until the end of August.

I would like to give some tips on how patients can get the best out of their appointments. Doctors' appointments are ten minutes long and it is a good idea to prepare beforehand what you want to discuss with your doctor. If you have more than one problem, tell the doctor at the start of the appointment and try to deal with the most important problem first. If there is insufficient time to address all your problems, then a further appointment or follow up telephone call may be necessary. Doctors cannot use your appointment to deal with the health problems of other members of your family. Urgent appointments are from 11.30 am each day. These allow only five minutes per patient and are for urgent problems that cannot wait for a routine appointment. As a result, the doctor will only have time to deal with urgent problems during these appointments. I hope this information is helpful.

COMING TO A RECREATION GROUND NEAR YOU ...

## BURWELL TIGERS F C



**FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE EXCITING NEW PLANS FOR THE  
SWAFFHAM PRIOR RECREATION GROUND**

**FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED**

**LEARN MORE ABOUT BURWELL TIGERS FOOTBALL CLUB**

**FIND OUT HOW BURWELL TIGERS FC CAN HELP YOU**

**FRIDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> FEBRUARY 2007**

**AT SWAFFHAM PRIOR VILLAGE  
HALL**

**MEETING STARTS AT 8pm**

# A Late Report on the Parish Council December Meeting

BECAUSE OF the earlier copy date last month it wasn't possible to include a *Crier* Report on the December PC Meeting. But there were important topics and a few nuggets are given below.

1). ECDC are conducting trials to see whether Garbage Collection can be reduced to once a fortnight. The first trial was held at Witchford but the results were inconclusive because during the week of no collection the good citizens of Witchford dumped all the rubbish on Grunty Fen. The Swaffhams were to be included in the next trial but, with the above experience, ECDC left us out and confined the trial to Bottisham, Lode and Longmeadow. Make of that what you will.

2). The application for a 30,000 attendance Pop Festival at Lode has been approved. Last year an application for 10,000 was turned down. The three councillors on the Licensing Committee came from Ely, Littleport and Fordham to ensure they had no interest which might affect their decision. Not that this matters because under the unfortunate Licensing Act of 2003 the only objections allowed are those from the police, highways department, fire service. Even though probably 98% of Lode residents object, this counts as nothing. And neither do the objections of neighbouring villages in spite of being "interested parties" who may be affected by the possible arrival of an extra 11,000 cars in the area. **It could happen in our parish.** If you think this is bad just consider what will happen if Kate Barker's recommendations come in to effect.

3). The Development of the Water Tower Site. Saville's had submitted to the PC a plan containing five additional houses to the two already approved. Geoffrey Woollard jumped in to take charge of the discussion, and, though acknowledging that he does not live in the village, he thought we needed the houses, that our

limited development status was ill-judged (partly blaming his old adversary Margaret Cook for this), and that it would be silly not to welcome the houses. !00% to Geoffrey for his enthusiasm, his oratory, and his commitment. But Geoffrey is a natural developer and for this he should be treated with caution, for the following reasons.

In 1988/89 a proposal was put forward for a 2,000 house development at Nine Mile Hill. At the July 1989 PC Meeting "County Councillor Geoffrey Woollard had

**"ECDC are conducting trials to see whether Garbage Collection can be reduced to once a fortnight. The first trial was held at Witchford but the results were inconclusive because during the week of no collection the good citizens of Witchford dumped all the rubbish on Grunty Fen."**



declared an interest, and been asked by ECDC Councillor Mrs Cook to leave the chamber before the discussion started.” Eventually the proposal was turned down.

At about the same time, perhaps a little earlier, an application had been made for housing on what became known as the Dencora Field. The person applying was the owner – Geoffrey Woollard. I am not sure of the details but there may have been two applications before the field was sold to Dencora. Then began another saga, the story of which many know well and which is well recorded in the *Crier*.

The point of this is that Geoffrey does like to develop and the meeting was brought back to order when a member asked what local people thought. The answer was that virtually everyone was against the development. One member noted that “Those exploiting the site have no interest in the village.” Eric Day said that his father Bert Day had been forced to sell the land in about 1937 so that the village could have a water supply. Now that the land is no longer needed for that purpose he thought it should be returned to agriculture. This seems to be an interesting though possibly impractical proposal – but we can see what he means and there is a logic to what he says. The PC will tell Saville’s that its previous opinion and objections have not changed.

*Alastair Everitt*

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*Crier* readers might like to be alerted to this currently circulating email plea:

## ROAD PRICING

THE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSAL to introduce road pricing will mean you having to purchase a tracking device for your car and paying a monthly bill to use it.

The tracking device will cost about £200 and in a recent study by the BBC, the lowest monthly bill was £28 for a rural florist and £194 for a delivery driver.

A non working Mum who used the car to take the kids to school would pay £86 in one month.

On top of this massive increase in tax, you will be tracked. Somebody will know where you are at all times. They will also know how fast you have been going, so even if you accidentally creep over a speed limit you can expect a NIP with your monthly bill.

If you care about our freedoms and stopping the constant bashing of the car driver, please sign the petition on No 10's new website.

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

### Donations!

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

## Notes from the Parish Council January Meeting

Chairman Mr John Covill chaired the meeting with 7 Parish Councillors and 2 members of the public.

**Minutes of Last Meeting:** These were reported and agreed.

**Speaker from ACRE – Jo Fitzpatrick, Community Development Worker for East Cambridgeshire.** Jo Fitzpatrick was invited to attend the meeting to explain the idea of a Parish Plan. Outline as below:

A Parish Plan would be a way of consulting with the whole community to gauge priorities for the future of the Village. Collecting of information could take several forms but usually comprises of a questionnaire. ACRE can offer assistance in the putting together of a suitable questionnaire to suit the requirements of SP.

The Plan is usually a 5-year Plan.

This would not be completely organised by the PC but a group of interested people within the Village.

A grant of £1,500 would be available. The PC would be expected to contribute 50% of the cost.

The process usually takes approximately 1 year.

Jo explained the benefits of such a plan suggesting as with other villages that had already completed their Parish Plan, the results were always surprising and once residents' priorities had been established through analysis of the questionnaire, useful projects had been put in hand to safeguard and improve Village facilities. It was agreed that the PC would defer this for further consideration after the elections. It was suggested that this might be an item for the Annual Village Assembly.

**CCC Report:** Cllr Hazell Williams reported to the meeting.

**ECDC Report:** No ECDC report.

**Correspondence Received:** This was reported to the meeting.

**Letter received reference High Street** (*adjustment to High Street limits*):

Correspondence was received asking the PC to confirm its agreement to the fact that the High Street commences at the western end of the village where the sign is currently located. The PC agreed with this, noting that moving the "High Street" sign would serve no purpose. This was prompted by the difficulties being encountered by Royal Mail's numbering of properties and not using property names.

**Review of Cemetery Charges:** This was deferred until a future meeting when more information would be available.

**Cambridgeshire ACRE – Renewal of Membership:** This was agreed.

**Repairs to Road Sign – Rogers Road:** A replacement arm for this sign was chased with CCC. The Clerk received a reply stating that as the sign is not a standard directional sign and there was very little funding available, perhaps this repair was something the Parish would be more able to deal with.

The Clerk was asked to reply noting that this matter had been ongoing for approximately 2 years and that the PC felt it was a matter for CCC.

**Final Confirmation of Budget & Precept for 2007/08:** A Precept of £14,500 was

agreed.

**Accounts for Payment** - These were agreed.

**Planning Applications Received:**

Recreation Ground, Station Road – *sports pavilion and associated car parking.*

There were no objections.

Kent Hall, 3 Heath Road – *demolition of existing stable block, erection of new building for gym and hot tub.* There were no objections.

Land at Mill Hill – *seven dwellings with associated access.* The majority of the PC objected to this application, stating that it was for too many units and the problems of overlooking of neighbouring properties and additional traffic onto Mill Hill.

**Planning Approvals Received:**

11 Station Road – *two storey side extension.*

9 Cage Hill – *construction of a car-port, alterations to wall and demolition of existing lean-to.*

**Any Other Business:**

The Clerk informed the meeting that the repair works to the pathway at the back of the Village Hall would be carried out end-February, beginning of March.

The damaged bin in the bus shelter had been removed. A replacement is to be ordered.

**Open Question Time.**

General discussion.

**The next Parish Council meeting will take place on Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> February 2007 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.**

**Karen King – Clerk  
of the Parish Council**

**Tel: 742358. Email: [karen.king5@btopenworld.com](mailto:karen.king5@btopenworld.com)**

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

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



## **Lode Baptist Chapel**

### **CRY “FREEDOM!” (Part 1)**

NEXT MONTH a new film, ‘Amazing Grace’, is being released to mark the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the Slave Trade Act in 1807. It tells the story of William Wilberforce who mobilised many others to speak out with him against the injustice of a trade which involved the buying and selling of human beings. This was an ‘industry’ which formed the backbone of Britain’s economy at that time, but nonetheless one man stood up, against much opposition, because his convictions compelled him to act.

But as we celebrate the end of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, and the endeavours of both black and white abolitionists in the 18th and 19th centuries, we cannot ignore the fact that people are still being bought and sold now, in the 21st century. Lode Chapel, part of a growing coalition of organisations from around the world, seek to use this anniversary as a catalyst to once again cry for freedom.

In 2007 men, women and children are trafficked within their own countries and across international borders for the purpose of exploiting them through: prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation; forced labour or services; slavery or practices similar to slavery; servitude; or the removal of organs.

At least 12.3 million people are victims of forced labour worldwide.

An estimated 1.2 million children are trafficked each year.

The majority of trafficked victims are poor.

Human trafficking is the third largest source of income for organised crime.

Will we ignore the cry of those who cannot fight for themselves – or will we be part of the worldwide shout for change? The abolition of the Slave Trade Act in 1807 was achieved by a mass movement made up of ordinary members of the public, black and white, male and female, all joining their voices to those of the enslaved. Whoever you are and whatever your age, you too can make a difference!

Lode Chapel is organising some special events to help ‘Stop the Traffik’ including an exhibition of art, photography and creative writing on the theme of ‘Freedom’ and an evening event which could also include dramatic and video contributions to help raise awareness of the issues. Dates and venues will be published in next month’s magazine, but if you would like to get involved in the planning for these local activities or make a contribution to the exhibition please contact me – my details are below.

For more information about the national campaign have a look at [www.stopthetraffik.org](http://www.stopthetraffik.org) or [www.setallfree.net](http://www.setallfree.net).

*Simon Goddard*

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 when we hold our monthly mini-holiday club  
at Bottisham Primary School.

**Next club – 10.30am Sunday 25th February. All welcome!**

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](mailto:simon.goddard@lodechapel.org.uk)  
Web: [www.lodechapel.org.uk](http://www.lodechapel.org.uk)

## Moderation

THIS MONTH'S VERSE is a result of seeing a small paragraph in 'The Guardian'.

It could become this year's easily kept 'New Year Resolution'.

Quote:-        'One woman who entered the  
                  'Housewife of the Year' contest  
                  had 18 children.  
                  When asked what quality  
she most admired in a man she replied," Moderation"

Thus:-        MODERATION in MODERATION.

'Moderation in all things',  
                  is all very fine  
In women, and singing,  
                  and of course, wine.

But 'all things' includes,  
                  and I think you'll agree -  
'Moderation' itself,  
                  and THAT, is for me!

***Ophir***



## Church of England Services

### February 2007

	<b>ST MARY'S Swaffham Prior</b>	<b>ST MARY'S Swaffham Bulbeck</b>	<b>Bottisham</b>
<b>Sun 4</b>	<b>11:00am</b> Holy Communion	<b>8:00am</b> Holy Communion <b>9:30am</b> Family Service	<b>11:00am</b> Family Service
<b>Sun 11</b>	<b>8:00am</b> Holy Communion <b>11:00am</b> Holy Communion	<b>9:30am</b> Holy Communion	<b>11:00am</b> Holy Communion
<b>Sun 18</b>	<b>11:00am</b> Holy Communion	<b>9:30am</b> Village Communion	<b>11:00am</b> Holy Communion
<b>Wed 21</b>	<b>10:30am</b> Ash Wednesday Communion		<b>7:30am</b> Ash Wednesday Communion
<b>Sun 25</b>			<b>8:00am</b> Holy Communion

### PASTORAL LETTER,

**February 2007, Bottisham Vicarage**

Dear Friends,

I'VE OFTEN FOUND that at the beginning of a new year I receive more than the usual number of enquiries from couples thinking about getting married in Church, and this year is no exception. I very much enjoy the whole process of advising and helping a couple prepare for their wedding day and presiding over the ceremony itself. Our five parishes very much value and appreciate couples asking to be married in their Church buildings. Marriage in Church says so much about the importance of the parish Church as a central focal point of village life. It says a great deal about continuity, about history and the importance of belonging in a fast changing world. Above all, it says a great deal about the role of God in marriage. God invented love, and, in the love that couples share in their relationship, they get a glimpse of His love for them. As someone once wrote *'A perfect marriage is a*

*marriage of three persons: a man, a woman and God.'*

I find that Couples are often very unclear in their minds about the legal position of getting married in a parish Church. As a Church of England Vicar I am in the very privileged and responsible position of being appointed both the Minister presiding over a marriage ceremony and the Registrar making a legal record of the marriage. This is because the Church of England is still legally recognised as the established Church of our country. One of the happy implications of being the established Church is that couples needn't be baptised members to be married in their parish Church, they simply have to meet the residential qualifications. Normally the legality of the marriage is established by the reading of banns for three consecutive Sundays, but it can also be established by the issuing of a licence or a special licence.

In recent years the Church of England has softened its approach to the remarriage of divorced persons in Church. It is still regarded as the exception rather than the norm, but, if a couple can demonstrate that their relationship is free from the burdens of past mistakes and not the cause of the divorce, then we are happy to welcome the remarriage of divorced persons in Church. We recognise that God is about forgiveness as well as love, that He understands our failures and weaknesses and wants to help us to come to terms with the burdens of the past. He wants to help us to rebuild our lives and to find new happiness and the loving companionship of a new relationship.

My task in helping a couple prepare for their wedding day is to guide them through the proposed ceremony, and to help them make it a truly memorable and special occasion. This means making the service personal for them by helping them choose readings, music and hymns that are special to them, advising them on the role of friends and family in the ceremony and helping them to prepare the order of the service. I also help them to understand the full implications of what they are entering into, and we often have lively discussions on the issues of communication in marriage, sharing decision making, dealing with money and coping with conflict and disagreements. The liturgy of the Church of England provides for a standard form of vows to be said by the couple. This is the focal point of the service, and represents a public declaration of the love that the bride and groom have for each other. These days the majority of couples exchange rings, reminding us of the equality that exists in the marriage relationship today, and this is also emphasised by the bride no longer being required to 'obey' her husband.

Getting married in Church is surprisingly inexpensive by comparison with all the other costs often associated with weddings, and with the setting of a wonderful mediaeval building, the bells, the music and the flowers there cannot be a more perfect setting for a marriage ceremony.

So, if you are considering getting married, talk to me about the possibility of getting married in your local parish Church.

May God bless you all,

*David*

## Dates for Your Diary

### February 2007

Fri	2	Tiger's Meeting, 8pm, VH
Sat	3	St Mary's Concert, 7.30pm, St Mary's, Swaffham Bulbeck
Wed	7	Reading Group, Old School House Burwell, 8pm
Thu	8	PC Meeting, 7.30pm, VH
Tue	13	Mobile Library, Cage Hill 3:05-3:45, Chapel 3:50-4:10pm RECYCLING
Sun	18	<b>Crier Copy Deadline</b>
Mon	19	WI, VH, 7.30pm
Tue	20	Village Gardener's, VH, 8pm
Tues	27	Mobile Library, Cage Hill 3:05-3:45, Chapel 3:50-4:10pm RECYCLING
<b>March</b>		
Sat	3	Quiz Night, 7.30pm, VH
Fri	5	Spud & Pud Evening, Reach Village Hall

## Village Clubs & Societies

Club	Contact	Tel.	Date	Time	Place
FOSPS	Clare Freeman	741316	2 <sup>nd</sup> Mon of Term	8pm	Village School
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	