

Dersingham Village Voice

Issue No 30

September/October 2004



Dersingham is Provided with a Heavy Police Presence as the Village Post Office becomes Involved in a Terrorist Scare

Post Office Road was closed by the Police on Monday morning, 13 September, following the discovery of a suspect package in the Sorting Office at the Post Office. As can be seen from the photographs taken by our resident cameraman, Tony Bubb, a large number of Police Officers and vehicles were in attendance, and the area immediately surrounding the building was cordoned off in order to prevent public access.



Further details regarding this incident, including an interview with Fraser Lindsay, the Postmaster, can be found on the inside cover of this magazine.

Suspect Package Causes Disruption to Dersingham Post Office



Local residents heading for work at about 8.30 am on Monday 13 September were aware of blue lights flashing and sirens blaring as a large number of vehicles passed by heading for an incident at Dersingham's Post Office-cum-Sorting Office.

On speaking later to Fraser Lindsay, the Sub-Postmaster, it appears that he was made aware of a problem in the Sorting Office at about 8.30 am when Gary, one of the postmen, reported it to him. The cause of alarm was the discovery of a postal package, originating from Iraq, from which was trickling a fine white powder. Gary advised

Fraser that an Area Manager, on a visit from the Royal Mail office at King's Lynn, had called the emergency services. At first Fraser had suspected a 'wind-up' but realised from the expression on Gary's face that it was true. It was at this time that a fire engine had arrived to the front of the Post Office. Police then arrived and quickly sealed off the area and quarantined ten people who had been in close contact with the Sorting Office at the time. Post Office Road was closed for a while, and, at 9.15 am the Post Office itself was obliged to close for fear of contamination from employees to customers.

Fraser told me that at one point a group of specialists arrived in protective clothing, "looking prepared for 'chemical warfare', with all the appearance of Darth Vader from Star Wars, and, due to their breathing apparatus, actually sounding like him!" From then on the staff were continually asked about their health and welfare in order to ensure that they had not been poisoned by the 'substance'. As the day progressed it became clear that the package had been sent by a member of the armed forces serving in Basra to her parents living in the area, and that it contained nothing more dangerous than very fine white sand, and access to Post Office Road was returned to normal at about 3.30 pm.

The day took its toll on the business at the Post Office and its allied news agency as no customers were permitted onto the premises during the day, and Police advised the Postmaster not to re-open until the following morning. Many people who normally collect their newspapers failed to get them, although papers for home delivery had already gone out by the time of the scare. Not only did the business not receive any income, but the outgoings continued, making it a total disaster; as Fraser put it "I've had better Mondays!"

It is certain that all credit is due to the emergency services whose response was immediate and extensive. The services involved included the Police, a unit from East Anglian Ambulance Service's community paramedics, fire fighters from Sandringham and Lynn, and a chemical incident unit from Sprowston.

Reports were later to be seen on Yorkshire, Anglia and BBC television, and were to be headlined in the Eastern Daily Press and reported in the Lynn News. Fraser and the other people involved in the incident then had to undergo a 'de-briefing' session with senior personnel from the Police and other services.

A postal strike in Peterborough had already caused a backlog of mail to arrive late at the Post Office, and this, allied to the inability to move mail during the incident, increased the load for delivery on the morning following the event.

Parish Council Report

At the meeting of the Parish Council held in July, chaired by the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Malcolm Nurse, due to the resignation of Councillor George Pratt (Chairman), the Vice-Chairman paid tribute to the retiring Chairman, noting his 43 years of service to the Council and wishing him well for the future.

The first item on the agenda was that of electing a new Chairman and of the three people nominated, Councillor Malcolm Nurse received the greatest number of votes and was duly elected, formally taking the chair immediately. Councillor Robert Tipling was then elected to replace Councillor Nurse as Vice-Chairman.

Mr G Mole, Head of Environmental Waste, Norfolk County Council; addressed the meeting to answer some of the concerns which had been raised about the Heacham Waste Disposal Area. He realised that there were concerns about the service at the site and of items being rejected, but said that only normal household waste of the type put into wheelie bins and recycling boxes was acceptable. Other items such as fencing, rubble, bricks, fitted furniture, etc. should not be brought to this facility, but should be notified to the Council who would arrange removal for a fee, or, alternatively the owner should arrange for skip hire.

The Clerk read out a letter from BCKLWN that contained a list of roads, which, subject to Parish Council approval, were to be made the subject of a trial of a new method of collection of recycled items using green bins of similar size to the existing 240 litre black rubbish bins. The Council voted in favour of the trial, which is anticipated to commence in October, and which will affect most of the properties on the Post Office side of Lynn Road and Hunstanton Road.

The Members resolved to invite Mr J Hornigold to fill a casual Council vacancy.

County Councillor Janice Eells made a verbal report and concluded it with a tribute to George Pratt and thanked him for his help over the years. She then congratulated the new Chairman and looked forward to working with him.

The PCC Churchyard Committee asked that their grant from the Parish Council be increased to £3,000 to cover costs. The Members were unhappy about this request for such a large increase and referred the matter back to the FGP&A Committee for their consideration and a report back to Full Council.

After the Chairman had closed the meeting and opened it for questions and comments from the public, a member of the public asked it to be placed on record that this was the end of an era and that he wished to thank Mr George Pratt for his many years of service to the village. He also expressed his thanks to Kim Dunford, the Parish Clerk, and wished her all the best for the future. They both deserved recognition for their work.

Mr George Pratt addressed the Council and members of public thanking them for their kind wishes, paying tribute to present and past Councillors saying that he had served with the best Councillors to be found anywhere.

A meeting was held on Monday 23 August in order to deal with planning applications.

BT

Dersingham Parish Council's New Chairman Councillor Malcolm Nurse *(in his own words)*

I was born in Snettisham in October 1933 and moved to Dersingham in 1938. I was educated firstly at Dersingham Primary School, and then, having passed the scholarship but failing the interview, I went to Gaywood Park Boys Modern Secondary School. It was a wonderful school and I spent four very happy years there.



On leaving school I got a job as a Shop Assistant with Bob Riches in a wet and fried fish shop which was opposite the Coach and Horses Pub. We then moved on to Heacham and opened a shop there.

In 1952 I was called up for my National Service and joined the RAF. I did 8 weeks square-bashing at Bridgenorth in Shropshire, and the rest of my time I was at north Pickenham, just the other side of Swaffham, so if there was anything going on in the village I would cycle home and go back early next morning.

On leaving the RAF I applied to join the Post Office but there were no jobs at that time. I was put on the waiting list. I got a job at the Flax factory at West Newton. It was there that I met my wife, Avis, but we didn't go out together until I joined the Post Office in 1956. We married at Hunstanton in March 1957. We have a daughter, a son, and 4 grandchildren.

I joined the Parish Council in June 1966 and have been a member ever since, it was a very proud moment for me when I was elected Chairman in July this year, I know it will be difficult to follow George, who has been a great stalwart in the village since 1961.

I have been a member of Dersingham Royal British Legion for over 50 years, also Norfolk No 1 Group Royal British Legion for the same period. I have been a member of Martin Ffolkes Masonic Lodge since 1982. I have also been a School Governor of Dersingham First School. I have been a member of the Sports Field Management Committee and the Scout and Guide Committee.

My first priority as Council Chairman is to try and get more facilities for the 14 to 18 year olds of the village. If I can help you in any way you can leave a message at the Council Office or call me on 540833.

Editor's Notes

Before I write anything else, I would, as Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council and Editor of this magazine, like to welcome Malcolm Nurse to his new position as Chairman of the Parish Council and wish him well in his time in office.

I find it very encouraging to find that, due to the high number of contributions received, I have had to remove some of my own entries, and have also found that I have had to limit myself to this small area of the magazine. I would like to thank all of the current contributors, and also those who have promised me material for the future. Keep it coming, for even if I don't publish it immediately, if it is acceptable it will be held for a future issue. May I also take the opportunity to thank all of those readers who have spoken to me personally and said how much they enjoy receiving and reading our efforts.

BT

"Lang may your lum reek!"

Borough Mayor Paul Brandon was welcomed to Dersingham in great highland style by a piper in full regalia, be-kilted Parish Councillor John Houston Gilmour (the question of undergarments remains unresolved) and Alderman and ex-Parish Council Chairman George Pratt, together with some 25 villagers and councillors. On this, his second stop on his 170-mile charity cycle ride around the borough, the Mayor was toasted on his arrival with traditional highland spirit.

Our reception together with a mini-fete combined with fund raising around the village means that Dersingham will be swelling the Mayor's Charity Fund for the Stroke Unit at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital with around £550.

Fortunately the rain held off for the morning of 21 August and bright sunshine welcomed Mr Brandon and his entourage to the White House in Hunstanton Road where the 20 or so cyclists rested and refreshed themselves to the skirl of the pipes, before continuing on their way to their next stop at Heacham.

Many thanks to Valerie Brundle and John Gilmour Houston for the use of their premises, time and work and to all those who took part in the fundraising and organising of the very enjoyable event.

TB



RECYCLING WITH DERSINGHAM SCOUTS AND GUIDES

Please note the Dersingham Scout & Guide Groups continue (25 yrs plus) to collect newspapers, magazines, junk mail, old telephone directories, cards, cereal boxes etc for recycling. Bags or bundles can be left in the porch of their Manor Road HQ at any time.

As a charity they receive money from the County Council for this valuable recycling activity. The money helps with the maintenance of their HQ and each Scout & Guide group receives money for their individual activities.

PLEASE SUPPORT A WORTHWHILE CAUSE

*Lynne Wheeler – Guider 1st Rainbow/2nd Brownies Groups
Scout and Guide Committee (544753)*

Brian Poucher M.A.

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he was yesterday"

Alexander Pope (1727)

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Dersingham Parish Holiday Activities



Our newly formed Committee's first outing accompanied a group of Dersingham children to Bowlers in Hunstanton. This was enjoyed enormously by the children, parents and helpers. The children were extremely well behaved and all had a great time. Bowlers gave a generous discount thus helping to keep costs down. We would like to thank The Feathers Hotel for the use of their car park.

The second activity of the holidays was a Fun Event held at the Methodist Church Hall.

Children and parents braved the inclement weather to attend. The cake icing proved popular, these being liberally coated in coloured icing and decorated with coloured sweets etc. Needless to say the children ate a good few. Our thanks go to Gillian King who organised this event. Many children sat engrossed around the Arts and Crafts stall and under the expert eye of Sally Parkinson produced brilliant photo frames. These were made from pieces of card and decorated to the children's own design from pictures cut from comics and magazines. It was a joy to watch the concentration and enthusiasm on their faces as they sat around Graham Gilmour, following his example in making their own puppets. It's amazing what you can make out of screwed up paper, rolls of masking tape and pieces of material. Another stall was dedicated to making fancy hats, and anything else you fancied from all the coloured paper, streamers, stickers and lots more on this well stocked table. It was noted that quite a few adults were engrossed making hats themselves, the ingenuity and creativity of the children is wonderful to watch and we like to express our thanks to Jane Faulkner for running this activity.

Without the generous donation of £100 from Tropics of Dersingham the committee would have exceeded our budget of £300. Any donations to funds for next year's events would be gratefully appreciated. Finally, and not least, a big thank you to all parents and helpers without whom none of these events could have taken place.

B Clark



News in Brief

Congratulations to Sandringham Army Cadets – We wish to express our congratulations to Corporals Richard Bix and Karl Humber; Lance Corporals Steven Harriman and Tony Marsh; Cadets Karen Naylor, Andrew Hornigold, Tim Davis and Frans Navarro who have all achieved awards at an Annual Summer Camp at Penhale in Cornwall. The Officer in Command, Lieutenant Stephen Davison, presented certificates at the Drill hall in Dersingham. Their instructor, Sergeant Lorraine Hartog-Davison, has expressed her pride in their joint achievement of ten awards for various form of activity including first aid and shooting.

Dersingham's Ashley-Emile Theatre Dance School have raised a total of £1,600 which they have shared between Snettisham's Tapping House Hospice and the MacMillan unit at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. The money was raised by the 93 person cast (aged from three to thirteen) of 'Magic Moments' performed at the Princess Theatre in Hunstanton in July. A terrific effort for two very worthwhile causes.

Despite objections being raised by Dersingham Parish Council and local residents, planning permission was granted on Monday 6 September, by the Borough Council's Development Control Board, for 18 units of accommodation to be created at the former Gamekeeper's Lodge site in Manor Road.

Dersingham Players 1955

This picture shows the members of the Dersingham Players who formed the cast of the final play in an evening's entertainment in 1955.

Those in the photograph are (from left to right)

H Pitcher;
J Sauvain;
R Melton; A Bell;
I Chambers;
P Wills; S Bird
G Bird; and J
Melton



Yes, I'm a Senior Citizen!

Anon – received over the Internet and adapted slightly

I'm the life and soul of the party – even if it lasts until 8 pm

I'm very good at opening childproof caps – with a hammer

I'm usually interested in going home – before I get to where I am going

I'm awake many hours before my body allows me to get up

I'm smiling all the time because I can't hear a thing you are saying

I'm very good at telling stories – over and over and over and over

I'm aware that other people's grandchildren are not nearly as cute as mine

I'm so cared for – long-term care, eye care, private care and dental care

.....I'm not really grouchy.....

I just don't like traffic, waiting, crowds, lawyers, loud music, unruly kids, commercials where the SALE always ends at 5 pm on Sunday, barking dogs, politicians and a few other things I can't seem to remember right now

I'm sure everything I can't find is in a safe secure place - somewhere

I'm wrinkled, saggy, lumpy, and that's just my left leg

I'm having trouble remembering simple words like...

I'm beginning to realise that ageing is not for wimps

I'm sure they are making adults much younger these days, and when did they let kids become policemen?

I'm wondering, if you're only as old as you feel, how could I be alive at 150?

And, how can my kids be older than I feel sometimes?

I'm a walking storeroom of facts.... I've just lost the key to the storeroom door

Yes, I'm a Senior Citizen and I think I am having the time of my life!

News from Dersingham Library

A big 'thank you' to all those children who joined the "Reading Rollercoaster" summer game making our total number 146, well over last year's 98! The mobile library also managed to register 63 children, which is brilliant!

Congratulations to all those who managed to read their six books over the summer holidays and receive their fluorescent pen, medal and certificate.

Coming soon:

October half-term 'Spooky Stories' on 28 October from 2.30-3.30 pm. Children are invited to dress up as scarily as possible!

Food Fortnight

The first two weeks of November sees a special adult education promotion across West Norfolk, and Dersingham Library will be promoting all things foody - including a special Internet taster session on Tuesday 9 November where we will look at everything food related - from special diets to your favourite celebrity chef! Numbers for this are limited so please call the library to book your place.

Personality Profile

DICK MELTON (of Sunny Hunny!)



When I went to interview Dick Melton, I wasn't aware of what I had let myself in for, even though I had been forewarned! I had been told that Dick likes to talk and enjoys company, and that I should be prepared to be with him for some time! They were right! What a character!

Dick is, and has been for many years, a prolific writer of letters to the press, including the Lynn News, the EDP and the Citizen (from which, he informed me, he and another contributor were banned after a discourse lasting a number of weeks!) I must add that he has been, and I hope will continue to be, a regular contributor to this magazine, having offered his extensive knowledge of Dersingham for the benefit of our readers, many of whom have confirmed his memories, and expressed amazement at his recollection of events and names.

When I arrived at his home in what he calls 'Sunny Hunny', I was immediately struck by the fact that he is fanatical about Elvis Presley; his living room is almost a shrine to the 'King' – with pictures, posters and records adorning every wall and shelf in the room.

The following facts emerged in my conversation, or was it an audience? with him, over a period of about two hours.

Contrary to common belief, Dick was not born in Norfolk, having arrived in the world on 7 July 1939 in Portsmouth, where his father, a regular soldier for 25 years was serving King and Country. That was to be his home for only two months until he was moved to his Grandmother's home in East Winch where he resided until 1946 when his mother rented a bungalow in Dersingham, opposite Wagg's Cycle Shop in Lynn Road. After a year at this address he was to move house again, to a house in Lynn Road called 'Restu', this having been purchased for £750 by his father on release from a Prisoner of War camp, using his severance pay to lay down a deposit of £250!

Dick attended Dersingham Primary School until he was 11, then St George's until 13. He worked for Parker's Stores on the corner of Manor Road as a delivery boy on Saturdays, and, riding a shop bike with a full basket in front, was to be seen regularly cycling from the shop to the Keeper's Cottage situated on a lane to the right off the A149 at Cat's Bottom, which is to the Dersingham side of Babingley and covered a return journey of approximately 4 miles.

He also worked for Ken Martins, a postman, who had a smallholding, which is still in existence. [By this point in our conversation I had been with Dick for about three-quarters of an hour, having arrived at 2.15 pm, and I was to be taken aback to

hear, at full volume, Elvis Presley singing the first chorus of the song "I'm all shook up"! – Would you believe it, It was the clock on the wall informing us that it was three o'clock? I did say he liked 'the King' didn't I?]

Our hero did not like school, even though his father was the caretaker there for 25 years. He recalls that the Headmaster had once surprised his Dad by asking why he (Dick) wasn't at school, and his father asking how the Head knew, the reply being that he had just seen him on Ken Martins' tractor in the field alongside the school. After leaving school, Dick worked for a year as a shop assistant in the hardware section of Lambert's in Snettisham, then for four years as an employee of Kenny Milton, the butcher, who operated his butcher's shop and slaughterhouse at the premises on Manor Road that is now occupied by Lincoln's!

On 10 March 1960, Dick was to become a National Serviceman, being a member of the Royal Horse Artillery until 1962, during which time he was a Duty Truck Driver and also a Medical Officer's Driver. Imagine his surprise when, after demob, he was to visit the local doctor to find that it was Dr Ford, one of his former officers, who even in 'civvy street' persisted in calling him 'Gunner'.

On his demob, Dick took a job as a part-time barman at the Kit Kat Club in Hunstanton, working there in the evenings and at weekends, whilst also doing piecework on the land all over the area during the daytime. He was to work for local Gangmasters, driving and looking after their workers up to 1966, at which time he married and became Head Barman of the Kit Kat, a post which he held until 1986 when he was made redundant due to the sale of the club. Dick and his wife lived next door to the Kit Kat until the houses were condemned in 1971, when he moved to his present address in Willow Road.

Following his departure from the Kit Kat, he joined the staff of the 'Showboat' amusement arcade where he worked until 2004.

His writing career started after a chance conversation with the Hunstanton Sea Front Manager in 1964. New groynes had been installed on the front, and Dick was asked, "What do you think of them?" to which he replied. "Not a lot, 50 of them were washed away this morning!" – that was to trigger his first letter to the Lynn News!

Dick, now retired, spends a great deal of time reminiscing and researching the topics for his letters and articles, and says that he spends at least two days a week in Dersingham where his daughter, Tracey, still lives, and at which times he walks his dog around the village to see what's new. Each contribution received by this publication records a little more of the history of Dersingham – long may his pen contain ink.

The picture on p8 shows Dick in his youth (holding a guitar), when he was a member of the Dersingham Players. On this particular occasion in 1955 their play, "A Cure for the Doctor", had been the final one of the evening, although I am not certain of its placing when it was judged.

BT

Dersingham Pubs and Clubs in the 50s and 60s

by Dick Melton of Sunny Hunny

Before the Second World War there were six pubs in the village of Dersingham, but the railway hotel, or the Alexandra Hotel as it was better known, closed down in 1937. The building, the last big house on the left hand side as you get to the bypass in Station Road, is still there.

The **White Horse** stood where Jubilee Court now is, it closed down in May 1973, the last licensees, Harry and Mabel Chester having been associated with it since 1933. Right up to the time it was closed down it never had a bar; the beer was brought up straight from the cellar!



On the site where Budgens is now stood the **Dun Cow**, which was built in 1938 to replace an old pub on this site. The Dun Cow had a lot of landlords over the years. In the late 60s when Bert Crane kept it he had one regular customer who would take his six greyhounds in with him and buy them all a whisky with a raw egg in it, and at Christmas time another chap from the village would sit up in the

corner and pluck and dress chickens for the customers who brought them in. When David Buck was the landlord around 1965 he was, I believe, the youngest pub landlord in the trade at the time.

The **Albert Victor** is now a private house and is just off the main road, on the left, as you enter Manor Road from Lynn Road. Mr and Mrs Southgate and their daughter Dolly kept it from the 1930s until 1961. Then a Snettisham man, Peter Rogers, became the landlord. Back in the 1920's it had a nice bowling green but it had got in a bad way and Peter Rogers kept horses on it. Then, when Arthur and Barbara Daw took it over in 1970, after a lot of hard work they opened it up again. The pub closed down in 1981.



When the **Feathers Hotel** was built in 1883 it was first called the **Cock Inn**. For many years the People's Rest House Association owned it, and I think I am right in saying that it has only had three landlords since the Second World War. When I was at school there was a big brass bell, and we would all ring it on our way to and from school. After some time it was taken away, I wonder why?



The **Coach and Horses** is the only public house



left in the village of Dersingham today (the Feathers is a hotel) and it stands in Manor Road, just near the junction with Dodds Hill Road. Over the years it has had lots of landlords. During the Second World War the Popperwell (sic) family ran it, then moved to Hunstanton to run two fish and chip shops, the Brooklands and the Vegas. One landlord who kept it had chickens running around the bar and they

would lay eggs on the seats.

Dersingham Working Men's Club was built around 1900, it was a busy club with a bowling green in the front until the Second World War. Then it was allowed to run down until the 1970s when it was turned into the thriving club that it is today.



Before the Old Hall was turned into the



Gamekeeper's Lodge there was a club and dance hall on the site. The TOCH used it as their headquarters, and we called it the Old Hall Club. The steward for a lot of years was Jo Jary who was a wireless engineer, and when you went to the bar for a drink he would have to move all the wireless equipment before he could serve you. Sadly neither the club or the Gamekeeper's are there today.

Today in Dersingham there are only the Feathers, the Coach and Horses and the Village Social Club, even though today there are around 5,000 people in the village, when, in the 50s and 60s there were only about 1,500.

The photographs used to illustrate this article appear on the Dersingham Village History Website (<http://www.Dersingham.com/history/pubs.htm>)

Our Elephant

by Joan Adams

He thought he saw an elephant standing high on the hill,
Then said aloud "Oh dear me, no, it's standing far too still."
But this one was a dullish green, now, all elephants are grey,
It was a group of ancient trees that somehow grew that way.
But it has given much pleasure and we know, and it's true,
That our elephant will never end up in London's zoo!

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MORTGAGE OR OTHER LOAN SECURED ON IT.

Michael Keogh writes that shortly after moving into the village in 1966, being a haulier, he found that, to use his words he "soon found that local place-names were designed to confuse Vurriners like me." He now offers the following, with apologies to Lewis Carroll.

Happisburghy

I was Blickling, and the Wiggenhalls did Clench and Crimple in the Flave,
All Tilney was the Barroway Drove and the Emneths Grimsgrave.

Beware the Happisburgh, my son, the Sporles that squash,
Avoid the Seething fen, and shun the Wendling Welney Wash.

He took his Walpole blade in hand, longtime the Woodbastwick he sought:
Then halted by the Palling Sea, and stood a while in thought.

And as in Elsing thought he stood, the Happisburgh with eyes aflame,
Came scarning through the Bilney wood, and Methwold as it came.

One-two, one-two, and through and through, the Walpole blade went snicker-
snack:

He left it dead, and with its head he went Winfarthing back.

"And hast thou slain the Happisburgh?" "Come to my arms my Bendish boy!"

"Oh, Cockley Cley! Oh! Wormegay!" he mardled in his joy.

Dersingham Village Plan Steering Group

The first of a series of consultation meetings was held at St Cecilia's, Mountbatten Road, on Saturday 11 September.

Most of the people who attended came to voice their concerns over the possible siting of a new Village Centre on the Sports Field, and the effects on existing buildings and user groups. There is still a long way to go, however, before any decision is taken.

The consultant architect, Kevin Harrison of WPP Associates, has taken away all the comments and suggestions and will be letting the Steering Group have a report in due course.

The full report together with an Action Plan will be submitted to Dersingham Parish Council at their next meeting on 27 September.

There will be further open meetings to discuss the Action Plan and to ensure that any agreed actions are carried out.

If any one wishes to discuss any aspect of the report, please contact me on 01485 540538.

Sue Payne, Chair Dersingham Village Plan Steering Group.



Hidden Treasure

Ash Murray is a man who spends most of his days on the bog. Dersingham Bog. As site manager he and assistant managers Lisa Treadwell and Chris Betts look after the Dersingham Bog National Nature Reserve, about 412 acres of dry and wet heathland, acid valley mire, deciduous and coniferous woodland. The site forms part of what was once a vast heathland stretching from King's Lynn to Heacham but which has been reduced over the last 2 centuries by agriculture and forestry. Part of the Royal Sandringham Estate, it is leased and managed by English Nature for geological interest and nature conservation.

Dersingham Bog has always been an important local resource to the inhabitants of the area. Locals grazed a variety of livestock on the heath, including; cattle, sheep, horses, ponies and goats. Up until the middle of the 18th century, the area was important for its production of rabbits for pelts and meat. This gave rise to the name Sandringham Warren, of which Dersingham Bog National Nature Reserve forms part. This grazing helped to keep the amount of regenerating scrub to a minimum, favouring the survival of other heathland species such as ling and bell heather. Any scrub which did survive was cut for fuel or pea/bean-sticks. Nothing went to waste and bracken was cut and collected for bedding for livestock. During the period when the railway line was in use, the bog was periodically set on fire by the railwaymen casting hot ashes from the passing steam trains over the adjacent bog. At a time of reduced management of the site, these fires helped to keep the mire open by reducing scrub encroachment. However, on several occasions, the fires ignited the underlying peat. One particularly bad fire in the 1920s raged for months and totally burnt off the peat layer.

The effects of this fire can still be seen today as a water-filled hollow adjacent to an area dominated by the white-bobbing heads of cotton grass.

Following the closure of the railway in 1963, the site quickly became dominated by birch, pine and rhododendron. By the 1970s, only a tiny fragment of open heath and mire remained intact, the remainder subsumed beneath a dense canopy of scrub, principally birch, pine and rhododendron. English Nature's precursor, the Nature Conservancy Council became involved in the management of the site in the 1970s



Chris Betts leads visitors on the boardwalk

and began the task of clearing scrub to restore heathland habitats. Much of this

work was carried out by volunteers using hand tools. In 1990, English Nature took on the full time management of the site after entering into a lease with the Royal Sandringham Estate. Small-scale clearance works continued throughout the 1990s and by the close of the twentieth century significant headway had been made in pushing back the 'front' of the encroaching scrub, to restore important heath and mire communities. However, despite the intensity of this effort, it was clear that much larger-scale works were required if the site was ever to be restored to its former glory. The advent of the North Norfolk Heathland Heritage Project provided English Nature with the funds to carry out this work.

In order to restore the heathland habitats for which the site is so important, English Nature has been working to remove the self-seeded scrub that has come to dominate large areas of the reserve. This work has been conducted over the last decade and has been very successful. During the past decade, the nightjar population on the site has more than doubled, woodlarks have gone up from zero pairs to three/four pairs and glow-worms have spread across almost all of the restored areas.

Voluntary Wardens play a pivotal role in the work of English Nature. The range of tasks undertaken is broad, depending upon the skills and interests of the individual. As well as acting as the 'eyes and ears' of nature reserves, English Nature volunteers may also be involved in: Patrolling the reserve; Leading or assisting with guided walks and talks; Assisting visitors and, in many instances, providing the public face of English Nature; Estate and habitat management, such as scrub clearance, litter collection, fencing or path maintenance; Assisting with administrative work in the reserve office; Species/habitat recording – collecting information of species or the environment. Volunteering for English Nature provides a positive opportunity to work towards ensuring the future survival of England's diverse range of wildlife and geological landforms. To some, volunteering may assist in gaining the skills required to pave the way to a future career in nature conservation; to others, it provides a chance to meet up with like minded people in some of England's most beautiful landscapes.

If, like me, you haven't visited the reserve lately you will be pleasantly surprised by the changes that Ash and his team have brought about.

To find out more about opportunities for volunteering with English Nature, please contact Dersingham Bog's Site Manager, Ash Murray, on 01485 543044 or write to the English Nature Office, the Smithy Workshops, Wolferton, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE31 6HA.

"The man who makes no mistakes does not usually make anything"

Edward John Phelps (1889)

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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; **Fridays - 29th October and 26th November between the hours of 10.00 am and 12 noon.**

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Dersingham Horticultural Society

Until recently I have still been relatively hors de combat time-wise and so have, once again, had to rely on my fellow members' reports in the society's newsletter for the bulk of this article.

Members' Garden Weekend – Despite the ravages of unseasonable wind and rain, the Open Gardens once again reached exceptionally high standards. Part of the fun of looking round them is to marvel at the variety of scale and style, from the very newest to the most well established. Lots of thought had clearly been given to creating an imaginative use of space with the application of natural materials in the hard landscaping and the inspirational use of old driftwoods, slates and fossils as garden sculptures and water features. The terrain of the gardens was quite different too. We climbed up and down beautifully tended grassy slopes and wandered through deeply shaded woodland paths. I gazed wistfully at the immaculate lawns and colourful borders and was deeply envious of the luscious crops on the vegetable patches and fruit cages. Over and above everything else was the welcome we were offered and the various opportunities to discuss plants and how to nurture them. Thanks to everyone who took part. It was a delightful way of spending an afternoon and I'd like to think the Open Gardeners enjoyed it as much as I did. **July Meeting – The Strawberry Fayre** – I couldn't decide whether the organisers, or those being entertained, enjoyed the event the most. There was a human fruit machine, a chance to win a "goldfish", many games of skill plus a ploughman's plate and delicious puddings. The draw for well-chosen raffle prizes completed the evening. The Fund Raising Committee, assisted by their partners, drew in a profit of £109.05. **August Meeting – Cheese-making** – From Mrs Temple's talk we had an opportunity to learn about the making of cheese generally. Her skills have developed over the years, from lectures at university continuing to Cheese-making Workshops and Conferences with her first clues coming from a book borrowed from the public library. On her travels to other countries, she takes advantage of opportunities to talk to local cheese makers some of whom have shown her how to make blue, parmesan and haloumi cheeses. Her cheeses have proved to be so popular, however, that she has outgrown the old factory and has now been given planning permission for a purpose built factory. We did have a chance to taste some delicious cheeses and even to buy some to take home. **Annual Show** – The wet August weather seemed to have affected our show by reducing the quantity of entries but not the quality of the exhibits that graced the hall. As usual these were of the high standard to which we are accustomed. The entries that particularly caught my eye were a vase of striking acanthus blooms and those in the children's classes with the miniature gardens and imaginatively decorated eggs were outstanding. However, all the exhibits deserved praise for their quality and the society's thanks to all, especially the exhibitors, who supported our show. **September Meeting** – The subject of Barry Gayton's talk was "Pruning". Armed with a multitude of cuttings, large and small, from his own garden, Barry ably demonstrated that, while books on the subject may be useful to us mere amateurs, they are no substitute for thirty years experience as a professional gardener and the expertise that this provides. After emphasising the importance of sharp, clean and periodically disinfected secateurs, Barry went on to establish why we prune (e.g. for shape, size and flower production) and then elaborated on the practicalities of when, where and how, with examples of the cuttings that he had brought along. All in all, a most informative and rewarding evening enjoyed by all present.

David Clark (543182)



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News from our Dersingham Schools

The new term is now well under way and we have settled into our new identities, with new school names. Over 300 children are now being educated at our schools and we are very positive about the future of education in this village. We are both encouraged to see the publication of the 'Future of Dersingham Report' and appreciate the hard work that has gone into producing such a reader friendly report. We are committed to working with the community to develop this in any way that we can. Both schools have plans and dreams for continuing to develop opportunities for our children. Some of those planned this year are:

- (New cycle sheds as part of our Safer Journeys to School Project are being built at both schools
- (Enhanced sporting opportunities linking with other local schools and with Smithdon High School and KES Sports College
- (A joint choir which will sing at several local venues over Christmas
- (Further school improvements; at the Infant School there will be a new library due to be opened on 20 October and exciting plans for a specialised Outdoor Play area are well under way. At St George's School internal and external redecoration has taken place and there are plans for moving the wildlife garden
- (Special events include a Book Week in October at the Infant School and a Grassroots Zimbabwe multicultural day at St George's.

We have sent our school holiday dates in to the editor to publish throughout the year, so please watch out for those. Half term this term is Thursday 21 October – Friday 29 October. The last date of term is 17 December.

We have always been well supported by the village and know that we will continue to be in the future. We welcome adult help in school so if anyone has time or talents to offer we would love to hear from you.

Jackie Austin
Headteacher
Dersingham Infant
and Nursery School

Carol De Witt
Headteacher
Dersingham St George's
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A QUIZ NIGHT

12 November at 7.30 pm in St Nicholas Church Hall

Teams should ideally consist of 4 members with the entrance fee of £5 per member including light refreshments, tea and coffee. Wine and soft drinks will also be available at very reasonable prices.

Details, entry forms and tickets available from Tom Morris (541450), Keith Blythe (544866), George Barton (544088), Edgar Cooper (540865) and Nigel Sisson (540081)

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John & Sons, Printers, Lynn and Dersingham.

**Can anyone throw light on
these two documents?**

They are associated with each other by the date of 25th June 1878, but do not give any indication as to which public house they are offering for sale, nor do they give the location of the 'Arable and Pasture Land and Agricultural Buildings to which the sale notice refers.

It is possible that the date ties in with a point in time when the management of the Dun Cow Public House was passed to Catherine and John Smith who were the innkeepers from 1879 to 1892, but there is no definite indication that this is the case.

If you have any clue as to the history of these documents, or can relate any other tales in respect of local hostleries, please contact the Editor, who will be only too pleased to add to the history of the village, which is gradually emerging from readers' contributions.

Memorandum of Agreement.

THAT the undersigned *Charles William Harding*
of *King's Lynn*
Norfolk

in the County of

being the highest bidder for, has this day become the Purchaser of Lot 7

of the premises mentioned in the annexed particulars for the sum of *One hundred and twenty pounds*
and on the foregoing conditions, and has paid into the hands of the Solicitors of the Vendor, the sum of *twelve*
pounds

as a deposit and in part payment of the said purchase money.

As witness our hand this *25th* day of *June* 1878

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Deposit	12		
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News from the Bog

by Ash Murray

September is the month when the heath is clad in the purple flowers of ling and bell heather, intermingled with the rich golden hue of the dying bracken. An early morning visit to the reserve at this time of year can be a magical experience, looking over the heath, clothed in its blanket of glistening spider's webs, across the mist-shrouded bog towards the Wash. If you are particularly lucky you may see one of several white Fallow Deer as they leisurely pick their way through the mist on the bog.

The majority of the plants in the bog have already flowered by this time. However, those with a sharp-eye will pick out the straw-coloured heads of the Bog Asphodel and the scarlet cranberries, nestled amongst the greens and reds of the Sphagnum 'bog mosses'. These mosses are the 'life-blood' of the bog, holding water like a big sponge and creating the peat that sustains the plants that live there.

Following breeding, Nightjars will have made their way southwards towards their sub-Saharan wintering grounds. As many species leave for the winter, a whole suite of others arrive, including siskin, crossbill, brambling, meadow pipit and birds of prey such as short-eared owl, hen harrier and common buzzard. In the woods, roving bands of birds such as long-tailed tits, goldcrests, blue and great tits move through the treetops seeking food and finding safety in numbers. It is also worth keeping an eye to the ground to look for the startling range of fungi that appear at this time of year, including: the Ear-pick, the Blusher, Tawny Grisette, Orange and Brown Birch Boletes and the most famous of all, the Fly-agaric with its bright red cap, covered with white spots.

Events: A series of volunteer days will be held throughout the autumn –

For further details contact Dersingham Bog's Site Manager Ash Murray on 01485 543044.

Village Voice would like to wish Amanda Field of Tudor Way every success in her charity 22-mile swim

Having only just learned to swim (she took lessons over a six week period), Amanda is now to tackle the task of swimming 1,048 lengths of the 25 metre pool at Bircham's National Construction College, during the 12 weeks from Monday 13 September to Sunday 5 December, to raise money for national spinal cord injury charity ASPIRE.

Operation Christmas Child

There will once again be a shoebox collection by the Methodist Church this year. You are asked to bring the shoeboxes to the Shoebox Coffee Morning at Dersingham Methodist Church on Saturday 6 November between 10 am and 12 noon.

Leaflets, detailing how to fill your box, will be available at the village Shoe Shop or contact Kathleen Moorhouse on 540325 or Catherine Tuckwood on 544363.

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The Seven Deadly Sins by Len Matthews

How many of us can quote all seven of those infamous deadly sins. It's a good pub quiz question. I can give them to you now because I have them listed in front of me in an article written by Joan Bakewell for the Sunday Times.

Recently BBC Radio 4 ran a series on this list of sins and towards the end of the series listeners were asked to nominate a new one, "a sin for the 21st Century." So to the seven deadly sins of Pride, Envy, Gluttony, Lust, Anger, Greed and Sloth another ten sins were nominated. These are those in the priority order of the nominations. 1st-Apathy, 2nd-Selfishness, 3rd-Hypocrisy, 4th-Indifference, 5th-Intolerance, 6th-Ignorance, 7th-Deceit, 8th-Waste, 9th-Cruelty, 10th-Cynicism.

The theological definition of sin is; an attribute of your personality that can lead to bad results when exaggerated. An example of this is wanting something is not a major problem; wanting it to excess is greed. However most of us think of sin as being things that we don't like about the world. In the sins proposed by the listeners there were things like; middle lane hoggers, speed cameras, reality TV and litter droppers. Speaking very personally, I was amazed that nobody seemed to have nominated 'Obsession'. When does desire become obsession? The Oxford English Dictionary defines 'Obsession' as: haunt, preoccupy, unreasonably persistent ideas in the mind; conditions in which such ideas are present.

A young thirty something man had an obsession with cars, which led to many difficulties in his marriage. Eventually this obsession guided him to hiring a very powerful car, much to the disgust of his wife. He decided to take it out to see what it would do. Unfortunately he didn't have the skills or ability to handle the car properly and eventually wrapped it around a lamp-post. When he arrived at the pearly gates the angel on duty sent him along to the transport office. The angel there said that based on his obsession with cars, this being heaven, he could have any car he wished as long as he was truthful an answering the questions he would be asked.

This he agreed to do, but when it came to the question, "How many times did you commit adultery?" he hesitated. The angel assured him that they knew the answer but he must be truthful. So he told the truth and said twice. The angel responded that that was right and he could have a top of the range Jaguar. He was a little disappointed but knew he would have to accept things as they were. He got on well in heaven and got to enjoy his car.

A short time later the transport angel found this man sitting in his car by the side of the road crying bitterly. The angel was concerned and tried to comfort him. "You are in heaven. OK you haven't quite got the car you wanted but it's a good one." "You don't understand," replied the man, "I have just seen my wife here." Well that's wonderful," said the angel, "You're wife is in heaven, you are in heaven. I'm sure you'll meet soon. So what are you crying for?" The man said, "I only got a Jaguar because I committed adultery twice." "That's right," said the angel. "Well I'm crying because my wife has just gone the opposite way down the road on a bike!"

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Heacham & District Community Car Scheme

Early in 2002 the above scheme was formed to provide transport for residents living in an area which had been covered by the Heacham Group Medical Practice. There are eleven villages within this area including Dersingham and adjoining villages. The drivers of this scheme are volunteers using their own vehicles for which they are paid 40 pence per mile. There are two paid part-time co-ordinators who work from the offices of Snettisham Parish Council (Tel: 01485 544544).

Passengers using the scheme must meet certain criteria in that they do not have access to, or, because of disability, cannot use public transport and cannot afford other means of transport.

As the title indicates this is a **Community** scheme and not confined to transporting patients to and from surgeries. The scope includes visits to opticians, dentists, chiropodists, taking passengers to visit sick relatives in Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and, where necessary, trips to the Post Office to collect pensions, and to local shops.

Initially the scheme was funded by the Countryside Agency but this has now been reorganised and this source of funding will finish at the end of 2004. Other funding must be found or the scheme will fold up, and, if this happens, it will be a disaster, as the scheme is a lifeline to so many people who live in and around Dersingham.

We do get a certain amount of help from the Parish Councils but I firmly believe that if we are to keep the Community Car Scheme going we must help ourselves. There are probably 8,000 residents in our Parishes, many of them elderly and disabled, and often without means of transport. But remember this is a **Community Scheme** and not restricted to the aged. Some of these have families who go to work or have children at school and so cannot help as much as they would like. So surely the scheme must be of some comfort to them also. We are seeking the sources of funding, for example the National Lottery, local businesses and organisations, but we have to act quickly if we want to keep this going.

I would suggest that we should organise public meetings in all our Parishes to make people aware of the problems, and if every household in our area gave an *annual* donation of £5 or £10 this would go some way to funding the scheme. Please send your answers to these questions:

- a) Would I make an annual donation?
- b) Would I attend a public meeting in my Parish?

Send your replies to the Co-ordinator, Community Car Scheme, Parish Council Offices, Snettisham, and the Committee can organise details about Public Meetings and Donations.

But Please Help Us To Help You!

Do not send any money or cheques at this stage.

*George Barton
Volunteer Driver and Committee Member and a Dersingham Resident*

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(It was our intention to include the following in the last issue of the magazine but were prevented because of lack of space!)

For two weeks in May the Carole Brown Health Centre were faced with the difficulty of having no access to their records due to a failure in the computer system (which also affected the Gayton Road practice). Although this caused a large number of problems for the doctors and staff in the surgery, they coped with the problem by reverting to the use of pen and paper, managed to keep the appointments list running, and, despite a few hiccups (and abuse from some patients) they managed to keep the surgery operating. No identifiable cause has been discovered for the computer failure.

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An optional 'BOOKmark' accessory allows you to open BOOK to the exact place you left it in a previous session – even if the book has been closed. BOOKmarks fit universal design standards; thus, a single BOOKmark can be used in BOOKS by various manufacturers. Conversely, numerous BOOK markers can be used in a single BOOK if the user wants to store numerous views at once. The number is limited only by the number of pages in the BOOK. You can also make personal notes next to BOOK text entries with an optional programming tool, the Portable Erasable Nib Cryptic Intercommunication Language Stylus (PENCILS). Portable, durable, and affordable, BOOK is being hailed as a precursor of a new entertainment wave. Also, BOOK's appeal seems so certain that thousands of content-creators have committed to the platform and investors are reportedly flocking. Look for a flood of new titles soon.

Sandringham View - What's in a Name?

PHILIP NURSE ROAD



Philip Herbert (Duke) Nurse was 28 years old when he died in a tragic building site accident in January 1983. 'Duke', as all of his family and friends called him, was born the youngest son of Herbert and Eileen Nurse, of 10 Chapel Road in Dersingham, and attended Dersingham Primary school and the then St George's Secondary Modern School.

As a young lad he would often be seen, wearing a very oversized white apron, making deliveries with Norman Towers (the butcher who had the shop in Chapel Road which is now Scoles), and later, as a teenager, he would help out at Vawser's Farm in Ingoldisthorpe. After leaving school 'Duke' started by working on the land, later transferring to the Furniture Factory in Snettisham, and then as an employee of Bob Riches at Stafford House Builders. He then worked for Ingoldisthorpe construction firm H.C.L. for the three years leading up to his death.

A very popular and keen sportsman in the village, 'Duke' played darts for the Coach and Horses, being involved in a competition between that pub and the Dun Cow (which was on the site that is now Budgens), played football in both the Saturday and Sunday Leagues and in competition for the Memorial Cup (no longer played for because of the pressure of fixtures).

The accident occurred whilst he was employed by a sub-contractor on a building site in Grimston Road, Wootton, when an 11-foot trench collapsed around him, leaving him trapped up to his neck. Rescue workers, including 6 firemen and a doctor from Gayton Road Health Centre, arrived at the scene at about 3.30 pm and are reported to have worked for over an hour to free him, but he later died in hospital, having suffered a fractured skull and brain haemorrhage. At the inquest following his death, Station Officer Paddy Barrett said "It was a very difficult operation, we had to use compressed air and spades to move some of the soil which had trapped him." Mr Barrett also paid special tribute to a digger driver on site, Mr Derek Lovett, who throughout the rescue bid held back the walls of the trench with his digger bucket.

Two wreaths at his funeral were reminiscent of his life in that one was of white chrysanthemums in the shape of a football, and another, in white, gold and yellow flowers, styled as a glass of lager on a beer mat. The service, conducted by the vicar of Dersingham, Rev Hugh Pollock, was in a packed chapel at Mintlyn Crematorium, where 245 mourners, some standing three deep around the walls, paid tribute to a well respected and loved local man.

Duke's sister Edna and brother Brock are still resident in the village; his other sister, Susan, is resident in Clenchwarton, and his other brother, Keith, lives in Cheshire. The editor thanks Susan for her assistance in compiling this review of a man who was so popular that it was felt by the Parish Council of the time that he should be remembered by the naming of a street after him.

Carole Brown Health Centre Patients Participation Group (PPG)

by Tom Morris – Chairman

At the 16 September meeting, the PPG and the Parish Council were briefed by Mr Graham Dickerson, Executive Manager of the Gayton Road Practice, on the plans to provide Dersingham and Ingoldisthorpe patients with a new purpose-built health centre to replace the existing Carole Brown Health Centre. The proposed site for the development will be the old farmyard at Manor Farm in Manor Road, adjacent to St Nicholas Church. No other site in the village had been found to be both available and suitable.

Plans for the 'one stop' primary care centre are likely to include consulting rooms for GPs and nurses, facilities for minor operations procedures (eg cataracts, hernias), a dentist, optician, dispensary, community services, doctors' training facilities and other support services. However, before any decisions are taken as to the services to be provided, residents served by the Carole Brown Health Centre will be consulted and their views sought as to what facilities and services are desired.

It has been agreed that the name "Carole Brown Health Centre" can be carried forward to the new centre and this agreement was welcomed enthusiastically by the PPG.

A public consultation exercise under the control of the Primary Care Trust will take place between now and the end of the year. The community's requirements will be used as a basis for the planning and design process undertaken by architects and, should planning permission be granted, construction could begin late in 2005 with completion due in 2006. It is hoped that the centre will be fully operational early in 2007.

The partners and staff of the Gayton Road Practice and of the Primary Care Trust have worked hard to provide our community with the health services and facilities to which our patients are entitled. The Chairman and members of both the PPG and Parish Council thanked and congratulated all those involved with the initiative which could provide residents with this health facility.

The PPG will be cooperating fully with all concerned to help identify the facilities desired at the new centre. To this end, the next PPG meeting on 28 October will be the first of several devoted entirely to discussing and documenting the requirement and concerns of members. All members of the public are invited to attend these forthcoming meetings at 7.30 pm in St Cecilia's Church or to write to the Chairman at 24 Tudor Way, Dersingham PE31 6LX. (01485 541450).

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Hedgerows

Enclosure, thou'rt curse upon the land,

And tasteless was the wretch who thy existence planned. John Clare

The age of a hedgerow is related to the diversity of plants found growing within it and can be estimated with a bit of simple mathematical jiggery-pokery. For some Devon hedges, these calculations reveal ages that suggest they were not planted but may be actual remnants of the ancient wildwood - into which the fields were carved. Stone walls in neighbouring Cornwall have similarly been dated to the Neolithic. The hedgerows in this part of Norfolk - along with most of eastern England and the Midlands - are not very species rich being mainly composed of the ubiquitous hawthorn. This, and the characteristic straight narrow lanes with wide grass verges, dates our local hedges to the time of the Parliamentary Enclosure Acts - between 1750 and 1850. The dry stone walls of the Derbyshire and Yorkshire Dales also date from this time. Some of these cross the fields in elongated S shapes - following ancient plough furrows and fossilising the tracks of ploughmen and their oxen. Our local hedgerows by contrast were planted in straight lines.

Rural England was changed profoundly by the Enclosure Acts as rich landowners consolidated their holdings. The rural poor were forced off the land and had to migrate to the expanding industrial cities where they became - and still remain - the urban poor.

Today, our hedgerows are of benefit to wildlife in a number of ways. They provide nesting sites for birds like the yellowhammer and whitethroat and plenty of winterberries for flocks of redwings and fieldfares. The verges protect wildflower species that would not be able to survive in the intensively managed arable fields. They also create wildlife corridors, allowing species to move between different habitats. But-like all change - there are winners and losers. Some bird species, such as skylarks and lapwings, will only nest in wide-open spaces and the planting of hedgerows would have reduced their numbers considerably. Perhaps the most dramatic bird that used to inhabit the open landscape of medieval England was the great bustard. The last British great bustard was shot near Dersingham. Shooting is normally given as the reason for their extinction but habitat loss was also likely to have been important. It is no coincidence that the latest attempt to reintroduce the great bustard is taking place on Salisbury Plain. This is a landscape that probably resembles pre-enclosure Norfolk.

Conservationists have even been known to advocate the removal of certain hedgerows. This is most often done on lowland wet grassland where hedges provide a convenient perch for predatory crows on the look out for the chicks of lapwings and other ground nesting birds.

The lush ancient hedgerows of the west country are national treasures and should be preserved at all cost. Our local hedgerows are less important but they do more good than harm - hedgerows across wet grasslands do more harm than good.

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Greenish Fingers' Garden Notebook

July to Early September

1 July. I sat among our blossoming shrubs, watching blue-tits swing in the 'tree' cotoneaster. When they'd gone I spotted a bird I didn't recognise. Rarely still, it darted from branch to branch. I crept away to fetch the binoculars and watched it from a distance. I consulted our bird books: it was probably a garden warbler. Apparently, despite its name, the garden warbler doesn't often visit gardens; but it fitted the description and photographs. So there it seemed to be, flitting about, voraciously devouring insects within two



metres of me. Later I watched a sparrow hawk flap and glide, flap and glide. It took a 45-degree fast drop to the south and I was glad for our small birds. We have found too many telltale piles of feathers under the old apple tree, a favourite 'plucking' spot of hawks.

Last year, mid-July was hot: we welcomed hoverflies, honey and bumble bees, red admirals, gatekeepers, painted ladies, peacocks and blues. This year a few have visited us: gatekeepers and tortoiseshells, a comma, a speckled wood. Now, in early September, red admirals are turning up in the orchard, drawn to the fallen plums like moths to a lamp. I leave some juicy, rotting plums at the foot of the Victoria. A butterfly arrives. Its colours are very new, pristine. It lands on the tree trunk, half a metre from the ground, and then, on dainty legs, it picks its way delicately through the fissures of the bark until it's a few centimetres from the fruit. A flutter down. And out rolls the proboscis! It is as greedily absorbed as the warbler was. A wasp investigates, and then decides to forage elsewhere.

Floods came later in July. Our peaches began to rot, though we rescued about half. The sun came out and with it the speckled wood, exploring the flowers of the large Hebe. And then a comma, and two tortoiseshells. We keep a small patch of stinging nettles for the caterpillars of the tortoiseshell and red admiral. My butterfly book* says, "the red admiral female lays its eggs singly on the leaves of the stinging nettle ... The caterpillar feeds singly inside a protective tent of leaves, held together with silk. The chrysalis is grey-brown with shining golden spots, suspended from the underside of the leaf ..."

And this is what it says about the small tortoiseshell (the large tortoiseshell is very rare in Britain): "eggs are laid in batches on underside of young leaves ... The caterpillar feeds only on stinging nettles: caterpillars live in a communal silken web up to the last moult, and thereafter live singly; suspended chrysalis grey-brown with shining golden spots, often formed at some distance from the food plant and attached to a plant stem." How privileged we are, to have such little miracles taking place around us...I'm off now to stake up the nettles and have a cautious peep ...

*Butterflies & Moths of Britain & Europe. H Hoffman & T.Marktanner. (Collins Nature Guides pb. £7.99)

The Oldest House in the Village

by Elizabeth Fiddick

I was recently asked if I knew which was the oldest house in the village. A document of 1672 concerning the collection of the Hearth Tax of 2/- for each hearth records 73 houses in the village. At that time the villagers lived in cottages along the present Chapel Road and Manor Road. There were clusters of cottages around the site of Gelham Manor (The Drift), Pakenham Manor (The Community Centre) Doddshill and Fern Hill. There were about 12 larger cottages standing on the sites of village farms. Our oldest house must be somewhere among these. Gelham Manor House at the end of the Drift and Pakenham Manor which stood next to the old village school no longer exist. One of the largest houses at that time would have been the Pell's "enchanted Mansion" built in the 1550s in the pastures behind the present Institute. Sadly only the moat is now left to show its position. The Pells, a wealthy family who made their money in the wool trade, also built Dersingham Hall as a family home. Most reports put the date of its building as 1670-71. However a house was being built at an earlier date as in his will of 1619 Thomas Pell wrote, *"I give unto my nephew John Pell, all the stuffe, as timber, stone, lyme, brick, tyle, deale and all other provisions for the building that is within the house of my now building or in and about the grounds belonging to the said house."* So were parts of the Hall started before 1670?

Close by is The Feathers. Accounts I have read suggest this was once a Manor House built about 1643.

One other Manor House is still standing. Westhall Manor in Manor Road still looks over to The Wash. The records for this Manor go back to the 13th century at least but accounts suggest the present dwelling was built in 1671. At some point it became the village Workhouse until the new Poor Law Unions were formed in 1835 and the large Workhouse was built at Docking

In Centre Vale the old farmhouse is still standing. The Tithe Schedule of 1839 records Jonathan Jackson living here in a House with Yard and garden but the premises predate the schedule. The present owner has told me that under the tiled roof some of the original thatch remains.

But now let's consider the smaller cottages or houses that stand in Manor Road and Chapel Road. At the bottom of Sandringham Hill is the large shop that was once Parker's Stores. The smaller part on the right is much older than the large extension added later. The oldest gravestone in the churchyard is that of Sarah and Thomas Fitlin. She died in 1686 aged 33 and Thomas died aged "about 39 years". They ran a grocery business here.

The back of The Coach and Horses is obviously much older than the large extension in the front.

As you walk down Manor Road towards the Main Road the Tithe Map (1839) shows the land on the left to be Rice's Common with no buildings there. The row of

cottages at right angles to Manor Road near Heath Road and known as Asker's Row are clearly of great age and have been well restored in recent times. Close by a more modern house has been added to a much older cottage at the rear. At the bottom of Beech Drift is a lovely carstone cottage that to my eyes is a contender.

There are several cottages in Chapel Road that should be considered. Walking from the Main Road the Tithe map (1839) shows only one dwelling on the right. That is the cottage facing Fern Hill. This is now one dwelling but used to be several small linked cottages. The first row of cottages on the left has surely stood in Chapel Road for centuries. There are others further along that seem of a similar age. They feature on all the old maps that I have seen. The large house opposite the Library has clearly some older parts. However this was the area where the Malthouse used to stand. It was known as Malthouse Yard, but the original buildings have gone. The front of the long cottage next to Red Pumps garage shows clearly the alterations made over the years since it served as a village shop and at one time a Post Office. On a small map of 1720 there are buildings clearly marked where Lane End now stands at the bottom of Sugar Lane. They would seem to be separate dwellings rather than one large house. But a close look at the House shows where alterations and additions have been made. There is a very small house here at right angles to the road, which is all that remains of a row of cottages that stood nearby. I was once told it used to be a stable.

Doddshill is one place in the village that has retained its name through the centuries. Evidence of very early occupation has been found here. Mrs. Stockley's lovely house must be a contender although I believe it too has been considerably altered over the years. Perhaps she can tell us more.

Finally there are four cottages opposite Budgens. Two are clearly much older and since they are opposite the site of the original Dun Cow Farm, a lovely carstone building sadly demolished in the 1930s I offer them as possible contenders. So we need any information or deeds that anyone has to settle the question. I have proposed a few contenders but which is the oldest house in the village?

Al fresco Dining Military Style

This photograph should bring back memories to many former Norfolk Army Cadets who were members of the Sandringham Detachment based at Dersingham's Drill Hall in Dodds Hill Road between 1969 and 1985. It shows 2nd Lieutenant George Pratt (right) preparing an al fresco meal at the time when he was adult instructor to the unit. Also in the picture is George's son, William.





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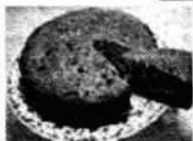
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DIARY OF NOTIFIED EVENTS

Full details of some of these events will be found inside this magazine

Day	Date	Month	Time	Organisation	Event	Venue
Thur	21	Oct		Dersingham Schools	First Day of Half Term	
Mon	25	Oct	7 pm	Dersingham Parish Council	Full Council Meeting	Infant School
Thur	28	Oct	2.30-3.30	Dersingham Library	'Spooky Stories'	Library
Fri	29	Oct	10-12 noon	Norfolk Constabulary	Mobile Police Station	Budgens Car Park
Mon	1	Nov		Dersingham Schools	Schools Reopen	
Sat	6	Nov	7.30 pm	St Nicholas Church	Bangers, Beans & Beetles	Church Hall
Tues	9	Nov		Dersingham Library	Food Fortnight	Library
Wed	10	Nov		Village Voice	Deadline for copy	Parish Council Office
Fri	26	Nov	10-12 noon	Norfolk Constabulary	Mobile Police Station	Budgens Car Park
Mon	29	Nov	7 pm	Dersingham Parish Council	Full Council Meeting	Infant School
Wed	8	Dec		Village Voice	Publication date	Citizen Newspaper
Fri	17	Dec		Dersingham Schools	Last Day of Term	

Helen Marie Jordan married (Charles) Simon Scott at St Nicholas Church on 31 July 2004

Helen's mother, Kathy Jordan,
a regular contributor to this magazine,
wrote this poem for the event

IMPACT

Kathy Jordan © July 2004

York never knew what hit it,
When 'Hel' and Simon went to town,
City walls and Monk Bar trembled,
As Clifford's Tower fell down!!

Birmingham's Spaghetti Junction,
Almost tangled to a stop,
"We'll give 'Brum five", they chorused,
Munching Bournville choc!!

St Bees buzzed in its bonnet,
'Old man Coniston' went grey,
Poor Wordsworth lost his daffodils,
Windermere was washed away!!

Fragrant lavender was flattened,
Hunstanton fell into the sea,
Even Cromer crabs retreated,
With none left for their tea!!

Stoke's potteries were shattered,
Then Stone's canal ran dry,
As beer and wine flowed freely,
At the Langtry Pub nearby!!

May they drink the sweetest nectar?
And taste the fruits of life,
So this 'Norfolk Dumpling'
And 'Cumberland Sausage',
Make the ideal man and wife!!





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Everyone's a Winner in the Village Voice Holiday Prize Competition

Due to the fact that we received only two entries!

A £20 voucher for a meal for two at the Feathers Hotel for the only ***BORING postcard of the season*** received goes to Mr D Staples, who sent in a yellow postcard with the words '8 out of 10 postcards mention the weather'.

There is no **runner-up** to receive a box of chocolates supplied by Dersingham Post Office.

A £10 voucher to use at Thaxter's Garden Centre goes to Alex and Alan Polaine, the senders of the ***only postcard which was sent from the furthest point from Dersingham***, that being St Kilda in the Orkneys.

When is a Village Not a Village?

We are pleased to hear the West Norfolk villages, Clenchwarton, West Winch and Castle Rising, have been granted village status by the NHS Pharmacy Dispensing Committee, who were asked to adjudicate for or against an argument by the Norfolk Local Pharmaceutical Committee that they should no longer be classified as villages because they have amenities ***such as street lighting and pavements, and because most residents travel into neighbouring towns such as King's Lynn for shopping and work.***

If these were the criteria for identifying built-up areas as rural villages where would it have left other villages such as ours?

This matter came into question after the Gayton Road Health Centre had asked for permission to dispense medicines to patients from the villages mentioned.

St George's 'Eco Gang'

What a pleasure it is to drive through Snettisham and to see the results of five months of effort by three twelve-year old pupils of Dersingham's St George's School.

A corner plot, adjacent to the bridge on the outskirts of the village has been transformed by these youngsters, from an eyesore where a tree had fallen during storms, to a beauty spot for the benefit of the community, featuring plants, shrubs and a bench seat, which have been donated by local businesses, with assistance from Snettisham Parish Council.

Holly Smith, Thomas Pitkin and Thomas Pearce became runners-up in a competition against 66 other county groups who were challenged with undertaking a community-based project, the event having been organised by Norfolk Police's Partners Against Crime Taskforce (PACT).

It is a real joy to be able to report on the wonderful efforts made by some young people to put something into the community, albeit in another village, rather than the negative comments, which are often made about this age group.

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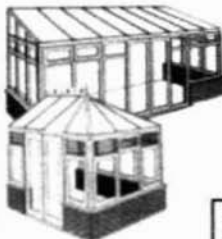
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Letters to the Editor

The Editor has received the following letter (name and address supplied);

In your recent article on Dersingham Youth and Community Centre there were some errors which I would like to rectify. I am afraid that I cannot date each change precisely but I will do my best.

When the Public Elementary School was built it taught all ages from 5 years up to school leaving age. (This varied from 13 yrs-15 yrs and was not very strictly applied.) Over the years the school became short of space and the Drill Hall on Doddshill Road, and the small room opposite (in the Feathers' Car Park) were both used at varying times for school activities.

By the 1930's it was evident that larger premises were needed and St George's Secondary School was built. This was due to open in 1939 but it was requisitioned by the army and used to billet soldiers during the war. When the war ended the school opened, this was around 1946. The Youth and Community Centre then became Dersingham V.C Junior School and dealt with children 5 yrs -11+ yrs and St George's was a Secondary Modern School, taking children from 11+ - 15 yrs.

Things continued like this for some years. Eventually it was found that the Junior School, (or the Bottom School as it was known locally), was too small and increasingly outdated and inconvenient. They then built a new school near the surgery which we now know as the Dersingham First and Nursery School. This ran alongside the Bottom School for a while. The next big change came when St George's School became a middle school and the Bottom School became the Youth and Community Centre. This happened around 1980. I cannot be more precise with this date as there were so many changes and things being phased in and out that the lines are blurred.

The last headmaster of the Bottom school was Ted Shawl. He was a really caring headmaster and well liked. He has since died. I hope this makes a clearer picture of the life of the Youth and Community Centre.

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For those readers who perhaps provide a local service but who do not currently advertise with us, you may consider a fee of £12 for a sixth of a page (up to £50 for a full page) per issue, to be very cost effective.

Advertisements for inclusion in the next newsletter should be in the hands of the Parish Clerk, Dersingham Parish Council, The Police Station, Manor Road, Dersingham PE31 6LH **by Wednesday 10 November 2004**. Enquiries regarding advertisements may be made by calling 01485 541465.

Articles for publication in the November/December edition of Village Voice must reach the editor at 45 Queen Elizabeth Drive, Dersingham, before the **deadline date of Wednesday 10 November 2004 for publication on Wednesday 8 December 2004**. (Contributors who are promoting events should take note of this earliest date of publication).

It must be pointed out that the editor encourages contributions but reserves the right to amend and edit as necessary. Any contributions received will be accepted on the understanding that, unless a specific request is made that names, addresses, etc are not used, these may be included in the publication and may be maintained on the Parish Council's database.

Due to limitations on space it is possible that some items received may not be published, or may be held for publication at a later date. Contributors should also be aware that published material might appear on the Parish Council's Internet web site.

The editor does not necessarily agree with opinions that are expressed, or the accuracy of statements made, by contributors to the Village Voice.

Village Voice is the bi-monthly magazine of Dersingham Parish Council

The Production Team consists of:

Editor:	Bob Tipling
'In-house' Photographer and Illustrations Editor:	Tony Bubb
Layout Artist and IT Technical Consultant:	Stella Caunt

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Edmond Hoyle (1914)



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