

Dersingham Village Voice

Issue No 19

December 2002



*The Green in Earlier Times (Douglas Lister)
As shepherds watched ...*

December again – Christmas is nearly here with Santa on his way again. People are rushing everywhere buying gifts and ordering turkeys. This is a really lovely time of year.

The year has passed very quickly as always and the village has been active in many directions, especially with celebrations for the Golden Jubilee.

The newsletter team would sincerely like to thank the many contributors to Village Voice over the past year. Articles and poems have been submitted regularly and there is not always room to accommodate them in a particular issue. But please rest assured that everything is retained for future issues and will appear eventually if at all possible.

Also a big thank you is extended to our advertisers who greatly assist in the publication and we do urge you to give our local businesses your support.

We hope the Village voice will continue to be published and distributed in 2003. If you know of anyone in the village who is not receiving a copy regularly please let us know. You can write to me c/o the Parish Council Office, Police Station, Manor Road, or drop items in to 78 Mountbatten Road.

In the meantime, the Parish Council wish you all a Happy Christmas and a healthy and peaceful New Year.

Teresa Southam, Editor

VILLAGE PLAN AWARENESS DAY

Over 200 residents came along to St Cecilia's Church on 2 November to register their views about the future of Dersingham. A follow-up will involve the delivering to every household of a questionnaire when all residents can have their views recorded as a step towards the formulation of a Village Plan. The following priorities list (in the form of a 'wish list') summarises concerns expressed at the Awareness Day meeting.

Surgery – keep it open and fully staffed.

Traffic Problems – Speeding, car parking, access to by-pass from Station Road.

New Village Centre – new building or refurbishing existing facilities.

Young People – more facilities, sports activities, skate park.

Rubbish – litter, street cleaning, refuse collection, dog fouling, bottle bank.

Pavements – keep clear of vegetation, widen to accommodate wheelchairs, more dropped kerbs.

Post Office – keep it open and extend/expand.

Open Spaces – maintain and ensure for the future generations, more tree planting, new play area on Mountbatten Estate, maintain footpaths.

Police – more visible presence, speeding and parking offenders dealt with.

Transport – improve bus timetables to fit in with train times, more local/community transport, bus shelters, create more cycle routes/paths, encourage children to walk to school.

Community – support village organisations, provide for elderly and young, childcare provision, schools should be involved.

Library – keep it open and extend hours.

Amenities – more eating places, banking facilities, seating, public toilets, Christmas lights, better TV reception.

Shops – support existing businesses and encourage new, keep Moss Pharmacy open.

Housing – restrict new building, encourage social housing.

Environment – wind turbine on land between A149 and the Wash.

Humble Beginnings

by

Hugh Mullarkey © October 2002

The Lord of Creation came upon Earth
With nobody there to welcome his birth
And then in the lonely still of the night
The heavenly voices are heard.

Angels sing
Christ the King
Peace on Earth for a Saviour is born.
Follow the star
Wherever you are
The promised Redeemer has come.

No trumpets, no drums, no palace of gold
No rapturous crowds his glory behold
No room at the inn, a stable is all
Mankind can offer to him.

Alone on a hillside minding their sheep
Some shepherds are nearly falling asleep
An Angel of God appears at their side
With tidings of great joy.

A feeling of peace that fills the night air
A feeling of joy beyond all compare
A feeling of love that all can share
The child has given to us.

Angels sing
Christ the King
Peace on Earth for a Saviour is born.
Follow the star
Wherever you are
The promised Redeemer has come.



The poem can also be sung as a Carol. The music can be made available in recorded or written form. Please contact me on 543507 if any queries.

Hugh Mullarkey

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Christmas

By

Joan Adams

I'm going home for Christmas.
I 'phoned and said I'd come.
I can hardly wait to hug and kiss
My darling Dad and Mum.
There'll be a welcome there, I know
And love and smiling faces.
And arms outstretched to greet me
With so many fond embraces.

In the hall hangs mistletoe
For all to kiss beneath.
While outside on the cottage door
There hangs a holly wreath.
There'll be a turkey in the oven,
A pudding on the stove.
With brandy sauce and hot mince pies
And all the things we love.

Young children round the Christmas tree
All making lots of noise.
So anxious to unwrap their gifts
Of books and sweets and toys.
And in the evenings, when it's dark
We'll turn the lights down low,
And sit around to laugh and chat
In the firelight's cosy glow.



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Medieval Mince Pies

In olden times, before trade with more exotic countries was common, food was much simpler. The mid winter feast used up a lot of fresh food that simply would not, without preservation, last until the next spring. At that time the mince pie was taking on the appearance we know today but the filling was different. Not the entirely fruit concoction of today – they had no citrus fruits to flavour things, it literally was minced meat, flavoured and spiced to make it last as long as possible. It was a delicious savoury treat. Here is a typical recipe for you to try.

- A little lard or bacon fat
- 1 medium onion
- 8 oz minced pork
- 1 oz sultanas
- 1 oz grated carrot
- 1 oz grated apple
- 2 tbsp of a fortified wine (sherry, port, Madeira or, better still, marsala)
- Salt and pepper
- Powdered cloves, ground ginger
- 2 tspn each marjoram and thyme
- 1 tbsp honey
- 1 tbsp flour
- A little stock

Peel, chop and gently fry onion in a little lard or bacon fat. Add in the minced pork and continue cooking. Soak sultanas, grated carrot and grated apple in the fortified wine. If you can, do this 24 hours ahead. Stir this into the pork and onion mix. Season with salt and pepper, powdered cloves, ground ginger and the marjoram and thyme. Stir in the honey and flour. Stir over the heat for 2-3 minutes to cook the flour and then correct the consistency with a little well flavoured stock. You are aiming for a stiff, cohesive mixture that is not loose or crumbly. It should be very flavoursome, not bland, as you don't want to overfill the pies but still taste the filling. Allow to cool and use like modern mincemeat.

Remember: there was no puff pastry in the middle ages – it would have been shortcrust paste and undoubtedly wholemeal. One final tip – before filling your pastry case, eggwash the whole interior. This gravyproofes the bottom and allows the top to be stuck on without lots of fiddly brushwork to dodge the filling.

DERSINGHAM IN THE PAST

Marshall Scorah has sent in a notice from an old parish magazine. How times change! A dance, cabaret and buffet for half-a-crown (12 ½ pence). The advertisers below also appeared in the same magazine and he invites readers to guess the year in which their advertisements were printed.

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King's Lynn & District Cooperative Society Ltd, Corner Stores
J C Walker, Hillside Nurseries
Hanfords, Grocers, Hair Stylists. Manor Road
E J Riches & Son, Reliable Footwear Repairs, Tobacco & Confectionery
K W Milton, High quality meat, Manor Road
Peatling & Cawdron, Wines, Spirits, Ales, Chapel Road
Heathside Fish Shop (J H Stevens), Main Road, Dersingham
N Napolitano, Hairdressing Saloon, Manor Road
Red Pumps Filling Station (R M Shanks & Sons), Chapel Road
V C Greyson Auto & Diesel Engineer, Heath Garage
E & V Cook, Haberdashery, Confectionery, Groceries, Post Office Road
"Rhoda", Ladies Hair Stylists, Lynn Road
C Playford, High Class Baker & Confectioner, Manor Road
Norfolk Stores Ltd, (Mr & Mrs F Turner), Chapel Road

Many of these advertisers are no longer with us, of course, but older readers will remember them and have tales to tell of them. For example, how we used to take our order book into the Co-op at Linford's Corner and then await its delivery to our door.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

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. Meetings are held on the last Monday of every month at the First & Nursery School.

APOLOGIES!

Due to an unfortunate printing error there were 3 gaps in John Smart's tale about **Traubus Stemp** in the October issue of Village Voice. We sincerely apologise to John and to all the readers whose enjoyment may have been spoilt by this error.

Editor

Autumn

by John Smart

It is summer started all again
With all the cycle rides
And trips to here and there
To see, to look, to drink in all before the winter
It is summer started all again
On this late day in the year
It looks fresh sun upon fresh leaves
With a lively seeming summer wind
It is a sham, fool's gold, this Autumn sunshine
No warmth but through glass
The wind is later in the year
The leaves late August *terra vert*
Behind the windscreen I am warm
And think it summer beyond the glass
Yet I feel tired at the thought
And wish the welcome cold of Autumn on my cheek.

DERSINGHAM TEASER!

Some questions about the village to ponder over during Christmas and the New Year. We don't have all the solutions yet. Please send your answers or best guesses to the Editor and we will print the correct answers or the most plausible suggestions in the next issue.

- 1 Why is Sugar Lane so named?
 - 2 The church originally had a spire on top of the tower. In what year was it removed?
 - 3 Before the Post Office moved to its present site Post Office Road was called what?
 - 4 Kerrich Close was named after?
 - 5 The Old Hall (currently the Gamekeepers Lodge) was famous for growing which plant?
 - 6 Which houses used to be called:
 - a. Courcellette (after the WW1 battle)
 - b. Wellswill – once a private school
 - c. Blackheath Lodge?
 - 7 Where was Laundry Yard?
 - 8 Which house was hit by a WW1 Zeppelin Bomb?
 - 9 Where was William Potter's smithy? (its mounting block is still in place)
 - 10 What is now on the site of Mr Reynold's Nursery?
 - 11 Which house used to be the village workhouse?
 - 12 At one time the village had 3 windmills. Where were they?
 - 13 Where was the doctor's surgery before the present one was built?
 - 14 These shops no longer exist but the buildings still stand. Where was:
 - a. Norfolk Stores
 - b. Playford's Bakers
 - c. Terrington's Grocer/Builder
 - d. Parker's Store
 - e. Linford's High Class Grocers?
 - 15 We used to be better off for pubs. Where were:
 - a. The White Horse
 - b. The Albert Victor
 - c. The Alexandra Hotel
 - d. The Cock
 - e. The Dun Cow?
-

Wild Geese over Dersingham

The Snettisham RSPB Reserve currently has more than 20,000 pink-footed geese roosting on the mudflats. These are the geese you will have seen flying over Dersingham at dawn and dusk. If you would like to get a close view of these birds the RSPB runs guided walks to watch them leave the roost site in the morning. Walks are being organised on 29th December and 5th, 11th and 26th January. To book please phone 01485 21779. The cost is £4 for adults and £1 for children with a 50p reduction for RSPB members.



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Christmas Mud

The Great Ouse. Ouse. Say it. Ouse. Slowly. How else can you say it? A sound which exudes slowness. A sound which suggests the slow, sluggish, forever oozing thing it is. A sound which invokes quiet flux, minimum tempo; cool impassive unmoved motion. A sound that will calm even the hot blood racing in your veins. Ouse, Ouse, Oooooose...

Waterland – Graham Swift

I'm not over keen on Christmas shopping so I decided to leave this to my wife while I had a bumble around town. First stop was the top of the Purfleet behind the Showboat amusement arcade. There was no sign of the grey wagtail that sometimes spends the winter months feeding around the fast flowing outfall here. Grey is a poor word to describe these delightful birds with their sulphur yellow breasts and bellies. Sadly, the only colour in the Purfleet came from the usual assortment of discarded fast food containers. Grey wagtails spend the summer by sparkling upland streams and rivers. The ones that visit Norfolk in the winter probably fly in from the Derbyshire Dales.

From the Purfleet I walked along the quayside towards the Millfleet. The tide was low and a gaggle of overweight greylag geese could be seen loafing around with some gulls on the mud over on the far bank. A couple of



Redshank

redshanks were searching for crustaceans in the runoff from the Purfleet and around

twenty turnstones had gathered to feed on grain that had spilt onto the dockside. Turnstones are winter visitors, spending the summer months on their breeding grounds in Iceland, while the redshanks may have bred on a saltmarsh in The Wash. Both these species use their eyes to find their food and a few manage to get sustenance from the banks of the Great Ouse. What were missing were the enormous flocks of waders that find food by touch - probing their long bills into the mud out on The Wash.

Over 300,000 birds would have been busy feeding in The Wash while I watched just a handful eking out a living on the banks of the Ouse. The reason for this is the size of the sediment particles. The Great Ouse silt is rich in nutrients - brought down from the fertile farmland through which the river runs - but the sluggish flow deposits very small particles that prevent oxygen from penetrating into the sediment. Beneath the surface only anaerobic bacteria can survive. Whereas, out on The Wash the energy of the tides flowing over the shallow bay lets the larger grains of mud and sand settle leaving the finer particles in suspension. This allows oxygen to get into the sandy mud and mix with the nutrients carried by the rivers. Wherever you find oxygen, nutrients and light you find life and estuaries are amongst the

most productive ecosystems on the planet. Microscopic creatures feed on the abundant algae. Larger animals then eat these tiny critters and so it goes on all the way up to the huge flocks of birds that are themselves preyed upon by top predators such as the peregrine falcon. The fishing boats, moored just upstream of the Millfleet, were a reminder that we also take our share of this bounty by eating shellfish and shrimps. Talking of bounty reminds me that someone once worked out how many Mars bars would equal the annual energy production of The Wash biomass. This was an impressive number and laid out end-to-end the Mars bars would stretch from Dersingham to somewhere very exotic. Unfortunately, I've forgotten where this was so I can't share this little gem of knowledge with you.

Further around the coast the coarse sand and shingle does not support so much life because it is not so nutrient rich and the larger grains and pebbles rub against each other in the high-energy surf. This would pulverise many of the delicate creatures that live in estuarine mud. Great Ouse river silt is too fine and North Norfolk coastal sand too coarse. The Wash mud is like baby bear's porridge – just right! The track that starts at the bottom of Station Road in Dersingham leads straight to this glorious mud. Take a walk down there at high tide and see the incredible amount of life that depends on the particles of mud being hundredths of a millimetre larger than those on the banks of the Great Ouse.

I was about to leave the quayside when I saw a kingfisher flying in to land at the base of the dock wall by the Millfleet outflow. The brilliant blue and orange plumage of a kingfisher is always a wonderful sight. This one seemed even brighter than usual because it was set against the dirty brown mud and lit by the watery late afternoon winter sun. Kingfishers often move closer to the coast at this time of year where they can be sure of ice-free fishing.

It was a cold day so I left the riverside to find somewhere to get a hot cup of coffee. It was beginning to get dark when I walked back through town where I saw a flock of birds that were also looking for some extra heat. They



were pied wagtails - close relatives of grey wagtails. These

birds congregate in quite large numbers to roost in urban areas during the winter taking advantage of the heat escaping from our shops and offices. Many of you will have seen these attractive little black and white birds with their long wagging tails in King's Lynn's shopping precinct. They were once called Polly washdish – I've no idea why.

I arrived back at the Tuesday Market Place as my wife was loading the last of the bags into the car boot. I thought she looked a bit annoyed about something – probably just my imagination!

David Bingham

St Nicholas Church Christmas Services



Sunday 22nd December

8.00 am	Holy Communion
10.30 am	Morning Service
6.30 pm	Carol Service

Tuesday 24th December

11.30 pm	Midnight Communion
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Wednesday 25th Christmas Day

8.00 am	Holy Communion
10.00 am	Family Service

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**Closing date for copy for
February 2000 issue
13 January 2003**

Article and items for inclusion are accepted written in longhand, typed or on a floppy disk. Please send to Teresa Southam, 78 Mountbatten Road, or the Parish Council Office Manor Road

This is the first of an occasional series of interviews with local characters and notable visitors. For several years now, one of the most familiar names to us all has taken to living in Dersingham for the last part of the year and your seasonal reporter, Holly Ilex, has been along to beard him in his grotto for a chat.

Holly Ilex. Good afternoon sir, it is indeed a great ambition of mine fulfilled to speak with you today.

Santa Claus. Hello Hello Hello HoHo. It's nice to meet you, but of course I have met you before but you were asleep at the time. Bit of a snorer aren't you!

HI. The first question of course has to be why, out of all the places you could spend this time, do you choose Dersingham?

SC. Well, the weather for a start. I haven't got snowed in here yet. Then of course you have such wonderful elves living here and Thaxters make me so welcome providing I work hard. Also, the fact that I am practically living in an off licence helps.

HI. Yes what exactly does your work entail?

SC. Mostly it involves a lot of sitting about in my grotto, nodding and reading stories to the little children that keep pestering me. If their parents have made a donation to my beer fund I hand out a gift. There is a bit of lap sitting as well, but I can only do this on the bigger children. However, this year I seem to have a bit of a problem as I can only manage to speak music so far. Hopefully, the engineer is on the way and can sort me out. The power cuts weren't much fun either, I got caught in mid Ho.

HI. What do you miss most about not being at home?

SC. Well it certainly isn't Mrs Claus, the harsh tongued, cheerless old soul. She seems fonder of the chief goblin than me. All I get is cold mince pies. He gets roast reindeer and all the trimmings and anything else he fancies. I don't mind telling you that I do not look forward to going back on Boxing Day.

HI. The deliveries. Do you have any problems with the modern chimneys?

SC. They can be a bit tight but if there is a fire in the hearth my plastic bits melt and I slip down a treat.

HI. I can see you have a bit of a queue forming .

SC. Good, serve the little nuisances right to wait a bit! They look the sort that will hang a King-sized quilt cover from the mantelpiece and expect it filled.

At this point he reached under his seat, fetched out a quart bottle of brown ale and stomped off to his igloo, whilst making some most unfestive noises and pausing only to cuff a couple of unfortunate pixies about their ample ears.

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Dersingham Surgery Horticultural Society

Annual Show. It will have been immediately self-evident to readers of the October issue of Village Voice that the paragraph headed 'Annual Show' contained a report of our September meeting – apologies for the mix-up.

In fact, our 14th Annual Show was, once again, a noteworthy success, thanks to Derek Asker, our Show Secretary, who was ably assisted by his wife, Doreen, and a dedicated band of helpers.

The quality of the exhibits was very high with those of the children being of exceptional merit. It was very rewarding to see new faces among the exhibitors and new names on the winners' board, which enables us to look forward to our 2003 show confident of its success.

October Meeting. Brenda Turner, from the Fakenham Garden Centre, ably assisted by her husband, gave members a practical demonstration on the preparation of hanging baskets and other containers for winter colour.

The plants which Brenda used were various small shrubs and conifers, cyclamen, winter pansies, heathers, ivy, ornamental cabbage, sempervivens and bulbs. With these she created some varied and attractive results and generously donated one of the planted containers to our raffle.

Annual Dinner. A convivial company of more than forty members enjoyed an excellent meal at the Gamekeepers followed by an enjoyable entertainment of witty and folk-type songs by "The Gamebirds" vocal group.

AGM. November sees our regular monthly meeting devoted to the affairs of our society and a review of the year, and the usual excellent attendance demonstrated the continuing interest and enthusiasm of members.

The meetings agenda was dealt with in a business-like manner and members agreed that our usual annual donation to local charities should be £200 each to the Dersingham Community Nurses and Tapping House.

Contd overleaf

Contd from p17

The remaining time was filled by a slide presentation of a holiday which my wife and I spent in Holland in Spring this year. Modesty allows me to say only that this was well received by members.

On behalf of our society, I should like to wish all readers of Dersingham Village Voice a Happy Christmas and a Healthy, Prosperous and Peaceful New Year.

David Clark (543182)

Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk Cleanup Campaign

Approximately £25,000 is available for rural areas and the Borough Council has requested that the Parish Council indicate priority areas for a cleanup campaign within the village, ie tackling specific problem areas on an annual or biennial basis

The Village Environment Committee is compiling details of problem areas within the village.

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PALS is also a way of improving service quality and highlighting gaps in service provision.

Contact: PALS

Freephone: 0800 587 4132

News from Dersingham First and Nursery School

The school recently completed a very positive Ofsted Inspection in early November and the headlines of the report show that we are 'a good and improving school'. I would like to say a special thank you to all parents, helpers, staff, governors and members of the village who support the education of our children in so many ways. Your support has made a significant contribution towards our receiving such a positive report. The full report will be published just before Christmas and more details will be in the next issue of Village Voice.

Thank you to everyone who supported the Bingo - we raised £270.

Looking ahead to the rest of the term we have all the fun of Christmas to enjoy. Our Christmas Fair is on Friday 13th December at 5.30 pm in the school hall. Please come and support the Friends of the School in their efforts to raise funds for extra playground seating.

Our school nativity will be held in St Nicholas Church on Friday 13th December at 1.30 pm.

Last day of term is Friday 20th December when we finish at the usual time of 2.50 pm. We reopen next term on Monday 6th January at 8.45 am.

**Happy Christmas to everyone
from us all at the First School.**

*Jackie Austin
Headteacher*

WI Golden Jubilee Seat

In the October issue of Village Voice an article described the presentation of a seat to the village to celebrate the Golden Jubilee. It has been pointed out that we omitted to state its location. It is situated half-way down Station Road and has proved a popular addition to the village.



Dear Father Christmas

by

Kathy Jordan ©1984

Dear Father Christmas please be kind
Bring all the goodies you can find
Please bring me books and bring me toys
And lots of things for girls and boys.

Please bring a Sindy house or two
With furniture that's bright and new.
A cabbage patch* I'd like to see
So 'plant it' near the Christmas tree.

* A popular type
of doll

A typewriter I'll have as well
And maybe too a 'speak and spell',
Some care bears and a new guitar
(I'd like to be a super star).

Please bring an Army tank and jeep
An Action Man would fit a treat.
A Star Wars ship would suit me fine
And football games to pass the time.

I'll have a bike and a computer
Digital watch, darts and snooker,
A desk and chair – I could go on
But Mum says that my list's too long.

She says I'm being far too greedy
Other kids are much more needy,
Whilst I seem to want so many
Other children can't have any.

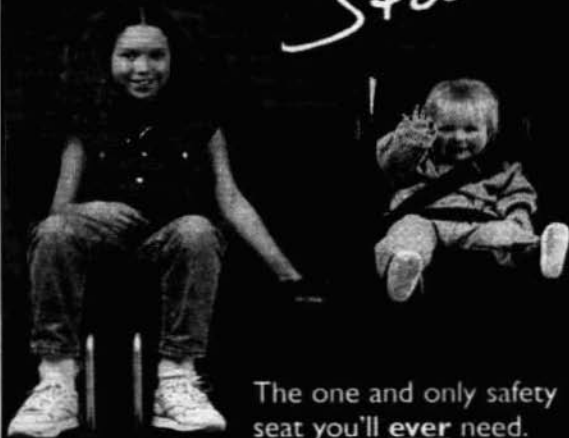
So, Father Christmas please be kind
Send all the goodies you can find
To girls and boys who have too few
And pick me out just one or two.

PS Mum's not looking – BIG ONES PLEASE !!!

I wrote this when my children were 7 and 13 and the list my daughter was sending to Father Christmas seemed endless. Readers may remember the popular toys mentioned in the poem. *Kathy Jordan*

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