



The Swaffham Crier

Volume XL Number 12

December 2016



Editorial

Nations have National Treasures, we have *Village* Treasures, and this month we are paying tribute to two very different characters who sadly have recently passed away and will be much missed.

Eric Day faithfully served on our Parish Council for 30 years, and there's very little "infrastructure" you might see around here that Eric has not had a hand in, one way or another. Some of his exploits were legendary, and we do hope that in months to come readers can tell us more.

Sid Prince was a kindly and much beloved figure about the village, a lifelong resident whose memory stretched back 90 plus years. Eleven years ago, he very kindly agreed to be interviewed by the Crier, and this means we now have a record, in his own words and republished in this edition, of just what our village was like in times gone by.

Goodbye Eric, goodbye Sid! We do hope that there is some cosy snug up there in the clouds somewhere where Sid is even now catching up with

old friends. And Eric, assuming you are already on the Celestial PC, there's quite a few letters of *serious* complaint that need attention...

Many thanks to Toni and Dave of the Red Lion for so generously sponsoring our prize crossword. Currently they are run of their feet and plan to leave soon. In the interim, winners will continue to receive our Winners Certificate, and we'll see what we can arrange for the future.

Congratulations, Janet and Mandy, for managing to get a **ton** of daffodil bulbs into the ground ready for springtime blooming. Like last year, we've decided not to go to print with the New Year Edition until after Christmas, so no hurry for New Year copy and the Crier will arrive as early as we can manage in January.

Happy Christmas All!

Caroline Matheson

Regulars

Letters	2
Our Reporter	4
Bon Mot	5
POP News	9
Wulsin	11
Bottisham Patients	14
CROSSWORD	15
Flying the Flag	19
School News	24
Mothers' Union	26
WI	26
Village Gardeners	27
Crossword Winners	28
Botnaic Gardens	30
CLlr Brown	31
BVC Courses	32
PC Meeting	33

News, Views & Reviews

Good Old Will	8
On Quoting Shakespeare	8
Car Scheme Donation	13
Eric Day	10
Swaffham Prior in Bloom	12
Comberton Ramblers	15
Advent by Candlelight	18
Sid Prince	20
Cantilena Carols	23
Ely My Shop is Local	2
B&B Photo Club	29

What's On

Boxing Day Hockey	7
Carol Service	6
Coffee Morning	7

Situations Vacant

St Mary's Key People	13
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Cover Picture: *Madonna with Child and Book* (after Raphael) by **Clare Newbolt**



Letters to the Editors



Dear Editors,

Sid Prince

Sidney passed away on 5th November at the age of 95 years. He lived in Swaffham Prior all his life except for fighting in WW2. He lived in the High Street in his childhood and then moved to a bungalow up Fairview Grove. Then 58 years ago, he moved into the new council houses in Greenhead Road.

Andy, Pauline and Valerie would like to say a big thank you to Toni and David at the Red Lion for looking after him on a Sunday. Also a big thank you to Lisa Arksey for being a perfect neighbour to him after Mary died.

Andy Prince

Dear Editors,

Reduced Gritting -

As frosty weather is now upon us, be aware that some roads you may drive on in this area will not be gritted as in previous winters. Cuts to council funding have forced them to reduce their gritting routes, as they informed the Parish Council in November. Ungritted but often used roads are a pretty scary thought. Austerity can mean more accidents caused by ice.

Mark Lewinski

Dog Fouling: some recent letters to the Parish Council

Dear Parish Clerk,

It appears that the dog fouling is continuing in the park. It is extremely worrying as it is a potential health hazard. I do hope that the Parish Council will take this repeated offence seriously and look into measures to prevent it.

All the best,

Suzi Shimwell
Rogers Road

Dear Parish Councillors,

I visited the children's play area today in Swaffham Prior and was very concerned to find dog excrement by the children's play equipment. As we are all aware this can pose serious medical problems and it was for this reason that we welcomed the designation of many children's play areas as 'dog free' zones.

Distasteful as it is, I have in the past collected the mess myself and disposed of it in the bin but was not able to do this today as I did not have the necessary equipment.

I would very much welcome a reply from the Parish Councillors on this.

Thanking you in anticipation for your help with this unpleasant situation.

Helen Gale

Dear Editors,

What's in a Name?

I'm sorry Alastair Everitt didn't like my self-satire take on Barbra Streisand which he saw on the Guardian letters page towards the end of August and seemed to think my letter was sincerely meant. That's a good while ago now, so it was a nice surprise to see it recalled in the Crier in November. Perhaps he also missed the context, another news item, ie that Ms Streisand had heard that the Apple electronic 'avatar' called Siri (a virtual character with a voice, for non-virtual folk) pronounced Streisand's name in a way she didn't want it to. Being the superstar that she is, she was able to ring the head of Apple to get it changed to the way she wants it and which he agreed to do, and this made international news.

So just for fun I wrote that I too have people pronouncing my name differently to how I would prefer, and I asked:

"Could Barbra Streisand start phoning the heads of global corporations for me and for others who live with a similar affliction, to make them get it right?"

Which the Guardian saw the point of, I think, and published. Perhaps Alastair also missed the letter from Quentin Falk (author, film critic, journalist) published with mine, reprinted here courtesy of the Guardian:

"I was amused to read of Barbra Streisand's latest bout of control freakery (Streisand takes issue with Siri over surname, 23 August). Some years ago I was chairing a press conference for The Mirror Has Two Faces, a mediocre film which she directed and co-starred in. I introduced her to my press colleagues as "Barbra Streis-nd". "It's Streis-AND!" she hissed in my ear, to which I reacted with a nervous titter."

Just for info, the W in my name, being Polish, is technically a V but I'm so used to it being pronounced either way I don't really care; but thanks to Alastair for bringing that and the Streisand correspondence up again.

Merry Christmas all!

Mark Lewinski

PS "Lewinski, Levinski, Levinski, Lewinski, let's call the whole thing off" (apologies to the Gershwins)

Dear Editors,

Cliff

I see that Sir Cliff Richard has bounced back into the Lime-light

So, - Herewith:-

Congratulations' to Sir Cliff Richard;

Whom the police tried to slur & stitch hard,

With a charge of historical sexual abuse,

By an unforgiving, hysterical procedural's misuse.

Best Wishes,

Ophir

From our Reporter at the Parish Council Meeting

Phew! So much has happened since the last meeting that the world really does seem to be falling apart and turning upside down. An estranged husband does the dirty on Hillary, the extraordinary intervention of the FBI, the election of Trump, the delight of many Brexiteers at the result, Farage jollyng it up with Trump, Putin and Trump setting up a mutual admiration society, Theresa May not performing well, and Boris, well, just being Boris – nothing you can do about him. And much more will happen. Never dull! I suggest it will be best just to stand aside, and be entertained by a performance of either *The Comedy of Errors* or *All's Well that Ends Well*.



Allan has resolved the black sack question raised by Paul at the last meeting. They are accepted at both Witchford and Milton, but “co-mingled” sacks are not. What is a co-mingled sack asked Peter. Allan explained it means unsorted sacks e.g. bottles cans, etc should be in one sack for recycling, garden waste in another, etc. In fact just like the bin system. Which seems reasonable if you want to save the planet, and money.

Allan also said that he was “spending 50% of my ward councillor time on what I consider to be unsound planning applications”. And he quoted one application which had been made in Reach. At present we have no local plan and will not have one until the early part of 2018, which may mean that there appears to be no restriction on the nature and location of house applications. But there are still some control principles in place to protect local features and characteristics. Quoting these, and armed with the Reach PC objections as well as 18 individual letters of protest, Allan thought he had an incontrovertible case. He was astonished that his arguments were ignored and that the planning committee approved the application 5-3. Without knowledge of the site it is impossible to judge but it is a warning to Swaffham Prior and other villages.

The meeting moved quickly to correspondence and I noticed there was no discussion about the “CCC Consultation on the Enforcement Plan for Planning, Minerals and Waste Heritage Lottery Fund surgery day” to be held in March on 15th November. It is reassuring to know that people are beaverng away like this for our benefit.

David has received an answer from James Wrigley about the posts in Station Road and which he had passed on to the Clerk, who was quite angry about the reply. It had “deliberately ignored all his questions and “showed no respect at all” for the Parish Council. Members again expressed their concern that there is insufficient room for prams and pushchairs, and that people are forced to walk into the road. Surely there is a safety issue here. Three questions had been asked:- 1) who instigated the posts; 2) what was the cost; 3) from which budget did the money come. This last question was because the PC had been told that if they wanted yellow lines they would have to pay for them. This one will not go away and the PC now sees him as Wriggling Wrigley. It is being passed back to David for further action.

Steve then reported on the CIL projects and described it as “unrelenting good news”. The table tennis table, all one and a quarter tons of it, had

been delivered but because of a fallen tree in the Youth Club driveway the table had to be left in the wrong place. The Charities paid for the removal of the tree, and then Steve with the help of Martin Meade moved it to the rightful place. The path at the back of St Cyriac’s has been completed but the final gravel finish cannot be applied until the warmer weather.

Andrew Noyes has virtually completed his work on the cemetery record and there is a website which gives the names, dates when available of all the people buried, together with whether there is a headstone, plot numbers and also the numbers of unmarked children’s graves. And there will be a map illustrating all this. We in the public gallery were astonished at its completion because it was only agreed at the last meeting. We now have spaces for 161 new graves and 30 places for cremation ashes. All hope that Andrew will publish in the *Crier*, a descriptive account of how it was achieved, and further details.

Reach wish to follow us in using its phone box to house a defibrillator; so Steve passed on all his information. All the daffodils have been planted and one person sitting next to me muttered “shameful”, “they ought to stay in gardens and not litter the sidewalks”. I don’t know what he thinks about the colour.

Steve is still trying to extract money from ns&i which had been there for thirteen years and had earned £83 over that time. It was money donated to maintain the village sign, possibly by the Fenland Fair. One shouldn’t say the PC is awash with money but there is quite a bit of CIL money sloshing about and Mike Malster had researched that Manchester Building Society pay 1% interest. So a fair dollop will be gone there.

Alastair Everitt

BON MOT NUMBER SEVENTY ONE

“Democracy substitutes election by the incompetent many for appointment by the corrupt few.”

George Bernard Shaw (1856 - 1950)



**Swaffham Prior
VILLAGE CANDLELIGHT
CAROL SERVICE**

on

SUNDAY 18 DECEMBER

at

4.30pm

in

St Mary's Church



~ With the Primary School Choir

~ Hear the Christmas Story

~ Sing Traditional Carols

~ ALL WELCOME

Boxing Day Hockey Match

SWAFFHAM PRIOR VS SWAFFHAM BULBECK



The Denny, Swaffham Bulbeck

Saturday 10.45 am (10.30 am players)

COME AND SUPPORT SWAFFHAM PRIOR!!

All proceeds to MAGPAS

Contact **Mandy Kingsmill** if you would like to play in the winning team!

New players are
always welcome

01638 742482 (kingsmills@btconnect.com)

ANNUAL COFFEE MORNING

10.30 – 12.00 Noon



Wednesday
18th January 2017



Lowfield, 49 Lower End

Cake Stall & Raffle
Produce Bring and Buy Stall

All proceeds to St. Mary's Church

GOOD OLD WILL

At the end of a year celebrating Shakespeare the fact still remains that his surviving children were illiterate. This has never been disputed – ever. So – his children were illiterate, his parents were illiterate, his siblings were illiterate. But few people find this strange, or even worth giving even a half thought to. The academic world really excels itself on the question. For that matter there is not a single bit of actual evidence that the great man himself could even read and write.

Let us end the year by reproducing Bernard Levin's famous *On Quoting Shakespeare*. This illustrates just how much the works of Shakespeare are part of our daily life. Read it below.

And if you want over Christmas to bring a smile to the face of people with even a slight interest in the great man, buy them a copy of the illustrated *Shakespeare's Guide to Parenting* by James Andrews, published by Square Peg, an imprint of Penguin at £8.99. Parents love it.

Alastair Everitt

On Quoting Shakespeare

If you cannot understand my argument, and declare "It's Greek to me", *you are quoting Shakespeare*; if you claim to be more sinned against than sinning, *you are quoting Shakespeare*; if you recall your salad days, *you are quoting Shakespeare*; if you act more in sorrow than anger, if your wish is father to the thought, if your lost property has vanished into thin air, *you are quoting Shakespeare*; if you have ever refused to budge an inch or suffered from green-eyed jealousy, if you have played fast and loose, if you have been tongue-tied, a tower of strength, hoodwinked or in a pickle, if you have knitted your brows, made a virtue of necessity, insisted on fair play, slept not one wink, stood on ceremony, danced attendance on your lord and master, laughed yourself into stitches, had short shrift, cold comfort or too much of a good thing, if you have seen better days or lived in a fool's paradise – why, be that as it may, the more fool you, for it is a foregone conclusion that *you are*, as good luck would have it, *quoting Shakespeare*; if you think it is early days and clear out bag and baggage, if you think it is high time and that that is the long and the short of it, if you believe that the game is up and that truth will out even if it involves your

own flesh and blood, if you lie low till the crack of doom because you suspect foul play, if you have set your teeth on edge at one fell swoop without rhyme or reason, then – to give the devil his due – if the truth were known for surely you have a tongue in your head, *you are quoting Shakespeare*; even if you bid me good riddance and send me packing, if you wish I was dead as a doornail, if you think I am an eyesore, a laughing stock, the devil incarnate, a stony-hearted villain, bloody-minded or a blinking idiot, then – by Jove! O Lord! Tut, tut! For goodness' sake! What the dickens! But me no buts -- it is all one to me, *for you are quoting Shakespeare*.

Bernard Levin

**There will be no organised
POP (Proud of Prior)
litter picks for the months of
December and January
but if you would like to borrow
the equipment during this time
please to not hesitate to call me
on 07833 960678
and arrangements will be made
for any rubbish you collect to be cleared**



Eric Day

1922 – 2016

Eric Day was born in his beloved Swaffham Prior and never left it apart from his time serving the nation in the second world war. He served firstly in the Home Guard, then the Royal Artillery and was a D-Day veteran. After the war he met his wife Jean while they were skating on the Point in Reach, and married her in 1950. Eric was a printer and linotype operator for the *Cambridge News* for 50 years, and stayed until he was over 70.

Eric was known throughout the village because of the time he gave and spent on so many committees, most notable of which was probably the Parish Council. On this he served for more than 30 years. Here he displayed the same characteristic mentioned by Hilary, his daughter, at the funeral service – “Eric was not known for his generosity with his money.” His reluctance to allow the Parish Council to spend any money was legendary. There were so many cases when the Parish Council threatened to pay for a man to come, and Eric would say “I will do it”, and he did. Maybe this is why our current Council is so rich.

As with so many people we should also remember his quirks. In the words of his grandchildren he was “a competitive man, and a keen card sharp”, and also a bundle of fun. His erratic driving has also been mentioned, and this may not be surprising as he must be one of the few people who ever displayed any loyalty for the Austin Allegro, usually dubbed as “the worst car of all time” - with its quartic steering wheel. This car, together with Eric’s ever presence and willingness to help, has made him a part of the history of the village, and he will be greatly missed.

RR.



Eric, third from left, served more than 30 years on the Parish Council

The Poetic Garb

No weather, this, for gabardine poets
The deluge drumming on the Levels' lake,
The bitter brown serpent remoulding the Mendips.
No country, this, for a Mackintosh'd Motion
Or Marks and Sparks Larkin
Or Graves in a Gannex.

Aquascutum'd Auden here has no place.
The Burberried Betjemen plashing the pavement
And Gore-Tex'd McGough all have their galoshes
Sucked from their seal-skinned high-tech tetrameters.
Drenched Carol-Ann Duffy's Drizabone dampens her couplets,
And Cloying clay clasps Edwin Morgan Musto-deep.

No.
Provide me a pair of heavy-soled Heaneys,
Broad Irish brogues of hand-me-down Hopkins,
A heavy, hempen Hardy under hefty Heath-Stubbs.
Barboured Basil Bunting to see off the storm
And to stride beside caped Causley or Sou'westered Sassoon.
For yomping the foul years, give me a Yeats
And a damp Dylan Thomas to drink down the day.

But best of the bunch and first of the front rank
When westerly storms sweep sheer across Somerset
Hang on my shoulders a shaggy, savage
Rain-wringing, mud-mastering
Oil-skinned, Death-dry,
Granite-hewn
Hughes.

Wulsin



SWAFFHAM PRIOR IN BLOOM 2017

We would just like to say a huge thank you to all those who contributed to the Swaffham Prior in Bloom project. Approximately 15,000 bulbs have been planted around the village and hopefully there will be quite a display in the spring.

Many thanks to: the Parish Council for donating the bulbs in celebration of the Queen's 90th birthday; to Greens of Soham for transporting and storing the bulbs; to all those who came forward to plant bulbs, in particular the Beavers, Scouts and the After School Club (look out for flowers in the playground, around the village sign, and outside the Village Hall respectively); to the many newcomers to the village who volunteered; and to the Cambridge Community Payback Scheme who have done sterling and enthusiastic work around the churches.

Thank you!

Mandy Kingsmill
Janet Willmott



It is with grateful thanks that the
Swaffham Prior Community Car Scheme
acknowledge the receipt of a
very kind donation from the Estate
of the late Janet Cooper



**Do your daily walks with your Dog take
you past the Churches?**

You could be just the person we are looking for!!

We urgently need more volunteers to help with
the unlocking and locking of St Mary's and
St Cyriac's Churches.

If you are interested and would like more
information please contact Jan Pattinson on
01638 743866.

No experience required! Weekly rota with a
commitment of approximately three or four
times a year.

You do not, however, need to be a dog
walker to apply ☺

News from Bottisham Medical Practice Patients' Group

Dispensary Christmas Arrangements:

10,500: That is the number of items dispensed by the Practice in the 19 working days leading up to Christmas 2015. In order to make the system more manageable this year and to try and avoid lunchtime closing, please ensure that you get your repeat prescriptions in, in good time.

When ordering in **November & December** please order **two months'** worth so you have enough to cover you over the festivities.

It helps us greatly if you request all your items together and allow a little longer when ordering more than one month, 3/4 working days will be very helpful.. If you are going away for longer we can only arrange a maximum 3 months' supply of medication. Please speak to the dispensary staff who will help you with these arrangements. You don't need to speak to a GP to order your medication.

Also please remember to collect your medication in a timely manner, as space is limited!

Thank you for your help and support. Beverley Weller-Lewis, Dispensary Manager.

Also remember: To have enough remedies at home for colds, coughs, indigestion, aches and pains to last over the holiday period.

Survey: Thank you to all who completed the patient survey. The results will be published in the New Year.

Extended 111 service will help those in mental health crisis: Callers who are experiencing a mental health crisis can dial 111, and by choosing 'option 2' will be put through to a member of the new First Response Service. Specially-trained mental health staff will speak to callers and discuss with them their mental health care needs – instead of them having to go to accident and emergency departments.

Out of Hours Service This is now integrated with the NHS 111 Service and run by Herts Urgent Care.

Red Bucket Appeal: The table top sale held at the second flu clinic raised £50 for this. Thank you.

Patients' Group: The Patients' Group would be delighted to hear from you – please see the notice board in the waiting room for details, speak to the receptionist or look at the practice's website for further information <http://www.mysurgerywebsite.co.uk/ppg.aspx?p=D81055> and see what your Patients' Group has achieved.

Walks for Health: The next walk with our accredited walk leader Steve Gilson starts at 11.00 am from the surgery car park on 7th December, then 11th January, 3rd and 15th February and 3rd and 15th March 2017. Do join Steve for a walk he would be delighted to see you. Anglesey Abbey walks continue on Thursdays at 10am from the reception area.

Next Meeting: Patients' Group will meet on 26th January 2017 at 6.30pm at the

surgery.

Seasonal Greetings: Wishing everyone a happy and healthy Christmas and New Year.

Bottisham Patients' Group

COMBERTON : RAMBLERS CLUB

The Comberton Ramblers Club walk on alternative Sundays. All walks start at 10.15 a.m. Walks are from 4 - 7 miles, usually ending near a public house.

We are a friendly / informative group and enjoy exploring the varied countryside in this area. New walkers are welcome to join us with up to 2 free walks, and if you enjoy our walks we request that you become a member.

For further details on how to join our sociable rambling group please contact Stella - The Secretary

Email : stella.ramblers@hotmail.com

www.combertonramblers.org.uk

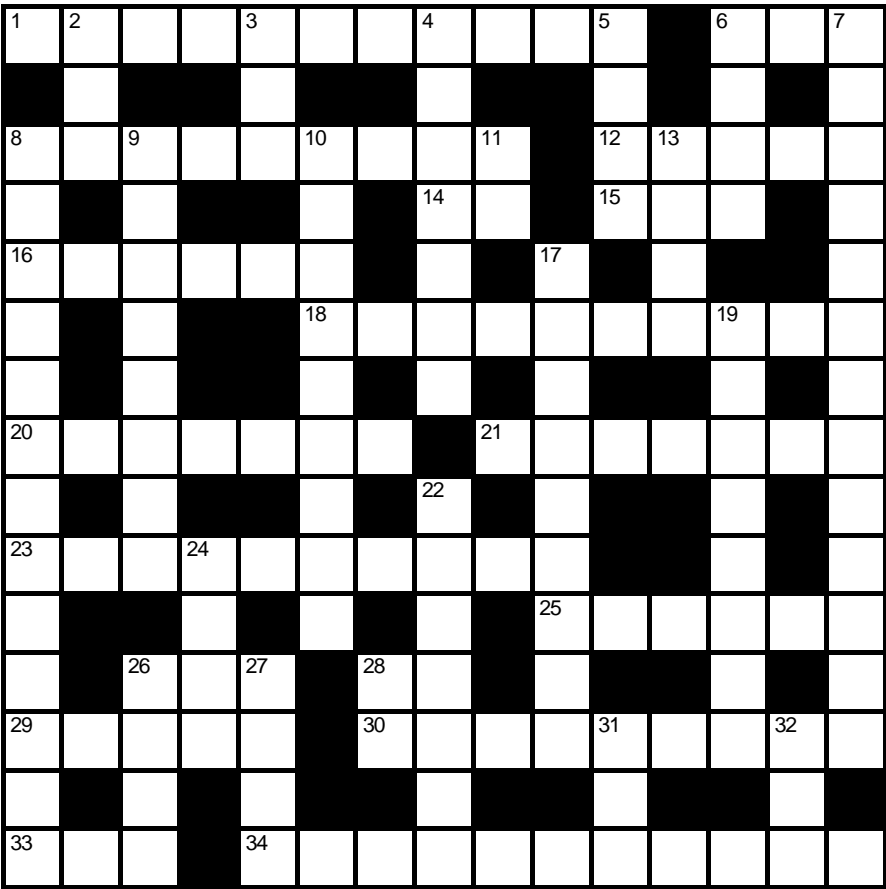
Tel : 01954 210049



Crossword Number 137

Compiled by
OUNCE

This month's puzzle is a simple cryptic crossword. Send your answers to the editors by 18 December 2016. and the first correct solution out of the hat will receive the Winner's Certificate



Name:.....

Address:.....

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

Across

- 1 See 8 Down
- 6 Get long US sandwich from tiramisu bakery (3)
- 8 Ray erects unorthodox member of 17? (9)
- 12 Raised temperature in Italian river? Snap! (5)
- 14 Jekyll, for instance, or do little, say (2)
- 15 Plant Miss Piggy (3)
- 16 Incarnation revealed in balaclava. Tartan or plain? (6)
- 18 Ice cream mixture on Palatine. (Or further South?) (10)
- 20 Primate found in Idaho? Mini, dwarf lemur perhaps? (7)
- 21 Wow, I join Bond's boss before starting school on first of September (7)
- 23/17 Morning enticement to Gemma disfiguring 8/1 organising group (10,9)
- 25 Lawrence meeting nurse, loses shilling but gains long-term position (6)
- 26 Danish coin made from source of metal? (3)
- 28 Egyptian goddess - or demi-goddess - exists? (2)
- 29 Email delivery place at home with bishop and bull (2-3)
- 30 Fake brier used to stop flames (9)
- 33 A pocketful of whisky? (3)
- 34 8/1 officer, Anne, met Inca by arrangement (11)
- 4 Richard hated holding protective gear (4,3)
- 5 Licks circuits (4)
- 6 Annual event (in short, seasonal harvest of watermelon, for example) arranged by 8/1/23/17 (4)
- 7 Gerbils knock and ring around for 1/8/23/17 member (8,5)
- 8/1 Local building disaster if flower girl hashes lava lamp without bridge opponents (8,5,7,4)
- 9 Tempestuous North American tenor abandoned 17 leader (8)
- 10 Unsportsmanlike disruption; salmon discarded on tollroads (9)
- 11 Begone from byre for a short time? (2)
- 13 Native of Arizona discovered in shop inside mall (4)
- 17 See 23 Across
- 19 Gems found if rebel leader deserts officer of 17 (8)
- 22 Period that is reversing around vessel clutched by child (7)
- 24 Start with all-frizzy, rounded, off-face hairdo (4)
- 26 Hussy flees houseboys in confusion, would, we hear, wind (4)
- 27 Test held in Essex amenities (4)
- 28 Whether or not, loud one comes back (2)
- 31 Bad beginning, with one end of brown receptacle (3)
- 32 Electrical discharge noted in Antarctica (3)

Down

- 2/3 Sort out mixed categories of frozen time (3,3)

Solutions and winners to last month's crossword on page 28.

Advent by Candlelight at the Churches of St Mary and SS Cyriac and Julitta

Ian de Massini and Cambridge Voices

Sunday 27 November

Two years ago, on the centenary of the beginning of the First World War, the evening took its theme and focused our attention on the celebrated memorial windows in the north aisle.

This year, swivelled through 180 degrees, we faced the less celebrated, but no less beautiful, Benedicite windows of the south aisle for our inspiration, backlit from without against the cold gloom of late November. That these windows are a sermon in glass on that great canticle of universal praise by all creation was news, I suspect, to more of the audience than just me, but it offered the broadest possible canvas on which to design an evening of music (or to mix a metaphor). Ian de Massini framed the programme as celebration of Creation from Genesis to Revelation – beginning to end - with the opening reading of the final lines of Eliot's *Four Quartets* forewarning us that when we arrived at the latter, we should recognise it as the very place from which we started.

There was much to delight, and a number of surprises on the journey.

The opening choral piece, *Twixt Heaven and Earth*, to an arrangement by De Massini of a piano melody by Satie, was a kinetic demonstration of its own theme, chorus beneath the West Tower, soloists behind the altar and the rest of us twixt the two.

Poetic and musical meditations on creation by, respectively, Johnson and Haydn were followed by the famous hymn that, in effect, summarises the canticle: *O Praise ye the Lord*, to Parry's setting.

George Herbert's *I got me flowers* referenced *Bless the Lord all that grows in the ground/sing his praise and exalt him for ever*, while Orlande de Lassus' *Aurora lucis rutillar*; an extract from Hamlet's most famous soliloquy and Handel's *Come Gentle Morpheus, son of Night*, channelled morning and night, death and resurrection and The Four Last Things generally. Cambridge Voices by now were warmed up and well into their stride and giving a pretty convincing impression of a cathedral advent carol service, most notably in De Massini's acapella arrangement of Corelli's *Concerto Grosso* as Renaissance Polyphony.

The Benedicite *in propria persona* made an appearance, dedicated to the memory of Barbara Ives, late resident of Swaffham Prior, in JS Bach's great motet *Singet dem Herrn* whose solemn majesty was pointed up rather than undermined by the reading of John Hegley's witty and irreverent *Jesus is not just for Christmas* which followed, the first of two pieces from this contemporary, vernacular, but not unserious writer.

In two great hymns, of Advent Past and Advent-yet-to-come, the audience had opportunities to test its collective voice against the choir and *O Come O Come Em-*

manuel caught the contemporary mood of populist insurgency against expertise, with congregational volume trumping technical delicacy of descant.

A processional motet to music by Satie, followed by the organ Prelude to Bach's *Sleepers Awake* moved us through to the icy vault of St Cyriac and St Julitta's with its glacially brilliant acoustic, where, over-coated and scarfed, Cambridge Voices were already mid-way through the stately cantata accompanied by a ghostly pre-programmed electric piano.

The Annunciation by Edwin Muir, a fine poet lying only a few metres away in the graveyard, led naturally enough into *Hymns to the Mother and Child* and another of the evening's surprises. An Advent Service is not where I would expect to hear *the Humming Chorus* from Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*, but that's what we got, cunningly disguised as an antiphon for two choirs, one in the gallery, the other in front of the chancel.

The programme was now, in the best possible sense, turning apocalyptic, with a Vaughan Williams setting of Prospero's farewell to our revels and a reading from the Revelation of St John itself, but the spirit of Eliot's promise to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time was evoked by the beautiful carol *Jesus Christ the Apple Tree* by Elizabeth Poston. The first tree whose apple was mankind's undoing is found again redemptively, in Christ. And all shall be well and/All manner of thing shall be well.

And it was.

The final stanza of *Lo He comes with clouds descending* was a rousing score-draw for congregation and descant and the setting of Psalm 149 to Karg-Elert's *Marche Triomphale* - another unexpected pairing - was indeed a triumphant finale.

Minced pies and mulled wine beckoned in the marginally warmer St Mary's, a decent sum was raised for the Emmaus charity and the season of advent was joyously begun.



Andrew Grant

Sid Prince

If nations have their national treasures, Sid Prince who has died recently was part of the living history of this village and will be much missed. He was born in Swaffham Prior and lived in Greenhead Road since 1957. He had always lived here apart from a short spell in the war. I interviewed him for the Crier in 2005 and although for space I did not include it in the profile below, I always remember him telling me of a time when you couldn't walk to the middle of the village in half an hour because there so many people you would see to stop and talk to.

Sid: I was born in 1921. I call it a dying village. Once upon a time in Swaffham Prior you could get anything you wanted bar clothes. But you could buy cloth, at two shops in the village. There'd be butcher's, sweetshops, shoeshop. There used to be a cobbler, but my dad used to buy a piece of leather and mend our shoes. You could buy a square of leather. He used to sit there with an old hobbing iron and mend 'em. He'd cut it off and nail it round. There was a nurse in the village when I went to school. Four pubs, and one down the Fen, the Cherry Tree. That used to do a good trade during the summer. My dad, he could remember eight in the village. There used to be one up that house, what they called Croft. And opposite the Carpenter's shop, that was called the Cow and Calf. Then there used to be another one, just the other side of the Lion...and they used to get a living. There were a few that would bike to Cambridge, on the building; farms - Ambrose, he employed a lot of men, and so did Mr Woollard... Woollard had one farm, Arthur Yarrow had a farm, I think he



Landgirl reunion, with Sid's wife Mary fourth right from the tractor wheel. ?

employed about three or four.

When I left school at fourteen there wasn't a lot of work for youngsters but I had a job to take the papers round. Well, there weren't many houses those days - then I'd carry on and deliver at Reach. Then twice a week, with a grocery van, I used to come round with him. Three half crowns he used to give me, (laughs) six days I'd deliver the papers, then in the afternoon I used to work down the parson's, the Vicarage, the Reverend Hills's, in his garden, five days, so I used to have six half crowns a week (laughs) - I was well off!

Dad, he was a baker, used to work for Mr Low. Mum worked on the railways during the war as a guard -she'd get the train down here to Cambridge, then she used to be a guard to March.

There used to be four trains a day from Cambridge, used to go right through to Mildenhall, and there used to be a goods train. You always knew what time it was - cause some of us didn't have watches - we used to see that old train, we used to say, there y'are, it's getting on so-and-so. There used to be buses, two bus services we had.

It didn't cost much to go to Cambridge, two or three coppers I think. You could go on the train from Swaffham Prior to Cambridge for three pennies. My grandchildren don't believe what I tell 'em! See, everybody, them years ago, everybody seemed happy in Swaffham Prior, cause they were all on the same lines, the same monies. My dad being's a baker, he used to get five shillings a week more than the farm workers. He used to get a golden guinea a week, that's a hundred and five pence. My brother, he was a piano tuner. He could play the piano; I couldn't play nothing, only ruddy cricket and football. I love sport. But I got smashed up in the war. I was in the Royal Armoured Corps. We finished up in North Africa, that's where I got smashed up.

I joined up seventh of February 1942. I had my 21st birthday in the army. I got stationed at Newmarket. That was handy, I used to get me bike and bike home. We went the February 43, Algiers, then we carried on up to Tunisia. There was four of us. We'd been called up together; we'd been together all the time...it was a ruddy aeroplane. We see these old Jerries fly round, never took no notice of us. Course, they goes round and comes out of the sun at you. We got machine-gunned and these here little shrapnel wounds. Me mate got killed, Parker; the other guy, Davis, had his leg blew off; and Salt, he only got a scratch. We were near a forward base hospital. I don't pray but I think to myself, Sid, you're bloody lucky. Parker, he died: Davis, I never knew where he went. Nearly seven months in hospital, and I weren't no more



Sid at Swaffham Prior School....

good so they chucked me out the army. I weren't sorry, but I had been looking forward to having a good look round, in the army, for nothing. I come out and I didn't do anything for a while because I wanted to get over all this, but anyway, I got a job on the farm again, then I had a job for Crittalls, the window people, doing jobs all round here, on the first stage at Addenbrookes Hospital. then I got on the public works, roadwork, I had a few years with them, we used to tarmac with a fork; then I got a job at a building firm; Addenbrookes second stage was coming on, 1967. I got a job up there, 13 ½ years up there, then the job got done.

It was hard work on the land them days. Now everything's changing and I looks back and I say what a change. It is! The whole village, years ago: you'd see people on a Sunday, kiddies all dressed up, going to chapel, then church – I used to go to chapel twice a Sunday; well, there weren't nothing to do so we used to go. You wouldn't see nobody working on a Sunday them days, nobody. No, Sunday was a day of rest.

My old dad, he used to start six in the morning till five at night. He went all through the first war; in the Royal Signals, running messages; four years there, come out with a clean record: so when I went he said Sid, remember, come out with a clean record. So that's what I did.

We used to play in the old meadow where the swings are now. That was our playground. A lot of kiddies used to get in there. We'd get two or three wickets in there and an old bat; then football come, we used to play football; we used to have a lovely old fair in there, after Reach Fair they used to come in that meadow. They used to come the Thursday and then Friday and Saturday the whole village would be packed, Saturday night. It used to be packed.

There used to be two schools near the church. One for the infants, one up till eleven. I started in the infants school, then I carried on in the other one while they were building the new one, then we moved into there. Some of the teachers were ghastly, they used to give you the cane! I've had the cane many a time. Mrs Davis, she wouldn't say anything but she'd come and draw a cane across your fingers. Now learn that, she said. Learn your lesson. But we'd get another one, next week. You know the little rulers a foot long, we used to flick plasticene at the headmistress. Her son used to sit next to me, and he were worse than me! He used to get the same. We used to act about in the school. It weren't any one who got the cane – we all used to



....and in the army

get it! Teachers were really strict them days. You got the cane a lot down here, but when I went up to Burwell I never got the cane once. I seemed to change. I learned me lesson.

My wife, she came down from Manchester with the Land Army. There were three of them, Joan, that's Joan Bradley - Mary, and Irene. They came down together. Irene married my brother. She were one of the best. A good manager, everything. Fifty-six years I knew her; fifty-four we were married. First child, you never got no money. Second child, you got eight shillings. Forty pence. I sit and think sometimes, forty pence. Now what do they get today? We used to go without to keep those girls tidy. They always came first.

When I went in the army I got one pound, seven and six a fortnight. People say how did you manage? Well, everything was cheaper then. My mum used to send parcels. I know me 21st birthday she sent a big box with a cake in – we sat in the barrack room and scoffed the lot. That's how it goes. You always see someone worse than you. I was very lucky, the surgeon said. Well, I got through it. I tried me best. You can't do any more, can you?

Mark Lewinski

Carols for Advent and Christmas

Saturday 10 December, 7.30pm

St. George's Church, Brinkley Road, Six Mile Bottom CB8 0UN

Join the Cantilena Singers for a celebration of Advent and Christmas music and readings in the unique St. George's Church in Six Mile Bottom.

Programme includes:

Wassail Song - arr. R. Vaughan Williams

London Waits - arr. Llewellyn

Selections from the King's Singers Collection - The Gift, O Little Town of Bethlehem, The Twelve Days of Christmas, Gaudete Joy to the World - arr. Rutter Canon for Three Choirs - Mozart/Llewellyn Frohlocket ihr Volker auf Erden - Mendelssohn
O Magnum Mysterium - various arrangements

Tickets £10 (free admission for under 18s) on the door or ring 01223 811643

Refreshments available.

School News

On Tuesday 8th October staff and pupils went to St Mary's for our Harvest Celebration which was led by Reverend Sue. Each class prepared their own special contributions. Mercury Class and Mars classes confidently sang, 'The Sun Came Shining Down'. Neptune Class brought beautifully decorated Harvest Boxes to the church which have been left for the parishioners to enjoy, and sang 'Harvest Festival song'. Saturn Class confidently recited 'Autumn' as a class and sang a Harvest Samba. It was commented on how



Eleanor and Lara

expressive their reading was. Reverend Sue talked to us about the process of harvesting wheat and how we need to care and nurture the crops to get a good harvest. This was related to the nurturing of children so that they are prepared well for their future lives. KS2 choir performed 'Beautiful World' and we also had a lovely rendition of the Lord's Prayer sung for us.

We sent our harvest donations to Newmarket Open Door Charity via Mrs Baker who reported that they were very pleased and thought it was a wonderful idea for a harvest collection. The Director spoke to Mrs Baker and said how grateful they were and asked that we pass onto the children and parents/carers how grateful they were and said it will be put to good use, allowing them to make choices about what to buy such as toiletries and other essentials.

In October, Years 5 and 6 went to the Cathedral Day in Ely Cathedral. Lily Steed and Bethany-Louise wrote a report:

'We did two activities. The first one was called 'Toilet twinning' and it was really interesting. One person had glitter on their hands and had to High 5 other people to show how germs are spread. Then we talked about the different diseases you can get through not washing hands. After that we talked about the importance of clean water. We did another activity called 'ChristianAid'. A lady from ChristianAid told us what they do e.g. sending boxes of worms to people who need to make compost to grow crops. We both found out a lot of facts in both, especially the second one. We enjoyed the germs activity. At the end we had a



Charlie



We had fun on Grounds' Day

ceremony where we shared our heart prayers. We sang songs and did actions. The day was action packed and it had a brilliant impact on us.'

Grounds Day took place on Friday 21st October and despite a damp afternoon, we enjoyed a productive day outside. Children and adults worked together throughout the day in all areas of the schools' grounds on jobs including, clearing leaves, putting down wood chips, weeding flower beds, cutting back shrubs, clearing and tidying the vegetable garden and Nature Area, fixing the playtime box, removing the old sand box from the field and planting bulbs, which were generously donated to the school. It was a very successful day and the grounds look wonderful!

Pumpkin parade took place on Monday. Over fifty pumpkins were brought to school and they were extremely creative. They included, a smurf, a tiny cauldron with a magic potion cooking in it, a zombie, a hamburger, and a pumpkin with a flower decoration and hanging bats. Some featured artwork by famous artists such as Kandinsky, and there was some very detailed and clever carving. There was a pumpkin headdress and Jack grew his pumpkin. All the children were given prizes and some special ones were awarded to children in KS1 and KS2. Children who received these were Giselle, Ava H, Harry, Breeze, Jack and George.

We have just completed a week of anti-bullying activities based on the theme, 'Power for Good'. Throughout the week children had the opportunity to explore what bullying is and what can be done to prevent it. The week ended with a sharing assembly to which parents were invited.

Christmas is fast approaching and we have lots to look forward to. Our annual Decoration Day is at the end of November and KS1 Christmas production this year is called 'The Nativity'. We have the FoSPS Christmas Fair on Friday 9th December (2.30pm start), a Christmas celebration at St Mary's and Christmas lunch. We are looking forward to sharing mince pies and sparkle!



We would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Charlotte Cane, Chair of Governors

chair@swaffhamprior.cambs.sch.uk

The Swaffhams WI News

Well of course we like to think that all our meetings are good but the November one was certainly up there among the best. We had a few visitors in response to our invitation in last month's crier to the open meeting and they were certainly not disappointed. Horry Parsons was our speaker and he came, along with his lovely wife Susan, to talk to us about his part in the building of the Millennium tower in Bury Cathedral. As project manager Horry had an enormous responsibility and seeing the finished building is certainly a tribute to his dedication. We heard how important it was to select the right stone and how each piece was custom made by the best local craftsmen and how every piece was right first time fitting in its allocated spot like a giant jigsaw puzzle. Prince Charles made three visits during the work, laying not one but two bricks at the start, and coming along during the project and at the end. I think a number of us will be off to see the work at close quarters and now tours to the top are available, although I think I will have to pass on that one as I don't have a head for heights. In December it is our Christmas party so our next regular meeting will be on January 17 when Debbie, one of our members will be talking about her experience visiting the Arctic Circle earlier this year.

New members and visitors are always welcome at our meetings so do come along and be part of our friendly group.

Pat Cook - President

Tel: 01638 742224

Email: patcook6@btinternet.com



Mothers' Union

On October 20th Richard Ayres gave us a very interesting talk on The Gibberd Garden in Harlow, Essex which was created by Sir Frederick Gibberd. He designed the garden and filled the grounds with sculptures, ceramic pots and architectural salvage from 1972 till his death in 1984. The Gibberd Garden is an inspirational Grade 11 listed garden full of beauty, peace and tranquillity.

Our Autumn Bring & Buy Stall made £41.00. On December 8th we are holding our Christmas Lunch at 1pm in Lode Chapel.

Jill Jenyns.





VILLAGE GARDENERS

Rob Brett was our speaker this month, with a talk entitled "28 to 365 acres: the delights and possibilities of the RHS garden Hyde Hall. Rob, for the last year, has been the Curator of Hyde Hall, having moved from the Sainsbury laboratory in the Botanic Gardens in Cambridge, where he was responsible for the management of the plant growth facility.

He started his talk with an overview of all four RHS gardens- Rosemoor, Wisley, Harlow Carr and Hyde Hall, describing how the RHS is going for a multi million pound re- vamp, over the next decade, by re-investing money and always looking to increase visitor numbers and membership, which currently stands at 449, 000.

He of course mentioned too, their two largest flower shows- Chelsea and Hampton Court and the work their 300,000 volunteers do in the community with groups- Britain in Bloom being an example. Over the years thousands of bulbs, trees and shrubs have been planted and millions raised for these groups.

A new garden has been recently acquired- "Bridgewater", which lies south of Manchester, alongside the Bridgewater canal. It had a Victorian gothic mansion, which was demolished in the 1940s, lakes, woodland and an 11 acre walled garden: this will hopefully be opened in 2019.

He has clearly been bowled over by Hyde Hall, which started as a family farmhouse, with 600 acres, in 1950, when it was bought by the Robinson family. They planted the rose garden, in what is one of the driest areas in the country and sold to the RHS in 1993, who promptly build a reservoir which holds 100 million gallons, all of which is run off from the surrounding farmland. It is a young garden with strong links to the Essex Wildlife Trust. There is currently mature woodland, colour themed borders, a magnificent rose garden, the Hilltop garden, famed for its Dry Garden which was constructed in 2002 and courtyard gardens.

Rob clearly wants to keep what works: increasing the number of Mallus species grown there (it used to hold the national collection) and next year to start an annual Rose weekend, whilst still taking the garden on a "journey".

Adam Frost, the garden designer, has been working with the staff on a long term plan to form a connection between the separate gardens, by re- drawing and lengthening pathways and opening up vistas.

Many changes are already happening- a new restaurant, education and activity centre are in the process of being built, as is a global growth vegetable garden: a circular garden with each quarter representing four continents- Europe, Asia, North and South America. A winter garden is also under construction.(Could there be a rival here for Anglesey Abbey- Rob did say he had been talking to Richard Ayers.) 600,000 trees have been planted over the years around the property as a shelter belt, but Rob has one more tree to plant this year- an Oak, to commemorate the 90th birthday of the Queen.

Hyde Hall is definitely going on the Gardeners list to visit again!

Margaret Joyce

See the January Crier for our 2017 programme. New members are very welcome

Local shopping in Ely just became a lot easier

ely.myshopislocal.co.uk

Residents of Ely and the surrounding villages can now benefit from new and improved local shopping services. Ely My Shop Is Local have expanded their service offerings to cater for the busy or housebound residents, who don't get the opportunity to shop in the Ely during the day. You can shop with your favourite independent local shops online in just one place at ely.myshopislocal.co.uk. You can combine your shopping from multiple shops into just one order and can choose not only FREE same day click & collect, but now also FREE same day local delivery, set hour time slot delivery and even one hour local delivery. In addition, if you change your mind about your purchase you can benefit from FREE returns as well. Anyone living within 15 miles of Ely can now shop locally with the city's independent local shops from the comfort of their sofa, on the train on the way to work, or during a lunch break. Support local by shopping local.



Martina Jenssen

Mobile: 077147 33886

Email: martina.jenssen@myshopislocal.co.uk

Solution to crossword no. 136

We congratulate Trish Whitehead, the winner of last month's competition, who will receive her prize certificate from the editors. Honourable mentions go to Martyn Clark, Robert Nunn and Sue Richards.

I	N	S	E	C	T	R	E	P	E	L	L	E	N	T
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Bottisham & Burwell Photographic Club

The club started its 43rd year in early September and has again been able to attract several new members to our relatively small club. We are always pleased to see new members wishing to join or as guests throughout the year. The club now has about 40 members, which includes some very experienced photographers who are able to share their depth of knowledge of photography with new members.

On 25 October 2016 the club had its first Print League Competition of the season. There are three of these competitions throughout the year and in this first event there were 131 mixed entries of colour and monochrome, in our open subject category. The club was very pleased to see such a large number of entries. These competitions are always assessed by an external judge from a photographic club of the East Anglian region.

On Tuesday 6 December 2016, we have Ian Wilson APRS from Cambridge Camera Club, who will be giving a digital presentation entitled '**Clockwise Around Iceland**'. This should be a particularly interesting evening.

Other dates for your diary in 2017:

Tuesday 7 February 2017.

'**Ten Thousand Miles of Ocean**' digital presentation by Sarah Kelman DPAGB ARPA, who with her family, cruised the Caribbean and the Eastern Seaboard of the USA.

Tuesday 28 February 2017.

'**Sixty Years & Counting!**' Andy Hanson MPAGB ARPS APAGB FIPF, will take us through his photographic journey from his days in the darkroom, colour slides & prints to the digital technology of today.

Readers may remember that the club's Honorary Secretary, Daphne Hanson DPAGB APAGB, was appointed President of the EAF - East Anglia Federation of Photographic Societies last year. In February 2017, Daphne will be entering her second year of her two year term in this prestigious office.

Further details are available on our website see below.

Guests are welcome to attend any meeting at our venue, Lode Chapel CB25 9EW on Tuesday's from 7:30 pm to 9:30pm. Fee: £3.00, including refreshments, refunded on joining.

Annual subscriptions: Adult: £40.00, Joint Membership: £67.00, Student: £21.00. Refreshments 50p. New members joining now will receive a pro rata rate.

Lastly we would respectfully ask guests attending the club not to **double park** in the vicinity of Lode Chapel, as there is local concern regarding access for emergency vehicles.

Barry Coles, Publicity Officer

For further details contact:

Mrs Daphne Hanson DPAGB APAGB

T: 01638 741106 , www.bottburpc.org



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY BOTANIC GARDENS

SKELETAL FORMS

We often think of trees as being at their most beautiful when clothed in a dense canopy of fresh leaves, and festooned with flowers. Many, however, have much to offer during the winter months by way of stem, branch colour and texture.

In their naked state, denude of leaves, the skeletal forms of trees can make a dramatic contrast to a stormy winter sky, appearing as dark figures silhouetted on the horizon. When bedecked with a haw frost, the drooping limbs of the native birch, *Betula pendula*, take on an enchanting, other-worldly appearance to bring another element to the

winter landscape.

Closer observation of birch trees reveals an array of stem and branch effect, with a bewildering range of colours and textures evident. The Himalayan birch, *Betula utilis*, in its various forms, has peeling bark from pure white to brown, while *Betula utilis* 'Sichuan Red' has a smooth, dark brown bark, overlain with orange and red. In contrast, the stems and branches of the river birch (*Betula nigra*) are covered in curling, exfoliating brown bark.

The cherries are not to be outdone on the winter interest front, with the Tibetan cherry, *Prunus serrula*, having glossy, mahogany bark which demands great admiration. The maples too want a piece of the winter action, with several having distinctive bark to add another dimension to the garden. *Acer griseum*, the paperbark maple, has cinnamon-coloured bark, which curls with age, but which creates a dramatic effect. It is no coincidence that *A. capillipes* and *A. grosser* are often referred to as snakebark maples, having brown and green bark with vertical markings. One of the more imposing trees to provide winter interest is the Persian ironwood, *Parrotia persica*, whose flaky, self-grafting stems produce an intricate network of interwoven branches to create a broad canopy.

The more familiar native oak, *Quercus robur*, is also worthy of a mention. It has a rugged, branching frame and serves as a distinctive landmark, but how many of us have paused to admire its grey, fissured bark? The bark of a tree can provide one of the identifying features, but it is those with highly ornamental bark which are most desired by the gardener.

Finally, coniferous species also have their winter appeal. The single, vertical stems of *Pinus nigra* ssp. *laricio*, or the Corsican pine, are armoured with thick, scaly plates of bark whose grey, pink and orange hues are highlighted when lit by low winter sunlight. Equally dramatic in winter sunlight are the deciduous conifers,



Metasequoia glyptostroboides (dawn redwood), and *Taxodium distichum* (swamp cypress). Each of these has fibrous, russet-coloured bark. Elegant as these are, neither can compete in scale with the giant redwood, *Sequoiadendron giganteum*, which dominates the landscape, and whose spongy, reddish-brown bark provides a protective insulation from forest fires. The lacebark pine, *Pinus bungeana*, provides another source of winter stem interest, displaying a smooth bark with patches of grey, brown and olive-green colouring, which sheds in small platelets to reveal younger bark beneath.

All these species add dimension to the winter garden, with their architectural form, and their textured and coloured bark. Some species, such as the Tibetan cherry, can be accommodated in a relatively small garden, but if you really wish to compare form and stem effect, a range can be admired here at the Botanic Garden.



From our Local County Councillor
David Brown

The main item of interest at County Council in November has been the proposed Devolution deal for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. An extraordinary meeting of Full Council took place on 22nd November at which it was agreed, by a majority vote, that the County Council should accept the deal and agree to join a combined authority with an elected mayor. The deal has now been agreed by all seven constituent local authorities and the Local Enterprise Partnership. The deal will bring at least £600 million over 20 years for infrastructure projects, local control of skills funding and £170 million for affordable housing over the next 5 years for the area.

General Purposes Committee met to consider a number of items. These included the results of the public consultation on the 2017-18 business plan and approaches to Cambridgeshire Guided Busway defects and a review of the Waste Private Finance Initiative,

Children and Young People Committee met. The major item for discussion was a proposal to bring together the management of the Enhanced and Preventative Directorate with Children's Social Care Directorate. It was agreed unanimously that this was the right direction of travel. Committee also agreed to further work on joint working between Cambridgeshire Catering and Cleaning Services (for schools) with neighbours.

I attended a workshop with Senior Management Team regarding transformation work in the Council. I also attended Constitution and Ethics Committee, and the Children's Change Programme Board. Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Probation has been undertaking a 2-week inspection of Youth Offending Services in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and I attended their formal feedback session. The full results of the inspection will be published in 2017.

David Brown



Bottisham Village College

Adult Learning

New Evening Courses for January/February 2017:

Art History – The Golden Age of European Painting

British Sign Language

Calligraphy

Digital Photography – Night Shots and Winter

Digital Photography – Portraits and Street Photography

Living with Confidence

Real Indian Cookery – Curry Delicious

Stained Glass for Beginners

Woodwork

Saturday Workshops - 18th March

Calligraphy

Cook with your Kids

Paediatric First Aid (Sat/Sun) – meets Ofsted requirements

Stained Glass

Wedding Flowers

Willow Weaving

Russian Decorative Painting

(Most workshops run from 10.00 to 4.00, but check our website for full details)

**Our full programme can be found on our website, together
with enrolment information:**

www.bottishamvc.org/adultlearning

Tel: 01223 811372 email: adultlearning@bottishamvc.org

Notes from Parish Council November Meeting

John Covill chaired the meeting with 8 Parish Councillors and 3 members of the public in attendance. The meeting started at 7.30pm.

Members' Declaration of Interest for Items on the Agenda + Requests for Dispensation: None.

Public Participation: None

Reports

CCC Matters: Cllr David Brown's report was read to the meeting.

ECDC Matters: Cllr Allen Alderson reported to the meeting including, some discussion about the type of black sack content accepted at Witchford and Milton recycling centres. Sandra Gynn asked where the planning application Allen Alderson called in was. It was in Reach and outside the village envelope. He pointed out that this kind of unsound planning may happen until the Village Plans are back in force which may be 2018 or longer if the required number of houses is not met. Allen Alderson noted that he was attending an away day next week with the chief exec. where he would bring up this problem. John Covill asked if the Reach PC were against the plans mentioned. Allen Alderson said yes. John Covill also brought up the fly tipping by the Black Barns; including black sacks, tyres and the TV mentioned previously. Allen Alderson said that he had mentioned these reports to the head of recycling. John Covill asked if the travellers at the end of Black Drove were known. Allen Alderson said not.

Matters Arising from Previous Minutes: None.

Correspondence for Circulation / Consideration: John Covill had been contacted by the owner of No. 42 and he had mentioned the bollards being too close to the building for wheel chairs etc. to use the pavement. It was agreed that the installation showed no respect for the PC as no consultation had been entered into and no notice given. Peter Hart pointed out that rather than protecting the footpath, the bollards narrowed it. Sandra Gynn pointed out that the bollards may force people into the road. Steve Kent-Phillips said that he had completed and returned the polling district form. He also mentioned some late correspondence, a compliance letter, from the pensions regulator confirming the PC's status. All other correspondence was noted.

Consideration of Planning Applications Received

Only tree work planning applications had been received. It was noted that a horse chestnut had been removed from the school grounds that was not on the planning application.

CIL Money Projects

Steve Kent-Phillips reported the status of all projects. Mostly good news.

1. Play Area: The see-saw would be delivered next week and the gates were in progress.
2. Table Tennis Table: Was delivered but not to the correct place due to a fallen tree. Martin Mead had carefully moved it as it weighs 1.4T.
3. Refurbish the path from St. Cyriac's to be back gate: Work was mostly

- completed but warm weather was required before the tarmac could be done.
4. Cemetery: The Shed doors are being built and the concrete pad has been completed. The fence has also been completed and daffodils planted. It was decided to also have the front fence painted.
 5. Cemetery Mapping: Andrew Camps reported marking out new plots, including the space made available by removal of the spoil heap, making 161 new grave plots. An A1 plot and new records would be sent to the records office. The new plans and records were now being checked. It was noted that the new plan had already saved hours in recent searches. John Covill requested that thanks were sent to Andrew Noyes
 6. Street Lights: It was reported that due to power supply problems, the work would now be commenced on 12th December.
 7. The Telephone box was complete and Reach had requested the information to do the same with theirs. Huntingdonshire were losing around 100 boxes.
 8. Swimming Pool Hut: FoSPS had met and will be deciding on the design by 1st December. Quotes will be coming for the suppliers to install the shed as this extends the guarantee. The toilet will be left for a future project. Work to begin 1st four days before Good Friday.
 9. Daffodils: are now all planted. Sandra Gynn added that the community youth team, who had help with planting, enjoyed the work.

Allotment standpipe for South-East side of B1102

Michael Malster reminded the meeting that the estimate from Anglian Water was £800 to install and £400 if traffic lights were required. The Clerk reported the forms had been with AW for some time and a conversation with them prompted a request for plans. It was agreed to get AW to provide a quote and discuss the allotment fees and the standpipe at the next meeting.

Higher earnings / interest for Parish funds, CIL & Open Space money

Michael Malster presented a number of options for accounts. Santander at 0.1% and Premium Bonds, which are not a valid investment for PCs. These were discounted. The Manchester at 1% was a 45-day notice account and the Buckinghamshire at 0.75% was 35-day. Peter Hart asked how much was in the accounts, Steve Kent-Phillips said that it was more than £100K. It was noted that the money must be spent in 2 years, so it could stay where it is. The amount of difficulty in accessing funds and the number of signatories was discussed. John Covill thanked Michael Malster for doing the research. David Greenfield suggested opening an account with the Manchester, which it was agreed to do. Michael Malster added that the account was on-line but required withdrawal by post. Steve Kent-Phillips suggested moving £20-35K to this account.

Replacement of gate in churchyard (small wicket gate)

Steve Kent-Phillips asked if it was not the church's gate. Andrew Camps stated that we have made repairs in the past. Steve Kent-Phillips said he would get Jon Taw to quote for repairs to the gate and post and that it could be from the Open Spaces money.

Accounts for payment

These were all agreed.

Steve Kent-Phillips reported on the accounts: on budget with only the Queen's Birthday expenses as a variation. The Precept would be voted on at the next meeting. A statement had finally arrived from ns&i showing £83K and in all that time no mention of interest. Allen Alderson added that the account was originally set up to hold a £1000 donation to look after the village sign.

Sign forms to close ns&i account: It was agreed to close the account.

Clerk's Report: The clerk reported further trouble with Anglian Water chasing invoices not presented in time to be paid. After discussing the issues, the Clerk agreed to investigate paying by Direct Debit. CGM had been contacted and David Greenfield had arranged a meeting on the 15th Steve Kent-Phillips asked if he could also get CGM to quote for clearing the paths and hedges. David agreed.

Parish Councillors' Reports: Sandra Gynn reported a tree lying over at the previous meeting leaning over a house and fence. The tree or gap in the fence may have been used in a recent break in at the house for access. Andrew Camps had spoken to ETS, who are scheduled to look at it. Sandra Gynn will pass on the information to ECDC when they do. John Covill mentioned the rubbish down the fen and the state of the roads, especially joints and edges. He had a conversation with Neil Bond about this who said he would attend to the worst ones quickly, especially Whiteway Drove. Sandra Gynn wished to thank Janet Willmott and Mandy Kingsmill for their help planting daffodils. The Clerk said that an email had been sent but would also send a letter.

Open Question Time: Peter Rand mentioned the state of the Village Hall driveway. Ruts had developed, especially near to the path. Steve Kent-Phillips agreed to ask Martin Mead to have a look at it. John Covill asked if plastic grids would help. Michael Limb asked for clarification regarding the CIL fund criteria and on-going maintenance. John Covill explained that new projects should not entail on-going maintenance. Peter Rand asked if the Village Hall windows could be a way to spend CIL and OS money. Michael Limb thought that the original £1000 put in ns&i was a donation from the nice Fenland Country Fair people.

If anyone would like further information on any of the above items, please do not hesitate to contact the Clerk.

Future meeting dates: January 12th 2017. All are welcome to attend.

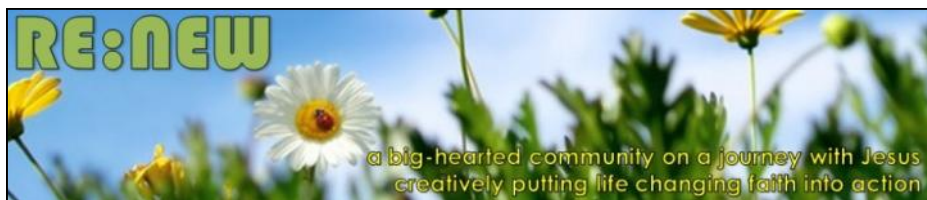
Clerk to the Parish Council: Paul Catling

Tel: 07040 908743 (Voice Mail only).

Email: clerk@swaffham-prior.co.uk

Website: <http://www.swaffham-prior.co.uk/pc/>





God's gift ...

A conversation I had recently in preparing for a Christmas service reminded me of the phrase, "God's gift ..." You have probably used the phrase at some point to describe someone who appears to believe they are better than everyone else at something. "He thinks he's God's gift ...", "She thinks she's God's gift ..."

The predictable message at Christmas is, '*Jesus is God's gift to us* and we celebrate His birth'. Obviously, I believe that and celebrate it not just through this season but through every season of life.

Maybe the less predictable message, and key to our message at RENEW this Christmas is, '*we are God's gifts to one another*' ... What are we giving? How are we giving? Where are we giving?

Thank you to everyone who provided a complete shoe box packed with goodies to be sent through Samaritan's Purse to a child in a developing country this Christmas-time. Thanks also to those who contributed toys, toiletries, stationery, knitted hats and financial gifts to help make up boxes and to pay for additional items and shipping. The RENEW Church family enjoyed packing up boxes with your donated items at our RENEW Cafe in November. I have helped in the distribution of similar shoeboxes in Romania and have seen the looks on the children's faces as they receive - the only gift they will receive. The shoebox you packed. Thank you, you are God's gift to the child who will receive your box this Christmas.

There's a sense in which it can be easier to think about what we can do to help children in developing countries than it is to think how can we be God's gift to those around us: in our homes, communities, workplaces, schools, churches. Maybe you could join me in spending some time during this season, thinking ... who can I be God's gift to today and how can I do it? I'd love to hear your thoughts and experiences and you are very welcome to join us for our Christmas Service led by the children and youth team at **10.30am on 18th December** at **Bottisham Primary School** - you are also welcome to stay for lunch afterwards.

May you receive God's gift this Christmas, and be God's gift to others...

Revd Alan Brand

RENEW Church Services in December 2016.

We have activities for children and young people at all our morning services.

A crèche is available if required. All are welcome.

4th December. 10.30am – RENEW The Bigger Picture. With Communion

(Bottisham Primary School)

11th December. 10.30am – RENEW Café style (at the School) followed by shared lunch.

11th December. 6.20pm – Evening Worship. (at Lode Chapel)

18th December. 10.30am – RENEW Christmas Service (at the School)

Led by the RENEW Children and Young People

25th December. 10.30am – Please come and join us in our Christmas Day Family Worship (at the School)

There will be no evening worship at Lode Chapel on Christmas Day.

FREECYCLE



If you have any offers or wants, please contact me by the 14th of each month by phone (01223 813362), e-mail (jun.thompson@tiscali.co.uk) or drop a note through the letter box (23 Longmeadow). Please let me know if you would like anything repeating in subsequent issues. Everything is free and nothing is expected in return. Please can you contact the offers after the 1st of the month to make it a little fairer.

Offered

18ft caravan chassis. Christine/Richard 01223 812501

Several sheets of new plasterboard and some large offcuts; also small folding fireguard. Tim 01223 813815

Wanted

Wanted any old (or new, lol) computers or laptops or monitors to build a computer for my son. Anything at all even an old laser printer or Atari or even an Amiga and Sinclair spectrum. Also old software of ANY sort. Joseph, 07341971330

Old tools, garage items and anything classic car related. Ray 01223 813117.

Your old light fittings, brown Bakelite switches, iron conduit and switches, bulb holders and holders. Sheets and bits of bakelite. Postcard rack (carousel if possible). George 07895 064727.

Dear Friends,

Thinking Allowed!

One of the things I enjoy when I have time, is catching up with “The Sky at Night” and Horizon programmes about astronomy. I like to find out what scientists are doing and discovering now. It struck me, as I looked at the catch up menu, how many of these programmes are about astronomers looking for planets similar to our own. They are looking for worlds that are warm, but not too warm. Planets which might have water on the surface indicating the possibility of organic molecules and life. In addition scientists are also looking at the signals and the information that we send into deep space in case another life form is searching for us and we regularly sweep the sky looking for extra-terrestrial communication. It’s as if we are lonely in the solar system and are eagerly searching for life forms that might communicate with us and ease that existential loneliness.



It is a fascinating area of thought and reflection, one that has initiated many films and books. Yes, it would be amazing to discover life on some distant planet yet we do not need to feel lonely or alone in the cosmos. Christmas is a great celebration of the fact that not only are we not alone but the life force which gave rise to all that we know and all that we have yet to discover is not out there on some distant and unknown planet but is right with us, beside us, one with us. Just as there is much still to discover about the solar system there is still much to learn and discover about God too. At Christmas we celebrate the fact that Almighty God, the one we cannot comprehend or even begin to get our minds around, came from all the vastness and power that was his, to be born amongst us as one of us, fragile and vulnerable. Jesus taught his friends how to pray so that they might never feel alone with anything ever again. He gave them his Spirit to be with them always. He came to demonstrate God’s closeness and commitment to us by living beside us and taking human form. Immanuel means God with us and that’s what Jesus wanted all people to understand. Whatever we have to struggle with in life, whatever challenges we are faced with we are not alone. Beside us and within us the love of God shines. We do not have to search for him or look for him in distant and strange worlds for he is right here to bless us with strength and peace.

I pray that you might discover God right beside you this Christmas and that you will experience his peace and love.

God’s blessings to you

Sue



Church Services in December

at St Mary's, Swaffham Prior
unless otherwise indicated

Sunday 4 December, Second Sunday of Advent

11am Matins

Sunday 11 December, Third Sunday of Advent

11am Nativity and Christingle All Age Service

Sunday 18 December, Fourth Sunday of Advent

4.30pm Candlelight Carol Service

Sunday 24 December, Christmas Eve

3pm Crib Service

10pm First Communion of Christmas, *Lode*

11.30pm First Communion of Christmas, *Bottisham & Swaffham Bulbeck*

Sunday 25 December, Christmas Day

8am Holy Communion (BCP), *Quy*

10am Benefice Service Holy Communion (CW1T)

Would you like a lift to a service in Swaffham Prior or elsewhere in the Benefice? It makes sense to share cars and can be reassuring to go into church with someone else. Please be in touch and we will do our best to arrange a free lift: 07553 151585

Happy Christmas
Everyone!
From All at the Crier
Team

Dates for Your Diary December 2016

Thu	8	Mothers' Unoin Christmas Lunch, 1pm, Lode Chapel [p. 26]
Sat	10	Cantilena Carols, 7.30pm, St George's Church, Six Mile Bottom [p. 23]
Sun	11	Christingle, 11am, St Mary's [p.39]
Sun	18	Candlelit Carol Services, 4.30pm St Mary's [p. 6]
Mon	19	
Tue	20	Mobile Library, Cage Hill 2.45-3.15pm Chapel 3.20pm-4.00pm
Sat	24	Crib Service, 3pm, St Mary's [p.39]
Sun	25	CHRISTMAS DAY
Mon	26	Boxing Day Hockey Match, 10.45am The Denny, Bulbeck [p. 7]
January		
Thu	12	PC Meeting, 7pm, VH [p.35]
Wed	18	Coffee Morning, 49 Lower End., 10.30am [p.7]

Club	Contact	Tel.	Date	Time	Place
FOSPS	Clare Freeman	741316	2 nd Mon of Term	8pm	Village School
Cubs	Tim Doe	743656	Weds (term)	6:00-7:30pm	Village School
Reading Group	Brenda Wilson	743937	1 st Weds of month	8:00pm	(See Crier)
Scouts	Tim Doe	743656	Weds (term)	6:15-7:45pm	Village School
Village Gardeners	Margaret Joyce	744390	3 rd Tues of month	8:00pm	Village Hall
WI	Pat Cook	742224	3 rd Mon of month	7.30 pm	Village Hall
Youth Club	Alan Badcock	742228	Tues	7-8:30pm	Youth Club Hut Hut
			Thurs	7-10:00pm	