



# The Swaffham Crier

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July 2019



## Editorial

UPWARDS OF 300 VILLAGERS attended the Village Tea Party at the Marshall's last month, and a very good time was had by all. A sumptuous tea with excellent company all set in the palatial surroundings of a gorgeously bedecked marquee, to be finally rounded off by a beautiful walk through the sunlit (occasionally!) grounds of Swaffham Prior House. The only thing that went amiss was the Amazon-purchased megaphone which while faithfully conveying the first seven words of Sir Michael's tour guide ("And here on the right we see...") then....

But the Crier would really appreciate a report with some decent pictures to go with it (our own having gone the way of the megaphone). Facebook, where news travels like wild-fire, is extremely effective and immediate for some things, for example, advertising events, and we certainly hope that the PC does establish a presence there—see Our Reporter and the PC Notes from our new clerk Jude Griffiths. The Village Annual Assembly was poorly attended, and at the same time, we suspect/hear that the very sparse village attendance at *Summer's Sweet Music (Letters)* and the not quite so sparse at *Romeo and Juliet* (don't miss Andrew Grant's review on p. 30) was largely because many who meant to come just needed an extra reminder.

But the magazine also has a part to play, and by no means just for the die-hard fuddy-duddies that are not so keen to put in those Facebook-hours! We are very much the recorders of village life, and we hope the ideal medium in which events like the Village Tea Party can be reported. There's the question of what Sir Michael actually told us through that megaphone, and the interesting issue of a previous tea-party like this, many moons ago?

**DON'T FORGET!** The Crier takes its annual holiday next month, so any September copy must be in time for the August/September combined issue.

*Caroline Matheson*

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**Cover Picture: New Roofs Swaffham Prior by Paul Abbott**



## Letters to the Editors



Dear Editors,

### After School Club

Myself Alyson Alecock and Jenny Bridgeman are the co-owners of School's Out a business that we purchased from Catherine Wrench nearly 6 years ago.

It is still our business yet today I have had parents whose children attend our club concerned that they were not made fully aware that the school had in their words "taken back the After School Club"

When I questioned the parents as to where they had obtained such information their reply was the Swaffham Crier.

I live in Landwade so I do not receive a copy of the Crier but someone has now kindly shown me their copy and I have read the statement "The Village Hall has lost a lot of it's income because the school has taken back the After School and Holiday Club Booking" which is on both page 12 and 13. This is absolutely not true.

Jenny or myself have never been contacted about this and from what I understand neither has the School.

We are really cross that this false information has been printed and the fact that we are now having to deal with parents who have concerns because of it.

Whoever you obtained this information from doesn't have the correct facts. We are still a private business renting space in the school, in the same way we paid rent to the Village hall. The School is not running the club in any way.

We would like an apology in next month's Crier along with the correct information printed please.

**Alyson & Jenny**

Schools Out Swaffham Prior

*Many apologies to Alyson and Jenny for this misunderstanding. What Tina was referring to was the booking of the premises (the "After School and Holiday Club Booking") and not the running of the club, and we will put a note in the online version to clarify this. Eds*

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Dear Editors

### Invading Foliage

On behalf of the Parish Council, may I request that residents whose garden plants have grown out into and over footpaths trim them back. After the mixture of rain and warmth we've had recently, the plant life has expanded considerably and is causing obstructions to footpaths in the village - it would be much appreciated if these could be 'tamed'!

**Jude Griffiths**

Clerk to the Swaffham Prior Parish Council

Dear Editors,

## A Suggestion for the Starling Murmuration Caption

How about “A Kiwi Seeing off a Snake”?

*Tina Harbottle*



*See Jorge Monteiro's article in the June issue. Any other suggestions, readers? Eds*

Dear Editors,

### Summer's Sweet Music by Serenata

As highlighted in the May edition of the Crier, Serenata are a chamber choir of experienced female singers from across the East of England, many of whom previously sang together in the highly regarded Coro Stelante.

The choir is directed by Dr Kate Wishart. Kate started her professional life as an orchestral timpanist and developed her interest in working with voices whilst working with a number of opera companies. She is in great demand as a conductor of a number of singers, ensembles and Peterborough Opera. Serenata's debut performance was December 2018 at King's College, Cambridge for Maggie's Cancer Centre, raising over £2000 for the charity.

It was a privilege to listen to them when they put on a concert at the church of St Cyriac and St Julitta Swaffham Prior at the beginning of June. The wonderful acoustics in this Church enhanced an already magnificent performance.

Summer's Sweet Music was a celebration of the arrival of summer through music with a wide selection from Weelkes, Gibbons, Mendelssohn, Stanford, German, Elgar, Vaughan Williams, Robert Schumann, John Rutter and Benjamin Britten

Contemporary music was not forgotten with songs from Sting, Michael le Grand George and Ira Gershwin and Irving Berlin

Their rendering of Summertime will live long in this writer's memory

Not content with merely singing they read out a wide variety of poems in between songs from Clare, Wordsworth, Adamkiewicz, Renaldi, Shakespeare, Sandberg, Rossetti and Laurence. This enhanced what was already a memorable afternoon.

The sizeable audience was most appreciative of the efforts of the participants,

**...the turnout from Swaffham Prior villagers was to put it mildly: disappointing. That was their loss ....**

applauding loudly until they got a number of encores not to mention some magnificent strawberry cream cakes! However the turnout from Swaffham Prior villagers was to put it mildly: disappointing. That was their loss and it was good to see an enthusiastic nonagenarian in the shape of the inestimable Betty Prime to the fore.

They will be performing in this area again at St John's College Chapel, Cambridge in December; all proceeds going to charity.

*Robert Mathieson*

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Dear Editors,

### **Macmillan Coffee Morning September 27th, 2019, 10.30am - 12 noon**

I can hardly believe that once again the time is coming for our annual Coffee Morning! However, when the information pack for September 27th came through my letterbox the other day I realised that we had come to that time of year again.

So, as usual, we will have a raffle; a plentiful cake stall, I hope, of home made cakes; a silly game to persuade you to part with **more** of your money; and lots of coffee, biscuits and chat.

If you're a regular I look forward to seeing you once more and if you are a new-comer to the village then please do come. It's a great place to meet a few friendly faces.

Enjoy the rest of the summer and you're all very welcome here at **The Oaks, Manor Farm Court, Swaffham Prior, 10.30 am - 12 noon on Friday 27th September, 2019**

*Ruth Scovil*

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### **From our Reporter at the Parish Council Meeting**

It was a full complement of the current PC, plus 3 in the Public Gallery, with two of the regular attendees absent.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved with a few small changes. Josh was not there, leaving Charlotte Cane an open field to present her ECDC report. She did this with a great deal of zest and enthusiasm. Do read it in the *Crier* – it is good. You will notice that all the key appointments have been taken by women, except for one held by Josh. Charlotte reported on the successful motion to increase the number of affordable homes planned on the MOD site being purchased by ECDC. The motion succeeded by one vote but I gather that three Tory councillors were absent, there was a declaration of “Not Fair”, and another vote is to be taken. Why are councillors, MPs and others allowed to change their minds whereas the people, **that's us**, are told we took a decision three years ago and that we've got to stick with it? The preparation of Neighbourhood Plans is making progress with Sutton having just completed one, and six other parishes are working on theirs. Swaffham Prior has always taken a tough line on this and a long time ago decided it was a waste of time.



**Five planning applications were received...one from Newmarket's July Racecourse. This is a reminder of the huge size of this parish which stretches from there to Upware**

Landbanking came up and Jude read out a long letter from Lucy Frazer, which did not answer the question which had initially been put to her by David, with a follow up by Paul Catlin (ex-clerk). Lucy also enclosed a two page report by Oliver Letwin which also failed to answer the question. Many of the PC had strong views on "landbanking" and Charlotte thought parishes should get together and try to get a change in the law. She would like more people to write to Lucy demanding action and suggested a good solution would be for any developer to be given two years to complete a development otherwise they would have to pay the council tax on all the agreed houses. Of course every year Lucy offers to come and talk to the PC and the village, but always our PC says "Thanks, but No Thanks".

In Open Question Time I asked if the *Crier* could see the Frazer/Letwin letters and quote sections if considered sufficiently interesting, giving the gist of certain parts. I was told this was not possible because the correspondence was "private". I responded that I could not agree because the meeting was public, the letters had been read out in public, and that they were from public representatives. This carried no weight. David also said that he had offered his initial letter to Lucy to the *Crier* and it had not been published (*We can find no trace, and we certainly would have published it had we received it. Eds*) I know nothing about this, and there could well be good reasons because the editors, like all editors, must have to take decisions which may not always please. Obviously he was a bit miffed.

In matters arising, the large sign on the fence of the house at the top of Cage Hill was discussed. The rules had been researched by David and must be restricted to one third of a square metre. The owner of the house was approached, and the PC received what seemed to be quite a brusque reply which made the point that the business was not carried out at the house. In which case it is almost certainly illegal because you should not have a sign promoting a business from a private house. This will be ongoing. "Who is the ECDC 'Signage Enforcer?'" Charlotte was asked. For once she looked baffled - "I don't know".

Five planning applications were received, three with small amendments, one new one for a single storey side extension to the Village Hall, and one for a single storey extension to a maintenance building at the July Racecourse. This is a reminder of the huge size of this parish which stretches from Upware through to the July Racecourse in Newmarket. There used to be a tradition a very long time ago of "beating the bounds" which involved walking round the whole parish to ensure there had been no land grabs. Mark Haworth, when vicar, once revived it accompanied by a few loyal and faithful stalwarts. It was never repeated but a new younger generation may well wish to have a go. An organising volunteer?

All the accounts were passed including the £200 which ECDC charged us for **not** having an election for PC members. A quote of £960 for moving the table tennis

table will appear on the agenda for the next meeting. In Open Question time Michael asked to be reminded of the rules for accepting quotes. It is worth repeating this from time to time because many still remember when it was necessary to obtain three quotes. Steve gave the facts. The need to obtain three quotes was abandoned because it was unworkable and three quotes are now only necessary for “grant money”. Today, if the quote is less than £1,000 you can select the supplier of your choice. More than that and three quotes are necessary. However, if there is a safety issue and the cost is more than £1000 you can make an immediate decision on just one quote.

During Parish Council reports David raised the Community Heat Scheme (as it now known) as he is on the committee. More than ten minutes or so were spent on this as so many had views. As this is going to be with us for a long time, with many meetings and reports, I shall just pick out one question. Steve made the observation that if gas is being phased out why is the Heat Scheme relying on gas. Not so, said David, gas is only being used as a back up. Sounds as if gas is being used, or have I misunderstood?

Jude brought up the suggestion that the PC should have a Facebook account. People were ambivalent about this, while Paul Catling, from the Public Gallery, said he had already been into this, he did not advise it because he wondered about the legality of it and the PC could not enter into any discussion on Facebook, and thought any debate with PC should either be direct or in the *Crier*. Charlotte said that Reach has a Facebook account, but each PC varies so much, and this is from my limited knowledge of Reach, Bulbeck, Lode and our own. It seems as if caution should be exercised especially in the light of Mr Mark Lewinski’s letter of the May *Crier* which shows the upside and the downside of the proposal. Mr Lewinski is a bit miffed that the PC did not respond to his Facebook observation about dead animals on the road. Perhaps he would like them to appoint him “Carcass Tsar”? I think this was a roundabout way of asking whether he could be such a person. Maybe after his differences with the PC he was reluctant to approach them.

The 21<sup>st</sup> June was the longest day of the year and it is all down hill now until we move slowly towards the dark nights of December. But we will have much to keep ourselves amused for the next few weeks as we are entertained by the new PM drama, with the brilliant opening scene of Boris scuffling at night with his new girlfriend. What a curtain raiser that was! The show should be a hit.

*Alastair Everitt*

**Jude brought up the suggestion that the PC should have a Facebook account. Paul Catling said he had already been into this and did not advise it because of legalities. The PC could not enter into any discussion on Facebook, and any debate should either be direct or in the *Crier***

# Julie's recipes for July

Some of our favourites from Greece .....

## Baked feta in a clay pot

1 Block of feta cheese  
Thinly sliced green pepper  
1 small red chilli thinly sliced

½ tomato sliced  
Olive oil  
Dried Oregano

1. Cut Feta in half and place into small clay pot or ceramic dish.
  2. Top with slices of pepper, chilli and a slice of tomato.
  3. Drizzle with Olive oil and sprinkle the oregano on top.
  4. Bake in the oven for 20 mins until cheese is soft and starting to brown at edges.  
Serve hot, Ideally 1 block of feta would make 2 portions for a starter dish.
- 

## Traditional Country salad

3-4 tomatoes  
2 medium sized cucumbers  
1 red onion cut into slices  
5oz black olives  
2 medium green peppers sliced

3-4 tbsp olive oil  
7oz Feta cheese  
Sprinkling of oregano  
Pinch of salt  
Drizzle of vinegar if desired

1. Chop tomatoes and cucumber into cubes, put into bowl.
  2. Add sliced onion, peppers and olives.
  3. Top with wedges of feta, sprinkle with salt and oregano, then drizzle the olive oil all over the salad. Add a dash of vinegar if desired.
- 

## Simple pork Souvalaki

Cubed fillet of pork  
Olive oil

Oregano  
Salt and pepper

1. Cut the pork into cubes, put in bowl with salt, pepper, oregano and oil.
  2. Place the meat onto skewers and grill for 15 mins until brown.
- Could substitute the pork with chicken if preferred. Great served with Pita bread
- 

## Island Mussels

1 kilo mussels  
1 teacup oil  
3 cloves garlic sliced

2 tbsp finely chopped parsley  
1 wine glass Ouzo or white wine  
Salt and pepper

1. Wash the mussels very well. In a pot saute the garlic in oil.
2. Add the mussels, parsley and ouzo or wine. No water and cover the pot tightly.
3. Boil for 10 minutes. Ready to serve hot as an appetizer or main dish.



## Pint of Science Session

Join the Tech-Team in a walk to the Energy Centre and proposed Network Route on Thursday 11th July, 7.30 – 8.30pm.

Please RSVP: [info@heatingswaffhamprior.co.uk](mailto:info@heatingswaffhamprior.co.uk)

## Question Sessions

Thursday 18th July (3pm – 5pm), Village Hall

Wednesday 24th July (8pm – 9pm), Village Hall

Tuesday 30 July (7-8pm), Village Hall (or pub drop-in) TBC

Please RSVP: [info@heatingswaffhamprior.co.uk](mailto:info@heatingswaffhamprior.co.uk)



## Strawberry Teas

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> July

3.00 – 5.00 pm

Adventurers Farm  
Station Road  
One mile from the School

Tickets £5.00/£3.00  
Must be booked in advance  
please

Janet Willmott 743472

Dee Noyes [admin@angleseygroupparishes.co.uk](mailto:admin@angleseygroupparishes.co.uk)

All welcome 😊

Will go ahead whatever the  
weather!

In aid of  
St. Mary's Church  
Swaffham Prior



# **Rosie the Grumpy Cat of Swaffham Prior**

## **A Moral Tale**

Once, there was a very grumpy cat (well, she was elderly) who would not go out and would not use her litter box either. If that was not bad enough for her loyal servants (these are what cats have instead of owners) she made their lives even more of a misery by yowling at them day and night.

So when it came time for their annual fortnight's leave, they constructed a sturdy cat-kennel that she could live in while they were away. Grumpy Cat did not think much to this at all, especially when the wind blew the rain in, and she complained bitterly to all the servants' halls in Swaffham Prior, even appearing on Below Stairs Facebook.

But when her own staff finally returned, what a transformation! Grumpy Cat turned into Happy Cat, who purrs rather than yowls and can't wait to get out and about — there's a moral here somewhere.

*Caroline Matheson*

### **SWAFFHAM PRIOR PARISH COUNCIL**

*have an immediate vacancy for an*

#### **ALLOTMENT PLOT**

Numbered SP-GAP-2 on the plan, see

[www.swaffham-prior.co.uk/pc/notices.html](http://www.swaffham-prior.co.uk/pc/notices.html).

The cost is £5 a year, payable in April.

Applications to the Clerk at [swaffhampriorclerk@gmail.com](mailto:swaffhampriorclerk@gmail.com)

## **BON MOT NUMBER NINETY NINETY**

“There's a big world out there. Where we've got shortages [of workers], obviously we have to fill them. But it doesn't just have to be from Italy.

It could be from Botswana.”

*Annunziata Rees-Mogg (1979 – )*

## Cambridge Open Studios Mini-Guide

Visit local artists this July when they open their studios free to the public. The codes indicating which weekends the artist's will be exhibiting are as follows: Weekend (1) 6/7 July Weekend (2) 13/14 July Weekend (3) 20/21 July Weekend (4) 27/28 July



### **168a Heidi Lichterman - Weaver/artist**

The Old Courthouse, 123 High Street, Bottisham, CB25 9BA - [heidilichterman.co.uk](http://heidilichterman.co.uk)

**Weekends: 2, 3, 4**

### **168b Tony Davison - NEW - Contemporary landscape paintings**

The Old Courthouse, 123 High Street, Bottisham, CB25 9BA - [tdart.blog](http://tdart.blog)

**Weekends: 2, 3, 4**

### **168c Claire Howieson - Contemporary jewellery**

The Old Courthouse, 123 High Street, Bottisham, CB25 9EG - [clairehowieson.com](http://clairehowieson.com)

**Weekends: 2, 3**

### **168d Jeremy Nicholls - Decorative woodwork**

The Old Courthouse, 123 High Street, Bottisham, CB25 9BA - [jeremynicholls.info](http://jeremynicholls.info)

**Weekends: 2, 3**

### **169 Matthew Blakely - Porcelain and wood-fired pots**

9 Abbey Lane, Lode, CB25 9EP - [matthewblakely.co.uk](http://matthewblakely.co.uk)

**Weekends: 2, 3**

### **170 Jamie Sugg - Landscape painting, wildlife drawings**

Downing Farm, Station Road, Swaffham Bulbeck, CB25 0NW - [jamiesugg.co.uk](http://jamiesugg.co.uk)

**Weekends: 2, 3**

### **171 Outside Edge - Six painters in various media**

Church of St Cyriac and St Julitta, High Street, Swaffham Prior, CB25 0LD

**Weekends: 1, 2**

### **172 Prior Arts Group - Textiles, paintings, ceramics and print**

Swaffham Prior Village Hall, High Street, Swaffham Prior, CB25 0JX - [bramblecottage-crafts.co.uk](http://bramblecottage-crafts.co.uk)

**Weekend: 2**

### **173 Prior Arts Group - Textiles, paintings, ceramics and print**

3 Foster Lane, off Rogers Road, Swaffham Prior, CB25 0FA - [www.instagram.com/priorartsgroup](http://www.instagram.com/priorartsgroup)

**Weekend: 3**

### **174 Paul Abbott - Colourful oil paintings and more**

The Mill House, 11 Mill Hill, Swaffham Prior, CB25 0JZ - [www.vividicity.com](http://www.vividicity.com)

**Weekends: 1, 2, 3, 4**

**175 David George - Watercolour and oils**

Windmill Cottage, 34 Mill Hill, Swaffham Prior, CB25 0JZ - drgeorge459@gmail.com

**Weekends: 1, 2, 3, 4**

**176 Ruth E Blundell - Wooden sculptures and paintings**

34 Lower End, Swaffham Prior, Cambridge, CB25 0HT - rutheblundell@hotmail.com

**Weekends: 1, 2, 4**

**177 Annie Neild - Wet felting, hand embroidery**

36 Lower End, Swaffham Prior, CB25 0HT - annie\_neild@yahoo.co.uk

**Weekends: 1, 4**



**The Electoral Services Team  
at East Cambs District Council  
is looking for canvassers to help**

**with the compilation of the 2019 Register of Electors**

We currently have vacancies in the following areas: Bottisham, Chippenham, Kennett, Snailwell, Ashley, Brinkley, Burrough Green, Dullingham, Kirtling, Westley Waterless, Woodditton and Witcham.

The work will be undertaken in two stages:

Hand delivery of forms to all households in stage one (paid at 20p per form), and door knocking non-responders in stage two (paid at 70p per property and uplifted to £1.20 if form completed) plus mileage. Stage 1 is from 25 July through to 9 August and stage 2 is from 3 October through to 31 October. For an application form and an informal chat regarding the posts please contact [elections@eastcambs.gov.uk](mailto:elections@eastcambs.gov.uk).



Welcome once again dear readers to a new edition of ‘OutontheWildSide’ or OOTWS (sounds like an Owl I like to think). For this new great Summer month of July, I’ve decided to feature the Buzzard or East Anglian Buzzard, being one of the ‘Raptors’—official name for birds of prey. The reason it has our regional attachment is because according to the RSPB (or at least from my 1970’s copy) these beautifully common birds of prey were most numerous here within the original homeland of the East Angles.

Its Latin name is ‘*Buteo buteo*’ and I have been inspired to write about this bird by my best friend, so thanks to him. As readers will know, in the past I have enjoyed featuring the more common of our bird species and looking into what makes them thrive and their peculiarities. Our “East Anglian” Buzzard (actually, its range covers much of Britain) is *the* most widespread bird of prey in our sceptred isles.

They are frequently seen from the car, and we have often seen them flying high above the road between Burwell and Exning, exhibiting a wonderful aerial display as they try to impress females and warn off rivals. They rise and drop rapidly, in a manoeuvre known as the “rollercoaster”, and complete loop-the-loops. Apparently, the degree of danger in the aerobatics depends on how easy or difficult the female is to impress, and some of them get dangerously near the ground when they’re doing the rollercoaster.

I have got it confused with eagles, and indeed it is sometimes known as the “tourist eagle” because people commonly make the same mistake. In terms of size, Buzzards and Hawks are the most abundant Raptors in the U.K, but not the biggest.

The East Anglian Buzzard (or EAB for short) has a wingspan of **4ft 6 inches** (about 1.2 metres for the metrically-minded) and is considered medium sized in their greater family of Kites, Hawks and Eagles (the Golden Eagle has a wingspan of 6 foot or more), with a height around half a meter.

There is a difference in the weights between the two sexes of the EAB. The females come in between 700-1,300g are larger and heavier than the males (550-1,000g) and have bigger talons and beaks. Across the British Isles, there are roughly between 57,000 to 79,000 breeding pairs which is a distinctly healthy population, considering they were once hunted to the brink of extinction.

In the early 1900s, they were killed off by gamekeepers frightened they would destroy their pheasants and grouse and at one time were as few as 1,000 breeding pairs in the UK. Then in the 50's when myxomatosis killed an estimated than 99% of the country's rabbits (buzzard food supply) and organochlorine pesticides affected their reproductive capacity, they were down to about 10,000 pairs. But as agricultural practices have altered, they have made an awe-inspiring comeback.

Females lay a clutch of 2-4 white eggs around Mid-April and incubation is about 34 days for each successive egg to hatch. The young fledge when they are 50-55 days old, and stay with their parents for 6-8 weeks after fledging. In terms of diet, Buzzards principally eat small rodents, but also take birds, reptiles, amphibians, larger insects and earthworms. They actively predate anything up to half a kilo, and also search for carrion (dead meat), such as road kill, the reason we see them hovering over roads and motorways.

Buzzards are also highly territorial; I won't criticise them for that. Another unique characteristic is that they have 'mewing' sounds, similar to a cat. So perhaps, if roaming East Cambs, you happen to hear a cat from 20m above you, be assured, it's not, but rather Mr. or Mrs. Buzzard. Fun fact: if you're walking across Swaffham Prior Heath and or Devil's Dyke and are carrying binoculars, point them towards the pylons above. Apparently Buzzards enjoy perching on the lines or metal struts anyhow—so they are electricity inclined birds, how eccentric.

Many Buzzards don't reach maturity (and so the ability to reproduce) but for those that do, their average life span consists of around eight years. The oldest wild buzzard known was 25 years and 4 months old.

Whoosh! Our EAB's feathers range in colouration from black and brown to white and it's a gorgeous combination, especially against the backdrop of a blue sky. Airborne, they make a 'V' shape with their tail feathers looking much like a scallop. They're versatile in where they embrace living—their abodes could be from the following variety of East Anglian habitats; woodlands, farmland, fen, heathland, grassland or more remotely in other parts of Britain... on uplands (moors). So not fussy, quite impressive! So, here's celebrating the Buzzards in our field of vision.

**Special thanks to Country Life magazine and once again, the RSPB**

***By Jorge Xico Monteiro***

**..if, roaming East Cambs, you happen to hear a cat from 20m above you, be assured, it's not...**

## Village Feast 2019

How lucky were we to have fantastic weather for the second year running.

The limited choice of weekend, coinciding with the bank holiday caused the hall committee a few early concerns. There was no need to worry, the support and attendance was phenomenal!

No bouncy castle this year but the headline attraction of circus skills and Punch and Judy was a huge success.

In addition to the usual stalls, there were numerous games and competitions for children.

### The competition winners were as follows:

#### **The Leaflet quiz:**

Joint winners: Robert Nunn, Caroline and James Matheson and the occupants of 26 High Street.

#### **Formula One Challenge:**

Leah Swift, for the third year running.

#### **Colouring Competition:**

Lydia Douglas and Breeze Churchman.

#### **Football Competition:**

Wylie Mead.

#### **Gurning Competition:**

The Gurning Competition winner are to be chosen based on your votes. Send the name of your choice to the Crier Editor by email to **editors@swaffhamp-crier.co.uk**

#### **Egg Throwing Competition:**

Michael Mead and Wylie Mead did eggceptionally well to fight off the stiff competition and all had a cracking time. Their names will be engraved on the winners plaque displayed in the village hall.

The Village Hall Management Committee would like to thank all who attended and supported by helping and providing donations for the stalls.



Thanks also go to Steve and Michelle from the Red Lion for their support and for continuing the fun with a barbecue and music over the weekend.

Planning has started for next year and we look forward to seeing you there.



## 2019 Feast Gurning Competition

This year, everyone has 6 votes to allocate as they like. Send them to [editors@swaffham-crier.co.uk](mailto:editors@swaffham-crier.co.uk) for the August Crier. Or vote on Facebook.











## *The 2019 Village Feast*

## News from Wicken Fen

We've recently had a pair of common cranes breed successfully at Wicken Fen for the first time in over 100 years, in fact we suspect that cranes have not bred here since the time of Henry VIII. This is exciting not only because cranes are on the amber species list, but also because it shows that the diverse habitats developing at Wicken Fen are attracting new and varied species. Once the young crane starts to explore the reserve, it is hoped that visitors will be able to spot the new crane family in the near future.

We're looking forward to sunny, warm days when everyone will be enjoying the summer buzz throughout the reserve. Enjoy the gentle hum of dragonflies, bees and other insects, and the jewel-like flashes of colour as butterflies flutter past. We'll be joining with the British Dragonfly Society for the annual **Dragonfly Day** on Sunday 21 July. Join us for dragonfly walks at 11am and 2pm, and drop in for dragonfly craft activities, pond dipping, and larvae feeding.

Our programme of adult events continues: local printmaker Judith Handley returns for her second **Introduction to Lino Printing** workshop on Saturday 20 July 10:00-16:00, and our writer in residence Guinevere Glasfurd completes her series of workshops with **Telling the Story of Wicken Fen** on Saturday 27 July 10:00-16:30; a full day creative, non-fiction writing workshop.

Our **Mucky Pups: Summer Safaris** for under 5s will be held on Wednesday 10 and Thursday 11 July 10:15-11:45, and in addition to the normal outdoor fun, stories and crafts we'll be decorating scones as animals as part of our **Sconeathon** 8- 14 July. We'll be asking you to vote for your favourite scone, and serving it for you to enjoy in the Docky Hut Café, as well as other scone related activities.

Don't forget that we'll have lots of fun family activities on offer over the summer holidays, starting with **Den Building** on 29 July. Check out the 'What's On' section of our website for all the details: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wicken-fen](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wicken-fen)



Wicken Cranes — first to breed here since Henry VIII's reign?

**Advance booking is essential for all events at Wicken Fen. Full details on our website**

## Recycling Rinse

Please remember to give your bottles and tins a quick rinse under the tap before putting them into your bin. We don't want them to contaminate the lorry and be rejected when they arrive at the Materials Recycling Facility in Waterbeach. The facility can process mixed recyclable materials from households using Eleven different types of equipment to sort the materials including suction systems, magnets and a glass breaker.

Once separated, the different items can then be baled up on site and sent off for recycling.

The material from the green lidded bins is presented for composting also at the Waterbeach Waste Management Park.

For more information please contact the East Cambs Street Scene Team 01353 665555 Customer [CustomerServiceTeam@eastcambs.gov.uk](mailto:CustomerServiceTeam@eastcambs.gov.uk).

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## Would you like to receive 45p per mile by volunteering?

It would help us provide transport for people who are unable to use conventional public transport to attend hospital, dental appointments, visit loved ones, etc.

### Do you:

- ✓ have access to a roadworthy car?
- ✓ like helping people?
- ✓ have a day to spare each week?
- ✓ hold a full driving clean licence?
- ✓ Willing to undertake an enhanced DBS (CRB), check.

For more information please  
**Call Granville on 01353 666166**

**Or**

**Email: [granville@vcaec.org.uk](mailto:granville@vcaec.org.uk)**

**or**

**visit: [www.vcaec.org.uk](http://www.vcaec.org.uk)**

**or**

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**You can also follow us on Twitter or Facebook**



## Mothers' Union

### Who wrote the Hymns?

Our guest speaker in May was Rev'd Professor Gina Radford. She lead us through a fun question and answer session on hymns and their writers. Many people enjoy singing hymns whether it is traditional, gospel or modern. They have very personal meanings and memories for each individual, often marking important events during our lives. However, we rarely look at when and by whom they were written. This was very enlightening, and enhanced our knowledge on the writers' background.

The oldest hymn ever written in 200AD was by Clement of Alexandria 150-215. He was a Christian theologian who taught at the Catechetical School of *Alexandria*. Probably the first hymn written in modern English which begins "Glory to Thee, my God, this night, /For all the blessings of the light; / Keep me, O keep me, King of kings, / Beneath Thine own almighty wings" was given to us by Thomas Ken (1637-1711). He was an Anglican Bishop, hymn writer and Royal Chaplain to Charles II of England.

The hymn we sang during our meeting worship, "All things bright and beautiful", was written by Mrs C. F. Alexander 1818-95, born in Dublin. Words from the hymn were used for the title of television programme 'All Creatures Great and Small'. This series followed the stories of Yorkshire vet James Herriot.

John Newton, Clergyman and Abolitionist 1725-1807 wrote the popular hymn Amazing Grace published in 1779. The words he used for this were a reflection of his personal experience.

Charles Wesley is said to have written 6,500 hymns. These include the well-loved hymns "Love Divine, all loves excelling", "Rejoice the Lord is King" and "Jesu, Lover of my soul".

American hymn writer Fanny Crosby 1820 -1915 wrote more than 9,000 hymns. Fanny was blind and only had sight for the first six weeks of her life. Two of her best known hymns are "Blessed Assurance" and "To God be the Glory".

Henry Francis Lyte 1793-1847 wrote "Abide with me" in 1847. This was set to music whilst he lay dying. Today the hymn is usually sung to the more modern tune 'Eventide' written by William Henry Monk.

In 1855, while staying in Ontario, Joseph M Scriven received news from Ireland of his mother being terribly ill. He wrote a poem to comfort his mother called "Pray Without Ceasing". It was later set to music and renamed becoming the hymn "What a Friend we have in Jesus".

Famous poet John Milton 1608-74 is the youngest hymn writer. He wrote "Let us

**Charles Wesley  
is said to have  
written 6,500  
hymns....  
(that's one  
hymn a day for 20  
years!)**



with a gladsome mind” at the age of 15 as a paraphrase to Psalm 136.

At the end of her talk the branch presented Gina with a card and small keepsake to wish her well on her move to a new parish in Devon.

Our meetings usually take place on the third Thursday of the month in Lode Chapel at 2.30pm. In July our speaker will be a volunteer of the Service by Emergency Response Volunteers (SERV) Suffolk & Cambridgeshire. (A charity organisation transporting blood, blood products, breast milk, patient samples 24 hours a day, 365 days a year). You are most welcome to come and join us.

*Ann Langran*

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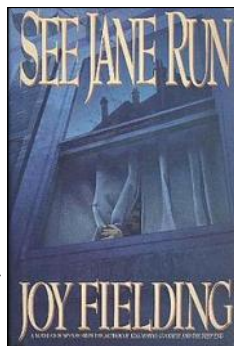
## The Reading Group Reads....

### See Jane Run

#### But not necessarily by Joy Fielding...

.For one member, it was a case of the right book but the wrong author and this lead to some interesting discussions before the error was discovered!

See Jane Run by *Joy Fielding* was an interesting psychological thriller in which the heroine suddenly discovers herself standing on a street corner with a view to buying milk and eggs, but with no idea who she is or how she got there. When she turns out to be the wife of a celebrated paediatrician, she returns with him to her old life. Things don't seem right, but who is she to say, she can't remember a thing, and this is not helped by her husband's insistence that she must take her "prescribed medication". Jane's roller-coaster battle to discover the truth while suffering under the fog of psychiatric drugs (which made her drool) and the stigma of mental incapacity—*hysterical* amnesia—is the central theme of the book.



The group only thought it was a page-turner in the sense of rather encouraging them to turn several pages at once (it was overly drawn out in places) but quite enjoyed it and were intrigued by the light it shone on the predicament of mental hospital patients.

Alternatively, See Jane Run by *Hannah Jayne* is classed as Young Adult Fiction and had mixed reviews, including “Either I was bored, or I was annoyed.” Our member bravely plugged on with it, perhaps even seeming to quite enjoy it.... There will be NO Book Club in August, and the next meeting will be on Wednesday 7 September, “Rules of Civility” by **Amor Towles** (he of “Gentleman in Moscow”), 8pm at Kent House. Do join us!

*Caroline Matheson*  
**Newmarket 744008**

## Embrace the summer (or at least dream of it) with some alfresco eating with produce from our shop

Summer is here, well it's meant to be and the Co workers have been busy harvesting crops to stock up our veg shed. We have bags of Charlotte or Maris Piper potatoes that would make a tasty potato salad or if you fancy something a bit more green on the side we have spinach, kale and mixed leaf salad, plus some mouth-watering globe artichokes. If you are looking for something sweeter on your pallet we have rhubarb that could be made into some yummy desserts or equally scrumptious served on its own. We update our website with shop stock on a regular basis, [take a look at what's in the farm shop at Snakehall Farm](#).

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### A parody of an Oscar Wilde verse:-

The wild bee reels from bough to bough.  
In his apparently aimless wandering.  
If you're very quiet you can hear him sing.  
As drunk on nectar as any old how  
Not giving a care for any small thing  
But he knows best; of that I trow;  
He has amazing skills, you must allow.

*Ophir*





EAST  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

## From our District Councillors Charlotte Cane & John Trapp

May has been busy with induction meetings at the District Council and starting to get to know the Parish Councils in Bottisham ward.

The Annual Council Meeting on Thursday 30 May 2019 largely decided and noted Council Appointments. There was one policy motion and adoption of a Neighbourhood Plan. We have both been appointed to the Finance & Assets Committee and John has been appointed to the Planning Committee. The Planning Committee meets once a month and visits all the sites under consideration in the morning. They then meet to discuss and decide each application in the afternoon. John's first meeting was on 12<sup>th</sup> June and didn't finish until 6.30pm, which he was told was not unusual.



The policy motion, which was seconded by Charlotte, committed the Council to revisit its plans for the MOD site which it is buying in Ely. Before the motion the Council was going to sell all but 15 of the 92 properties on the open market. The 15 were to be sold as affordable shared ownership properties, with none available for rent. The motion asks the Council to allocate at least 46 of the houses as affordable, with a significant proportion of those available for affordable rent. There are 710 applicants on the waiting list for social housing and the Council has a target of 130 new affordable homes each year – a target it has not met since 2007/8. These 46 affordable homes would set us on track to meet that target in 2019/20 and offer homes to some of the 710 applicants on the waiting list.

Officers have been working on figures for the various options and there will be a special Council meeting on 19 June to agree what number of affordable houses could be delivered and how many of these could be for rent. The proposal will then be put to the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA). The reason they are involved, is because the Government funding for affordable housing was given to the CPCA rather than to District Councils. We hope the CPCA will be willing to provide grant funding to allow East Cambs to deliver more affordable houses on the scheme.

The Sutton Neighbourhood Plan was adopted as part of the District's Development Plan. This means that all planning applications in the Sutton Area will be assessed against their Plan. They are only the second Parish in the District to have a Neighbourhood Plan, with 6 other Parishes working on their plans. There were calls for the District to give more encouragement and support to Parishes to develop their own Neighbourhood Plan.

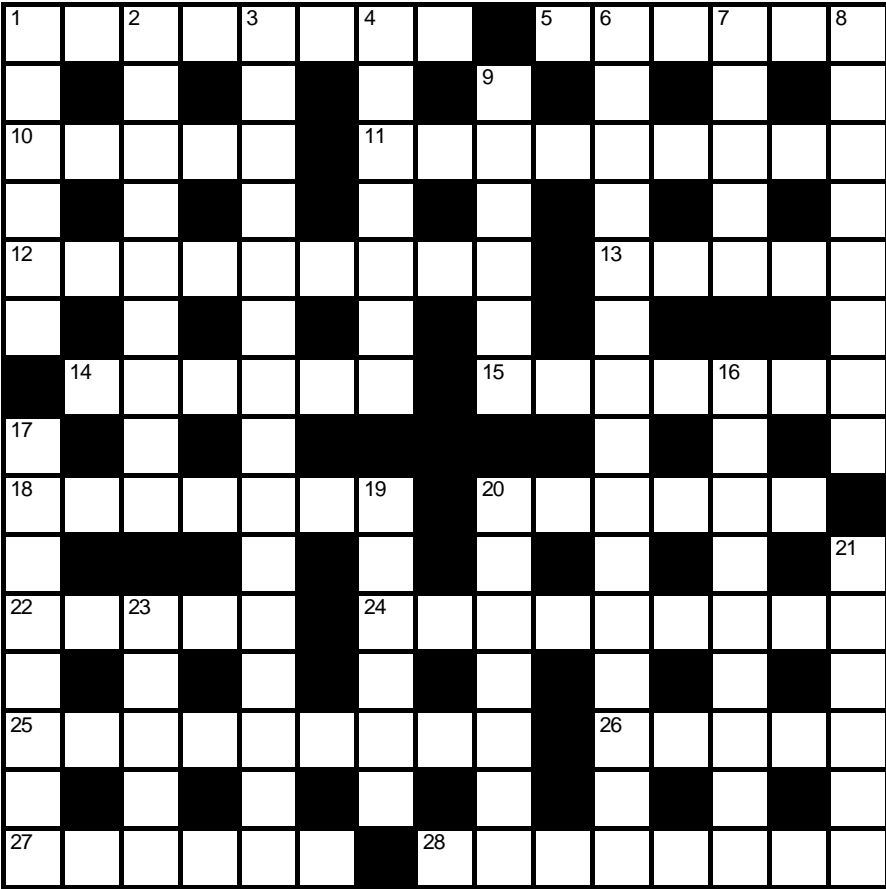
Our next District Councillors' Surgery is on Monday 22 July at 6.30-7.45 pm at the Memorial Hall Brinkley, followed by a 'Meet your Councillors' at 8.00pm in the Red Lion, Brinkley. Following that, we will hold a Surgery on Thursday 22 August at 6.30-7.45 pm in the Village Hall Swaffham Prior, followed by a 'Meet your Councillors' at 8.00pm in the Red Lion, Swaffham Prior.

***Charlotte Cane & John Trapp, June 2019***

Crossword Number 166

Compiled by NIBOR

This month’s puzzle is a simple cryptic crossword. Send your answers to the editors by 18th July 2019. The first correct solution out of the hat will win a £20 meal voucher for the Red Lion—see the pub manager for full details.



Name:.....

Address:.....

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



## Across

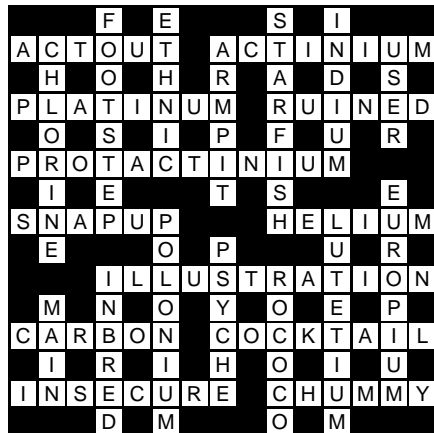
- 1 Left international organisation before wages were cut (8)
- 5 Start searching churches or roman catholic houses for fire (6)
- 10 Fight when supporter and centre forward trainee meet (5)
- 11 A smug nun I upset was boring (9)
- 12 Start hearing little elephants in lofts? High jump maybe (9)
- 13 Valley in which doctor follows sound of doves (5)
- 14 Dress for first course with reluctant sweetheart (6)
- 15 Suffocate parent on 1st of September (7)
- 18 Nevertheless we hover all over the place (7)
- 20 Regular small drink leads to empty day (6)
- 22 Article about one female bandit (5)
- 24 Teenage girl finds teenage boy on the fourth of July (5,4)
- 25 Possession of proprietor's joint (9)
- 26 Should, we hear, be anything at all (5)
- 27 Most attractive result found in organic establishment (6)
- 28 Batchelor ate a drug cocktail (8)

## Down

- 1 Optimistic sort of 19 (6)
- 2 Low bat he'd used to deliver a coup de grâce (9)
- 3 A prayer I've found with note on heraldry for agricultural co-operative (10,5)
- 4 Sloppy deregulations lack slogan but are academic (7)

- 6 Established as a religious denomination (6,2,7)
- 7 Greek letter around in Perissodactyl (5)
- 8 Noble, from a mountainous region? (8)
- 9 Agitated socialists toil away to get blackcurrant drink (6)
- 16 Garden hay used to produce garden shrub (9)
- 17 Open up? No, it's closed! (8)
- 19 Beat found initially in really hip youths taping heavy metal (6)
- 20 Demolish meal including first course (7)
- 21 Try elm hybrid for aromatic shrub (6)
- 23 Type of architecture found in fashion icehouses (5)

## Solution to crossword no. 165



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

# Notes from the Parish Council meeting – 13<sup>th</sup> June 2019

Mr John Covill (chair) chaired the meeting with 7 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 and requests for dispensations:** Two declarations of interest noted.

**Reports:** There was no CCC report. For the ECDC, Councillor Charlotte Cane reported. She recommended that villages get involved with the Combined Authorities Transport Plan, in order to influence public transport policy and provision of the future.

**Matters arising from previous minutes (for information only):** Cage Hill signage – David Greenfield outlined the issue, discussion and actions so far.

Financial review – Steve Kent-Phillips stated that it is now signed and filed.

Bonfire near the Scout hut - Steve Kent-Phillips reported that the starter of the bonfire had been admonished.

## **Correspondence for consideration/circulation:**

Able community care – free “no unexpected callers” stickers. Noted

Applying for local highway improvement funding – CCC. Noted.

Open day at Prospect’s Trust. Noted.

**Additional correspondence:** Lucy Fraser MP– response to letter from the PC regarding land-banking. The Clerk read out this letter and the enclosed response from Kit Malthouse, Housing Minister. David Greenfield outlined the letter sent by the PC to which this correspondence replied and pointed out that the response did not tackle the question of land-banking, missing the point of the original correspondence. Peter Hart proposed that David Greenfield write a further response to Lucy Fraser MP, reiterating the question of land-banking

## **Consideration of planning applications received:**

a) 19/00642/FUL Byes Farm Cottage, 6 Heath Road: Proposed garden room – previously approved ref 18/01206/FUL. No objections or comments.

b) 19/00651/FUL Village Hall: Construction of a single-storey side extension and additional storage. AD abstained. No objections. It was agreed that the PC would support this application.

c) 19/00622/VAR 6 Cage Hill: To vary condition 1 (approved plans) of previously approved 18/00850/FUL for 2 storey side and rear extension and alterations. No objections providing the wall is put back as it was, using the original materials as recommended by the planning officer.

d) 19/00683/LBC Old Barn House, 25 High Street: Replacement of concrete floor within the “kid’s den” with insulated lime floor and the internal lining of the walls to the “kids’ bed” and “bedroom 3” with a breathable wood board. No objections or comments.

e) 19/00444/FUL The July Racecourse, Newmarket: Single storey side extension to maintenance building – approved.

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

**Signage on Cage Hill:** There was an outline of the discussion and actions so far. The matter is now in the hands of the ECDC planning enforcement section.

**Moving the table tennis table:** Steve Kent-Phillips has obtained a quote from Martin Mead to make a new concrete base and move the table to it and is to obtain others. The matter to be discussed further at the next meeting.

**The Pound:** The Pound needs the gutters clearing and weeding. Steve Kent Phillips to get quotes for the job. It was agreed that if the quote is less than £100.00, to go ahead.

**Clerk's report:** Ways in which the PC would be able to pay by BACs, online and directly for smaller purchase (e.g. stamps) were suggested and discussed.

**PC emails** – the possibility of having an official chair's email was discussed. The PC felt happy with the current arrangements.

**Facebook Presence** – the clerk suggested the PC could have a social media presence to publicise e.g. the annual village assembly – no debate or interaction would take place; it would be purely to disseminate public information. The PC felt that there should be a social media policy in place before anything was set up – Clerk to get copy of Reach PC's social media policy for an example. It was agreed to discuss this further at the next meeting.

**Village Noticeboard** – the clerk requested a box or step in front of the village noticeboard to make it easier to pin up information. Clerk to source something **suitable**.

**Crier Notes** – the Crier have requested monthly access to the minutes of the meetings for publication – due to the timing of publication, these would have to be from unapproved minutes. The PC were happy for this to take place – the clerk to edit the minutes down.

#### **Parish Councillors' reports:**

Paul Latchford reported that there had been interest shown in plot 2 of the allotments, but it had been rejected after it had been viewed. He suggested that at present it looks like too much work to take on.

Sandra Gynn stated that more clearing up was needed in the cemetery – Steve Kent-Phillips to look into this.

Peter Hart noted that the footpaths in the village are becoming overgrown in places – the clerk to write a polite letter for the Crier asking residents to cut back plants where they obstruct footpaths.

David Greenfield reported that he and the clerk had attended the Community Land Trust (CLT) annual general meeting. The renewal of tenancy was discussed and timelines put in place for the actions needed for this. The heating scheme now has a separate board, but David Greenfield is attending meetings. The scheme is felt to be progressing and is currently producing and distributing leaflets to answer frequently asked questions.

Alan Durrant said that the Village Hall had declined the CLT's offer of a planter and the email concerning this is to be forwarded to the clerk to see if the village could accommodate it elsewhere – potentially in the play area.

#### **Open question time:**

It was noted that Janet Hall provides up-to-date information about the CLT heating scheme.

Alastair Everitt asked what the guidelines are for the PC getting quotes for jobs and the amount below which only one quote is needed. Steve Kent-Phillips explained:

To spend grant money, 3 quotes are needed

For work costing under £1000.00, the PC can choose to use a preferred supplier, of which the PC have several, but they can choose to get quotations from other companies and go with someone else.

On matters of safety (e.g. play area equipment) the clerk and chair can authorise immediate action.

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

**The next Parish Council meeting will be on Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> July 2019 starting at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. All are welcome to attend.**

*Jude Griffiths – Clerk to the Parish Council. Tel 745 106.  
Email swaffhampriorclerk@gmail.com*

Unfortunately Rev. Alan is recovering from an operation at the moment. He will be continuing his series on Love from 1 Corinthians 13 in the next issue. In the meantime here is one of my favourite little poems on the subject – it is called ‘**Outwitted**’ and it’s by [Edwin Markham](#) (1852-1940):

He drew a circle that shut me out—  
 Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.  
 But Love and I had the wit to win:  
 We drew a circle that took him in!

That is our aim at RENEW Church, to draw a circle that takes people in. Please come, we’d love to see you! The times of our Sunday worship services are shown below. *Peter Wells.*

### **RENEW Services for July and August 2019**

*Morning worship at Bottisham Primary School will continue on Sundays as usual through July and August. Croissants and drinks are available from 10.10 am. The services begin at 10.30 am. Everyone is welcome. We have activity groups for children and young people*

*For more information about any of the activities of RENEW Church please contact:*

*Rev. Alan Brand on C.812558. Email: [alan.brand@renewchurch.org.uk](mailto:alan.brand@renewchurch.org.uk)*

*Or visit our website at [www.renewchurch.org.uk](http://www.renewchurch.org.uk)*

## **Services in the Anglesey Benefice, July 2019**

Wednesday 3 July	8pm	“C by C” ( Short candlelit meditative service), <b>Bottisham</b>
Sunday 7 July	8am	Holy Communion (BCP,) <b>Swaffham Bulbeck</b>
	9.30am	Morning Service, <b>Swaffham Bulbeck</b>
	9.30am	Village Worship, <b>Quy Village Hall</b>
	11am	Holy Communion (CW1), <b>Bottisham</b>
Sunday 14 July	9.30am	Holy Communion (CW1), <b>Swaffham Bulbeck</b>
	11am	Family Holy Communion, <b>Lode</b>
Sunday 21 July	8am	Holy Communion (BCP,) <b>Bottisham</b>
	9.30am	Holy Communion (CW1), <b>Quy</b>
	11am	Family Service, <b>Swaffham Prior</b>
Sunday 28 July	9.30am	Children’s Church, <b>Lode</b>
	11am	Holy Communion (CW1T), <b>Swaffham Prior</b>

**You are welcome to attend services anywhere in the benefice.**

# FREecycle



If you have any offers or wants, please contact me by the 14<sup>th</sup> of each month by phone (01223 813362/07980 423210), e-mail ([junthompson44@gmail.com](mailto:junthompson44@gmail.com)) 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 1<sup>st</sup> of the month to make it a little fairer.

## Offers

1 tonne coal bunker, suitable as log store. Andrew 01638 741018
Approximately 4 litres of rug doctor carpet cleaner. Karen 01223 812163
Computer / overnight bag (Black fabric with carrying handle, main compartment and other smaller compartments). Maggie 01223 778928
Two mattresses for the child futon bed size 140x70; Ikea Patrull stove guard (protection for toddlers); A large children swimming pool with dolphins, a slide and a shower in a shape of a sunflower (If anyone would like to see pictures of the swimming pool, please email me at <a href="mailto:luisa1935@btinternet.com">luisa1935@btinternet.com</a> ). Luisa 01223 813793
Little Tikes plastic play house - can be easily flat-packed. Amy 07795 975075 (see picture)
Set of 6 pale grey mothercare cot bumpers. Sue, 01638 742559

## Wanted

Wire hanging baskets. Fibre (not plastic!) wall plugs (rawlplugs), sizes no. 8 or no. 10. Bob or Nicky, 01223 813592

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. (For an idea of what George is gathering this for – please see <http://georgetrapp.co.uk/georgetrapplamps.html>)



**This is My Theatre productions**

## **Romeo and Juliet**

**St Cyriac and St Julitta, 25<sup>th</sup> June**

In late June, Shakespeare came to Swaffham Prior in just the way the Lord Chamberlain's Men might have done four hundred years ago to keep up the cash flow when the plague closed the theatres in London – as an itinerant band of players – the sort that rock up at Elsinore to give Hamlet his chance to catch the conscience of the King.

*This is My Theatre*, whose Artistic Director is Susan Slator, are a group of recent Drama School graduates committed to taking theatre on the road and performing in the sorts of spaces that would have been familiar to strolling players four centuries ago. In partnership with the Churches Conservation Trust they have brought a varied programme to many of the Trust's Churches over the summer and thus it was that the flagstones of St Cyriac and St Julitta became the cobbled streets of 16<sup>th</sup> century Verona for an evening, and, but for the temperature, sufficiently convincing in the role to allow us to suspend our disbelief.

A simple multi-level platform did duty as Juliet's balcony, bed and tomb as well as the Verona fountain against which the dying Mercutio, in the Zeffirelli film we've all seen, pronounces a plague on both houses, whilst simple, battery-powered floodlights uplighting St Cyriac's pillars and gothic arches created a space no more and no less sophisticated than might have greeted many a touring company four centuries back.

*Romeo and Juliet* is a young people's play; fuelled by testosterone, youthful hot-headedness and romantic idealism crashing against the rocks of middle-aged cynicism and expediency and as the two principals, Harry Boaz and Hazel Caulfield looked and sounded absolutely right in the roles. Mercifully, they were the only two not doubling, tripling or even quadrupling parts as this talented company set about adapting a *dramatis personae* of 21 for a company of 6 and trimming *the two hours' traffic of our stage* to ninety minutes.

The result was dramatic development at warp speed and a challenge for the con-

centration of anyone unfamiliar with the plot. Simon Stallard's Friar Lawrence had the poise, gravitas and resonant voice to carry off not only his role as chief paver-of-the-road-to-hell-with-good-intentions, but to take on unacknowledged aspects and lines of the role of the Prince, the figure of stable but remote authority in feuding Ve-



rona, to play a kind of composite ringmaster-figure.

Mercutio, a kinsman of Romeo's is one of the chief sources of youthful testosterone, here played by George Turner, doubling, with a swift change of costume, as Juliet's father, old Capulet. Turner's ability to clearly differentiate the two extremely different roles, by voice, posture and manner was as impressive as the sensitivity of his verse speaking and the precision and clarity of his diction. He perhaps managed the church's acoustics - extremely difficult for a speaking voice, especially when raised - better than anyone. Matt Tweddle, as Mercutio's Nemesis, Tybalt, had the right strut and swagger for that role but perhaps retained too much of it in his doubling as Paris, who came across as a less than likeable bullying accomplice of old Capulet in the abuse of Juliet, rather than the ineffectual and almost-overlooked victim of collateral damage that the play suggests.

Nonetheless, his two fatal fight scenes as Tybalt, first with Mercutio and then Romeo, which provide the spring of the tragedy, were well-choreographed and full-blooded dramatic highlights around which the production turned.

Anyone familiar with the Elizabethan series of *Blackadder* and aware that the character of "Nursie" was a satirical lift from this play would have been thoroughly confused to find Ethan Taylor in the role of Nurse. Initially, this was quite a challenge to my capacity to suspend my disbelief, but it is a tribute to Taylor's stage presence, clarity of verse speaking and utter conviction in the role - wisely, he suppressed almost entirely the comic aspects of the character, which are pretty tiresome in any case - that he not only won me round, but produced a performance that was genuinely moving in contributing his well-intentioned share of the paving stones to hell.

A major feature of this production was the music: almost exclusively *a capella*, and produced entirely by the cast, a sonorous blend of plainchant, Gaelic folksong and Latin polyphony created a haunting background to the action that for me was one of the highlights of the evening.

However challenging the acoustics for the speaking voice, they are a gift to singers, as the cast plainly recognised. When I returned to the Church to lock up, expecting *This is my Theatre* to be long gone, they were still there, recording an ethereally beautiful Gaelic chant.

They have promised to return next year. If you missed their first visit to Swaffham Prior, don't miss their next.

**However  
challenging [St  
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ethereally  
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chant.....**

**Andrew Grant**

## Dates for Your Diary July 2019

Sat	6	Open Studios (all weekend) [10]
Thu	11	PC Meeting, 7.30pm VH [27] Heating Swaffham Prior, Walk to Energy Centre, 7.30-8.30pm [8]
Fri	12	Mobile Library, 3.10 pm-3.35pm, Village School
Mon	15	WI, Jonathan Cook, Fuller's Mill, 7.30pm
Thu	18	Mothers' Union, 2.30pm Lode Chapel Heating Swaffham Prior, 3-5pm, VH [8]
Sat	20	<b>Crier Copy Deadline</b> Open Studios (all weekend) [10]
Sun	21	Strawberry Teas [8]
Wed	24	Heating Swaffham Prior, 8-9pm, VH [8]
Sat	27	Open Studios (all weekend) [10]
Tues	30	Heating Swaffham Prior, 8-9pm, VH [8]

*Numbers in square brackets indicate page number of an accompanying article*

Club	Contact	Tel.	Date	Time	Place
FOSPS			2 <sup>nd</sup> Mon of Term	8pm	Village School
Beavers, Cubs and Scouts	Tim Doe	01223 861083	Variable		
Reading Group	Brenda Wilson	743937	1 <sup>st</sup> Weds of month	8:00pm	(See Crier)
Village Gardeners	Margaret Joyce	744390	3 <sup>rd</sup> Tues of month	8:00pm	Village Hall
WI	Pat Cook	742224	3 <sup>rd</sup> Mon of month	7.30 pm	Village Hall