

# Dersingham Village Voice

Issue No 14



February 2002



## Old Views of Dersingham

We are giving a new look to the front cover with an old photograph of the Crossroads which you will all recognise. This picture was taken before the traffic lights were installed. This is now of course a very busy crossing.

We hope to feature an interesting picture in every issue for a while and if you possess a favourite scene that you would like to appear on the front cover please send it or bring it along to the Parish Council Office, Police Station, Manor Road, or drop it in to Teresa Southam at Plot 4a Mountbatten Road.

Time has flown and we are in February again. So we must now look forward to the spring when the snowdrops will arrive. The traditional Mart will once again take place in Lynn and Valentine's Day will come and go. Don't forget the cards and roses for your loved ones!

This year, as always, will see a number of village activities including the Queen's Golden Jubilee celebration for the village on Monday 3 June. This being a Bank Holiday means that this special event will attract a huge crowd which will be ample reward for the time and effort being invested by our group of hard-working volunteers. A few details to whet your appetite appear in this newsletter with more information to follow next time. Meanwhile place this date in your diary.

Other dates to note are: Open Day 6 April, Concert by the Gamebirds at St Nicholas on 19 April. Also note the listed dates of the Parish Council meetings.

Copy for inclusion in the April issue of Village Voice should reach me by 20 March. All contributions are welcomed and should be addressed to the Editor, c/o Parish Council Office, Police Station, Manor Road (tel:541465) or you can drop them in to me at Plot 4A Mountbatten Road.

*Teresa Southam, Editor*

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Dr Andrew Fielding  
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**Tel: 01485 540520**

## Parish Council News

*All meetings of the Parish Council are open to the public. The full meetings begin at 7.15 pm and are preceded and terminated by a 15-minute session for parishioners to raise any matters. The next meeting will take place on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> February, at the First School, and thereafter on the last Monday of each month*

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### *Travel to School*

The School Plan Travel Officer is arranging a meeting with representatives of the Parish Council and both village schools to discuss ways to make journeys easier and safer.

### *Notice Board*

A new village notice board is under construction and will be located in the grassed area opposite Budgens. This will be a more prominent location than the current position at the library.

### *East Anglia Air Ambulance*

It was agreed to make an annual grant of £100 to the Air Ambulance.

### *The Precept for 2002/3*

The Precept figure has been set at £42,950. This represents a figure of £24.67 per household for the year.

### *Highway Matters*

The issues regarding the recent footway at Centre Crescent have been considered and the site inspected. Remedial work is to be carried out. The blocked gully on Station Road will be inspected and dealt with. Roadway trouble spots in Dersingham have been visited by NCC representatives and noted. Flooding on highways is a problem throughout the area and is being given full attention. The programme for 2003 includes repair to six gullies in Manor Road, further work outside the church hall entrance and the replacement of kerbs in Woodside Close. A request is being put forward for Dodds Hill Road to be included in the gritting programme for the village as it is a main route for pedestrians and vehicles to St George's School. A blocked gully on Fern Hill will be given attention

### *Parish Council Meetings 2002*

Dates of meetings: 25 February, 25 March, 29 April, 20 May, 24 June, 29 July, 30 September, 28 October, 25 November, 16 December. The First School will be used for the main meetings and St Cecilia's for any extra meetings. The Annual Parish Meeting has been set for 13 May 2002 at St Cecilia's.

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## *Making Norfolk Safe*

### THE MOBILE POLICE OFFICE

The Police will be on duty in their mobile office to meet the public, give advice and answer queries in Budgens Car Park from 9.30 am until 12 noon on the following dates:

Wednesday 27 February

Monday 11 March

Thursday 28 March

Tuesday 16 April

Follow-on dates will appear in the next edition of Village Voice



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#### THANK YOU!

Budgens Charity - MS

I would like to say a big thank you to Len Matthews of St Cecilia's for contributing the Christmas Carol books, and to the Budgens Girls' Choir who turned out on a very cold night to sing for the Budgens Charity.

*Jill Daniels*

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**Really Wheelie Bins?**

*by Hugh Mullarkey © 2002*



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## Bird Table Wars

by  
*John Smart*

It shone golden brown in the late afternoon sun. It was straight and true and just in the right place on the lawn and I said to Phyllis, 'They won't be able to resist it'. The new bird table would transform our garden into an avian paradise. I put some bread on so that they could have a late feed and we left it at that.

They didn't come. Not only did they stay away but they compounded the insult by flying over the back fence to Mr 'always sweeping the back step', who lives behind. They turned their backs on us. I redoubled my efforts. I said to Phyllis, 'I shall put out a banquet fit for a king or at least the bird equivalent!' I broke the bread into small pieces with plenty of crumbs for the little fellows and larger bits for the bigger birds. I set it on the bird table with all the care of a head waiter at Claridges and I watched from an upper window. My heart fell. Off they went over the fence to Mr 'whatsit's'. Tails up and diving down to his invisible feeding trough! I got the steps and balanced them on our rockery. Looking over the fence I couldn't believe my eyes.

Talk about rubbish. A man with one eye could see that Mr 'Thingy's' bird table was not plumb. It was, in fact, rickety! Covered in bits of moss and droppings it contained the scrubbiest old bits of bread and hard bacon rind anyone could imagine. I climbed down before Mr 'So and So' could poke his nose out and re-thought my approach. Working in the shed I put a few landing ridges for their little claws to grip and then I fashioned some odd bits of bamboo with clean rag to polish their beaks on.

As the weeks went by I made that bird table into the Ritz of back garden bird tables. If I could have done it I would have offered weekend breaks to some of our rarer visitors. Two for the price of one. Different sorts of bacon rind; whole meal, half meal; plain white bread! I was going out of my mind and Phyllis was looking worried. I felt drawn, still the birds refused my table, ignored my fare and flew over to Mr 'mows the lawn before everyone else's' rickety rickety, scruffy apology for a bird table.

Near exhaustion we sat in the garden gazing at the tenantless table. 'It's no good Phyllis,' I said, 'they just won't come, we shall have to give up the idea of avian bliss in our garden and scrap the bird table.' Phyllis didn't say anything, just gazed over the lawn with her green eyes and purred contentedly.



## The Golden Jubilee June 2002 Exhibition of Pictures

As part of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations we are holding an exhibition of pictures showing Dersingham over the past 50 years.

As well as raiding some local collections, there must be lots of photos in existence of family, friends, scenes and buildings. We would like to borrow and copy these to include in the display. Please don't dismiss your photos as being of no interest to others – let us be the judges of your treasures. That picture of Auntie Flossie might have an interesting building in the background that has now disappeared.

We also want to display any paintings or drawings you may have. As well as the content, the artist may well be of local interest.

Please contact Tony Bubb or let the Parish Clerk know if you have something that we can use.

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The approach of the festive season brought two social events to members. The first, a Sausage and Mash dinner, was attended by 40 members who enjoyed a hearty meal, a musical entertainment laced with jokes and humorous anecdotes and a general air of conviviality which sent them on their way full of good cheer. The second event was held at our December meeting when we had a traditional Christmas buffet. Attended by some 70 members, the evening commenced with a presentation of two cheques for £250 each to Dr Brown. The first to be used for two otoscopes for the nurses at Dersingham surgery, the second for the community nurses to use for the needs of their Dersingham patients.

A splendid buffet, which was provided by members was enjoyed by all as was this opportunity to have a good old chinwag with fellow members. Six brain-teasing quizzes prepared by Doreen and Derek Asker rounded off the evening. However it was suddenly realised that our 10 o'clock deadline was almost upon us and the hall had to be cleared quickly. A few words of encouragement from our Chairman and everybody fell to and, literally within minutes, St Cecilia's was converted from a scene of secular Yuletide festivity to one of ecclesiastical sanctity and serenity – a transformation scene worthy of any pantomime and a fitting end to a most enjoyable evening.

Our society's first meeting at our new venue of St Cecilia's Church was a resounding success. With over 70 members attending, our speaker Mrs Ruth Gooch of Thorncroft Clematis Nursery, received a warm welcome. Her talk concentrated on the various "families" of this lovely genus and the many innovative ways they can be used in the garden. Generally regarded as climbers on trellis, pergola and obelisk, Mrs Gooch showed various slides demonstrating their other uses such as climbing through roses, trees and shrubs, scrambling through flower beds and rock gardens and using the herbaceous varieties as border plants. In passing she particularly recommended the "viticella" group as ideal plants for the newcomer to clematis cultivation.

The second talk of her talk focused on her trips to Japan and Estonia where she collected some new varieties for her nursery. Two different styles of gardening were demonstrated by slides. The Japanese, very simple, mostly container grown and, unusually, sometimes used as houseplants. The Estonian, in open ground, with severe winters using especially bred cultivars, but with magnificent results based solely on cow manure.

All in all a most informative evening full of ideas for the keen and receptive audience.

*David Clark*  
(Tel 543182)

### **Dersingham Scout Group**

The Dersingham Scout Group is seeking volunteers, 18 years of age and over, who feel they have the inclination and whatever time they can spare to assist the splendid volunteer leaders the Group is fortunate to have but who cannot be expected to bear all the responsibility on their own. Cubs meet 6.30 pm to 8 pm on Mondays; Beavers meet 6 pm to 7 pm on Wednesdays and Scouts meet 7 pm to 9 pm on Thursdays. Enquiries to Roy, telephone 540434 or Terry, telephone 540643.

### **Dersingham Seniors' Club**

74 members attended their annual Christmas dinner at the Church Hall on 14 December. The committee and helpers prepared and served the traditional fare of roast turkey with all the trimmings and Christmas pudding – not forgetting the wine. This was followed by the Nativity story with carols, a cup of tea with a hot mince pie, distribution of a Christmas card and grocery parcel to each member, the afternoon ending with a raffle when 60 prizes were won. For part of the afternoon in his busy schedule, the Mayor Councillor, George Pratt, found time to take part in the festivities which all added to the enjoyment of the occasion, summed up in the following verse from a member, Ivy Woolford.

We all arrived in our Sunday best  
Wearing quite sensibly our thermal vests.  
And what did we see but tables so gay  
Decorations and crackers gave quite a display.

Then our dinners arrived and what a grand spread  
I was so pleased that I came – it wasn't cheese and dry bread  
But turkey, etc, Christmas pud and mince pies  
And so many presents, what a real great surprise.

So thank you to everyone for a wonderful day!  
To have such a great time and NOTHING to pay.

God bless you all for 2002.

Well done to all who helped to make the occasion so enjoyable  
and for the wonderful support from the members. Many  
thanks,

*Terry Finbow*

## **Friends of St Nicholas Church**

### Forthcoming Events

Please note the dates for your diaries/calendars. Details will appear on posters, etc, later.

*19 April 2002*

The Gamebirds will have a complete evening to themselves after their wonderful showing at the summer garden concert. This will be at the church.

*16 May 2002*

The Annual General Meeting will be at the Gamekeepers as usual.

*18 October 2002*

Hugh Lupton will be making a return visit at the Gamekeepers. This event is entitled 'The Crack across the Year' – 'Celtic Wonder – Tales, Legends, Myths and Music'

## **The Golden Jubilee**

The Golden Jubilee Committee have arrangements for Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June well in hand. Up-to-date information is given below:

### *Morning Events*

Nature Trail, Sports, Children's party

### *Afternoon and Evening Events*

Pigeon release, Fashion Show, Fancy Dress, Cream Teas, Disco, Hog Roast, Band, Raffle

### *Fund Raising Events*

The Playgroup has raised £47 at their jumble sale and they are organising a teddy bear raffle – tickets at 50p each from Lynne Wheeler. There will be a sponsored wheelbarrow push around the sports field. Forms will be available in advance with marshals on the day – money to charity - £1 entry. Raffle tickets to be sold on the day with cash prizes.

### *Marquee*

This has been booked and confirmed for the day.

### *Outside Events*

Photographs in Community Centre. Falconry, Steam Engine in Farm Yard.

Full details will appear in the next issue of Village Voice.



## Time and Tide

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Do you ever get that sinking feeling? Well you are – at the rate of about a millimetre a year! This is because during the last ice age a huge weight of ice pressed down on Scotland and the north - with very little over the south of the British Isles. This forced the north down and the south up. The balance is now being restored with the north rising and the south sinking. Britain during the ice age was like a rowing boat with Pavarotti in the front and Geri Halliwell in the blunt end. We are now at a time immediately after they fall overboard and the boat is not yet level in the water!

Does this matter? Well in fact it does to us because we live near the flat East Anglian coast - where a slight sinking of the shore will lead to the tide coming closer to our sea defences. This is made much worse by global warming that is likely to increase sea levels through thermal expansion and the melting of the ice caps. The net result is that our intertidal zones – beach, shingle, mudflats and saltmarsh – are being

squeezed up to the man-made sea defences. We are in danger not only of floods but also of losing important wildlife habitats.

So, what can we do about this? We can, of course, all do our bit to save energy and reduce the effects of global warming. However, some radical changes are also likely to be needed to our sea defences. The most radical - and almost certainly the most effective - is to knock them down! This approach is being taken in the opposite corner of the Wash at Freiston, near Boston, where a new RSPB reserve is being created – part funded by EU grants - on land that was until recently ordinary arable fields. A new sea wall has been built further inland. The material for this was extracted locally enabling the RSPB to create a saline lagoon habitat that attracted nesting avocets in the first year. The old sea wall will be breached this summer allowing the tide to enter the former farmland that will eventually revert to saltmarsh by natural processes. More than 140 species of birds have so far been

recorded on the reserve and many more will be attracted as the reserve develops.

This is a win-win situation. The saltmarsh will help defend the coast because they are very effective at absorbing wave energy. This means that the sea defences can be lower and less expensive to construct. In fact, Freiston Shore is the first coastal realignment project in the country to form part of a sea defence scheme. Saltmarsh also attracts birds with breeding redshank in the summer and wildfowl, including widgeon, during the winter. Future visitors to the reserve may be lucky enough to see some impressive birds of prey such as hen harrier, merlin, short-eared owl and peregrine hunting over the new saltmarsh. All this is expected to generate considerable tourist revenue - cycle ways are in place and events and information leaflets have already been produced.



The lagoon at the Freiston Shore

reserve includes a number of low islands. These are not only being used by breeding avocets but are also developing into a high tide wader roost that may one day rival our own local wildlife spectacular at the Snettisham RSPB reserve.

The arable land that is being restored to saltmarsh at Freiston did not have much wildlife or landscape value. It was also the last land claim on the Wash and was saltmarsh until very recently. This is not always the case in areas such as the north Norfolk coast. Here sea defences often protect fresh water marshes, wet grassland and valuable and attractive buildings from the sea. These are special places both scenically and for wildlife. The Freiston model will not suit every situation. However, more schemes of this sort are likely in the future.

The Freiston Shore RSPB reserve can be accessed via the A52 Boston to Skegness road – turn right at Haltoft End. Admission is free. Events leaflets and 'Where to Watch Birds of the Boston Wash Banks' are available in the library.

*David Bingham*

4 November. Mild weather means we are still enjoying marigolds, linaria and feverfew, whose little white daisies, alongside pink nerines, brighten up odd corners of the garden. All our vegetables, even lettuces, are flourishing. I've staked the Brussels sprouts, (possibly to be labelled 'English' sprouts, I've heard, in some supermarkets. Can you believe it!) Birds are hungrier, a robin and bluetits can be seen with the blackbirds and, of course, wood pigeons – many more of the latter than in previous years.

5 November. A beautiful waning moon last night.

19 November. The hedgehog's last visit this year? Night temperatures are dropping. Lots of chaffinches, starlings, dunnocks and sparrows about. Have started hanging fat balls and nut baskets in earnest, keeping them renewed and topped up. Once you start feeding the birds it's important you keep on doing it, no shirking, especially in bad weather!

1 December. A wet and dismal start to the month. Pruning the longest wands of a buddleia davidii that always ends up tangled with the clematis montana rubens on the shed. If the long growths are left they will bring down part of the clematis and possibly its supporting trellis when the winds blow ...

5 December. A beautiful late afternoon sky, the cloud covering like rippled sand at ebb tide, changing as you watch huge birds' wings beating across the sky. A male goldfinch fed this morning on lavender and marjoram seedheads, which, against gardening rules we don't prune off until spring. He's a pretty bird, with his bright head and black and white zig-zags down rump and tail.

8 December. Spent what seemed hours tying fleece over hoops to protect Swiss chard, broad beans and autumn-sown onions from birds. Wood pigeons and sparrows shred the leaves, while sharp-billed blackbirds and starlings search for grubs and worms at the roots, up-earding the poor plants.

14 December. Pheasants are in our gardens again. Winter is really beginning. The cock pheasant roosted at dusk in our birch, swaying precariously as he stretched his wings and tail and preened his gorgeous feathers. Soon it will be Christmas. Do people eat pheasant at Christmas? Not this one, anyway, I hope...

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## Dersingham First and Nursery School

Thank you to everyone who supported our Christmas events. The Christmas Fair was the best ever and the Friends of School raised £446 towards their project for 2002. They are aiming to extend the climbing equipment at the front of the school and need about £2000 to be able to do this, so the proceeds from the Fair was a great start.



Classes are now well settled back into routines after the Christmas break, and the children are busy with all sorts of new projects. Our topic for the term in several classes is 'Homes' and our children hope to visit an Estate Agents, a building site and look at styles of homes in the area as part of this project. Other children will be visiting places of worship in the village as part of their RE work and we will also be having speakers come into school to support other aspects of their curriculum work. Life is never dull at our First and Nursery School – there is always much to do and enjoy!

Members of the School Wildlife Club went to the Norfolk Environment Award presentation at Dereham recently and were presented with their £250 winners' cheque. I am sure they will really enjoy spending it! The community continues to give good support to the Club for which we are very grateful.

We held two Open Evenings early in February when village people were able to come and look round our village school and saw the displays of children's work.



Finally, school is closed for half-term from 11 February to 15 February.



*Jackie Austin  
Headteacher*



## The Child We Never Seem To Lose

by Hugh Mullarkey © January 2002

Oh I see!  
It was all for my own good  
Was it?

So what if:  
She does deserve more respect;  
It was a clean shirt this morning;  
Glass is expensive;  
My father will be disappointed?

So what if:  
My name will be mud;  
I should have tried harder;  
They'll never trust me again;  
I should have known better?

Oh grow up  
You idiot!

So what if:  
Canute got his feet wet;  
Judas did get the money;  
Custer was brave;  
The Light Brigade were following orders?

So what if:  
The sun did set on the argument;  
The bullet was never bitten;  
The facts continue to stare;  
The mind is shut?

Don't just shoot the messenger  
Shoot his wife and kids as well!

Please help me to have the strength to pause  
And think again.



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further information please contact:

Stella Caunt, Secretary. Tel: 01485 544423

## **Dersingham Open Day**

Every other year the Parish Council organises a village Open Day. This is a showcase for village organisations and for the Council and enables everyone to find out more about the many clubs and voluntary organisations in Dersingham. Council representatives will be available all day to meet the public.

The next Open Day will be held at St Cecilia's Catholic Church on Saturday 6 April 2002 from 2 pm to 5 pm. Admission is free. Refreshments will be available.

All the village organisations, clubs and the schools will be invited to attend and participate in this Open Day. There will be ample opportunity for Dersingham residents to view exhibits and ask questions.

A special feature this year will be a mobile exhibition showing how people can save money on their energy bills and help the environment through various energy efficiency measures.

Our Open Days in the past have proved very interesting and stimulating and it is hoped that as many residents as possible will come along and find out what the village has to offer.

The photograph below shows a scene from our last Open Day.



**Date for your diary:  
Saturday 6 April at St Cecilia's**

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## If It Should Be

*by Margaret Alexander © 2002*

If it should be that I grow weak  
And pain should keep me from my sleep  
Then you must do what must be done  
For this last battle can't be won.

You will be sad – I understand  
Don't let your grief then stay your hand.  
For this day more than all the rest  
Your love for me must stand the test.

We've had so many happy years  
What is to come can hold no fears.  
You do not want me to suffer so  
The time has come, please let me go.

Take me where my needs they'll tend  
And please stay with me until the end.  
Hold me firm and speak to me  
Until my eyes no longer see.

I know in time that you will see  
The kindness that you do for me.  
Although my tail its last has waved  
From pain and suffering I've been saved.

Please do not grieve it must be you  
Who has this painful thing to do.  
We've been so close we two these years  
Don't let your heart hold back its tears.

## Restoring Hope

by Kathy Jordan © 2001

The village sign was vandalised  
Deprived of its carved head  
Once standing proudly welcoming  
Now just a stump instead!

It's such a sad sign of our times  
Forlorn and torn apart  
But vandals must not take away  
The joy within our hearts.

So we must look to better times  
In two thousand and two  
The glory of our sign restored  
And hope returned anew!

*This poem was inspired by the haunting picture of our vandalised village sign in the December issue of Village Voice.*



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