

# Dersingham Village Voice

Issue No 26

January/February 2004



Prelude to Spring

## Parish Council Report

The highlight of the final two Parish Council meetings in 2003 was a presentation by seven children from St George's School on the results of a project to look into safety issues in Manor Road. Among the points that the children thought needed attention were the overgrown footpath alongside the Pasture, badly-placed signs, and blocked drains. They suggested tackling excess speed with a 30 mph reminder sign and a speed camera and also wanted the hedge cut back between the Coach & Horses and the Church Hall and work done on the footpath surface.

The Council Chairman thanked the children for their work and promised that their ideas would be followed up. Since then, the hedge has been trimmed and the soil and weeds that had encroached onto the path have been cleared, effectively widening the path.

The Council has agreed that the 2004 Dersingham Day - which gives local people the opportunity to find out what the many local voluntary organisations, clubs and societies do - will be held on Saturday 17 April.

Discussions about the possibility of installing skateboard facilities on the Recreation Ground are ongoing. Types of equipment and costs are being evaluated and the experience of two villages - West Winch and Castle Acre - where such equipment has recently been installed is being sought. The Council has promised to consult fully once the details of a possible installation have been finalised.

Other matters being dealt with by the Council include speeding traffic in Shernborne Road; the possibility of adding a statue of a soldier to the War Memorial (as was originally planned many years ago); possible improvements to the pedestrian crossing opposite Budgens; and the provision of proper signs and timetables at bus stops in the village.

*The next two Parish Council meetings will be on Monday*

*23 February and Monday 29 March at the First School; they start at 7 pm  
with a session for members of the public to raise issues.*

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## Deadlines and Publication Dates for Dersingham Village Voice

For the benefit of both advertisers and contributors to this magazine the following dates will apply:

### **Deadline date for receipt of copy**

Wednesday 17th March 2004  
Wednesday 12th May 2004  
Wednesday 14th July 2004  
Wednesday 15th September 2004  
Wednesday 10th November 2004  
Wednesday 12th January 2005  
Wednesday 16th March 2005

### **Publication date**

Wednesday 14th April 2004  
Wednesday 9th June 2004  
Wednesday 11th August 2004  
Wednesday 13th October 2004  
Wednesday 8th December 2004  
Wednesday 9th February 2005  
Wednesday 13th April 2005

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## Editor's Notes



I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those contributors who have given their support since I took over the responsibility for this magazine, and also to say an especially big thanks to Stella Caunt who slaves away in the background setting up all the advertisements and articles so that they are ready for the printer.

We appear to be going from strength to strength, as in order to prepare this issue, (which, like the last edition, has 33% more pages than were previously published) a lot of thought has had to be given as to what to include, what to hold for future publication, and what to edit to a greater or lesser degree, because of the amount of copy which we have received. Please keep it coming!

As we wish to ensure that the right sort of material is published to serve your needs, we would ask that you take the time to answer the short Survey Sheet which we have included in the Centre Pages and then to return it to one of the collection points named. Thanks, again,

*Bob Tipling*

## Sandringham View What's in a Name?

Work commenced in 1993 on Phase 1 of the development of a 40 acre site in Dersingham which eventually created what we now know to be Sandringham View. After these first 50 properties were built, development by T.W. Suiter and Son continued, to provide 362 in total of two to four bed-roomed properties in 14 different designs, these being purchased as they became available. In any new development there becomes a point at which streets have to be named and the following names were put forward to the council for consideration; **ROBERT BALDING, WALLACE TWITE, JAMES JACKSON, REYNOLDS, STANTON, REG HOUCHEN, WICKLEWOOD, KERRICH, SHOULDHAM, PAKENHAM, DUCK DECOY CLOSE, MARSH ROAD and FENN CLOSE.** These names were supplemented by the addition of **THOMAS DREW CLOSE, PHILIP NURSE ROAD and HIPKIN ROAD.**

Setting aside the name of Duck Decoy Close, which may be assumed to be named after the then Duck Decoy Farm, what is it that makes the use of the names of the others so special? Who were these individuals and what was so outstanding about them that they should be so honoured? This magazine intends to look at each in turn and to attempt to provide more background information which will be published over time, beginning with this issue's contribution relating to Reg Houchen.

*continued on p4*

**REG HOUCHEN** who died in 1989 at the age of 83 had lived in Dersingham for the whole of his life, and made a major contribution to the community.

He had been associated with Dersingham Football Club for 62 years, was Chairman for almost 40 of those and Treasurer for 30 years (obviously having combined the two duties over part of his service). His efforts saw club funds increase during his term of office from £2.50 to £1,050, and on retirement from the club he was presented with a trophy by no less a person than Ted Croker, Chairman of the Football Association.

Mr Houchen's wartime efforts, assisted by his wife, Dora, raised money towards providing munitions, and the surplus funds after the war ended were used to provide, and maintain, the first ever swings on what was later to become the Reg Houchen Adventure Playground on the village recreation ground. He took a personal interest in attending to this site until the Parish Council donated a sum of £2,500 to extend the facility and make it more or less as it is today.

A butcher by trade, Mr Houchen had started work as a boy in the gardens on The Sandringham Estate, later setting up a taxi business in his spare time, developing this into a coach operation having at one time seven coaches and taxis and three mini-buses at his disposal operating it is believed from the garage at the junction of Lynn Road and Post Office Road. One of his contracts at this time was to transport staff from Sandringham House to Buckingham Palace. Mr Houchen retired from business in 1973.

It is our intention to look at the other names which were adopted and to seek out the history of these for publication in future issues. In the meantime, if you are a relative or friend of any of the people listed and can offer any information or photographs these would be gratefully received at any of the addresses listed on the inside back cover.

*With acknowledgements to the Lynn News for much of the information regarding  
Reg Houchen - B.T.*

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### **Summer Activities 2004**

The Parish Council is endeavouring to co-ordinate the various holiday activities for children which are provided in Dersingham. Last year's events were very successful, and we wish to build on that. It makes sense to offer Dersingham's youngsters a wide range of activities, including fun days, sports and trips out of the village. We hope that there will be events to cater for all ages and abilities, and we also hope to avoid any possibility of events clashing or activities being duplicated. A meeting will be arranged in the near future, to which all groups in the village will be invited.

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## Never Smile at a Galanthophile

It is not known for certain whether snowdrops are native to this country. If they were, they would have originally been confined to Wales and the west rather than the drier eastern regions. This is why they grow but don't particularly thrive on the typically dry sandy soils of Dersingham. Snowdrops have been cultivated for hundreds of years and many garden varieties are now available - all of which still have small white flowers and need a close look and an expert eye to tell them apart. Snowdrop experts are called galanthophiles (from the snowdrop's scientific name *Galanthus nivalis*) - probably the only group of people who would claim the end of January and beginning of February to be their favourite time of year.



Snowdrops are often associated with monastic sites, where they were grown to celebrate the purification of The Virgin Mary on Candlemas Day (2 February). In fact, one of their old names was Candlemas bells. The famous snowdrops at Walsingham Abbey may well be descended from stock originally planted by Augustinian monks in the Middle Ages. The destruction of Walsingham Abbey in 1538 sparked off a rebellion that resulted in twelve men being hung, drawn, quartered and beheaded and the Sub Prior was burnt alive. It would be hard to imagine a more fitting memorial to these men than the abbey snowdrops.

Although snowdrops are usually associated with hope and purity, they do have a darker side. There is an old rural superstition that it is unlucky to have them in the house. It is also considered unlucky to have a single snowdrop growing in the garden. Nowadays, snowdrops offer real rather than symbolic hope because one of the new drugs being used to treat Alzheimer's disease was originally isolated from snowdrop bulbs.

I'm not particularly interested in gardens but I do make an exception for the Walsingham snowdrops and try to go and see them every year. This year's visit will no doubt be like every other. I will take some photographs and be disappointed with the results, my wife will complain about the mud, we will have a slice of carrot cake and a pot of tea in the Sue Ryder café - then we will go home. In the United States, Candlemas is also known as Groundhog Day!

David Bingham

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## Greenish Fingers' Garden Notebook

2003 was a busy gardening year: we were all taken by surprise, despite all the talk of climate change, by our beautiful summer. I was too busy to jot more than a very few joyful notes into my garden notebook. Two were: "Broad beans gorgeous this year, and no blackfly!" and ! "Glorious flower colours make up for scrawny brassicas!"

Garden birds were abundant at nesting time. We were delighted to be hosts to a baby robin, which seemed to grow bigger by the day and developed the habit of arriving on the patio each morning for a sprinkling of crumbs. It seemed to roost most nights in a bushy escallonia and perched there, too, in the heat of the day. In August it vanished, to moult its baby feathers in private, reappearing in early autumn resplendent in its adult plumage.

Now, in January 2004, the robin is a daily visitor, sometimes joined by a second, which may possibly have a rival territory with a less plentiful food supply. Or the two may already be thinking ahead to spring - there's a deal of wing-flapping and carrying to and fro of tit-bits going on!

It's tempting to be out in the garden in open weather. I've winter-pruned two small apple trees since Christmas and prepared the ground for shallots, which should arrive by post any day now. They need more space than onions, so I plan to plant the sets in rows 12" (30 cm) apart, with 8" (20 cm) between the sets. I have two shallot beds, 2m by 1.2m, so there isn't a lot of room to spread them.

People's spirits will be lifting, like mine, at the sight of the delicate green shoots of early bulbs nosing their way up into the light. I had left a pile of perennial prunings last autumn on a bed where I know there are bulbs to come. Yesterday I thought I'd move the pile to the compost bin, only to discover, just in time, a hibernating frog under the 'roof' of stems. Hastily I replaced the pile: the bulbs will just have to wait their turn!

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## Garden Open Days

The Annual Village Garden Open Days will take place this year on Saturday 15 and Sunday 16 May. *Enquiries should be addressed to Edgar Cooper (540865)*

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## Norfolk Constabulary Western Mobile Police Station

Staffed by Public Enquiry Officers Linda Forder, Peter Duncan and PC Christopher Howes, the Mobile Police Station will be stationed in Budgens car park on the following Fridays: **20 February, 19 March and 23 April, between the hours of 10.00 am and 12 noon.** Services include: Advice, Crime recording, Information, Lost and found property, crime prevention advice and literature and liaison with community groups. Useful contact telephone numbers are:

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## Heacham and District Community Car Scheme



This continues to operate successfully. The object of the scheme is to provide transport for persons living in the area covered by the Heacham and Carole Brown Health Centre practices who are unable to use, or do not have access to, public

transport. This service is not limited to trips to the surgeries only. It is in no way intended as a cheap taxi service but as a last resort for those within the criteria of the scheme who cannot make alternative arrangements.

The car scheme office number is 01485 544544 until 5 pm Monday to Friday, but, if no answer is received, then Keith or Peter, the co-ordinators, can be contacted on mobile numbers 07800 811710 or 07800 858282.

An unauthorised circular headed "Do you need a lift? then phone 544544 and transport will be provided" is inaccurate as this is not the case unless those applying come within the criteria of the scheme.

It is stressed that this is a community scheme and drivers from the community are urgently needed. Age alone is no bar to these volunteer drivers, and those wishing to help can get full details by ringing one of the above numbers. So please do get in touch.

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## Village Plan Questionnaire Update

At the time of writing (early January) about three-quarters of the returned questionnaires have been entered into the database. Just over 1,000 of the survey forms have been handed in and the task of sitting at personal computers has been shared among nine homes. This army of volunteers, suffering from Repetitive Strain Injury, has besieged the Carole Brown Medical Centre! Seriously, the Village Plan Steering Group is extremely grateful for the time and effort they have put into this project and thank them most sincerely.

All the team of volunteers has enjoyed the task. We have learnt a lot about our computers, had some disappointments as data was lost and had to be re-inputted but everyone has enjoyed the experience. It is expected that all the data will be entered into our Master Database by the end of January and then we will be able to analyse it and promulgate the results, hopefully, during February.

*Peter Box (7/1/04)*

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## Gardeners

Residents of the village who are keen gardeners but find an allotment a daunting task may be interested to know that some garden sized (20 ft x 40 ft) plots are now ready for preparation for spring planting at the Station Road allotments.

*Telephone 541523 for further detail*



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## Carole Brown Health Centre News

Two stalwarts of the surgery at Dersingham have left the Carole Brown Health Centre since the last Village Voice. Dorothy Nurse, who performed outstandingly with the administration tasks during very difficult times, has left to enjoy some well-earned time with her family, especially her grandchildren. Dorothy joined the practice as a receptionist in 1986 since when she has seen the number of patients registered at the surgery more than trebled. Simon Hambling, who bore the brunt of GP duties during the last couple of years, has left for family reasons to join another practice at Ramsey. Simon joined the Heacham Group Practice from the Royal Navy in 1998. We wish Dorothy and Simon every good fortune and thank them for their dedication and hard work over recent years.

The Primary Care Trust (PCT) has assessed the expressions of interest it received for providing services at Dersingham against a range of criteria, including the views of the Patients Participation Group. After taking these into account, and noting the success the practice has made of the current franchise arrangement, the PCT has invited the Gayton Road Health & Surgical Centre to enter into detailed discussions with a view to making the arrangement permanent. We all hope that the future of the Carole Brown Health Centre will be determined at an early date.

*Tom Morris, Chairman CBHC PPG*

## The Answers to Dersingham Teaser 2 (Published in the Christmas Issue Number 25)

- 1 Police Station/Parish Council Office
- 2 Budgens - South Wall
- 3 The Feathers
- 4 Tropics Turret
- 5 Thaxter's Coffee Shop
- 6 The Fire Station
- 7 Milestone - Lynn Road
- 8 Vent - Church Hall, Manor Road
- 9 Lion Guarding War Memorial
- 10 Lighting Array - Thaxter's Car Park
- 11 Window - Dersingham Social Club
- 12 Gatepost - Wood Royal, Manor Road
- 13 Manor Stores - Manor Road
- 14 Dovecote - Alexandra Close

The winners of the  
competition,  
Mr and Mrs G Darley,  
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**DERSINGHAM VILLAGE VOICE**  
**READER SURVEY - FEBRUARY 2004**

In order that we may be able to offer the best possible service to readers of *Dersingham Village Voice* (published by Dersingham Parish Council and distributed bi-monthly as an insert to the free "Citizen" newspaper) we would ask that you take a few moments to give us your perception of the existing content of the magazine and to express your wishes for the type of material that you would hope to see in the future.

Listed on the opposite page are some of the categories of article which we publish in our magazine and we would request that you indicate how strongly you identify with each by placing a tick in the appropriate box.

**If you know of someone who does not receive the magazine, please advise us so that we will be in a position to remedy the situation.**

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey sheet. Please remove the page from the magazine and return it to any of the following by **29 February**: Dersingham Library, Budgens Supermarket, The Post Office or forward it to the Parish Clerk, Dersingham Parish Council Office, The Police Station, Manor Road, Dersingham PE31 6LH

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## Village Voice Reader Survey

	No Opinion	Low Interest	Moderate Interest	High Interest
Poetry				
Local Interest				
Village History				
Council Reports				
Churches				
Schools				
Library				
Horticulture				
Natural History				
Scouts, guides, etc				
Police Matters				
Local Events				
Voluntary Services				
Surgery				
Clubs, Associations				
Readers' Letters				

Other items which are already covered by the magazine but not listed (please detail)

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Please identify any items which you believe should be included, which are, as yet, not included

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## **Dersingham First and Nursery School and Dersingham St George's (CE) Middle School**

### **Happy New Year from staff and children at our two Dersingham Schools**

We all enjoyed the fun leading up to Christmas, with parties, plays and other special times. Children and staff in Years 3 and 4 enjoyed working together on the Bridging Project to design a joint leaflet about their schools. The children used their skills in a range of ways including photography, ICT, planning, discussing, writing letters and artwork. Dolphin Graphics are printing this for us and then it will be available for people in the village to get a copy from early February. Children in years 3 and 4 also enjoyed being part of a joint choir and their musical talents were enjoyed by people at four local venues. There are more joint ventures planned including maths workshops and sports fun events. Looking ahead to this term we have some dates for you.

### **Half Term - Monday 16 - Friday 20 February Last day of term - Friday 2 April**

#### **Other First and Nursery School dates**

- School closed for staff training on Friday 13 February - Design and Technology
- School closed for staff training on Friday 19 March - Maths
- Road Safety Week - 1 - 5 March - have you seen our lovely Safety Sign designed by our children at the entrance to our school?

#### **Other St George's Middle School dates**

22 January	2.15 - 4.30 pm Open afternoon at St. George's
29 January	Year 4 parents lunch - 12.15 pm
2 February	Energy Bus
10 February	Parents Evening 3.30 - 7.30 pm
11 February	Celtic Workshop - 9.00 am, followed by theatre performance at 10.00 am
12 February	Special Valentine lunch at 12.15 pm
13 February	Inset Day - Art
23 February	Book Week with Clifford Norgate doing dramatised readings on 26 February
26 February	Year 5 parents lunch - 12.15 pm
20 March	Cross Country at Sandringham
23 March	Tempest class photographs 9.00 am
25 March	Year 6/7 parents lunch - 12.15 pm
29 March	Decorated Egg Competition
30 March	Friends' Bingo - 7.30 pm
31 March	Easter Service in St. Nicholas Church at 10.00 am
31 March	Special Easter lunch 12.00 noon
1 April	Super Learning Day
1 April	Easter Disco 7 - 8.30 pm
2 April	Easter Fair
5 - 16 April	Easter Holidays

## St Cecilia's Church

**Holy Mass** is celebrated every Sunday at 9.30 am. With a few exceptions a Eucharistic Service is celebrated every Wednesday at 10.00 am.

### Other services and functions as we build up to Easter are as follows:-

Wednesday	25 February	Holy Mass and distribution of ashes	10.00 am
Wednesday	3 March	Ecumenical Lent Group	7.30 pm
Wednesday	10 March	Ecumenical Lent Group	7.30 pm
Wednesday	17 March	Ecumenical Lent Group	7.30 pm
Wednesday	24 March	Ecumenical Lent Group	7.30 pm
Wednesday	31 March	Ecumenical Lent Group	7.30 pm
Sunday	4 April	Blessings of the palms and Holy Mass	9.30 am
Thursday	8 April	Mass of the Last Supper	7.30 pm
Friday	9 April	Passion of the Lord	3.00 pm
Saturday	10 April	Easter Vigil - Festival of Light	9.00 pm
Sunday	11 April	Easter Mass	9.30 am
Saturday	17 April	Village Open Day	2.00 pm

## Progress?

*by Hugh Mullarkey © 13-01-04*

What have we done to progress, has it stealthily been decreed:  
 We must take much more than we give, and desire's more important than need?  
 Show me something superficial, if it's material that's what counts  
 Especially if it's consumable, in increasingly large amounts.  
 If you want to make it attractive, then wrap it in plastic or foam  
 Which can easily be disposed of, as long as you don't take it home.

The wrappings of mortal temptation seem to form an expanding slick,  
 As if some mechanical monster has been nauseatingly sick.  
 If something looks attractive, especially with the right name,  
 Then purchase it with a credit card, it's as easy as buying some fame.

Is there any political party that can give us back our pride,  
 Are we subject to naked Commercialism, that is taking us all for a ride?  
 Progress requires dedication, and teamwork which has to be led,  
 "United we stand, divided we fall", or so someone fabulous said.

## A Walk Down the Drift

The Drift at Dersingham is the small muddy lane that starts at the junction of Manor Road and Lynn Road, Westwards to the sea.

The first field on the left is called Parker's Piece, as, years ago, a person called Parker lived at the corner of this field in a lovely old wooden, green-painted caravan. At the bottom of the next field on the right is a small birch wood, and, during the Second World War, a gentleman called Fiddler Mitchell kept a pony on this field. When it died he buried it in the wood and ever since it has been called Fiddler's Wood.

The next field is where the sewage treatment plant used to stand with its big arms going round and the water spurting out.

Opposite this field was Bauldings Moat, a small stretch of water that many years ago formed a moat that went around an old manor house that belonged to the Prior of Binham. The last field on the left belonged to Ken Martins, on the left hand side was a large rabbit warren, and, on the other side, Ken kept his pigs.

You then came to the railway line, on each side of which were large five barred gates. Us boys would sit on the gates as the steam trains went by and wave to the passengers on their way to and from Hunstanton.

Over the railway line the next field was where Mr Bob Baulding kept his turkeys, they would all roost on an old elevator in the corner of the field.

Next was the little wood, this is where you could get the best blackberries in Norfolk. In 1953 a person's body was found in this wood, the person having been drowned on Snettisham in the January and the body not being found until the September.

Just past the wood the Drift becomes a concrete road and turns right to join up with the beach road. Before the Second World War, and before the concrete was laid down, the Drift went straight on towards the sea and finished just the other side of the old sea wall close to where the pumping station was built in 1947.

It was a good place to play and be, down the old Drift!

*Dick Melton, Sunny Hunny*

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## The Wonder of Darren

Congratulations to twelve-year-old Darren Poucher of Station Road, Dersingham who became a star for a day by singing Elvis Presley's song "The Wonder of You" on Carlton Television's "Christmas Show" broadcast on ITV1 on Wednesday 17 December. Darren had been selected to appear on the show after approaches had been made to the TV company by the "Make a Wish Foundation UK", and he had a very eventful time in London where he was chauffeur-driven in London on the day before the show, then received singing lessons from Carrie and David Grant of "The Fame Academy" talent show, before appearing live in the TV programme which was broadcast from Covent Garden and was hosted by Eammon Holmes and Tess Daly.

## **What's On at Dersingham Library February and March 2004 BBC People's War Campaign**

The BBC is interested in gathering experiences of the British people during WW2 for its website at [www.bbc.co.uk/dna/ww2](http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/ww2). The library will be running a special Internet taster session on **Tuesday 23 March from 2-5 pm** when you can use our free internet computers to add your own stories and to read those posted by others. Staff will be available to help you use the computers.

There will also be displays of books and memorabilia throughout February and March. If anyone has items, particularly clothes from the 1940s, which we could borrow, please contact us on 01485 540181

### **WHSmith Book Awards**

You can vote online for your favourites between 14<sup>th</sup> January and 25 February. Watch out for the notices around the library.

### **Children's Activities**

There will be a Winnie the Pooh half-term storytime on **Thursday 19 February, from 11-12.**

### **Volunteers Required**

The WRVS runs a 'books on wheels' service for housebound readers in the Dersingham and Hunstanton area. On Wednesday mornings between 9 and 10 volunteers can be seen at Dersingham Library choosing books and tapes which they hope their readers will enjoy. Once these items have been issued, the volunteers set off in their cars and spend a short time with each of their 'customers'. The housebound people then have a chance to discuss their likes and dislikes and make requests for other books. If you have a few hours to spare every fortnight, if you have your own car and would like to help with the service, or to find out more information, please contact the library.

### **\*\*\*Coming Soon\*\*\***

April is Crime Month in Norfolk Libraries so watch out for our special book promotions

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## **King's Lynn Funding Information Day**

This event is organised by The Borough Council together with the West Norfolk Council for Voluntary Services. Date: Friday 20 February 2004, 10.30 am - 3.30 pm, at West Norfolk Professional Development Centre, Kilham's Way, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 2HU. There will be information stands from a variety of funders and a workshop entitled "What makes a good application?" This is a free event but places are limited and must be booked in advance.

*Please contact: Hannah Martsters on KL 616274, or Rosalind on KL 760568*

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## A Simple Act of Charity

In our world of speed and our 'must have' society an article I read in a recent edition of the 'Tablet' a Catholic weekly magazine, reminded me of the words Portia spoke in Shakespeare's 'Merchant of Venice'. "How far that little candle throws its beam! So shines a good deed in a naughty world." The writer of the article lived in Yorkshire and told of a tube journey he had made on a grey day in London in early December. His descriptive style of writing brought back many memories of travel on London underground. In the mid 70s I spent a lot of time at IBM training centre at Sudbury. When travelling on the tube, especially if I was on the early shift, I took great delight in smiling at fellow travellers and deliberately saying "good morning" to them as they hid behind their papers. But I digress. Here is a condensed version of the article.

The writer described arriving at King's Cross and descending to the tube platform, which was filled with damp, silent and irritable people, and boarding the train. He, like most others kept himself apart, carefully avoiding eye contact by examining the adverts for cough-mixture, foreign holidays and mobile phones. As the train stopped at Euston his eye was caught by a well dressed family boarding the train. With mum and dad were twin sons, aged about ten, both sporting two very large balloons, one red the other blue. But they were not just any old balloons, they were Christmas balloons on polished wooden sticks. The boys were obviously delighted with them. At the next stop the heavy silence was shattered by the arrival of a little girl of about seven who was screaming as she clung to her father's jacket. There was nothing anybody could do to comfort her, and everyone was simply trying to pretend she wasn't there. Everyone, that is, except the boy with the red balloon. The writer could see the boy attempting to identify the source of the tears by standing on his tip toes. Then the boy disappeared, but the red balloon started to make its way down the carriage, held aloft above the heads of the crowd. As the train approached Oxford Circus the young boy stood in front of the little girl. Once the train stopped and more people tried to enter the carriage, the boy said in a loud and grave voice; "Hello, this is for you. Happy Christmas, Good-bye." Then he disappeared back to his parents. The effect was instantaneous. Everyone heard the words and turned to see what was going on. The little girl stopped crying, clutched the balloon and started to show it off to her father and all the people around her. It seemed astonishing that one small gesture could change the sense of everyone's grim and silent alienation into the sudden warmth of community. The carriage had been invaded by a sense of celebration and the warm glow of happiness. People were looking at each other, they started talking about the weather and basking in the radiance of the little girl's laughter. The truth is, of course, that the gesture hadn't been a small one, but a very big one. What was clear was that the boy had given away to a complete stranger what was, at that moment, his most treasured possession. Christmas came early to the Victoria Line that evening. *Len Matthews*



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## Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

This is an appeal to readers who had a relative that served or was wounded or died at Gallipoli to make contact. 'The Gallipoli Association' was formed in 1969 to keep alive the memory of the Gallipoli campaign of 1915 - to ensure that the men who fought and died in the campaign are not forgotten - to encourage and facilitate the study of the campaign so that lasting benefit can be gained from its valuable lessons. The television programme 'All the King's Men' starring David Jason drew attention to the involvement of the 5th Norfolk Battalion with Captain Beck of the Sandringham Estate. Although not very accurate it drew attention to the campaign and the involvement of ordinary working people from this part of Norfolk. The above association publishes a number of journals each year in which individual stories with photographs are published - do you have any letters, diaries, photographs that you would like to share with the association and its readers? If interested contact **John Crowe**, a member of the association, whose father was a member of the 5th Norfolks at Suvla Bay and was wounded, but survived to serve in Egypt and Palestine until 1918. Contact address: **145 Bellingham Road, Catford, London SE6 2PP - Telephone: 0208 697 2787 - Mobile: 07956 188826 - or E-mail: jcrowell@netcomukco.uk. John also has an address at 12 The Green, Dersingham, Norfolk PE31 6RG**

Dear Editor

I meant to write to you back in September but alas time flies by and I forgot. I was given a copy of the July/August Village Voice which had a picture of two young lads outside Heath Garage. I have to own up and say that the youngster leaning against the middle pump is me, the other lad is Roy Cross. My parents, Vic & Audrey Greyson, owned Heath Garage where we lived (that is my two sisters Valerie & Vivienne and myself) until the mid 70's. I have many happy memories of my time spent growing up in Dersingham and it was a nice surprise to see the picture on the front cover.

**John Greyson**

Dear Editor

To all past members of the now defunct Mountbatten Residents' Association it is confirmed that the balance of the funds left after the dissolution of the association, £300 at the final A.G.M. in June 2003, were, in accordance with members' wishes donated to the Dersingham Surgery Patients' Comforts Fund. Although formally acknowledged at the time it is regretted that publication and dissemination of this was not publicised and distributed to all members as should have been done, although I understand it was displayed on the notice board on the space opposite Budgens Store. It is regretted that this delay has occurred and apologies due from those responsible.

**Jack J W. Neale**

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## A Leap In The Dark

by Kathy Jordan © January 2003

Long time waiting luckless ladies, Who've been angling for a ring?

Now's your time to test his love, To reel that 'last fish' in?

For only one year out of four can it be **her** not he,

Enquiring on the twentieth - "Please, will you marry me?"

Be prepared though for rejection, As his answer may be "No!"

For your handsome hunk may tell you where the devil you may go.

He may well be weak and fickle, struck dumb for words to say,

So dead against commitment that he'll quickly leap away!!

To leave you in deep darkness where mostly men have been before,

So on February's extra day, he may even up the score.

Or give a happy yea not nay, then he'll be set for life,

Knowing he himself could not have asked for a better leap year wife!

## Today, Dear Lord, I'm 80!!!

Anon

Today, dear Lord, I'm eighty, there's so much I haven't done,

So I hope, dear Lord, You'll let me live - Until I'm eighty-one.

But, if I haven't finished all I want to do,

Would you let me stay a while - Until I'm eighty-two?

So many places to explore, so very much to see ...

I ask you Lord to stretch a point - And make it eighty-three.

The world is changing very fast, there is so much in store,

I'd like it very much to live - Until I'm eighty-four.

And, if by then, I'm still alive - Could you make it eighty-five?

More plans will be up in the air, so I'd really like to stick,

And see what happens to the world - When I am eighty-six.

I know, dear Lord, it's much to ask (and it must be nice in heaven),

But I would really like to stay around - Until I'm eighty-seven.

I know by then I won't be fast, and sometimes will be late,

But it would be really pleasant - to be alive at eighty-eight.

I will have seen so many things, and had a super time,

I'm sure that I will be willing then - To leave at eighty-nine... MAYBE!!!

### **A Walk in the Rain**

*Patricia Youngs © 28.1.98*

The spray of water hit me in the face,  
His driving and speed was a big disgrace.  
It had been raining for days on end,  
As this roadhog came around the bend.  
I was soaking wet, and flaming mad,  
How could someone be such a cad?  
I walked on, determined to enjoy the air,  
The wind and sun dried my hair.  
I splashed through the puddles just for fun,  
Enjoying the bright winter's sun.  
I stopped by a stile to have a rest,  
The birds were starting to build their nests.  
Then, from a distance, I heard a call,  
He looked handsome, strong, and so tall.  
After apologising for making me wet,  
I graciously accepted, and our eyes met.  
It turned out, that he'd lost his way,  
I gave directions but he wanted to stay.  
The sky got dark, and it began to rain,  
Together we started back down the lane.

### **Broadband**

Life for Internet users in Dersingham is about to become much easier. Most users know the frustration of interminable waiting for web sites to open and information and files to download.

Broadband - already available to more than two-thirds of people in Britain - speeds things up by as much as ten times, making the Internet an easy-to-use tool to exchange information, shop, research facts or access news, phone numbers, train times and so on.

Now the benefits are coming to Dersingham. BT is converting the Dersingham telephone exchange to handle Broadband from 21 January. And a local organisation - WNCB.net - is already offering a competitive radio-based Broadband service (contact them either at [www.wncb.net](http://www.wncb.net) or by phoning 01485 540011).

Broadband will open new horizons for anyone using the Internet. Major beneficiaries will be local businesses, people working from home, and students of all ages who will find the Internet suddenly becoming an easily-accessible educational tool.

## On Porridge

I have eaten a plate of porridge for breakfast for as long as I can remember. I consider myself a competent porridge-maker, and I'm sure there are a number of similar folk in Dersingham.

Were they not, then, like me, appalled at the dry, lumpy, disgusting-looking mess that was served to poor little Charlie on the two "Tonight with Trevor McDonald" programmes on an experimental diet given to a class of eight-year-olds in South London? No wonder the little lad whined for his usual unhealthy, sugary, junk breakfast! It was a relief to see his mother switch to a potato-cake-and-bacon breakfast for him in the second programme. While heartily agreeing with the message of the programmes, I felt the use made of the 'wartime' ingredients was unimaginative - apart from the parsnip chips.

In case there are Dersingham mothers keen to feed their offspring for the first time with healthy porridge, here are a few hints to get them off to a good start!

- 1 Try out more than one brand of porridge oats. Some make porridge like wallpaper paste and will put you and your children off for ever. Do avoid 'instant' porridge which doesn't need cooking. It's pretty "Yuk".
- 2 If you are stuck with a packet of the above, you can use it up by making flapjacks, or thickening stews with it.
- 3 Follow the packet instructions, but leave out the salt and use slightly less liquid to start with. It's easy to dribble a bit more water or milk-and-water into the mixture if you stir it gently.
- 4 Don't leave porridge to cook by itself. It only takes four to five minutes to thicken, and you need to stir it now and then. Use a low to medium heat. Don't try to rush it.
- 5 Serve hot, and at once, and, for perfection, on heated plates.
- 6 Do serve with your favourite type of milk, be it skimmed, semi, or whole. A tiny dollop of cream is a treat.
- 7 Finally, do add whatever 'flavouring' you fancy. I like a spoonful of molasses, which will also provide vegetable iron and several other nutrients. Dark brown sugar, honey, syrup or treacle are all alternatives.

PS I'll submit a recipe for 'real', oatmeal porridge next time - if the Editor will let me, and someone else hasn't beaten me to it!

*June Stephenson*



## A History of the Present

Should you be a relative newcomer to the village you will have found that you are on a continuous learning curve, for Dersingham has so much to offer.

Every day creates new insights into what is available: shops which you were unaware of are discovered; organisations and clubs come to your attention; groups and services; hostelrys and much more become drawn to your notice, increasing your knowledge and appreciation of the place in which you now live.

Even as a resident of many years standing, you may not appreciate what is readily available to you, for how often has it been said that those who live the closest to a place from birth tend to be the ones who know the least about it. It is the 'incomers' who find it essential to know the names of streets, the local history, who is who and the best places to shop. Those who have grown up in the area may take everything for granted, and often not take the trouble to visit those places which a visitor would find to be the most interesting.

Under whatever category you would classify yourself, it is recommended that you take the opportunity to visit the village library and request that you may see two very comprehensive works which have been produced, one by the Jubilee Committee and the other by the Evening Women's Institute, these being the equivalent of 'time capsules' but which are not to be hidden from sight for the next 50 to 100 years.

The first of these two large, beautifully bound and titled, documents is concerned with the Golden Jubilee celebrations in June of 2003, whilst the second commemorates the Millennium Period of 1999 to 2000.

On opening either of these absolutely superb documents it becomes apparent how much effort has been put into their preparation, and how much detail has been included to enable future readers to have an insight into what are snapshots of two points in time.

The contents include not only accounts of the celebrations which took place, complete with photographs, but also information about almost anything which affects the village. These cover everything from where to shop, what is for sale, how much it costs, what organisations exist for both young and old, places to visit, transport, public services, etc.. the list is almost endless, and is supplemented by such details as receipts, bus tickets and other such information.

These magnificent works are available for inspection as a reference facility on request of the staff at the library, and it is highly recommended that you take advantage of this by taking time to sit and peruse them at your leisure.

*B.T.*

## Dersingham Horticultural Society

### The Christmas Party

Such a good atmosphere at St. Cecilia's with the sound of "mmm" (i.e. "mmm") all round as members enjoyed the delicious food. The generosity and talent for good cooking of our fellow members is well known and appreciated by all. We had an opportunity to meet friends and take part in the 'Asker' quizzes, maybe win a prize in the raffle and enjoy listening to one of Gilly's poems. The whole evening was well organised by the Fund Raising Team.

### January Meeting

On his second visit to our society David Grimes' topic was "The way we used to live 1850-1950"

Dealing only with the country living that he had experienced, he first dealt with agricultural tools, machines, and the labour intensive processes such as binding corn and potato picking, which were so essential in supplementing the income of poorer families.

This was followed by some interesting slides of posters from the 20's and 30's - Guinness, Player's, Bovril, among others, and some hand-embroidered postcards from the Great War.

His final thoughts were on the social and domestic aspects of the life led by country folk at this time. Whilst providing some enjoyment for all, David's talk proved of special interest to our members who had lived in the area for most of their lives.

Members were pleased to hear our secretary report that letters of thanks had been received from the various groups and organisations to which the society had made donations at our AGM in November, and that these had been appreciated.

*David Clark (543182)*

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**Articles for publication in the March/April edition of Village Voice** must reach the editor at 45 Queen Elizabeth Drive, Dersingham, or at the Parish Council Office, before the **deadline date of Wednesday 17 March 2004.**

**Advertisements for inclusion** in the same newsletter should be in the hands of Kim Dunford, Parish Clerk, Dersingham Parish Council, The Police Station, Manor Road, Dersingham PE31 6LH **by the same date.** Enquiries regarding advertisements may be made by calling Kim on 01485 541465.

**This edition will be inserted in the free 'Citizen' newspaper on Wednesday 14 April 2004.** (Contributors who are promoting events should take note of this earliest date of publication).

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