

Dersingham Village Voice

Issue No 21

April 2003



An old photograph taken outside the Dun Cow (now Budgens)

In spite of the Council Tax bills dropping through your letter box, this time of the year is special. Gardens are beginning to blossom and the days are getting longer and brighter. March saw the vernal, or spring equinox, the point at which spring begins and day and night are the same length, so there's plenty to be cheerful about.

The editorial team again wish to thank all the contributors who take the trouble to send in items for this newsletter. More letters and comments on any subject would be welcome.

The Annual Parish Meeting took place on 24 March and items covered appear in this issue of Village Voice. This is a meeting where any parishioner can raise any subject connected with the village.

When the next newsletter is published in June there will be a new Parish Council and the current editorial team will be producing the next issue probably for the last time, when a new team will take over.

Meanwhile, please send items for the June newsletter to me at 78 Mountbatten Road or to the Parish Council Office, Police Station, Manor Road.

Teresa Southam, Editor

Councillor Jean Hayward

The Parish Council were very sad to hear of the death of Cllr Jean Hayward on 17 February. She had served on the Council for 4 years and will be sadly missed. Our heartfelt sympathies are extended to her family.

Parish Council News

*The next meeting of the Parish Council will take place on
Monday 28 April at the First School at 7 pm*

Anti-social behaviour at the Library

The Police have reported that warning letters have been sent out and there is now an increased police presence at the library.

Tree Planting

Grassed area by Burma Close. A landscape plan was produced at the last Parish Council meeting. The residents have raised the sum of £95 to cover the cost of materials and labour. It was resolved to proceed with the scheme.

Motorbikes/scooters on old railway line

The Council are requesting Norfolk County Council to take action to stop motorbikes and scooters using the old railway line for racing.

Borough and Parish Council Elections

These take place in May by postal ballot. June's Village Voice will publish a list of new councillors.

Annual Parish Meeting

This took place on Monday 24 March, attended by 23 parishioners. Reports from the various Parish committees were put before the meeting outlining their activities during the year. The following items were discussed:

Bottle Bank for the Village: No progress has been made on the provision of a bottle bank due to the pressure on land for a suitable site. A question was asked about the collection of bottles and it was thought this might be possible if a proposed recycling plant were built.

Village Plan/Village Hall: A questionnaire would shortly be delivered to every household. An impartial view was to be obtained regarding a suitable site for a Village Hall.

Children's Summer Activities: Following on from the success of last year when 78 children participated, arrangements were being made for activities to take place from 21 to 25 July this year. May Davey, who organised last year's activities, was congratulated and she and her helpers were thanked for their hard work.

Borough and Parish Council Elections

Casting your Vote in the All-Postal Ballot

Electors in West Norfolk will cast their votes by post in this year's local council elections as part of a Government-initiated trial. In the May 2003 local elections for borough and parish councillors you will only be able to vote by post. There will be no polling stations.

Between 15 and 17 April postal packs will be sent to everyone who is registered to vote. The pack will contain a ballot paper, a declaration of identity and a return envelope – no stamp required, and instructions on what to do. The voting papers can be returned any time from receipt, but must be received by the Returning Officer by **1 May at the very latest**.

For further information: Freephone 0800 5836501 or visit the borough council website at: www.west-norfolk.gov.uk.



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Afternoon Teas

Deadline for copy for the June Village Voice is 16 May 2003. All contributions should be submitted to The Editor, Parish Council Office, Police Station, Manor Road or to Teresa Southam, 78 Mountbatten Road.

New Drains on Dersingham Fen

English Nature and Dersingham United Charities Trustees have been working to return the Fen to its natural state. A fine undergrowth of heathers has been set and a wide variety of bog plants are thriving there. To keep the area wet, two drains have been dug and controlled by a weir, so that the surrounding soil remains intact.



Mr Alan Cross, Chairman of the Trustees, Mr Raz Woollacott from NCC, and Alan Hayward, a Trustee and Mr Phil Holmes from English Nature inspect the new drain.



A view of the drain, looking towards Dersingham.

The Trustees make annual charity contributions to worthy causes. Their aim is to help people in need in the locality. Applications for consideration should be forwarded to the clerk:

Mrs Ruth Mountain, 11 Bank Road, Dersingham, by 1 November each year.

Dersingham Junior Flower Club



The Queen admiring the collages

We were invited to meet the Queen and Prince Philip on 5 February 2003 at Park House Hotel, Sandringham, where the collages the members had made for The Chelsea Flower Show 2002 were on display. The theme was "The Queen's Golden Jubilee". Any aspect of the Queen's reign could be depicted and the exhibit had to be made from pressed, dried, preserved plant material.

The Queen and Prince Philip were making a private visit to meet staff, guests and volunteers at Park House. We were invited to display the collages and meet the royal couple in the library.

It was a very informal visit and we were made to feel very relaxed. Both the Queen and Prince Philip showed a great deal of interest and spoke to the girls.

We felt very honoured to be part of the last visit by the Queen of her Golden Jubilee Year.

Doreen Asker, Leader

Green Garden Sacks

can be obtained from the Parish Council Office.

Cost: 50p each

The office is at the Police Station, Manor Road and is
open Monday to Thursday from 10 am to 2 pm

*These are collected with your normal rubbish when the
wheelie bins are emptied*

Orchard Close

We have received a plea from Mary Hinds, Tenant Representative of Orchard Close. She asks that cyclists walk their cycles through the Close as many of the elderly residents have poor eyesight and may not hear very well. Also she points out that the places for car parking are intended for the residents and visitors and not for general parking.

Please take note of this plea as residents deserve a quiet and peaceful environment.

House Names, Hunstanton Road

Mrs S Brooks of Old Hall Drive would like to know if anyone knows the meaning of the names of two houses on Hunstanton Road, near Bank Road – Pinctura and Pilula.

Garage Sale

Saturday 26 April 2003

9 am to 12 noon

at The Church Hall, Dersingham

Donation of items for sale and collection

Please contact

Doreen Asker (540601) or

Edgar Cooper 540865

Proceeds for Flower Festival funding

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Heacham & West Norfolk Singers

Do you enjoy singing? The Heacham & West Norfolk Singers are hoping to recruit new singers to join this friendly choir.

Rehearsals for the Christmas Concerts will take place on a Wednesday evening at 7.30 pm at Heacham Methodist Hall, starting in September 2003.



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Arthritis Care Dersingham and District Branch

Orchard Close, Dersingham

Secretary's Report

AGM 13 February 2003

Despite the fact that some of our Committee members have been unwell and rarely has there been a committee meeting with all members present, we consider this to have been another successful year. We started the year of branch meetings with a visit from Major Lake (retd) and his wife, of the Salvation Army, who shared with us some of their memories during the many years spent with this wonderful Christian organisation.

Sue Bird from the Norfolk and Norwich Association for the Blind came to our April meeting bringing with her several useful items that are available to help the blind and partially sighted.

The speaker at our May meeting was Mr Terry Finbow who very modestly explained the details of giving bone marrow which he himself has so generously and compassionately donated through the Anthony Nolan Trust.

In June we had a visit from LIST, the Local Information and Support Team from King's Lynn Council, who, I am told, have been of great benefit to this village.

July was our mid-summer social evening when once again strawberries, meringues and cream were enjoyed by many of our members.

In August committee member Janet Harley entitled her talk 'Room for one more' when she described her and her husband Don's years of fostering and caring for children. How fortunate we are to have had all these thoughtful and caring people in our midst.

We made the September meeting a talent contest when members were asked to entertain their fellow members and October was very similar with Mr Fred Williman playing the keyboard with 'songs down memory lane' and little stories to accompany them.

November was our business meeting when we settle financial accounts and make arrangements for Christmas, the January recess and the forthcoming AGM when we know, with regret, that our Chairman, Mr Don Harley, will be standing down from the committee.

Our December meeting was once again the delightful Christmas lunch at the Gamekeepers Lodge.

During the year our members visited Baytree Nurseries in April and a visit to the Corn Exchange in November when it gave us great pleasure to support the Footlights Dance Group of King's Lynn.

Throughout the year our Treasurer, Mrs Lilian Hardy, has organised lunches for our members at Gamekeepers Lodge. Many people who cannot get out and about say

how lovely it is to be able to sit down and enjoy a meal in the company of friends. For making these lunches possible, for our yearly Christmas lunch and for making available a room for our committee meetings, we are very grateful to Mr and Mrs Sutton and family of Gamekeepers Lodge. Their contribution to the Dersingham Branch has been very much appreciated by our members and although we are very sorry that they will no longer continue in business we all wish them a long and happy retirement.

We are also very grateful to Her Majesty the Queen for her very generous gift sent to our branch earlier this year and to Dersingham United Charities for their very generous gift sent to us in December. Through the kindness of these donations the committee are able to plan ahead.

Dersingham Methodist Church Annual Flower Festival

**Thursday 22nd to Monday 26th May 10 am to 5 pm
Sunday 2 pm to 5 pm**

Theme:

All Things Bright and Beautiful, the Lord God Made Them All

**Children from St George's School and Dersingham First School will be singing
at 10 am and 1.15 pm on Thursday**

**Coffee, lunches, teas, plus stalls, cakes, cards, plants.
We look forward to seeing you all**



WOMEN'S ROYAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE

Do you have a little time to spare? If so, the Meals-on-Wheels could use your help.

Currently, volunteers deliver approximately one round per month from about 11.30 am to 1.00 pm on either a Tuesday or a Thursday. A mileage payment can be claimed by drivers - non-drivers are also welcomed as helpers.

If you are interested please phone the Dersingham organiser, Di Hall on 543207.

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April was No Fool

by Kathy Jordan © 2003

Poor April was a friendly girl
Who fell in love with Don.
She hankered on his every word
Though they were lies and con.

He drank away his meagre wage
And gambled hers at cards.
Then wheedled his way out of it
With charm and false regards.

Friends warned her of his wicked ways
But he could do no wrong.
So smitten with his smarmy smile
She stood by him too long.
He had his cake and ate it too
With others on the side.
When rumours spread they very soon
Were cunningly denied.

So confident was he of her
And on to a good thing
He booked the marriage in advance
Then bought a cheap dress ring.

How shocked he was by her reply –
“You’re not the one to wed.
I was naïve to trust you so
Go ‘sling your hook’ instead.”

Now seeing through this weedy man
She drew herself up tall
“You are the very weakest link
And I’m no APRIL FOOL.”

“GOODBYE!!!”

Village Plan

Report of Steering Group Meeting, Monday, 17 March

The following officers were appointed at the Steering Group Meeting:

Chair - Sue Payne, Vice-chair - Peter Box, Secretary - Alison Thorne

The Future of the Surgery: Difficulties were acknowledged but there is whole-hearted support for Dr Hambling and the staff at Dersingham.

Village Hall/Centre: Paul Burall's recommendation that a consultant be appointed to investigate possible locations, viability etc, **before** the questionnaire is published was approved.

The skate park: the lottery bid and possible sites are being considered

It was agreed that the young members of the steering group would, with help, look at the set of questions for the youth of Dersingham.

Questionnaire: The set of 300 questions from the appraisal package is to be circulated among the members of the Steering Committee so that the most suitable questions are included on the questionnaire. Possible questions will refer to Young People, The Elderly, Environment, Community Facilities, Housing, Community Safety. Peter Box agreed to evaluate the software package.

The next meeting will be held on 29 April, 7:00 pm, at St Cecilia's.

Mr Mole

To dig strenuously with its enormous shovel-paws is the business of its whole life; permanent night surrounds it; it has its embryo eyes merely to avoid the light...what does it attain by this course of life that is full of trouble and devoid of pleasure?...The cares and troubles of life are out of all proportion to the yield or profit from it. Schopenhauer



A mole burrowed under the lawn in our back garden a few years ago and soon turned it into a miniature re-creation of the Somme battlefield. We eventually gave up on the lawn and covered the back garden in shingle. Another mole has now started to landscape the front lawn. This is in full view of the street so we get lots of helpful advice on how to rid ourselves of this unwanted guest. A lady knocked on the door and told my wife that moles come to the surface at precisely quarter to and quarter past the hour when they can easily be bashed over the head with a spade. My wife is not the sort of person who could bludgeon a mole so this theory remains untested! Other suggestions have been gas, poison, traps, smoke and mothballs. The most aesthetic idea was to place one of those colourful little windmills on a stick in the centre of each molehill.

Despite putting me to considerable trouble and expense, I do rather like moles and can't really blame them for failing to understand the importance of a well manicured lawn. I think they look great but I'm not sure why because their pointy earless heads and beady little eyes don't push the right psychological buttons. Maybe their soft podgy bodies and oversized fleshy front paws have something to do with their appeal.

Moles are insectivores and are related to shrews. Insectivores have incredibly high metabolic rates. The first time I saw a live mole its chest was moving in and out so fast I thought I could see its heart beating. It took me a while to realise that it was in fact breathing at a very rapid rate. Moles have to eat more than 60% of their own body weight in food every day just to stay alive. They eat mainly earthworms but will take anything they find in their tunnels particularly insect larvae. The only way they can find enough food to survive is to defend their own territories, which means that they have to lead solitary lives for most of the year. If they do find more earthworms than they can eat, they

immobilize them by biting off their heads and store them alive in larders for use when times are hard.

Moles do get together occasionally because - to answer Mr Schopenhauer's question - the purpose of a mole is to make more moles. Males extend their tunnel systems in the spring in search of mates. They break into the tunnel system of a female and after a bit of fumbling in the dark they leave. Paternal care is non-existent and maternal care strictly limited. The female makes a nest chamber for her young that she lines with dry vegetation. Baby moles are born naked but develop fast. When they are five to six weeks old, mummy mole throws the youngsters out of the family home. She usually does this at night to give her offspring a fighting chance. Moles are not well adapted for crawling above ground and the youngsters have to drag themselves along in search of a territory away from their parents and siblings. This is a very dangerous journey, not only are they vulnerable to predators but they also need to find food quickly or die of starvation. Apart from this, moles only move above ground in severe droughts or during a flood (they are good swimmers).

The young will probably have to dig a new tunnel system but they will readily use one that has already been dug if the previous occupant has

died. This is why killing moles is often pointless. Destroying the surface tunnels will not help either because the tunnel system of a mole usually incorporates a complex deep labyrinth that can extend for hundreds of metres. The lower levels are where the nesting chamber, which is also used for sleeping, and the larders are found. In areas that are prone to flooding or have very shallow soils, mole 'fortresses' are constructed above ground. These look like massive molehills and serve the same purpose as the deep tunnel system. Normal molehills are at the ends of side tunnels that are specially dug to enable waste soil to be pushed out onto the surface.

Moles use their strong stubby forelimbs to do the tunnelling. The rear limbs are used to anchor them to the sides of the tunnel and to push them along. Their dense black fur grows at right angles to the body so it does not ruffle whichever way the mole is moving. They have good hearing-despite their lack of external ears-and an excellent sense of smell and touch. Altogether a wonderfully adapted creature - but I do wish they would find somewhere else to live!

David Bingham



Cranberry Fen

In the October of 1930 it was brought to the notice of Dersingham Parish Council that the Eastern Electricity Board were erecting electricity poles across Cranberry Fen (the piece of land, 79 acres, between the old A149 and the Wolferton boundary).

The council asked for rent for the poles but the Electricity Board confirmed they had already paid Sandringham Estate for siting poles on the land and it was their land. The Council informed the Board that the land was granted to Dersingham in 1779 for the people of the parish to dig, cut and cart away and to let or sell.

The solicitors for Sandringham Estate, Bircham & Co of 46 Parliament Street, London, informed Dersingham Parish Council that it was the King's land. The Council then erected 6 posts between Cranberry Fen and Wolferton Warren with the initials DPB stamped on them.

This argument between the 2 sides went on for a long while. Two of the Dersingham Councillors, Mr Parker (the grocer) and Mr Wheeler (schoolmaster) resigned over the matter. Then in 1934 a decision was made and, as far as I know, this still stands today. The Queen owns the soil (freehold) and the people of Dersingham still have the right to dig, cut and cart away and to let, sell and graze.

But as most people know, at the present time, English Nature took over the management of this 79 acres of land, put up gates, fenced it all in, so neither the Queen nor the people of Dersingham can use the Cranberry Fen.



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Eastertime

by Patricia Youngs

Easter holds lots of lovely surprises
Chocolate eggs in all shapes and sizes
Little lambs are born around this time
Their innocence and antics are so sublime.
We have a holiday and go away
But some have to work and have to stay.

Remember our Lord Jesus who gave his life.
His time spent on earth mixed with trouble and strife.
They crucified him on a cross
To us all it was our great loss.
So let us remember him before it's too late
While we take time to celebrate.

Closure of the Village Playgroup

Unfortunately, as from Friday 19 July 2003 the playgroup will be closing its doors for the last time. This is due to the fact that as from September 2003 the Nursery in the village are taking the children at a younger age and there will not be enough children to keep the playgroup running. We did hit a problem when the Nursery first opened but with funds we had we have managed to survive this long, but now we can no longer manage with losing so many children.

It is such a shame that the education system feels that children as young as just 3 should be at nursery school. Maybe we will not be the only playgroup to suffer.

I would like to thank all the people who have been involved in the running of the playgroup over the last 21 years and made it as successful as it has been. We will be having a party on the last day just to say Goodbye!!

Many thanks, Lynn & Staff



This photograph was taken of a Playgroup in the 70s.



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Open Gardens in Dersingham
17 and 18 May 2003



Eric Yeoman's garden. This picture was taken last summer. Rear view towards the sundial.

Eric Yeoman's garden looking NE. This picture was taken at last year's Open Gardens



This year we shall have 16 gardens opening, some old friends and also some new. Tickets to tour the gardens can be purchased from the church hall or any participating gardens. The cost is £2.00 per person - children free. Tony Bubb will again run a competition at all gardens and the winners will be announced in the Village Voice.

If interested, please contact Edgar Cooper (540865)

News from Dersingham First and Nursery School

We are pleased that Miss Jane Dawson has been appointed our new Deputy Headteacher and she will take up this post formally at the start of the Autumn Term. Jane joined us last September and has lots of experience with literacy and early years, which will enhance the good practice we have in school. It will be good to have a Deputy Head once again!

It's all change at the First School at the moment. We are having alterations done at the back of our school to install a disabled toilet and ramp to the back playground. It will also provide us with some extra much needed storage space in our corridor too.

School is thriving with numbers high and lots going on as usual. Children in the Yellow, Blue and Green classes are doing a topic called 'Gardens and Growing' and they have been out and about in the village looking at gardens and buying plants and seeds from Thaxters Garden Centre. They are growing their own sunflowers and beans and they will be holding a Horticultural Show for the rest of the school on the last day of this term. Our Wildlife Garden is providing children with lots of first hand experience of plants and animals and the children are watching the signs of spring unfold. Our older children have been learning about life on Scottish Islands as part of their geography work and dreaming of holidays in far away places (well the staff have!).

Friends of the School are raising funds this year to buy more seating in the playgrounds and have several fund raising events coming up soon. Please watch out for notices of these events and if you can support them in any way they would be most grateful.

Jackie Austin
Headteacher

**Norfolk Policy Authority
Dersingham Community Consultation Forum
Wednesday 30 April 2003
7.30 pm at The Warren Room Gamekeepers Lodge**

Public Meeting which affords the local community an opportunity to find out more about policing of their local area, to ask questions, and discuss any concerns they may have with Members of the Police Authority and local police officers.

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AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS

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11 APRIL 2003

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THE CULTURAL APOLOGIST!

by Hugh Mullarkey © 2002

Oh to be a cultured person
Cultivated as a friend
When culture is a vibrant thing
A living, growing, open thing
That mollifies the mordant sting
Of social ills.

Oh to cultivate an ardent wish
To better, to create
To make our world a wholesome place
Where death will lose its tragic face
And life is not a tragic race
To reach the end.

Oh to lose those selfish ways
That cultivate the spoil of waste
That foster every thoughtless urge
Are proof against the keenest purge
From which no profit will emerge
Save bitter gain.

Oh to welcome nascent Spring
When warmth is to be found
When growing pride will emanate
From husbandry – a fertile state
Of caring minds to generate
Our rich resource.

IS YOUR LIFE losing – or has it lost – all
Joy Meaning Purpose Direction Love
Confidence Fulfilment Security Peace
And you have no-one to talk to about these?

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- To see if we can find a way ahead for you where you can reclaim what has been lost and move into a more confident and positive future.

Dr Andrew Fielding, 24 Station Road, Dersingham Tel: 01485 540520

Dersingham Surgery Horticultural Society

That Greensted in Essex has the oldest wooden church and that Beechamwell, near Marham, was a very prosperous place in earlier times, having four churches within a mile of each other, were only two of the interesting facts that emerged during Anita Carpenter's slide presentation "Square Towers, Round Towers and No Towers at All" - which she gave to our February meeting.

In a wide ranging survey Anita dealt with the history of East Anglian church architecture from Saxon to Victorian times. Of special interest was the way that Victorian architects had "mucked about" with some beautiful old churches. One example of this is the Norman/Mediaeval church at Castle Rising which was given its rebuilt porch and, for me, ugly saddleback roof in the 19th century.

Full of other interesting facts and detail and interspersed with legends of the past and humorous anecdotes, this was an evening enjoyed by all present.

An item from the Society's Newsletter

David Clark presented his musical garland to a packed house on 17 February. He had chosen a wide variety of music and introduced each piece with a brief explanation that greatly added to the pleasure and understanding of the music. Punch and nibbles were served during the interval. Altogether it was a lovely and enjoyable evening ... As well as a fun evening we raised £70.54 for the society.

Gilly Cann

March Meeting

Our society welcomed Brian Greenacre who, because of his experiences in the coroner's office, was able to give members a rare insight into his subject "Treasure Trove". In addition to defining treasure trove and the legal niceties involved in how and where it is found, Brian was able to show members illustrations of some of the exceptional finds that have been made in our local area. These included the "Snettisham horde" and a collection of Charles II silver coins found during the building work in Old Hall Drive.

A shorter talk than usual but none the less enjoyable for that. If you see increased activity with metal detectors, you'll know why!

David Clark, 543182

For your Diary
Gardeners' Fair
at Orchard Close Community Hall
Saturday 10 May 11-12.30 pm

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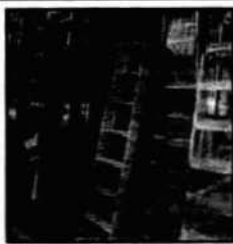
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