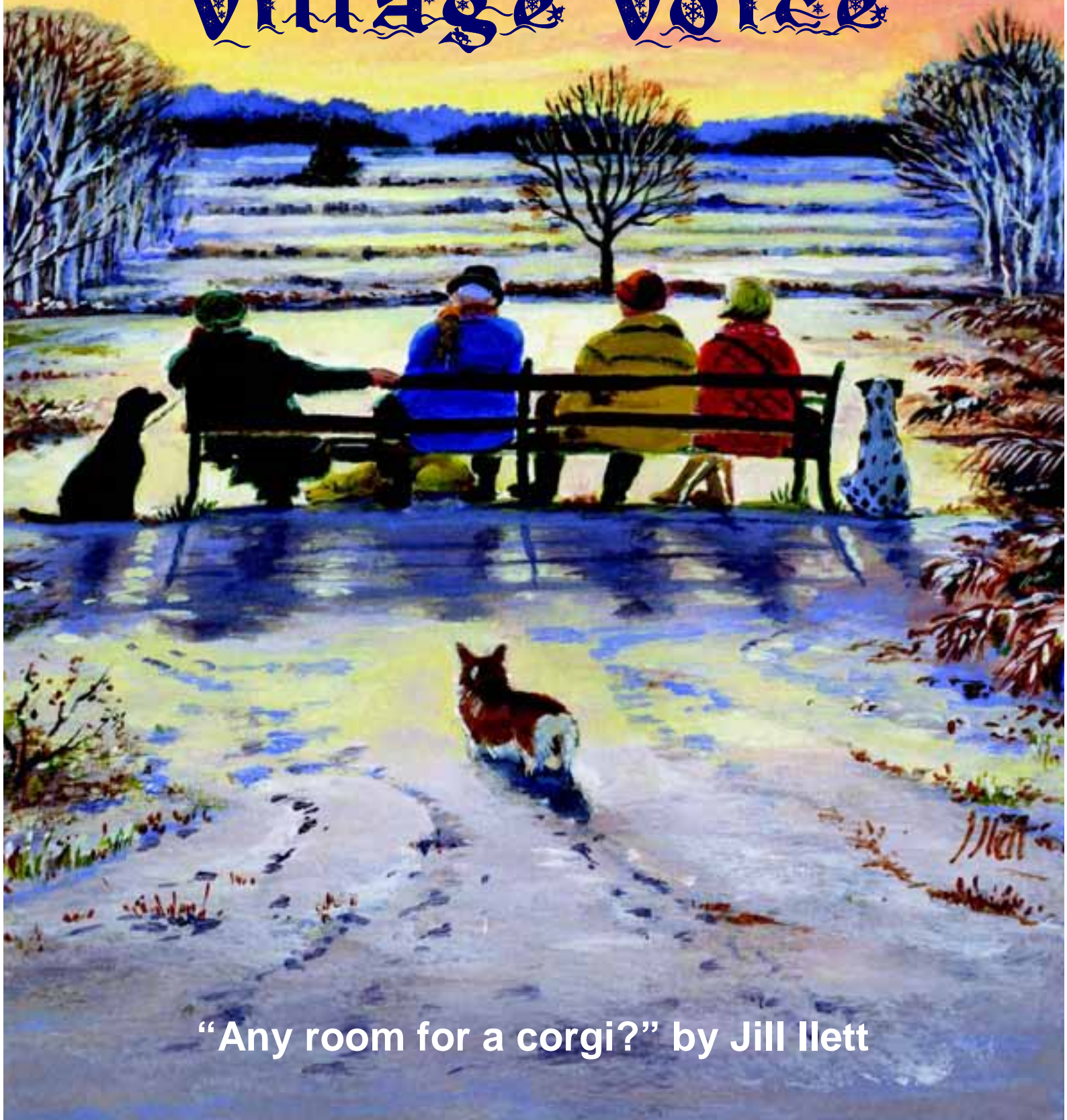


Dersingham Village Voice



“Any room for a corgi?” by Jill Ilett



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Editor's Notes

It doesn't seem that long ago that we were enjoying a white Christmas and yet here is another Festive Season racing towards us. There are several pieces with a seasonal flavour in this edition to get you into (or out of) the mood.

I was driving along the Swaffham bypass the other day and saw a dead fox by the roadside which got me thinking that I have never heard of any foxes in Dersingham or indeed badgers. Have any of you come across any? It seems strange, given that they are in such big numbers in built up areas, that one or two foxes might have found their way here. Certainly brer fox could find a couple, of hearty, nourishing meals round our way by consuming the persistently noisy roosters that think it's dawn all day.

Our cover picture was painted specially for VV by Jill Ilett. The original watercolour, now framed, measures about 18" X 14" and is available to buy from Jill, priced at £100. Jill also has work on show at Time Out beauty salon in Manor Road and she will be having a one woman show at the Grapes Gallery in Snettisham during April 2011.

We will be compiling the next edition of Dersingham Data during January so please check any entries that relate to organisations that you belong to. I am also sure that there are village activities taking place that do not get listed so please send in some details.

Some of you may already go on the walks organised by the walking group, but for those who have yet to try one of these they are great fun and good exercise. Well lead and researched, walks take you to places that you may have erroneously dismissed as dull or already well known to you but, as I have found, being taken there by someone else often reveals hitherto unseen interest.

There is a good mix of articles to keep you occupied over the end of the year with a bit of new talent emerging. If you feel that urge to write, do send in your efforts for consideration.

The geese are back now and fly over our house regularly, so it was nice to find that they were also in the Morecambe Bay area when I was up there at the beginning of the month. I also visited Leighton Moss RSPB reserve and, even on a wet and windy day, there were lots of birds, birders and even the odd red deer to see. With a good café and shop it's well worth a visit if you are in the area.

If, like our friend here, you have a long Christmas list, don't forget that Dersingham has a remarkable range of shops for a country village who are well able to supply some splendid gift ideas.

Have a good Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Tony Bubb



WHATS HAPPENING*

November

26 Bingo for Dersingham Minors FC, 7.30pm, St Nicholas Church Hall

27 Christmas Coffee Morning, 10am-noon, Methodist Church

December

3 Glebe house School Christmas Fair, 10 - 4pm, Cromer Rd Hunstanton.

3-5 Christmas Tree Festival, St Nicholas Church, 10am-4pm.

7 Village Voice Live, 7.30pm St Nicholas Church Hall

8 Dersingham Walking Group, see Page 31

January

4 Village Voice Live, 7.30pm. St Nicholas Church Hall

12 Dersingham Walking Group, see Page 31

30 Dersingham Walking Group see Page 31

* This, and all other information, is listed in good faith. We cannot accept responsibility for inaccuracies or if an event does not take place.

Dersingham Village Voice is published by Dersingham Parish Council

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Dear Village Voice



I am writing to tell you how much I enjoy reading Dersingham Village Voice. My name is Pauline Robinson (nee Drew). I was born at Garden Cottages in Dersingham in 1939. We then moved to Gelham Manor when I was about 10 years old.

Two of my sisters, Jenny Stenton and Mary Chidgey still live in the village, as did my late sister, Shirley Meredith. My two sisters keep the Village Voice for me to read. I left the village when I was 16 to live in Windsor in Berkshire where I met my husband who was in the army. After we got married we went to live in his part of the country which is the Yorkshire Dales.

Over the last 50 years we have visited family in the village at least twice a year. We always took our two sons to Hunstanton for their summer holidays. When we retired we joined the RSPB and what better place to birdwatch than Titchwell, Cley and Snettisham beach and shingle pits. When I was a child we used to swim in the shingle pits. I always thought they were in Dersingham. I really enjoy Dickie Melton in the Village Voice. He is about the same age as me and we went to the same schools. I know all the people and places that he talks about. So many memories he brings back. I look forward to all the magazines.

Pauline Robinson

*Don't forget that we can post V V anywhere for a small annual fee of £6.00. An ideal gift perhaps?
Ed.*

On a very rainy September morning the Dersingham Evening W I held a coffee morning for Macmillan Cancer Support.

Many thanks to all those ladies who worked very hard to make this event a great success.

So many people saw our new signs and balloons near the church and in Budgens car park and came in for a warming drink, Budgens biscuits and a chatter.

Many thanks to Jonathan James of Budgens and to Fr James Fyfe who once again allowed us to use his church.

£327 was raised for Macmillan Cancer support.

Shirley Brooks

The Willow Lace Circle held our first lace day at Snettisham Memorial Hall on September 11th. in aid of the East Anglian Air Ambulance.

Our thanks go to local suppliers, Margaret and David Davis, Mainly Lace, Val Smith with her Jewellery together with the Greetings Cards of Helen and Noel.

The talk given by Sue Ebbs on Japanese Embroidery was excellent and certainly demonstrated the intricacies of this art form. Diana Millner, Chairman of the Lacemakers Circle, and her friend gave their support, we were able to donate a number of lace making items to her Junior Lace Makers Group.

The day could not have been the success that it was without the tireless work behind the scenes of the ladies in charge of the catering and of course all the other volunteers.

A grand total of £650 was raised for the Air Ambulance from a most enjoyable day.

Gwen Wilson

As I am sure you are aware, Dersinghams tennis courts are in a fairly sad state of disrepair. Unfortunately they are so bad, that when we have league matches, many opposing teams will not play at Dersingham, so we must play our home matches away too.

Additionally, many people in Dersingham who are tennis players have joined other clubs as our courts are so dangerous and untrue.

Despite many efforts from the tennis club members, in applying for grants and the involvement of PC Andy Crown, as mentioned in the last edition of The Village Voice, a solution has yet to



be found for funding the vital repairs required.

The current situation is that the Sports Ground Committee are forming a fundraising steering group, to enable the tennis court repairs and the development of a new Sports Pavillion.

Is there anyone in Dersingham who is able to assist with the fundraising, who may not themselves be a tennis player, but who believes passionately about trying to improve this facility, before it becomes so dangerous that it becomes a fantastic facility that the village loses.

Thank you for your consideration.

If you are able to help in any way, please e-mail the secretary, rosie@familyrussell.flyer.co.uk

Rosie Russell

I was prompted by the welcome arrival of the latest edition of Village Voice to send you this photo. It was taken by me on 18th December last year during that really heavy snow and, because I was quite pleased with it, I posted it on a national website and promptly forgot all about it.

We run Barn House B&B in Station Road and around May time one of our guests happened to remark that they liked my framed photograph in the restaurant at the Sandringham Visitor Centre. I was quite taken aback as I had no idea that anyone in the area had seen the photograph, let alone framed it and displayed it for all to see. Since then many guests have remarked on it although it still remains for me to actually go and see it for myself! (Busy work - running a B&B!)

I should explain that the photo is published on the web under a "Creative Commons Licence" which means that the image may be freely used for non-commercial purposes provided the author of the work is credited.

Anyway, I hope you like it and that it may be of interest.

Tom Chapman



The piece about Dennis Wright in the last V V rang a few bells as our paths have crossed. When I left school in 1955 I went to work at Silletts, they were a family firm with a garage in London Road, King's Lynn and were Vauxhall dealers. During the sixties they were bought out and the garage and staff moved to John Kennedy Road. In the next few years the garage changed hands twice before becoming Tricentrol.

During my and Dennis's time there I was his workshop foreman which was a challenge. What is now a car wash were the offices and showroom, the bodyshop where Dennis worked was next door to the tyre depot and the workshops were where a private garage now operates.

One story I remember and we have had a laugh about it since. The car park at King's Lynn station used to join one of the platforms. One day a customer turning his car went over the edge of the platform and the car landed on its roof on the line. The car came to our body shop for repair and after the repairs were finished the customer didn't want it back so it was put up for sale. A buyer and the salesman sat in the car in the showroom and decided to open the sunshine roof. As it opened they disappeared in a cloud of white powder, filler had been used to finish the roof repair and after it had been smoothed down somebody had not cleaned the residue out from the roof gulley, so that sale fell through. There were a few angry people about but as usual Dennis talked his way out of it.

With his business and time with the fire service the boy done well, but there was never a dull moment.

Pat Reddy, in the last edition, mentioned that we meet up for a bite and a beer. Although we both live in Cyprus we are in different countries. Rosemary and myself live in the south east near Larnaca in the Republic of Cyprus, while Pat and Lyn live in the north of the island which is under Turkish occupation. In 1974 Turkey invaded Cyprus and when the fighting stopped Turkey occupied 38% of the island in the north, this is now known as The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. The border between the two is known as the green line, when the fighting stopped a line was drawn on maps in green pencil hence the name.

The border has a 3km buffer zone along its length which is policed by the UN. There are points along its length where you can cross, passports have to be shown and the usual checks made at times, also car insurance has to be bought for the part you are visiting. We are in the EU and use the euro as currency, in the north the currency is the Turkish lire everything is as in the Turkish mainland. Where we live we are ten minutes from the border. So when we see each other it's a little bit more than just jumping in the car. We both have the nice climate but live in different cultures.

He mentioned the Newfoundland soldiers and found this photo. Pat's father Gerry is on the right of the photo in dark glasses. Talking to Pat we think the lorry in photo is the one Gerry drove for the estate and the photo was taken on flower show day. The men are not in working clothes but dressed tidily. I think they were the gang who put up the boundary ropes for the car parks and show boundaries. Some names, in lorry from left Bob Dye, Wallace Twite, Foddy Nurse, middle row, third left, George Riches, in trilby Jim Brown who was head forester, Stanley Lines and Gerry, front on right Don Bridges. Wallace and Stanley always ran the bus park every year.



Another soldier Bill Quick married Mary Prime who's parents ran the Feathers Hotel, he played cricket for the village for a number of years being the wicket keeper, he always batted number eleven and used his bat like a baseball bat with a big round arm swing at the ball.

Bernie Twite

In response to Dick Melton's request for information on Dersingham Crisp Factory can I first refer him to my contributions in the following issues of Village Voice:- **43** re: Alex Fisher (son) and West Norfolk Super Crisps, **45** the crisp factory and delivery vehicles are mentioned and **55** describes the area where the crisps were produced

I will elaborate a little on the production areas. As I reported previously, I used to climb over our fence and put the potatoes through the peeler and then into either the chipper or crisper. The crisps were then soaked in a special solution (something to do with the starch and to keep them separated - I think). The first crisps were cooked in the fish and chip shop between the lunchtime opening and the evening opening and, having proved successful, a new frying range was bought and installed in the next building backing onto the original range. Here production really took off and the remainder of the buildings were used for packing and temporary storage prior to despatch in the vans.

One item that always stood out in my memory was that the cooked crisps were taken from the pan and put into a spinner to remove the excess fat. I never got involved in the crisps production apart from preparing the potatoes through the scraper/peeler and crisper in the early days. Don't ask me what year it was, it was a long time ago, about 1950. I don't know how many boxes of crisps were produced when in full production or how many potatoes were processed into crisps, certainly far more than I used to prepare in the evening. I do know that flavoured crisps were produced and, if my memory serves me well, they included salt and vinegar, OXO and onion. I also remember at times helping to load the van with tins of crisps for deliveries and also the building of the Trojan bodywork. I know there were quite a few people involved with the production and packing but names escape me now. I do know I was involved in my small way with the start of West Norfolk Super Crisps production in Dersingham thanks to the ingenuity and inventiveness of Alex Fisher (son).

Ivan Green

I remember the delicious "Cristo" OXO flavoured crisps that were only available at the sports ground where our school sports were held. A packet of those for 3d was just about worth the dire afternoon watching the sporty types at school running and jumping. After a couple of years though, the crisps disappeared and with it the need to go to the sports day. Ed.

On behalf of the numerous residents who reside in the Valley Rise, Mountbatten Road and Sandringham View areas and who use the new bus service regularly may I express my sincere

Village Voice Sudoku No 14 Solution								
3	9	7	5	6	4	2	1	8
6	8	2	3	1	9	7	5	4
4	1	5	7	8	2	9	6	3
8	4	9	1	2	3	6	7	5
5	7	1	8	9	6	4	3	2
2	3	6	4	7	5	8	9	1
9	5	3	6	4	8	1	2	7
7	2	4	9	3	1	5	8	6
1	6	8	2	5	7	3	4	9

thanks to Dersingham Parish Council, First Bus and anyone else who has campaigned for this in the past. No longer does one see passengers, especially the elderly, who have alighted from the bus at Manor Road or Thaxters having to walk up Station Road and Mounbatten Road whether it is dry or pouring with rain with bags of shopping. Some people never use a bus but when the time comes I'm sure that they will be glad of this service.

Congratulations also to 'First Bus' drivers who are nearly always on time. I hope that the council will remember to grit this route in the winter as it will be needed more than ever. Thanks again to all involved.

Mick Mossendew



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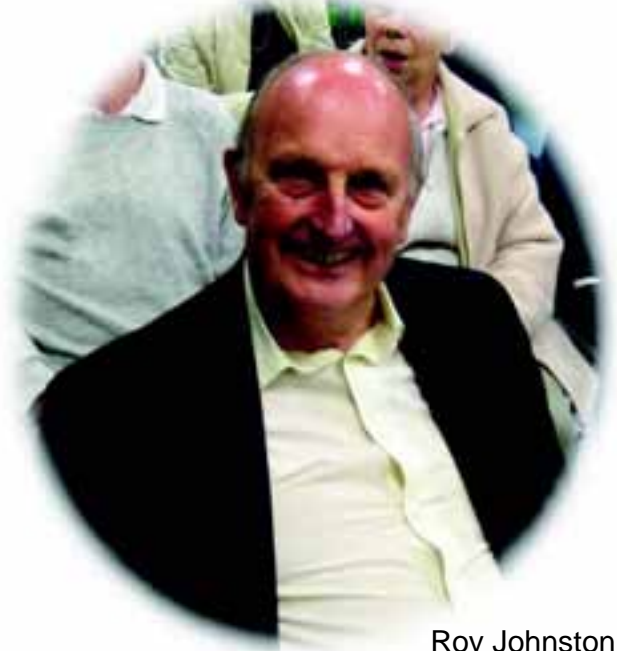
We have two new Parish Councilors. **Dennis Wright**, who we featured in the last edition of VV, has joined bringing with him his valuable knowledge of emergency procedures as well as being born and raised in the village.

No stranger to the council, **Roy Johnston** stood down for health reasons some 18 months ago but is now restored to health and is back to complete the set. Roy, is of course, still one of our Borough Councilors.

Sadly, however, we have just lost two members, for health and personal reasons, so we still have a couple of places to fill. How about you?



Dennis Wright



Roy Johnston

Dersingham United Charities

A vacancy has arisen for a Trustee of Dersingham United Charities.

The Trustees manage some 100 acres of land which provide funding for projects in Dersingham that benefit the sick, disabled, elderly, isolated, students on practical apprenticeships or those suffering hardship.

The appointment is for a five year term and will be made by
the trustees.

Any competent person, resident in Dersingham, who does not hold any interest in property belonging to the Charities, may apply for the office.

Applications should be in writing to:-

the clerk of Dersingham United Charities,

Mrs Ruth Mountain, 11 Bank Road, Dersingham by 31st December 2010.

The appointment will be made at the next meeting of the trustees, following the closing date.

An Evening in Advent for Music Lovers

An exciting opportunity to hear two international artists perform at St. Mary's Church, Heacham takes place on the 27th of November.

Cellist **Ivan McCready**, who spent 20 years with Duke Quartet and award winning chamber music pianist **Scott Mitchell** will perform in what promises to be a sumptuous programme commencing with 3 Fantasy Pieces by Schumann.

The concert organised by Heacham resident Alison Gowland is in aid of the Norfolk Hospice, Tapping House. The acoustics in Heacham Church are ideal for such a concert and it is sure to be a wonderful evening. Further details of the concert programme and tickets are available from :-

The Hospice Fundraising Office 01485 542891.



Best Front Garden

Seven different gardens were nominated for our best front garden competition, all of which were a joy to see but our judges chose "The Seaside Garden" as their favourite. Owned and tended by Mr & Mrs Williamson, it was designed to evoke memories of holidays spent at Wells-Next-The-Sea. Located at the junction of Chapel Road and Old Hall Drive it makes good use of a corner plot. Well done!

Keep an eye on the villages gardens for next year's competition.



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Christmas and New Year Opening 2010/11

BOOTS (Dersingham)

Closed: Christmas Day, Boxing Day, Holiday Monday and Tuesday (27/28 December), New Year's Day, and New Year's Holiday (Monday 3 January).

Open: Christmas Eve (8.30 am to 6.00 pm), Wednesday (29 December - 8.30 am to 6.00 pm), Thursday (30 December - 9.00 am to 5.30 pm), New Year's Eve (8.30 am to 6.00 pm), Tuesday 4 January (9.00 am to 5.30 pm). All other days as normal.

BUDGENS

Closed: Christmas Day

Open: Christmas Eve (7.00 am to 6.00 pm), Boxing Day (10.00 am to 4.00 pm), Holiday Monday and Tuesday (27/28 December – 7.00 am to 6.00 pm), New Year's Eve (7.00 am to 6.00 pm), New Year's Day (10.00 am to 4.00 pm) and New Year's Holiday (3 January – 7.00 am to 6.00 pm). All other days as normal.

CAROLE BROWN HEALTH CENTRE

Closed: Christmas Day, Boxing Day, Holiday Monday and Tuesday (27/28 December), New Year's Day, and New Year's Holiday (Monday 3 January).

Open: Christmas Eve (8.15 am to 3.00 pm). All other days as normal.

DERSTINGHAM NEWS

Closed: Christmas Day.

Open: Christmas Eve (as normal), Boxing Day (6.00 am to 10.00 am), Holiday Monday and Tuesday (27/28 December - 6.00 am to 12.00 noon), New Year's Day (6.00 am to 10.00 am), and New Year's Holiday (Monday 3 January - 6.00 am to 12.00 noon). All other days as normal.

LIBRARY

Closed: Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day, Holiday Monday and Tuesday (27/28 December), New Year's Eve, New Year's Day and New Year's Holiday (Monday 3 January).

Open: Wednesday 29 December (10.00 am to 1.00 pm, 2.00 pm to 5.00 pm), Thursday 30 December (10.00 am to 1.00 pm, 2.00 pm to 7.30 pm). All other days as normal.

POST OFFICE SHOP

Closed: Christmas Day.

Open: Christmas Eve (6.30 am to 12.30 pm), Boxing Day (6.30 am to 10.00 am), Holiday Monday and Tuesday (27/28 December - 6.30 am to 10.00 am), New Year's Eve (6.30 am to 12.30 pm), New Year's Day (6.30 am - 10.00 am) and New Year's Holiday (3 January - 6.30 am to 10.00 am). All other days as normal.

E H PRIOR BUTCHERS (St Nicholas Court)

Closed: Christmas Day, Boxing Day, Holiday Monday and Tuesday (27/28 December), New Year's Day and New Year's Holiday (3 January).

Open: Thursday 23 December (7.00 am to 5.00 pm), Christmas Eve (6.00 am to 1.00 pm) and New Year's Eve (8.30 am to 4.00 pm). All other days as normal.

SHOE SERVICE

Closed: Christmas Day, Boxing Day, Holiday Monday and Tuesday (27/28 December), New Year's Eve, New Year's Day and New Year's Holiday (3 January).

Open: Christmas Eve (9.00 am to 1.00 pm) and Wednesday (29 December - 9.00 am to 1.00 pm). All other days as normal.

SPAR

Closed: Christmas Day

Open: Christmas Eve (7.00 am to 9.00 pm), Boxing Day (9.00 am to 4.00 pm), New Year's Eve (7.00 am to 9.00 pm), New Year's Day (9.00 am to 10.00 pm). All other days as normal.

THAXTERS COFFEE SHOP

Closed: Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

Open: All other days as normal.

WIGRAM & WARE (Dersingham)

Closed: Christmas Day, Boxing Day, Holiday Monday and Tuesday (27/28 December), New Year's Day and New Year's Holiday (3 January).

Open: Christmas Eve (9.00 am to 1.00 pm) and New Year's Eve (9.00 am to 1.00 pm). All other days as normal.

Note: The above information is believed to be correct at the time of going to press but, in view of the lapse of time and other circumstances, variations are always possible.

Christmas at the Post Office

Fraser Lindsay



The evenings are drawing in and there's a noticeable nip in the early morning air. Our thoughts at Dersingham Post Office turn to Christmas and the inevitable extra mail.

In anticipation of the customary search for a gift with a difference, calendars, diaries and boxes of chocolates, not to mention early Christmas cards for sending abroad, ordering of extra stock takes place when most people are preparing to leave on their summer holiday. We have to be prepared for deliveries of these around September/October and it is at this time that our home

transforms into something approaching a miniature warehouse.

With the goodies displayed from ceiling to floor around the shop's limited space this, too, resembles something like an Aladdin's Cave. But customers have said they like it this way and can always find something different for that 'friend that has everything' or auntie who insists she doesn't want anything this year.

Dealing with the extra mail enquiries is in addition to the general day-to-day services of passport enquiries, foreign currency transactions, banking and pensions and the majority of our customers recognise that this can mean delays in serving at times. Queues around the central newspaper stand become a constant feature at this time of year and our customers, on the whole, find this a good communal experience with the chance of a gossip with people they may not have seen for weeks. The atmosphere is usually one of affable banter drowning out the background CD of Christmas music.

As the demand on the postal service increases an additional serving position is opened on Monday mornings to cope with the surge of extra parcels that have been wrapped over the weekend and the mail boxes have to be continually emptied to make way for all the extra post. We are always happy, at any time of year, to offer advice on the best and the cheapest method of despatching parcels and cards and generally this does not hold up the flow of transactions but there are ways, too, in which a customer can help to speed up the service:-

- a) make sure envelopes and parcels are clearly labelled and securely wrapped.
- b) a postcode will ensure that post arrives quickly and safely. Customers with access to a computer can go to the post office address/postcode finder at www.royalmail.com, or ask at the counter and we will be happy to help.
- c) there are new weights and sizing applied to post now which determine the price so be aware that incorrect postage may delay delivery and a surcharge may occur.
- d) sometimes an embellishment on a card may bring it into a 'large letter category' and require a large letter stamp ;
- e) try to adhere to the last posting dates for surface or airmail despatch, (for your guidance see over).

Last inland posting dates are:-

Standard parcels: Wednesday 15th December 2010

Second Class Mail: Saturday 18th December 2010

First Class Mail : Tuesday 21st December 2010

Special Delivery : Thursday 23rd December 2010

International last posting dates are available from the Post Office.

As we close the door on Christmas Eve we at Dersingham Post Office take a deep breath of relief knowing that everything that needs to be done has been accomplished. Weeks of preparation have led up to this and we can at last look forward to a relaxing tot or two to celebrate what this time of year is really all about.

Our front door is closed on one day a year only. Christmas Day - a day that follows a manic few weeks of carrying out our normal day-to-day work whilst ensuring that our customers enjoy a worry free posting time. Their gifts have been parcelled and with the help of our staff are on their way along with hundreds of cards to arrive at their destination for the big day, be it Liverpool or Limerick, Tooting or Timbuktu.

But, as many of our customers would wisecrack, the post-master's job is not all about work. Many of our customers have become personal friends over the years and one of our most agreeable decisions can be which party to attend and, bearing in mind the early starts to our day, what time to drag ourselves away.

Another happy event began two years ago when I was invited to the Puddleducks Play Group during November. A sort of pre-Christmas party which is now a regular date in my diary. Over the week prior to my visit the children have been busy making cards to send to Santa with special requests. It is my job to gather them all up in a mail bag and bring them back to the post office for posting. Thankfully I have been assured their demands have always been met.

In times long gone, temporary Christmas posties were employed to assist with the extra load. Nowadays the load falls on your local postman/woman to deliver. They pride themselves in maintaining the flow from sorting office to destination albeit the delivery may be a little later than usual. Christmas Day is for them, too, a day when they can enjoy putting their feet up.

Christmas Day is all too short for us and 5.00am on Boxing Day comes tiresomely soon when, once again, newspapers have to be sorted and, for us, another year begins.

But we still regard Christmas as a magical time and as we attempt to do throughout the year, Fraser, Maria and Dersingham Post Office staff will be very happy to assist you with any enquiries to *make your* Christmas posting less stressful.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Very Merry Christmas.□



Fraser and some of his eager staff.



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The Dersingham Beat

September - October

Here we go again, Winter is upon us with extra hours of darkness and cold weather, where has this year gone? The scary thing is I remember my grandparents saying the years get shorter when you get older. It's true!

Still on a positive note, in preparation for my contribution I have looked through the crimes reported in the last few weeks.

We have had damage caused to the roof tiles on the cricket pavilion and the nets at the tennis club. A lone youth was seen by a witness to do a 'Kung Fu' kick at 3 gas meter boxes near Jannoch's Court to damage the doors. What is it about this village? Who kicks things like this? I would suggest that it is someone who is not very brave as we know gas boxes don't kick back (unfortunately!). Still, we have had less damage caused than in previous months which is a trend I am keen to maintain.

We, like everywhere are affected by staffing levels and spending cuts, we have had a bit of a shuffle around here too. PC Adrian Fryett is off to "Sunny Hunny" to replace PC Graham Keeley who has just retired. Adrian will still get involved around here. PC Ian McCrea and PCSO Paul Baker will be joining us, they are already stationed at Dersingham and were part of 'The Woottons' team which has been reduced in size. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome them to the team and I am sure you will meet them from time to time.

The team have been busy with their annual preparations leading up to Halloween. They have visited schools to educate the children about that old fashioned thing called "respect". They have also liaised with shop keepers regarding the sale of eggs and flour which will not be sold to anyone other than adults during the week before. This should help us and reduce the number of anti-social behaviour incidents that the vulnerable have to suffer and complaints we have to respond too.

I realise that Wolferton is not part of Dersingham but I'm sure that a number of you will visit the "cliff" car park when going for a walk. We have had a couple of cars broken into late in the afternoons at weekends and we have responded to this by increased patrols. It appears that "someone" may be watching cars arrive; note passengers place their handbags under the seat and go off for their constitutional. This provides a nice big window of opportunity for the criminal. I would therefore like to offer some advice. Please do not put your handbag under the seat or in the boot, they will know where to look if they have seen you put it there. Similarly if you have a "sat nav" avoid leaving the cradle attached to the windscreen. Some criminals even look for the little round circle left on the windscreen which is a bit of a giveaway. And I bet most of you keep the "sat nav" in the glove box – it's the first place they will look.

If you are thinking of buying your child a bicycle for Christmas don't forget a set of lights and a helmet. We see a number of local children out on bicycles after dark without lights and I don't want to have to deliver a bad news message – I've done too many of them in the last 20 years, they're not pleasant at all.

I said in the last issue I would hopefully be in a position to update you about "Plan B"? Well, I attended the Dersingham Parish Council meeting along with representatives from other agencies to discuss the possibility of a teen shelter and a basketball hoop in the village. The council were in full support of having a full Multi Use Games Area which you might hear referred to as a 'MUGA'. The council were very positive about taking this project forward. I will endeavour to update you as the project progresses.

As always if you have any issue that is affecting your quality of life please call me or a member of my team, we are here to help.

Have a great Christmas and a happy New Year!

08454564567 or www.sntdersinghamandgayton@norfolk.pnn.police.uk

"Mind how you go" *Andy*

The Spirit of Christmas

Allan Coleby

Sam had had a rather lonely childhood. He had been an only child and his mother had died suddenly when he was just ten years old. His father had done his best for him, but from the age of ten, Sam had had to manage many of the domestic chores on his own. He missed the pressing warmth of a crowded family life and the comforting presence of a mother's indulgent touch.

Now in his early forties, Sam thought of his own small family - his wife, Hazel and his fourteen-year-old son, Andrew - more tenderly at Christmas than he did at any other time. He was very earnest in striving to provide a special seasonal warmth.

The wrap-around cosiness he felt as he did his last-minute Christmas shopping each year was something that Sam deliberately arranged. He always saved a few days of his annual holiday allowance so that he could have a few days off before his company's close-down on Christmas Eve.

Present buying over, he loved to walk down the High Street of his home town, Thorby, on Christmas Eve afternoon, observing the hustle and bustle whilst buying a few bits and pieces the family might need over the Christmas season. Indeed, he even thought it was better if it was wet, because then the neon lights on the shop fronts and the winking decorations were reflected on the pavements.

Hazel was so busy that she really didn't have time to make mince pies and cakes and puddings and so it was pies, nuts and cakes that Sam bought as he walked along the High Street on Christmas Eve. The market square, at one end, was deserted because it was not market day. At the side of the market-place was the town hall and beyond that was the vibrant and pulsating heart of the commercial district.

Thorby had once stood on the Great North Road, and a few heavy-beamed and low-ceilinged pubs and hotels in the town had, in past centuries, been coaching inns. For this reason, the High Street was unusually wide. Indeed, a ribbon of space between the pavement and shops on one side was now used as parking lots for shoppers.

The first shop from the market end was a pharmacy, with rows of coloured bottles and advertisements covering the window-space. Next came a furniture store, which was a converted coaching inn, with an impressive stone façade. The interior was cluttered with suites, bookcases

and hi-fi units, and if you could see into the further recesses, there was an area for kitchen units and beds. Then there was a multi-coloured stationer, a shoe shop and, beyond a small alleyway, a branch of W.H. Smith.

People struggled with self-closing doors and called briefly to each other as they went about their business. There was a surging tide of people that seemed to be pressing through each door. Sam loved being a part of it,



glancing around, observing people, watching the happiness bouncing from one beaming face to another. Even the old man selling his sheets of wrapping paper on the pavement by the alleyway reflected the spirit of general goodwill.

Finally, Sam passed Marks & Spencer. It looked like some gleaming Aladdin's cave of a thousand glittering pieces, and sighed its warm breath into the raw chill of the High Street. He reached the delicatessen where he bought his mince pies and sausage rolls. Sam turned left out of the delicatessen and then came to a roundabout which marked the end of the shopping area because the two roads that led from it on the far side stopped after a few yards to allow a bypass to come across them. Beyond that was the car park that Sam was heading for.

Between the roundabout and the bypass was the biggest church in town, very much alive on this day, its glowing interior offering a welcome to all passers-by. The stained glass windows palpitated with the weak glow of candles from within. The welcome was enticing and Sam went inside and sat at the back.

As he listened to the familiar readings from Isaiah and the Gospels, Sam surrendered to the feelings of the moment. The cosiness he had felt in the shopping area became an internal warmth. He listened to the well-known carols as the people sang: 'O Little town of Bethlehem', 'It came upon the midnight clear', 'Silent Night'. He let emotions of peace and gratitude, humility and wonder wash over him. He thought of the life he had now and compared it with the bleakness of his teenage years. If this is the spirit of Christmas, he thought, I want to immerse myself in it.

Quietly, he left the building. The warm welcome had become a spiritual embrace. It seemed to caress his very soul. At the car park, he looked for his car through tears of happiness.□

This is an extract from my novel, 'Only Us' which was published in July 2010. It is available on the Amazon and Waterstone's websites or by order from any bookshop. ISBN 978 1 84624 446 9

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GLIMPSES OF LIFE IN A NORFOLK VILLAGE

by Maggie Grey

A few big bangs and party plans go up in smoke – and folks put their heads together, or not.

Living in a rural community surrounded by fields, farm and woodlands you get used to being awoken in the morning by loud bangs, sometimes caused by poachers, sometimes legitimate shooters, but more often than not by the bird scarers set up in various fields. But loud bangs at night are another matter, unless of course, it's two weeks before or after Hallowe'en and Bonfire Night. If only shops would stop selling fireworks until the very last minute that might reduce the numbers of idiots who think it's fun to set them off any old time they feel like it, once darkness has descended. These sudden bangs are very unnerving, especially for the elderly and pets, but I digress, so had better get off this particular soapbox!

The majority of the village had been in bed and asleep for some time when we were all rudely awakened by the commotion one night in late October. Once folks got out of bed, looked outside and saw the pretty display of fireworks lighting up the sky, dismay set in and hearts plummeted. It was obvious what had happened.

An emergency meeting of the Parish Council was called, members summoned by mobiles and land lines for we Luddites who haven't cottoned on to modern technology yet. Someone had broken into the shed at the back of the village hall wherein were stored the fireworks for the village bonfire party. It was no secret they were kept there, and as the Major was always warning us, lack of security would be our downfall. A padlock on the door was all the security this shed possessed, and not even that now, thanks to the intruders, who broke it off, took all the boxes of fireworks outside and set them all off.

The Major just couldn't stop himself saying 'Told you so. Damn fool idea keeping them in a shed like that, though I suppose you should be grateful they left the shed!' By now, the secretary to the PC was getting a bit sick of the Major, as were many of us, for he 'always had to stick his ugly great Romanesque beak in' (her words) and rarely offered any sensible help. 'So what would you suggest we do Major, not that it matters now?' she asked.

The Major suggested that the fireworks shouldn't have all been kept in the one place, that perhaps each member of the PC taking a box home with them might have been helpful? Or at least they should have been kept in something more secure than a wooden shed that had seen better days, with a padlock that any modern-day five year old could open. Eyebrows were raised as the question went around the members of the PC, almost telepathically, as to what sort of five year olds the Major came into contact with, presumably mini SAS members? (In his early days in the village, the Major had been fond of alluding very vaguely to his military career, often tapping the side of his nose and saying 'best not to say too much' when asked for details of this illustrious career, for that was all he would say about it, that it was illustrious.)

The Chairman of the PC said there was no point in discussing it any further, the deed had been done and what were they going to do about it? The result was that the credit cards of several of the members got a good airing, boxes of fireworks were purchased, the villagers also rallied round and the Bonfire Party went ahead as planned.

Not so for one of the neighbouring villages whose bonfire was set alight in the early hours of the morning the day before Bonfire Night, and it has been generally assumed that perpetrators were the fireworks thieves. The Major of course, said it was 'a damn fool idea setting it up so early, just asking for trouble,' which didn't endear him to anyone, but privately the PC to a man (and woman) all agreed with him. It was doubtful that enough wood could be gathered for another bonfire in time, because this was the second one that had gone up in (early) flames. A local property developer had been destroying, sorry 'renovating', some old cottages and had thrown out beams and parquet flooring into a covered skip and offered it to the villagers for their bonfire party. It was to be left in the skip, covered, until needed, a day after our own Bonfire Party.

(Villagers in these parts like to stagger such events so that you can go to one nearly every night of Bonfire night week if you are so inclined, at the end of which you are heartily sick of burnt bangers, charred potatoes, and never want to see a toffee apple or toasted marshmallow again... well, not until the next year anyway!)

Sadly, word got around that there was some good wood to be had for nothing, and late one night, in a white van ('what else?', The Major commented) the wood was stolen. You might well be thinking that if people knew it had been stolen in a white van, then someone must have seen it happen and so why didn't they do something? Fair point. It seems one of the old ladies in the alms cottages was up and about, picking herbs in her garden which she claimed had to be picked at a certain time, but in full moonshine, otherwise their efficaciousness was diminished. (I'm only repeating what I was told!) There are no street lights in her village, and at that hour of night it is usually quiet, but she heard a clackety motor veehickle (her words, my assumed spelling) and looking up she saw a white van driving on the other side of The Green. She thought nothing more of it at the time, but when she heard what had happened, she realised what they had been up to. But it was too late then of course. However, once again villagers all pulled together and they were able to cobble have a bonfire party in the end.



The other story that has been the latest hot topic of the moment is the outbreak of nits. Mention the word and people immediately scratch their heads or think they can feel itchiness there. It's not a nice thing to talk about, but it seems they have been rife of late. The Major (who else?) said it was despicable that in this day and age the blighters were still making their presence felt ... he has such a lovely way with words, don't you think? But it does seem to be a fact of life, that nits still thrive and so the village shop has bought in extra supplies of treatments that are selling like hot cakes. The presence of nits causes much consternation amongst the mothers of children attending playgroup and the school, and whenever children were seen putting their heads together to whisper confidences and no doubt moans about parents and teachers, they would be yanked apart, or at best screeched at. Still, there is always someone to benefit from others dilemmas, in this case the manufacturers of nit shampoos. And writers of lousy jokes.....□

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DERSINGHAM INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL



New School Year - New Adventures !

Leading on from our previous successful academic year, the children have settled into school life again quickly and have started on their learning journeys through the Jungle (Nursery and Reception children), Arctic Adventures (Year 1 children) and back into the Woodland (Year 2 children). With our highly praised Ofsted Report and now with our Federated Governor Link with St. George's (C.E.) Junior School, we are looking forward to another action packed year!



Jungle animals beware -
Nursery children are coming!



Den making with
Reception children.



Arctic expedition - Yr.1



'Town planning on Lego Day' - Yr.2

We are also immensely thrilled to announce that we have been awarded a Big Lottery Fund Grant to help us set up a Multi-Sensory Garden to develop Life-Long Learning. By the Spring, we hope this will be ready to invite anyone interested to come and help and enjoy this new facility - both young and older! There will be opportunities to help with growing herbs, vegetables and even looking after chickens as well as nurturing wild-life there.



The Sandringham Newsletter

*by kind permission of the Sandringham Estate
compiled by Helen Walch*



There will be some new additions in the Country Park over the next few weeks. Three new sculptures have been acquired to extend the Sculpture Trail – this is following the Game and Country Show in the middle of September. Chainsaw carving is always a popular section of the Show, and each year Sandringham Estate talks to the carvers and chooses sculptures to add to the Trail which, set in the leafy surroundings of the arboretum close to the car parks, makes a very pleasant circular



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walk about 20 minutes long – ideal for those who don't have the time or the energy for the longer waymarked trails through the Country Park.

The Estate has also added a “fort” to the children's play area. Made in wood by a local carpenter, it will include ladders and slides and it is hoped that more equipment will be gradually added to the play area over the next few years.

Farm staff completed the cereal harvest at the very end of August. The weather all year has made their lives difficult, and the weather during harvest was no exception – frequent heavy showers meant constant stopping and starting to try to get as much done as possible in the dry periods. The unsettled weather also affected the number of people going to the Fruit Farm orchards to pick their own apples, although Fruit Farm staff picking apples for juicing simply carry on whatever the weather.

The increased rainfall in September also led to a sudden flush of growth in the gardens, so staff there have been busy keeping on top of weed and grass growth; on the plus side, they have been able to put away the hoses and sprinklers. Long grass areas in the gardens have now been mown and the hay collected, with the exception of those containing orchids, to allow them to set seed.

The cycling Tour of Britain came past the Sandringham Visitor Centre on its route from King's Lynn to Great Yarmouth and several hundred people came to the Visitor Centre on a gloriously sunny morning to cheer them on their way.

September and October were very wet. This delayed the sowing of winter wheat and made lifting sugar beet an extremely muddy affair. The sugar beet tops left in the fields have begun to attract pink-footed geese, although they haven't yet arrived in the enormous skeins that fill the winter skies at dawn and twilight.

Application forms for next year's season tickets are now available, either by calling in to the Visitor Centre Gift Shop or by printing them off from the website. Season tickets make an excellent gift for a gardener, or perhaps for parents of young children, as they give free access to the 60 acres of gardens and the Museum during the open season and also a 10% discount year-round at the Visitor Centre shops and restaurants. Season ticket holders were treated to a fascinating walk recently in the company of one of the Estate's gardeners who has made a particular study of plant hunters and the examples of some of their finds planted in the Gardens. One of the early plant hunters was David Douglas, who gave his name to the Douglas Fir; there are several of these, including some quite early specimens, in the Gardens. Sadly Douglas died during one of his collecting expeditions when he fell into a pit trap in Hawaii, but not before he had introduced more than 200 species of plant, from lupins and California poppies to pines, spruces and redwoods, into British gardens.

With Christmas not far away now, the annual Christmas Craft fair will be taking place in Sandringham Park at the end of November – it's always worth a look, not just for Christmas presents but also for a range of unusual food and drink ideas. The Visitor Centre shops and restaurants are also open every day through the winter, even after the House and Gardens have closed, and of course there's no entry fee or parking fee there! People visiting the Centre on 5th December will also be able to witness the RNLI's Reindeer Run, with some 600 people completing 5 or 10km circuits through the Country Park in aid of the RNLI.

Finally, there has been press and TV coverage over the last few weeks of a mysterious illness affecting dogs. It appeared to develop after the dogs were walked in the Country Park and near the caravan sites on the Estate, but it has also been reported in Thetford Forest, Sherwood Forest and Clumber Park. The Estate has asked the Animal Health Trust to investigate the illness to see if a cause can be identified; the Trust have produced a detailed questionnaire and it would be most helpful to them if people who regularly walk dogs in the Country Park would complete one, whether or not their dogs have been affected. Copies of the questionnaire are available from the Visitor Centre gift shop and also online, on the “News” page of the Sandringham website. Although the illness does not so far seem to have affected many dogs, it is a serious one; the Estate welcomes the Trust's assistance and hopes that as many people as possible, whether or not their dogs have been affected, will contribute information to help them in their work.□

St Nicholas Church

December Services



2010

8 th December	-	Rotary Carol Service	-	7pm
12 th December	-	Informal Tea & Carols	-	3pm
15 th December	-	Mothers' Union Carol Service	-	2 pm
16 th December	-	Christingle Service	-	6 pm
19 ^h December	-	Service of Lessons & Carols	-	6.30pm
24 th December	-	Crib Service	-	4pm
	-	Midnight Holy Communion	-	11.30pm
25 th December	-	Family Service	-	10am

Please come and join us for any or all of the above Services

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

3rd to 5th DECEMBER (10am to 4pm)

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incorporating our Coffee Morning on the Friday morning with
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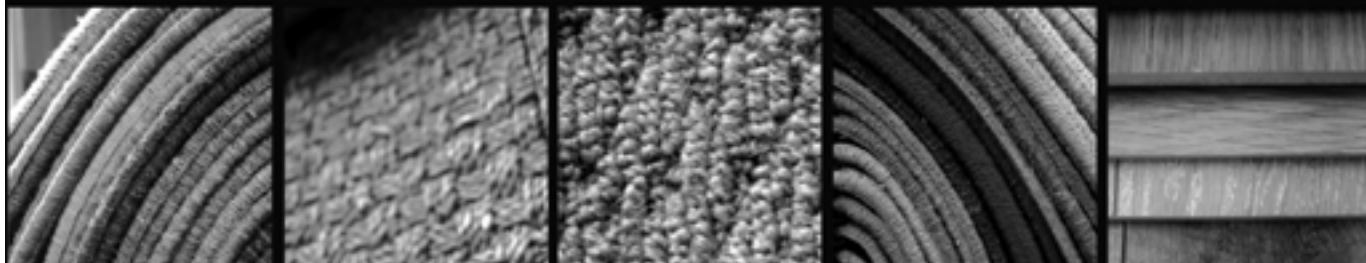
Old Picture Corner - now and then



Looking north east from the Sandringham Rd/Manor Road junction the view has changed, or rather reduced, quite a lot. The sports pavilion was completed in 1967 so we are seeing just how quickly the trees can grow around here. However, if the trees were not there we would be looking at houses.



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DERSINGHAM WALKING GROUP



On a cool and grey afternoon in early October, 26 walkers took part in our Cream Tea Walk around Castle Rising. Some 20 of these went to the Tea Rooms after the walk to enjoy a cream tea which included tackling gigantic scones. The event seems to have been enjoyed by all and there is already talk of repeating it next year. On a Sunday towards the end of the month, Pat Read led an eight mile walk from Hunstanton to Holme and Ringstead Downs. It was disappointing that, despite the brilliant sunshine, only three people joined her! It will be interesting to see what the support is for the new Sunday afternoon short strolls.



We now have the winter to look forward to and the walks planned for the next two months are:

WEDNESDAY 8th DECEMBER

Start at 1.30pm from Sandringham Visitor Centre (map ref. LI32/689 287). A 4.5 mile circular walk around the Country Park led by Christine Taylor and Geoff Toop (542807)

WEDNESDAY 12th JANUARY 2011

Start at 1.30pm from the Dersingham War Memorial (map ref. LI32/686 309). A 4.5 mile circular walk around Dersingham and Ingoldisthorpe led by Elizabeth Fiddick (540940)

SUNDAY 30th JANUARY 2011

Start at 2.30pm from St. Nicholas Church Hall car park (map ref. LI32/692 302).

A 2.5 mile circular Afternoon Stroll led by Lindsey and Steve Davis (543138)



If the weather is too inclement, it is worth checking with the leader before setting out.

There is **NO CHARGE** for these walks: just turn up on the day (wearing suitable clothing and sturdy footwear). **WELL-BEHAVED** dogs are welcome provided they stay at the rear of the group.

The leaders are happy to organise and lead these walks but stress that each participant must appreciate that there are hazards associated with walking and take responsibility for their own safety.

If you would like more information please contact me or the walk leader.

Keith Starks (542268)

DERSSINGHAM GUIDE GROUPS-VISION CELEBRATION

The Dersingham Guide groups (Rainbows, 1st & 2nd Brownies, Guides, leaders and helpers) joined together on Wednesday 20th October to celebrate the Formal end of the GirlGuiding UK Centenary Celebrations. The 20/10 2010 VISION event took place at St George's School, Dersingham.

A key feature of the Vision Celebration is a Nationwide renewal of the Rainbow, Brownie & Guide Promises. In preparation for this, the 60+ members enjoyed section activities based around their respective Promises. Everyone then enjoyed games, refreshments and singing. We also looked forward to the future of Guiding with everyone writing their own personal Vision, which will be sealed in a Time Capsule, along with photographs of the event, and stored in our HQ. We hope it will then be opened by Dersingham Guides in 100 years time during Guiding's Bicentenary.

Following the promise renewal everyone received a commemorative Promise Badge, "20:10, 20/10, 2010", a national Vision badge and a specially produced Dersingham Commemorative badge.

Individual cakes with candles were used to begin the singsong, organised by Brownie Leaders Emma Eyre and Carla Santos.

The evening was completed by the ringing of Bells at St Nicholas Church, Dersingham. Particular thanks are due to Tower Captain, Alan Polaine and his team of ringers.

Lynne Wheeler - 01485 544753 (Dersingham Rainbow and 2nd Brownie)



Dersingham Guides need you.

After nearly 50 years between them, volunteering, Dersingham's 2 Guide Guiders are bowing out at Christmas. To ensure Guides carries on for another 80 years, the girls need your help. If you would like to be a major part of a great Guide unit, please contact Badger on 01485 542483 or Chipmunk on 01485 542885. Be prepared for lots of fun and friendship.

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Dersingham Community Lunch

Suzy Daniels - photos by Stella Gooch

Another successful Community Lunch was held at St Nicholas Church Hall on Friday September 10th kindly sponsored by Lynntony Restaurants (franchisees of MacDonald's). Coordinated and hosted by Dersingham Lunch Co-ordinator Bob Tipling.



A delicious buffet luncheon was provided by Lynntony Restaurants in conjunction with The Coach and Horses catering team. The food being expertly presented with a friendly service of hot and cold beverages.....a job very well done!!!

After lunch Parish Cllr Paul Burall gave a short address on the subject of a Dersingham Community clean up. This would be a voluntary event which has proved successful in the past and is hoped to be reinstated on a regular basis in the near future benefiting the whole village.....look out for details on the Parish Council notice boards.

Ion Trewin a celebrated Author, Publisher and Editor was second to take the floor with his 'Home thoughts on Dersingham'. A very welcome, interesting and complimentary opinion of life in this village, outlining the many positives Dersingham has to offer as a home and a place of business. Ion moved to the village a few years ago after several visits in previous years and was made to feel very welcome by his new neighbours and quickly found that friendship was offered in abundance. Also mentioned were the many changes that have occurred here....some good, but some not so good!!! A popular topic of discussion with many residents!!! Several 'lunchers' were born, bred and still remain in Dersingham and were able to empathise with the homely appeal that makes Dersingham such a thriving community.

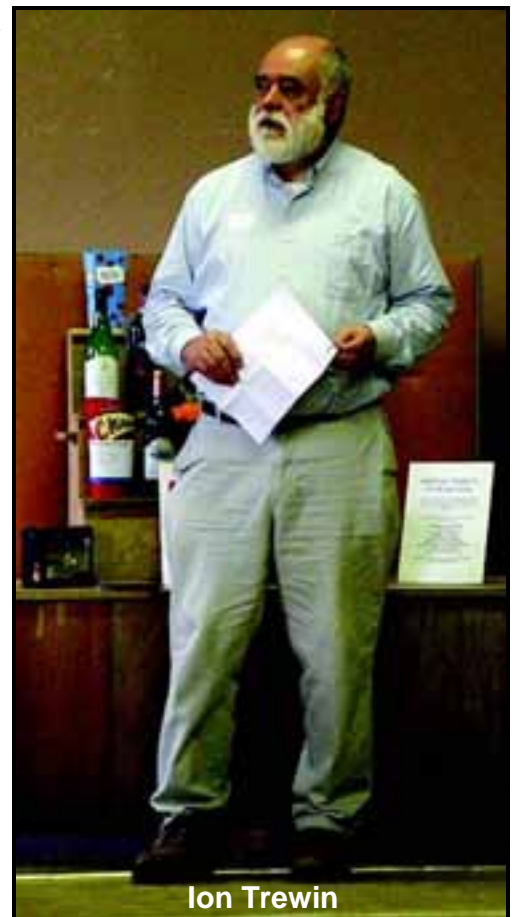
As the lunch came to a close thanks were given to the sponsors, catering team and for the raffle donations. The raffle raised £95 which was divided equally between the Phobbies group and the Day Centre for the elderly.□

DERSINGHAM WRITERS GROUP

We are a small, friendly group who meet fortnightly at the Orchard Close Community Room on Thursday afternoon at 2.00pm for a couple of hours.

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Ion Trewin

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Dick Melton

Now then, what a lot of interesting stuff in the October issue of Dersingham Village Voice. I found the article by Ion Trewin about wells in the village most interesting, as I myself had done a short bit on this subject some time ago. Most of the properties in Dersingham that were built before 1900 had a well in the garden or, like Albert Victor Cottages, Senters Row, garden cottages and cottages in Chapel Road, they shared a well. When we moved into No 63 Lynn Road in 1945 there was a tap installed in the kitchen but we still had a well in the garden. A few years before we moved in, a lady was up a ladder gathering apples from a tree near to the well when she fell off the ladder and into the well. Thankfully she was rescued straight away and was none the worse off for her nasty fall. My dad then had the well filled in.

All of the houses on that stretch of road from Senters Corner to Pleasant Place had wells in their gardens or shared one. There were also many old type community hand pumps around the village; the nearest one to us was just outside Number 39 in Lynn Road.

When mains water first came to Dersingham a lot of these hand pumps were replaced with taps until every one had water laid on in the house. As far as I know the mains water for Dersingham came from Docking where there was a water tower and water works. There was also a water works at Old Hunstanton and two water towers at Hunstanton with the one at Redgate Hill supplying water to Heacham. This tower still stands but it has been converted into flats. The other water tower in Hunstanton stood along the Cromer Road near the Glebe House School and was demolished in 1974.

Ion Trewin mentions springs and in particular the one at the top of Fern Hill. Years ago a small reservoir was built near it to take the water but it did not work. Another spring is on Stanton's

Meadows that runs under the road and into the sheep dip on the pastures. There is also one in Dersingham Woods that fills the pond on the Emblems opposite the Feathers Hotel and a favourite one of us boys where we used to play was in the woods at the top of the Shut-up-common. This stream ran down to the eight-mile stone corner where it went under the road and into the big dyke on the fen.

Dersingham beach

What a nice poem from June Mullarkey and then she goes on to ask when the name of the beach changed to Snettisham Beach. Well it has not. Dersingham has not had its own beach since the great flood of 1671 took the beach and the sea back to where it is today. When I was a boy we would always say we are going down the beach or down the pits, but the Shingle Pits and that stretch of beach has for hundreds of years been in and belonged to the Parish of Snettisham.

The boundary of the Parish of Dersingham ends at the last big drain



Docking water tower

about 200 yards before you get to the old sea wall. The Snettisham land goes along nearly as far as the pumping station where the Parish land of Wolferton begins and also where 300 acres of marshland was reclaimed from the sea in 1964.

The area of land in the parish of Dersingham is about 3,573 acres with 8 acres of water. This is the drain down the marsh and the decoys, but no foreshore if you look at Dersingham on an Ordnance Survey map. You will see it is like a finger starting down the marsh in the west and going about two and a half miles east as far as Peddars Way, the other side of Ling House, whereas it is only about a mile wide at the widest place from George Pratt Roundabout to half way along Life Lane Wood.

The parish of Snettisham covers 5, 592 acres or thereabouts, with 16 acres of water and 37 acres of tidal water. Also Snettisham has 1,342 acres of foreshore, one of the largest foreshores in Norfolk and stretches from the Heacham boundary as far as the Wolferton marshes. Just like the Shingle Pits, the Snettisham foreshore comes under the control of the RSPB, though you can still get to the pits and the old jetty by way of the track from Snettisham.

Access to beach and marshes

When my father was a boy in the early nineteen hundreds, the way they went down to the beach was by way of the drift and over the dykes to Boathouse Creek, where the pumping station was built in 1947. Then they would walk along the old sea wall. There was a track at the bottom of Station Hill down to the marshes but this only went for about a quarter of a mile; most of the marshes then days was grass land. Then in 1941/42, due to the war and the demand for more food, the concrete road was put down by WARAG [the War Agricultural Executive Committee], and most of the marshland was ploughed up so as to grow wheat, barley and potatoes.

When I was a boy many farmers had land down the marsh including Mr W Bird, Mr Stanton from Manor Farm, Mr Gent from Inmere, Mr Youngs from Ringstead, the Balding brothers from Dun-cow farm, Mr Jackson from High Farm (who grew a lot of strawberries down the marsh), the Lincoln brothers and Sandringham Estate.

Also until a few years back you could get down the beach road as we used to call it by car, as you could down the road from Wolferton to the pumping station. Then the Sandringham Estate and others put up gates to stop this. When I wrote to Sandringham and asked why this had been done they told me it was to stop their farm machinery from being stolen. Also people who have been walking down the marsh have been told by gamekeepers that they no longer have a right to walk down there even if they keep to the road, so sadly it looks like Dersingham marshes are out of bounds for ever to the people of Dersingham and any one else.

Changing a lamp post

This is a little story of one lamp pole and six men. About two months ago a lorry backed into a street lamp in Willow Road and damaged it. It was reported to the authorities and along came a man to survey the damage. About a week later another man put up a new pole beside the old one, then ten days after that yet another man came and put a new lamp on the new pole, then after about three weeks a man came along and wired it up so we had a brand new street lamp. Then, lo and behold, this week two men came and took the old lamp post away. Two months and six men to do a job the a few years back would have been done by one man in two hours. No wonder the country is in a muddle.

Well that's about all for this month I would just like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and all the best for the New Year.□



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DERSINGHAM DAY CENTRE FOR THE ELDERLY



We are well into our Autumn Session now, having started our weekly meetings again on the 1st September. We were delighted to welcome six new Members and I'm pleased to say that they have all settled in well. Despite wet and windy weather mid month we were particularly lucky on the 22nd September, when the Members and Volunteers went to Poppyfields Garden Centre for lunch. It was a lovely warm sunny day and this enabled everyone to have a look round the various garden areas in comfort before, and after, lunch. There were 39 of us in number and we wondered how we would all fit into the restaurant. We needn't have worried because our tables were reserved and everyone was sat down by 12.30pm. We had a traditional Christmas Turkey Lunch (is the 22nd September a record for a Christmas Lunch?) and, without exception, we all commented on the beautifully cooked and presented meal and the excellent service.

On the 29th September we were entertained in the afternoon by the Heacham Singers. We enjoyed listening to them and also joining in with them. It is amazing how the words of songs not sung since our younger days come back. We look forward to their next visit on the 1st December.

We held our Autumn Fair at the Dersingham Methodist Church on the 16th October and we were delighted with the local support. Thanks to all those who donated items for us to sell, those who worked so hard to make it a success and those who came and gave so generously. Our thanks also to the Dersingham Methodist Church who very generously shared the proceeds of its coffee morning on the 23rd October between the Day Centre and the Talking Newspaper. Thanks to all those people who worked so hard on our behalf that morning.

The Day Centre celebrates its 29th year at the end of November and we will have our usual birthday cake tea in the afternoon. We will then be into our 30th year and we look forward to many more happy years ahead. Since we were cast adrift by Social Services our numbers have increased and we have had referrals from the Surgery and from people who have seen our publicity. The numbers we are able to look after is ruled mainly by the availability of room on our special transport and the number of volunteers we have. At the moment we have a waiting list of Members but we hope to keep this to a minimum. One thing that is certain, the Day Centre is important to the elderly and housebound in our village and we are determined to keep it going.

Members have already started making decorations for the tree we have sponsored for the Church Christmas Tree Festival on the 3rd to 5th December. Under the guidance of our Craft Lady, Carol Drew, they are making some very pretty and unusual items and having fun doing so. As last year, we will be taking all our Members to the Church to see the Christmas Trees on the Wednesday after the event.

On the 1st December the Heacham Singers will be coming to entertain us again with their Christmas Programme and on the 15th December we will be holding our annual Christmas Lunch and Party, with professional entertainer Leigh Murfet. This is an occasion we all look forward to and it will be our first Christmas in the Church Hall, so we will have a lot to celebrate this year.

We break up for the Christmas Holidays on the 22nd December and return for the Winter Session on the 5th January 2011.

We are always looking for more volunteers, particularly as our numbers are growing. Volunteers are welcome for any time they can spare between 9.00 am and 4.00 pm. each Wednesday. I feel there must be someone out there who could spare even as little as an hour on a Wednesday. As we don't meet in the summer holidays, perhaps there are some young mums too who would be willing to help in term time. I can guarantee you won't regret it. PLEASE HELP US TO KEEP IT GOING.

If you feel you might be able to help and would like more information, please contact me, Alice Worth on Dersingham 544673, or pop into the Church Hall any Wednesday and meet us all.

On behalf of the Members and Volunteers of the Day Centre we thank all those in the village who have supported and encouraged us throughout this last year, and wish you all a Very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.□

Alice Worth



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The Old Biddie and her cottage garden

Valerie Anckorn

I had a bit of a shock the other day when a nice lady from the surgery came to give me a test for dementia. I'd mentioned to the doctor that I lost things, couldn't multi-task anymore – due to the stress of looking after an old lady. I wasn't expecting he'd think I was off my trolley!

As I am writing at the moment, the sun is shining, the sky is blue, the garden looks wonderful and of course it brings the feel-good-factor, When it is grey and raining, which it has been for ages now, things that get on top of you really weigh you down.

The back lawn is a quagmire. Crow, our lurcher, uses it as a racing circuit, and he has banked up his turns, all delightful sticky mud, which he then exuberantly races into the house and delivers onto my floors. Luckily I had the presence of mind to initially have flagstone flooring put down because of my pets and am mighty glad I haven't got some priceless carpet on the floors. However, I'm tired, and haven't got the energy to mop the floors all the time, so it looks a bit like a cowshed in my open-plan living quarters. It doesn't help either that the parrots chuck their seed out of their cages as far as they can as well. I suppose if I were stuck in a cage, I would think up a similar kind of therapy too. So, my garden is gradually entering the house, via Crow's paws, which means that instead of mopping up and Hoovering, perhaps I ought to scatter a few seeds and watch them grow around my armchair. Lateral thinking, hmm.

As we have watched our lovely lawn disintegrate - in winter the water table seems to be on top of it rather than beneath it - we have been trying to think of alternatives to a lawn. Decking looks lovely when it is first done, then fades and becomes green and slippery. Gravel looks horrid and walks into the house – well not literally, but on shoes and paws. Paving slabs can also go green and slippery, and are bad environmentally, causing rainwater to build up elsewhere and depriving the birds of worms. I'm not too fond of the look of lots of bark, and I think Crow would soon eat



**Heath Road woods -
ideal for gathering Oak Leaves**

most of that anyway, but that might be an option – but none have the allure of a nice bit of green. I even Googled man-made turf, but it looked plastic and cost an arm and a leg. Of course, we could ban the dog from the garden, but it would be a shame to deprive him of his joy. Yup, decision made – I'll scatter seeds on the mud indoors.

Christmas, of course, is just around the corner and I am getting my Christmas wrapping papers and parcel ideas sorted in advance. Here are some nice ideas. Get some ordinary brown wrapping paper. Go out and gather some small oak leaves and acorns and their cases from the woods – there's plenty of them. Buy some gold spray. Dry the oak leaves, cases and acorns then arrange them on the brown paper – you don't need to do anything too arty-farty. Spray them all carefully (so they don't blow off and spoil the design). Wait for the paint to dry and take off the bits and store in a container for when you have wrapped your presents. You now have some brown wrapping paper, with gold spray in places and the outlines of leaves and so on making a nice pattern. It will look lovely however slapdash you care to be. You can make some little carrier bags out of this paper – quite easy – punch some holes in the top and thread with string to carry. Or, if this is a bit too fiddly for you, you have some very attractive paper in which to wrap your gifts. When the gifts are wrapped – nice if you have some gold-wired ribbon to tie around them, then get out your gold leaves and glue them onto your package. It will look lovely. You can probably glue on some acorn cases, but you might find the acorns trickier. Those will look lovely in a bowl somewhere, with some baubles to make an attractive display. Just have fun – your pressies will look really attractive, and cost a lot less than buying special paper from the shops.

Another tip for Christmas. You can of course buy special foam to keep floral decorations alive, but a cheap and handy tip I use for table decoration is to get some raw potatoes into which you can push your fresh ivy, holly and so on, making sure the potato is covered, and then pop your decoration wherever you want it, and the moisture from the potato will keep it fresh for quite some time. Some of those gold acorns could be pierced onto a cocktail stick, and then into the potato for added effect. If you pick trailing ivy, it can meander its way across the Christmas table and look really lovely.

I mentioned in the last Village Voice issue that a disease is now threatening Horse Chestnut trees. I wasn't quite accurate there. They are being threatened by a tiny, tiny caterpillar, invisible to the naked eye, but which strips the leaves of their nutrients, making the leaves go prematurely brown, thus leaving the tree prone to disease from other quarters. These tiny caterpillars are progressing across Britain at a rate of knots and are currently munching their way across Norfolk. First the Dutch Elm disease, now the Horse Chestnuts...It's awful, isn't it.

I was also pleased to read that ivy is not, after all, a problem to houses when it climbs up the brickwork. I like to see it, and keep my eye on suitable bits for the Christmas table. According to latest scientific reports it does not do damage to mortar and so on. However, I bet there is someone who can tell me that it does!

A few weeks have passed since I began this piece. The indoor mud was bothering me, and I decided to attack the flagstones. Years ago with a leaking washing machine and some dropped Ariel washing powder, I made the discovery that it eats away at dirt that no other product can shift. Therefore, I decided that this was the day for action, and scattered Ariel all over the floor. I then swished some water from the mop to cover the flagstones, and left the Ariel to eat away the dirt. It didn't take long. What did take a long time was mopping up all the gunge, but by that time I had white tiles again! It is quite miraculous, and there is no need for getting down on the knees and scrubbing. The thought does occur, however, if Ariel does that to floors, what does it do to our skin? We've put a bit of trellis up in the sitting room to contain Crow at the door end, so that part is still muddy – what do you think? Marigolds and nasturtiums?

Each day I look out at the garden and think 'I *must* get out there and get trimming and digging', but by the time my morning chores are over, I have to have a little afternoon nap, and then when I wake up, it's too late. I've reached the stage now where all my limbs ache and any physical activity is difficult. I suppose looking after a nearly 99 year old lady is taking its toll on me, but

hopefully I have found a nice home for her in a new build at The Close in Snettisham. Just tying up the formalities, waiting for the room to be finished, and then Mother can move in.

I'm looking out at the garden as I write. There is an evening primrose still blooming, Michaelmas daisies, still in flowering abundance, Fuchsias, some late Lupins and lots of late Roses.

While the weather has been so ghastly I've been making Christmas presents. I like those wheatbags that you heat in the microwave and put around your neck. Takes the aches and pains

away. I've been using up ends of material, applying appliqué flowers, Googled the wheat and lavender, filled up the bags, and voila, some useful, pretty and tailor-made pressies and enjoyed myself with the creativity into the bargain. Of course, I had intended to garner my own Lavender from the garden, but left it too late.

I wonder if we will be having a white Christmas? I'm still a child at heart and do hope so. I know it is a nuisance for driving, but snow's so beautiful when it covers everything in its white blanket.

Well, this is all for now, shorter than usual but never mind. I wish you a very happy Christmas. Enjoy the festivities, and look forward to a good New Year.□

Village Voice Sudoku No 15								
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REMEMBRANCE by Sylvia Steele

I remember, yes, I remember
A lad who went to war
So full of life and passion
Just to die on a foreign shore.

Thomas Carter was his name,
A young man in his prime,
Who went to fight for freedom
And world peace in our time.

A man? No still a callow lad
For whom life had just begun
Taken to join the slaughter
Of other mothers' sons.

Few people knew of Thomas
Or the lives he sought to save,
He was just an ordinary boy from an ordinary home
Who lies in an unknown grave.

The Christmas Teaser

One of the entries to this years Dersingham Wildlife competition was sent in by Barry Beales. As you can see it obviously had to be disqualified for not being in the right format (landscape not portrait) but it makes a good base for a puzzle. How many differences are there between the two pictures?



The Danube Bike Trail

Trevor Riches

Nine years ago I bought an Orbit Harrier touring bike as a retirement present to myself, thinking that bimbaling around the back lanes of Norfolk would be a satisfying thing to do. And I was right. Cycling through the countryside is preferable to walking, which I find too slow, and driving, which is too quick and seals one off from fresh air and countryside. One ride led to another and I found cycling to be pleasantly addictive and less painful to ageing joints than sailing and canoeing.

Having invested in two sets of cycle touring and camping gear and having lodged one set at my eldest son's home in Bad Malente, Germany, I was set to tour in either the UK or on the continent. Travel to north Germany where Tim lives is cheap, thanks to the Ryanair link from Stansted to Lubeck. My last flight cost the princely sum of three pounds including airport taxes! The average cost one way is more like thirty to forty pounds which is still cheap considering that before the advent of budget airlines the British Airways return fare from London Heathrow to Hamburg cost over two hundred pounds, and that was many years ago. BA cabin staff would probably refer to that era as "the good old days".



First day by the baby Danube

Having fallen in love with bike touring, the love affair was extended to include following the course of rivers. The initial attraction is that the terrain is likely to be flat, and that is certainly true. But there is so much more to it. On rides from Holland to Switzerland along the Rhine, from Hamburg to the Czech border along the Elbe and this year, from its source near Donaueschingen in Germany to Budapest in Hungary along the Danube, I have met a wonderful variety of people, landscapes, architecture and history.

This year in June I set out from Bad Malente in Schleswig Holstein on the long train journey to Donaueschingen not far

from the Swiss border, where in the Black Forest the Danube has its beginning. The Danube, aka Donau in Germany and Austria, Dunav in Slovakian Republic and Duna in Hungary is Europe's second longest river at 1768 miles from Black Sea to source. So far as I can gather it's the only river measured that way, others beginning at the beginning as it were. Near Donaueschingen two small rivers, the Breg and the Brigach, flow towards the east and merge with each other on the edge of town. They become the Danube, though local tourist interests make conflicting claims as to the Danube's starting point.

I've always found the German railway system fantastic from the point of view of time keeping, though on this occasion we broke down near Heidelberg and with my poor grasp of German I could only gather that we had run out of electric. A very large engine towed us to the next station where power was restored and we were on our way with less than half an hour's delay. Before 9 pm I was sitting in the campsite restaurant drinking a beer, having pitched camp in the dry. The campsite owner assured me that rain was on the way, with temperature down to 4 degrees Celsius and I was glad to have packed cold weather gear. The date was



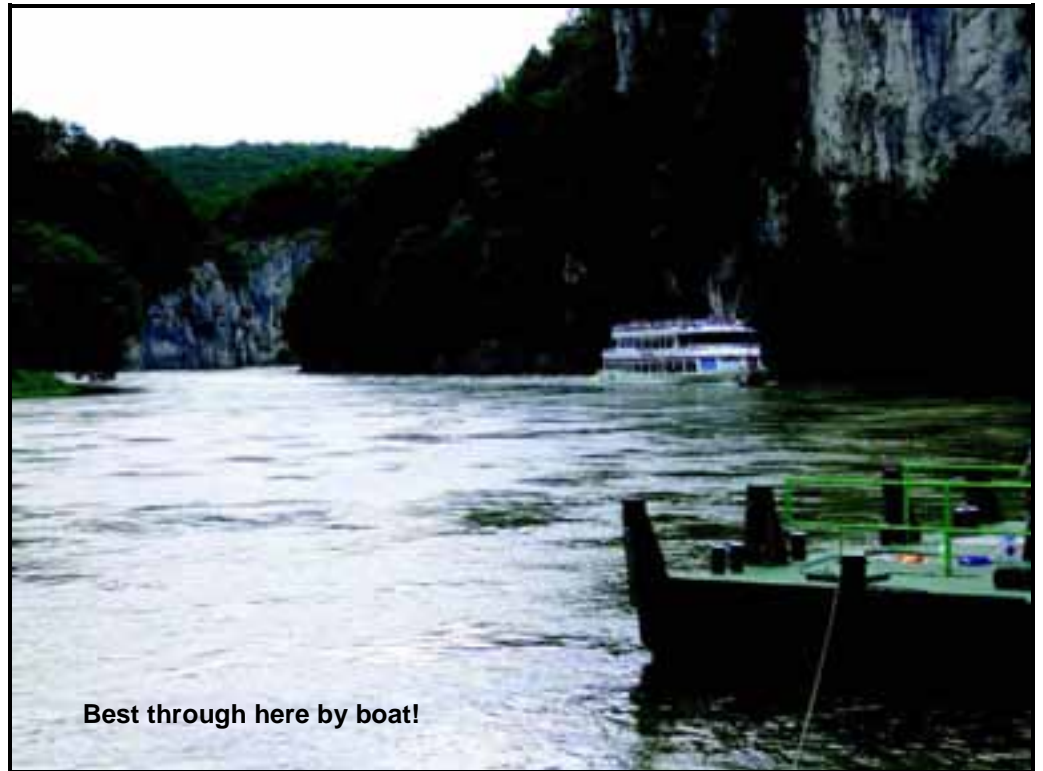
Hotel Tauber

Friday 18th June. As it turned out, only the first two days were cold and wet, the rest getting steadily hotter as I moved east.

It's about nine hundred miles from the Danube's source to Budapest in Hungary, and if there is part of the Danube which is blue, I certainly missed it. But beautiful, yes! Strauss got that bit right. A grand river to follow on a bike. Parts of it flow through dramatic gorges, which means that the cyclist

will do some heavy breathing where the track has its ups and downs. There are miles of forested banks along which one rides in a dream. I passed fields growing hops, more growing barley, and more still cultivating the grape. So when at the end of the day one has worked up a thirst, there are plenty of local brews to satisfy it.

The Danube Bike Trail is the busiest in Germany and Austria, and for most of its length is



Best through here by boat!



Austrian Vineyards

smooth surfaced, and well provided with camp sites, youth hostels, guest houses and hotels. I chose June and July for their long daylight hours and likelihood of good weather. It also avoided the school holiday crowds, which meant campsites having plenty of spaces.

Further downstream in Slovakia and Hungary the choice of accommodation was more limited but still perfectly satisfactory, as well as being less expensive. The only non-euro country was Hungary with its Hungarian Forints (HUFs) at three hundred and twenty six to the pound.

It took me some time before I realised how much cheaper Hungary is than Germany and Austria. Mental arithmetic was never my strong subject.

The preceding weeks had been wet, and the evidence was to be found on the journey east. At three campsites I was told that a few days before, their camp-grounds had been underwater. Which was nothing compared to the floods of 2004. At Donauwörth the first floor clubroom of the canoe club was three feet deep in river water, which meant that where my tent was pitched would have been under twelve feet of water. Ouch!!

On the first day the rain came down steadily, so on arrival in Sigmaringen after fifty eight miles I thought it a good idea to book in to the Hotel Tauber, where the central heating dried the wet gear and the bar and restaurant catered brilliantly for the inner man. Camping for me has always been a pleasure, but as the years pass the attractions of doing it in the rain become more and more elusive.

At some time during that first day I had been looking forward to seeing "The Sinks", a stretch of the river that flows underground beneath the top limestone strata. It was not to be. So much rain had fallen that the river was flowing on the surface. The good news was that summer started after the second day, and the weather went on improving all the way to Budapest. There were times in Hungary and Slovakia when mosquitoes thrived and I wilted. On one occasion in Slovakia the sun



Home comforts

was doing its best to melt me, and the track was rough and without shade. I'd given up the search for a lunchtime picnic bench when a side track into trees by the river offered a shady chance to rest and eat. Puddles were plentiful, and lots of tiny frogs leapt aside as the wheels squished through. It was only after opening up the picnic bag that the mosquitoes launched their mass attack and a hasty, not to mention ill humoured, retreat had to be made. Back on the track I met up with two young Austrians who asked for a look at the map as they weren't sure where they were. Their bikes were old and rickety, their gear was packed in poly bags and tied on with ropes, their map showed the entire route on one A5 page and they told me they were wild camping to cut down the cost. Having ascertained their position and photographed pages from my trail guide, we set off together for a few metres when they decided that my pace was too slow and disappeared in the direction of Budapest trailing a cloud of dust. Oh to be young and super fit!



Slovakian welcome?

The one thing the solo cycle-tourist will not be on the Donauradwanderweg is lonely. At every camp stop there were always others having adventures ranging in difficulty from the very easy to the mind bogglingly challenging. Near Linz I met up with Frederika and Guy, she originally from Germany and he from Australia. They had been working in London for seven years and decided to make a trip to Australia by bike. After a year of planning and preparation, which included riding from Lands End to John O'Groats, they took off carrying a staggering ninety kilograms of baggage. When I met them, Frederika was downloading their journey diary using a small laptop and wi fi connection. If anyone would like to check up on their progress or hear of their adventures, go on to www.abikejourney.com. The last time I looked they were in Turkey, and planning to cross Iran. After that the route becomes problematic. Incidentally, after Mark Beaumont had completed his round the world bike ride, he was asked in which countries he had met the greatest hospitality, and where he had experienced the greatest danger. The answers were first, Iran, where his welcome was overwhelming, and second, the United States, where he was mugged and robbed twice. So much for pre-conceived ideas. Other adventurers included a New Zealand couple on a tandem towing a trailer. They had flown in to The Netherlands with all that gear and were making a European grand tour. Belgium, France, Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Czech Republic and so on. If they ran short of funds they resumed work, he as a teacher, she as a potter. Then there was the couple riding well loaded solo bikes, he towing a trailer carrying two small children. We met on a viciously steep hill up which he was attempting to walk bike, trailer and kids. I gave him a helping push, and learnt that they had flown in to Munich, and were headed for Budapest. Tough cookies!

The fifteen day journey took me through lots of picturesque towns and cities, the highlights being Vienna and Budapest. In Vienna I went to a Mozart and Strauss concert and floated back to my hotel on cloud nine. Biking through Vienna in the dark added spice to an already exciting evening. There were times when I was reminded of what a philistine I am. Having visited an exhibition of the works of Peter Paul Rubens and Breughel, my main concern immediately afterwards was to find an Aldi or Lidl and stock up on bananas and salami. Very hobbit like!

Memories include watching the world cup matches from which Germany came out the winner. Congratulations Germany. In Austria a cock-a-hoop site owner told me that Austrians always support the Germans. I was too polite to say, "I know, I've just visited the Mauthausen Concentration Camp Memorial".

On a lighter note I met with nothing but kindness from the locals. Once, on a bridge in Dillingen, hesitating as to which side to take, a lady volunteered to show me the best route, and on the way supplied coffee and lunch. Her daughter was about to take her sixth form exams and spoke excellent English. In Straubing where I needed to find a bike shop to replace worn brake shoes, a young guy who was also about to take his pre-university exams guided me to his favourite bike mechanic and did the translation. New brake blocks were fitted and the bill was five euros! I felt like a cheapskate only giving him ten! After that my guide rode with me through the town, and out onto the trail.

In Ehingen I found myself dangerously close to joining an autobahn, and asked an elderly lady if she spoke English, and she referred me to her son who was waiting for her with his car. He gave me detailed advice, and ten minutes later I picked up the familiar Donauradweg signs - and there he was, parked on the side of the road with wife, kids and mother, pointing the way.

My thanks go to Deutsche Bahn for running such a great train service. I travelled from my eldest son's home in Bad Malente in North Germany and did both the outbound and the return with only one change. The cost of the ride from Budapest to Bad Malente was thirty nine euros for me and seventeen for the bike, a total of less than fifty pounds, and a classic trip through fantastic countryside. Altogether a wonderful trip.□



That's my business - 1

Graham Woods - Keynotes Music School

My name is Graham Woods, and I'm 36 years old. I teach Keyboard and Piano based in Dersingham and cover King's Lynn, Hunstanton and surrounding areas and I am also at Musikademy in King's Lynn.

I started playing when I was just 8 years old and every day when I came home from school I would get on my keyboard and play the songs that we had sung in assembly from memory. After a year, my mum was told that I should have lessons and as they say....the rest is history!

In June 2009, I got married to my lovely wife Jessica and as for family...watch this space!

Currently I have 60 pupils between home in Dersingham and Musikademy. My hobbies are having a dabble at ebay , photography and watching films.

If you are interested in having lessons please call 01485 545898 or 07846 240930.

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Hunstanton Lions Club

As the winter is now with us our thoughts are very much on the busiest time of the year for us, December – Christmas !. We are delighted to be able to tell you that we are again holding our **“Turkey & Tinsel”** lunches. These are for ***all over “60’s” in our area***, so don’t be afraid to let us know that you would like to come. The cost for a traditional three course lunch consisting of soup, roast turkey, sausage, stuffing and all the trimmings, a pudding and tea of coffee is again only £3.00 per head, with the balance of the cost being paid by Hunstanton Lions Club. Drinks are available at normal prices. It will be in the “Green Lodge Restaurant” on the Green in Hunstanton starting on Monday December 6, and running throughout the week. Please call Ian on 01485 533108 during the day for information on how to book. For the youngsters in our area we are holding our famous “Grotto” in the basement of the “Town Hall”. This will be on Saturdays and Sundays December 11, 12, 18, and 19th. Bring your children along to wander through the misty grotto ending up with a smashing present from Santa and a photograph taken with Santa in his room. To coincide with this we have a Craft Fair in the Hall on Sunday December 12 and Saturday and Sunday December 18 and 19th. Again full details of all these events will be in the next edition.

Friday November 19th was “Children in Need” Day and as usual we visited all the pubs and clubs in our area collecting money for this really worthwhile cause. All the money collected went straight to “Children in Need”. On the International front Lions Clubs International continue to work in Haiti. Throughout the world Lions Clubs donated over US\$ 5 million to this disaster (Lions Clubs of the British Isles and Ireland donated around £300,000) and supplied hundreds of tents to the area. They are still working with the various non-governmental organisations there and helping to construct 600 semi-permanent homes, and intend to help rebuild the community until the finish.

Our last Car Boot Sale of 2010 was on Sunday October 31st. These will be back again in the Spring so look out for the dates in the New Year. The profit from these is invaluable to us so we can continue to help all the many people and organisations, both local and national that we do. As always, please let us know if you, or anyone you know may need our help, not just financial, we’re not bad at putting in a bit of hard work if needed !!!.

Congratulations go to the winners of our “200 Club” October draw who were Alan Culy, Richard Dix, Jackie Harriman and Jack Henshaw, and in November were Angie Keightley, Alan Reed, Peter Mills and Mark Shingles. Next year get in early to guarantee tickets to this club. There are prizes of £100.00, £50.00 and two at £25.00 every month, so well worth winning.□

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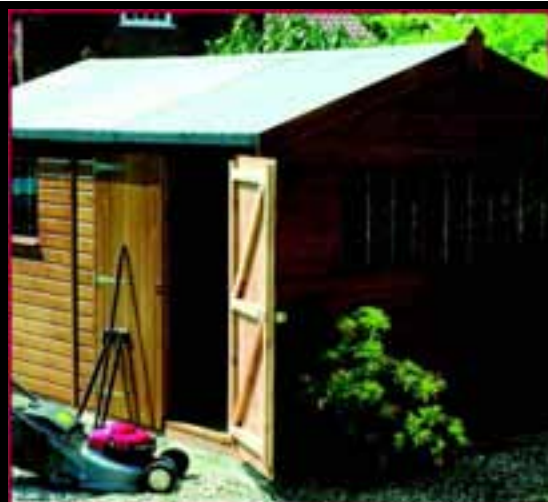
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A Portrait of Peru

Village Voice Live, November 2nd

On this first Tuesday of November with Alan Polaine as our guide and John at the controls, we were taken thousands of miles across the Atlantic to the west coast of South America. Leaving behind the chilly winds of Norfolk we entered that mysterious, intriguing country of Peru.

We flew across the arid desert lands to the Pacific coast where we saw the ancient cliff line that had once been the sea bed until forced upwards by the violent forces at the beginning of the world. We were all fascinated when we looked down from the plane on the amazing patterns and designs that had been etched on the dry arid plains by the early peoples of the region. Birds, men and even a huge whale all formed by the mysterious Nasco lines but which the artists themselves never saw as we can see. Unless of course you believe as some do that aliens from space were involved.

On our journey we traveled through villages and met the local people as they displayed their local crafts, spun and wove the wool for their colourful costumes. In every village they were always there to pose for the camera in their elegant headwear. The men, to prove they were the ones responsible for all those elaborate knitted designs, wore around their waists wool bundles pierced by knitting needles. Here as well as simple stone carvings we saw a magnificent altar piece of solid gold.

We sailed across Lake Titicaca in a reed boat and then took the train high into the magnificent Andes to reach that most remote marvel Machu Pichu. There we marvelled at the skill of the ancient Inca engineers who carved and fashioned immense blocks of stone and fitted them together with such precision that they have withstood everything time has flung against them. Here we saw the magnificent Condor soaring high above the Andes.

The trip to the jungle was memorable not only for the sight of a tarantula but also for a bright green creepy crawlly I certainly would not like to meet too often. Had we been there in reality we could have eaten roast Ostrich(?), llama, or guinea pig for our evening meal accompanied by the local band and dancers. All too soon the trip was over and we were leaving the high Andes to return via Windsor Castle back to London and then Dersingham Church Hall.

We were back in the real world once more but a hot cup of tea or coffee with a slice of good old English cake and a chat with friends rounded off a most rewarding evening. Thank you Alan and John. If you were not able to come on the journey with us this time on the First Tuesday in December we are off to Antarctica. See you there.□



CLIO

31 SQUADRON COME TO GLEBE CHRISTMAS FAIR:

The annual Christmas Fair at Glebe House School, Cromer Rd Hunstanton is on Friday 3rd December -10am till 4pm. This popular event is pleased to be welcoming members of the 31 Squadron from RAF Marham who are coming along to support the raffle in aid of Help for Heroes. They will also be bringing some interesting items with them ranging from a parachute suit to a dinghy which you will actually be able to sit in.

31 Squadron are one of the RAF's top Tornado squadrons and returned home from Afghanistan earlier this year, so do come along and meet them and look at some RAF memorabilia.

There will be many stalls offering some unique ideas for Christmas including; crafts, handmade chocolates, country wines, pottery, scarves, clothing, jewellery and even something for the dog. Enjoy a warming drink in our Christmas Cafe. Admission is free.



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CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS

By MAGGIE GRAY

As I write this in mid-September, Christmas seems a long way off, even though some trees are changing colour and the nights are drawing in. But it will be here soon enough and with it, the traditional frenzy for many people, of last-minute present buying and wrapping, of card-writing and posting, and mammoth shopping trips when a siege mentality seems to take over and they'll overstock, just to be on the safe side, and even though usually the shops close for no more than a couple of days. We have a much more low-key approach, with no over-eating, no over-spending, more laid back and restful, and all the more enjoyable for being so, to our minds.



Over the years, many of the Christmas traditions have been lost, and the history behind them too. Take baubles for instance. Did you know that the earliest ones came from Germany? Delicate and beautiful they were made from blown glass, because the first man to make them, a 17th Century glass-blower couldn't afford to decorate his tree in the way that was traditional at the time, with sweets and nuts. Instead he made use of the materials to hand and his skills, and made baubles. It was Queen Victoria who was the first person to have them on her tree in this country, and although the Church tried to condemn decorating a tree as a Pagan tradition, it was too popular for this plan to succeed.

Christmas crackers are often seen decorating a tree or festive table, these became a traditional part of Christmas in the mid-1800s. Tom Smith was a sweetmaker and on a trip to France he saw an idea which he was to copy, that of wrapping sweets, bonbons to the French, in paper, twisted at either end. He went further and added a love motto, but the final winning touch that turned a twisted paper-wrapped sweet into the cracker we know now, came after he added a small strip of saltpetre. He called his invention 'Bangs of Expectation'.

Say the words 'Yule Log' and a lot of people these days will think of a chocolate swiss roll, but the original Yule Log was indeed a piece of wood. Always connected with the Winter Solstice, it was burnt by the Celts to give light in the dark days when they believed the sun was still, around the time of the Solstice on the 21st December.

I wonder how many people still make their Christmas Pudding these days? And how many of those stick to tradition with all the family helping to mix the ingredients on the last Sunday before Advent? And do they still make a wish as they mix and hide a coin inside. It used to be the silver threepenny bit, then a sixpence, but with inflation, what is it now?



For a lot of people there has to be mistletoe hanging in the hall at Christmas. How many a wary teenager has been caught by his Gran under the mistletoe and endured a sloppy, lipsticky kiss? How many a hopeful man or woman has loitered with the intent of catching the secret object of their affections unawares. But when you consider that mistletoe is a poisonous plant, it's not exactly romantic is it? Mistletoe was held sacred by the Druids and hung over a crib to keep the sleeping baby safe.

Of course, not everyone bothers with mistletoe, or crackers, even baubles may have been exchanged for more homespun decorations, but Christmas cards are something that most of us buy, or make. They began, like Valentine's cards, as a form of stationery. On special occasions the wealthy upper classes sent little verses, elegantly engraved inside

an ornate, usually embossed border. The verses were flowery and wordy, and these rather serious cards are considered to be the forerunners of the cards as we know them today.

A large percentage of cards sent these days are charity cards, those sold in aid of various charities, and this form of card first appeared around the 1930s, and although no definite proof has been found as to who started this trend, certainly amongst the first to pioneer the idea was the Norfolk Wildlife Trust, which began life as the Norfolk Naturalists Trust in 1926, when it was founded by Dr Sydney Long. It was from his home in Surrey Street in Norwich, that he produced the first Christmas card for the charity in 1930. It featured a full-colour picture of a Bearded Tit, taken from a painting donated by the Norfolk artist J. C. Harrison. Five thousand cards were printed, raising some £60 for the charity. The Trust recognised this as being a good way to raise money and chose another of Mr Harrison's designs for their 1931 Christmas card, this time a painting of a Crossbill was used. A few years later and what is believed to be the first of the Trust's cards to be sent to Sandringham, a reproduction of a painting of a Goldfinch, was created. This sold 20,000 copies and raised what was then a princely sum, £320. This year, as ever, the cards available from the Trust include beautiful photographs and some lovely reproductions of paintings.□

An Additional Clinic for our Hearing Aid Users at Dersingham Surgery.

The Hearing Support Service provides thorough aftercare services for NHS hearing aid users in West Norfolk. Working alongside the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Audiology Team we provide practical support, servicing and advice for those with hearing loss. We visit many hundreds of patients at home and in residential care, in sheltered housing units and in our range of clinics around West Norfolk.

In the last issue of Dersingham Village Voice we announced the introduction of our hearing aid clinic at Dersingham Surgery which runs on the third Monday of every month. We are delighted with the clinics success and the number of people we service each month continues to rise. In response to the clinics popularity, and to ensure that the public continue to receive a prompt service, we are delighted to announce that a second, additional clinic has been set up at the same surgery. The additional clinic will run on the second Monday of each month and will provide greater flexibility and convenience to hearing aids users in the surrounding areas. The clinics run as a drop-in system from 9am – 12 midday. No appointment is needed, though it will be necessary for you to let reception staff know that you are waiting to be seen in order for them to issue you with a position in the queue.

You do not have to be a patient of Dersingham Surgery to attend either of the clinics.

The service is free and is funded by Norfolk Primary Care Trust. We are unable to provide batteries private hearing aids or service hearing aids issued by private dispensers.

For more information on either of the clinics or on any of the services that we provide please contact Rachel Vanhinsbergh at The West Norfolk Deaf Association on 01553 773399, email wnhss@btconnect.com .



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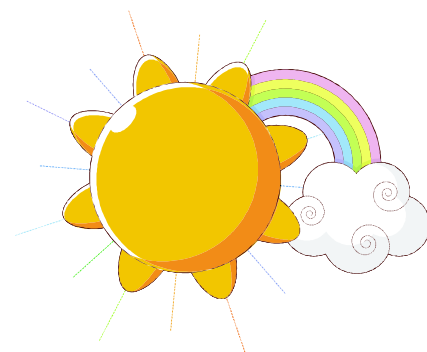
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The Dersingham Weather

observed by John F. Murray



I did say right at the end of my last article that I was hoping to report on an Indian summer and although I can't really say that it was, it wasn't too bad at all. The problem with the summer was that because of the particularly bad winter that we had, spring seemed to take a while to get going; then all the buds exploded into life. The summer was very short but quite intense, with high temperatures and humidity. Basically the summer was only one month; July. This reduced the growing time for us gardeners. My first runner bean crop was poor and I tried to get a second one in but the warm weather fizzled out and the crop came to nothing. Most gardeners I talk to also said that it was a poor year for beans. However my apples and pears were particularly good. It's a pity that this year I didn't have the time to make any scrumpy.

This September we had 67.4mm of rain which is more or less the same as 2008 when we had 65.8mm. Last year was much drier with only 27.4mm. The temperatures this September were an average of 14.3°C with a high of 23.7°C. Last year the average was 14.7°C with a maximum of 27.1°C, making last September slightly better, however this year was better than 2008 when the average was 13.7°C with a high of only 21.7°C. The main problem with September was that in the latter part it was dull and gloomy and that is also when we had most of the rain.

October was dominated by high pressure, which at this time of the year makes for bright sunny days but very cold nights. This is because high pressure is associated with little cloud cover. The highest temperature this October was 19.8°C which compares very favourably with the last two years. Last year was also 19.8° and 2008 it was 20.2°. There wasn't a big difference in the average, or mean temperatures either. This October the mean was 10.9°C compared to 11.6° last year and 9.8° in 2008. Incidentally in 2007 the figures were more or less the same, making October probably the most consistent month year on year. As far as rainfall is concerned this October was a little drier than previous years. I recorded 54.4mm compared to 66mm last year, 74.2mm in 2008 and 65.3mm in 2007.

The only thing worthy of note was the lowest recorded October temperature. I was quite surprised this year to record a below zero temperature overnight. Only just below zero at -0.8°C. However when I checked the records I discovered that in October 2008 I had recorded -2.8°C.

By the time I compile my next article the winter will be well and truly with us and harking back to something I said earlier, the summer was short and it doesn't seem very long ago that we were in the grips of quite a severe winter. Hopefully we will not have a repeat of that as it is very unusual to have two bad winters together. However I am not making any predictions at all. I note that the Met. Office haven't stuck their necks out either. How boring it must be to live somewhere where the weather is fairly predictable.□

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That's my business 2 – S. Claus

As told to Steve Nowell

“Like Lord Alan Sugar I am a self-made man. Reputedly he started off with a few quid in his back pocket; and I started with a dog and a dilapidated old pram which I converted into a dog-cart. He has finished up with a massive business empire; and I have a never ending haulage contract which gives me more job satisfaction than he will ever know. And unlike Lord S who probably works his socks off 365 days a year to make his fortune, I have a mega-blitz one evening a year; for nothing; and I love it. It all started many moons ago when a toy shop in King's Lynn put an advert in the Lynn News asking for 'seasonal assistants' to deliver Christmas presents. They were trying out a 'deliver on the day' scheme and had become swamped with orders. I volunteered to cover the Dersingham area. It was a massive success. But not only did the shop in question benefit from a glut of orders for the following year, so did toy shops across the country. The idea spread like wildfire. It was not long before the whole idea of 'deliver on the day' at Christmas became completely impracticable. Also some people were insistent on having their presents delivered to remote corners of the earth which didn't help. Now I couldn't just stand by and see millions of children all over the world being so bitterly disappointed, could I? In a very rash moment I sent out a message on the BBC World Service that I would make myself responsible getting every present got to the right place at the right time. And that was that, really. True we've had one or two hiccups but nothing serious. The kids are happy, the toy shops are happy, and I'm happy. Anyway, I'm a busy man and I've got to go now...”

“Hang on Mr Claus. That's all very well but you haven't answered the vital question. Namely how can you deliver so many billions of presents all over the world in such a short time?” “That's confidential and I'm not going to tell you. It would spoil the magic of it all.” “OK, but unless you tell me I'll see to it that you don't get a mention in Dersingham Village Voice and you know how much you like publicity”.

“Alright. You win. It's all very simple but I bet you won't believe me anyway. You see I am a 4-dimensional being. Without going into lengthy explanations that means that I can travel through time like Doctor Who. For example I can collect a present from your house in Dersingham in one instant then deliver it to your cousin in Australia a milli-second later. In other words I operate an instantaneous collection and delivery service. You're now going to ask me how I get down chimneys aren't you? The answer is that I don't. It's a myth. Being 4-dimensional I can materialise when and where I want. So mostly I choose to turn up in the lounge. There's often some mince pies for me in there. And why make life difficult by having to squeeze myself down a dirty tube just to perpetuate a fairy tale? Of course I don't use my faithful old hound and a dog cart any more. They were brilliant in the early days but when I went 'global' I had to think about my image. Legend had it that I was based in Lapland so I had to get myself a decent sledge, and replace Fang (that's the dog by the way) with a snooty reindeer who pranced about doing nothing useful but thought he was the bees knees. So what of the future? In recent years the job has become easier and I foresee this trend continuing. Children nowadays are becoming electronically minded. It's all mobile phones, micro computers, and digital this and digital that, and they are much easier to transport than bikes, dolls prams and train sets for example. Postal codes and sat-nav have made a big difference as well. In the early days I used to have stacks of maps and street plans tucked away in the sledge. It didn't take any more time using them because, as I said, I'm 4-dimensional. But all I have to do now is key in a post code and I'm there. A single operation instead of several. Got to go now – the sledge needs a polish. It's been good talking to you. Pass on my best wishes to the good people of Dersingham and if I see anyone out and about on Christmas Eve I'll give them a wave”.□



Greetings from the manse

In his autobiography, *An Only Child*, the Irish writer, Frank O'Connor, tells how one Christmas Santa Claus brought him a toy engine. On Christmas afternoon his mother took him to visit the local convent. As the engine was the only present he had received, he took it with him to show it to the nuns. While he was in the convent one of the nuns brought him to visit the crib in the chapel. As he looked into the crib he noticed something that upset him very much. What upset him was the fact that the Child Jesus was lying there in the manger without a single present. He knew exactly how that child felt, the utter despondency of realising that he had been forgotten, and that nobody had brought him anything. Turning to the nun, he asked why the Holy Child hadn't got any toys, and she replied, 'His mother is too poor to afford them.'

That settled it. His mother was poor too, but at Christmas she had always managed to buy him something, even if it was only a box of crayons. In a burst of reckless generosity, he took the toy engine, climbed into the crib, and put it between the outstretched arms of the Child. And he showed him how to wind it as well, because a little baby would not be clever enough to know a thing like that.

This story shows us the power of Christmas. Through Christmas God gives us an opportunity to show what we are capable of. Of course, he set the example himself. He began by making us a gift of his most precious possession - his only Son. God's Son could have come in power and wealth. Had he come in power, we would have bowed down in fear before him. Thus he would have made us feel small and weak and insignificant. If he had come in wealth, he would have made us aware of our own poverty. Thus he would have evoked a feeling of envy in us, and done serious damage to our hearts.

But he didn't come in power and wealth. He came in weakness and poverty. By coming in weakness, he made us aware of our own power. By coming in poverty, he made us aware of our own riches. His poverty evoked in us a feeling of compassion, thereby bringing our hearts to life. It was the poverty of the Child Jesus that evoked that reckless act of generosity in the young Frank O'Connor. It was the poverty of Jesus that awed the Magi to 'open their treasures' and lay them before him. The poverty of Jesus is a challenge to us too. It gives us an opportunity to open our hearts. Jesus no longer needs our gifts. But other people may. He wants us to share ourselves with one another.

Christmas is a feast of the heart. It reveals to us what the heart of God is like. At the same time it reveals to us what the human heart is capable of. Christmas causes us to open our hearts. And to open our hearts is to begin to live. What makes us human is not so much our ability to think as our ability to love. To the extent to which we open our hearts to God and to one another, we will experience something of the 'great joy' the angels announced to the shepherds. Joy is the fruit of love. Joy is an overflowing heart.

Christmas joy to you and yours,

Kim Nally

Many thanks to everyone who attended the coffee morning on 23rd October, we raised £267 which has been divided between Dersingham Day Centre and Talking Newspapers for the Blind. We look forward to seeing you at our **Christmas Coffee Morning on Saturday 27th November 10.00 a.m. to 12 noon**, for coffee and mince pies, stalls: cards, cakes, gifts, books and jigsaws, Traidcraft.

Christmas services 19th December 10.30 a.m. morning service, 6.00 p.m. Candlelit carol service.

Christmas Day service 10.30 a.m. Sunday 26th December 10.30 a.m. morning service,
no evening service.

You are welcome to join us in celebrating the birth of Jesus God's gift to us.

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Old Girls Patch

by Meetze

Sid brought home another girl friend. She looks very much like him just a bit smaller. She wears a red collar with a tag and a bell. So we call her Tinkerbelle, because of the noise she makes when she moves. She is really cute and she hisses at everything even food and toys. Well, what else to expect of a girl friend of Sid. The one he brought home last time moved in permanently. Now I can keep an eye on her.

We call her Johnnie. Not really sure why, as she is a girl. Johnnie also was pregnant when she moved in. But she had to get an abortion because her life was in danger if she had given birth. I did not know that can happen. I have never been pregnant and I also do not plan to get it. I think my big friend made sure that I cannot have any accidents in that department.

Johnnie is not the only one that moved in with us. Another 2 legged female is now living with us as well. Compared to the other two that live with us, she is very tiny. And this new one seems to be attached to a grey flat box with loads of buttons and a changing picture frame when it gets unfolded. And she does not like it when Johnnie or I sit on those buttons. But it is fun, as the pictures change when we do that. Sometimes there is a black piece of string attached to it which tangles and trying to fetch it proved to be very easy. No challenge there. Boring. If this new female detaches herself from that grey box, then she is eating. And is she eating! More than Stumps and that means something.

Oh, by the way, did you know the difference between a cat and a dog???

A dog thinks: They feed me, they love me, they take care of me. They must be gods.

A cat thinks: They feed me, they love me, they take care of me. I must be god!

Not funny? Never mind, I thought it was. And it is soooo true.

Last Thursday was a bit of a shock to all of us. All the cages were out and that means only one thing. Vet!!! Why??? I am not sick and the others look fine to me too. Well, we had not much say in that, we all went to the vet for a vaccination. I jumped onto my big friend's shoulder trying to hide in her long hair, but it was no use. Stumps was not impressed either, she bid the vet. And Sid was a real wuzz. He had his tail between his legs and the tip was showing in front of his nose. It looked really funny. Strangely there was no reaction from Beauty at all. No meow no nothing. And Johnnie jumped off the bench and started investigating the room. I don't like going to the vet. It



smells strange and there are dogs. I hate dogs. I mean I really really dislike them. OK, I do not like other cats either, but cats I can at least tolerate.

This morning I saw Stumpy training for Christmas. I think she could be a good candidate in case Rudolph gets sick. I took a picture so you know what I mean.

Pawy Christmas to everyone by the way and all the best for the New Year.□

David Bingham

Robin Redbreast

"Art thou the bird whom Man loves best/The pious bird with the scarlet breast/Our little English Robin?" - *William Wordsworth*

I'm sure that I've written about robins in some previous Christmas issue of 'The Village Voice'. But having absolutely no recollection of what I said I'm guessing that you won't remember either so I will plough on regardless. I'll start with the geeky science stuff. Both male and female robins have red breasts and look identical. They are very territorial holding both summer and winter territories. Females often hold their own winter territory a little way from the nest site. Their trilling silvery song can be heard even in the depth of winter - particularly if we have a mild spell. Robins were originally birds of deciduous woodlands but have taken to living in parks and gardens as well as woods. Their diet is made up mainly of small invertebrates and providing food on bird tables such as grated cheese or dried mealworms is the way to attract them. Don't expect a flock of robins because their territorial instincts will make them defend their patch even if you put a ton of mealworms on the table.

Our resident robins (about 6 million territories) don't tend to move far but continental robins are migratory due to the more severe winter weather in northern and central Europe. These migrating robins are often blown onto the Norfolk coast and in early October 1998, a particularly large 'fall' of robins was recorded in the county. There were 370 at Holme, 650 at Scolt Head, 3,000 between Wells and Holkham, 375 at Blakney Point, 200 at Weybourne, 300 between Overstrand and Sidestrand and 200 at Paston. Many of these robins would have continued their journey south but the UK robin population does increase in the winter with the arrival of migrants from the continent. Continental robins tend to be less confiding than our resident birds and often skulk in the bushes rather than boldly venturing within a few feet of a gardener digging in the veg patch. The early English settlers in America must have missed the homely robin because they gave the name to a much larger bird with a reddish rather than red breast. An American robin usually puts in an appearance at Christmas during the inevitable repeat of Mary Poppins. Keep your eyes peeled when Ms P brandishes a 'spoon full of sugar'.

Robins probably appear on Christmas cards because they are charismatic birds seen at their best against a snowy background. Some have suggested (rather tenuously I believe) that a connection was made between the delivery of the first Christmas cards and the Victorian postmen, known as 'robin redbreasts' because of their scarlet tunics, who delivered them. There are also several religious stories about the origin of the robin's red breast that emphasise their supposed kindness. These stories put the redness of the robin's breast down to it being stained red through picking a thorn out of Christ's head when he was on his way to be crucified, singed in the fires of hell while taking water to sinners, or more appropriately for Christmas, burnt while fanning a fire to warm the baby Jesus. Their kindness is also supposed to extend to covering anyone who dies in a wood with leaves, moss and flowers. This was the fate of the 'babes in the wood' in an early version of the tale - I imagine that modern pantomimes have a more upbeat ending.

'Thus wandered these poor innocents,
Till death did end their grief;
In one another's arms they died,
As wanting due relief;
No burial this pretty pair
Of any man receives,
Till Robin Redbreast piously
Did cover them with leaves.'

Robins aren't actually very kind to each other but their reputation has done them no harm



Photo - RSPB

because, in this country at least, it is considered unlucky to kill a robin.

There is a darker side to robin myths because they have also been seen as a bad omen. If you stand up and a robin lands on the chair you vacated you are not supposed to survive until the end of the day. We have a robin that joins us every Christmas that is a bit of a bad omen. It's a sound activated automaton that shakes and nods frantically while singing 'Jingle bells', 'We wish you a merry Christmas' and 'Rudolph the red nosed reindeer' at the top of its voice whenever the slightest noise is made. Yes, we *could* turn it off but somehow that doesn't seem like the right thing to do because it is only trying to be cheerful. At least it guarantees a very peaceful Christmas as we all tiptoe around the house trying not to disturb it. I would recommend a carol singing robin to all those wishing for a quiet Christmas.

‘All the birds of the air fell a-sighing and a-sobbing
When they heard of the death of poor Cock Robin’

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Goose News

Pink-footed geese should have arrived in big numbers by the time you read this but I have just spent a few minutes searching the Internet to see where they are right now in the middle of October. The number on the RSPB reserve at Vane Farm in Perthshire has fallen to 1, 800 - but Montrose Basin, just to the east, is holding a record 65, 000. Further south in Lancashire at the Martin Mere WWT reserve another record count of 36, 000 has just been made. Some have arrived back in Norfolk and there were 4, 150 at the RSPB Snettisham roost on the 11th of October.

I was about to log off the Internet when I noticed a Guardian article by David Adam entitled 'Why the pink footed goose is a CO² villain', which was written last winter. Very interesting stuff that refers to some research that has been done in Svalbard looking at the damage grazing pink-footed geese do to the arctic tundra. They strip away moss in search of buried plants to eat on returning to their breeding ground in the spring. Without the protective moss layer the underlying peat decomposes and releases CO² at a rate of 136kg per year per goose. The article equated this to each goose being responsible for emitting more CO² each year than four patio heaters. The article went on to say that there had been a three-fold increase in pink-footed geese on Svalbard because of successful conservation measures in their temperate wintering grounds.

The work referred to was a follow up to research done by Wal, Sjogersten, Woodin, Cooper, Jonsdottir, Kuijpers, Fox and Huiskes entitled 'Spring feeding by pink-footed geese reduces carbon stocks and sink strength in tundra ecosystems'. This work is freely available on the Internet and looks very sound.

The Guardian article assumed that our geese come from Svalbard in the high arctic. They don't. Our geese spend the summer in Iceland and southern Greenland that are much further south and there is a fair chance that the vegetation is more advanced when they arrive on the breeding grounds. The Svalbard pink-footed geese spend the winter on the other side of the North Sea. Right now, Icelandic pinkies in Norfolk are as close as they ever will be to their Svalbardian relatives over the sea in Holland. Making a link between each goose and four patio heaters also seems a bit suspect - possibly true if the heaters were used only on a handful of nippy evenings. Interesting stuff never the less and the first piece of research I have seen where wildlife is implicated in global warming (although it does correctly say that the amount of CO² released is miniscule in terms of the global carbon picture). I had heard that snow geese in North America are damaging the tundra of northern Canada where they breed, but snow geese in America number around 7, 600, 000 against the 350, 000 pink-footed geese from Iceland and Greenland. The UK hosts all of this western pink-footed goose population and a large percentage of them end up in

Norfolk (and over your house).

If you want to enjoy the spectacle of tens of thousands of 'environmentally friendly' pink-footed geese leaving the roost at dawn the Snettisham RSPB reserve run 'Pinkie Breakfasts'. Dates are November 26, 27, 29, 30 and December 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 14, 30. Booking is essential by calling 01485 210779.



Photo - RSPB

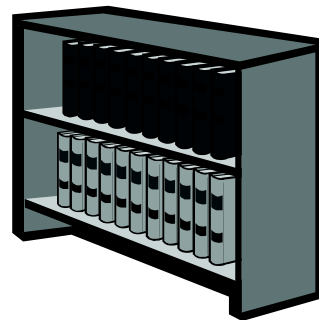
Dersingham Library

Here's what's coming soon to Dersingham Library

Introduction to the Ancestry Library.com website

Friday 3 December 10.00am – 12.00noon or Tuesday 7 December 10.00am – 12.00noon. Session will include searching the birth, marriage and death indexes, and using the 1841-1901 Censuses.

Spaces are limited to 6 people, so please book your place in advance by calling the library on 01485 540181



Knit and natter This is a monthly drop in morning for those who knit or crochet (or those who are interested in learning how to do both). If you are a knitter and are interested in helping others learn or if you would like to learn a new skill and find out how you can knit for charities, then please give us a call. First meeting will be on Thursday 9th December from 10.30-12noon. Coffee and tea provided.

Messy play and crafts with Books for Babies staff Every Monday until December 13th 2.00 - 3.00pm. For all ages of children from babies to 5 year olds.

Christmas Crafts at Dersingham Library Monday 13 December 4.00 – 6.00pm. Learn how to make simple Christmas decorations, help decorate the library and enjoy some festive stories. This is a family event and under 7s must be accompanied by an adult. This is a free event, but places are limited so please book by calling 01485 540181.

Library Reading Groups Our Christmas meeting for both groups will be on Tuesday December 14th at 6pm.

Jacqueline Wilson Night Thursday 20 January 5.30 – 7.00pm
Join us for a girls' night in with all your favourite Jacqueline Wilson books. There'll be quizzes and games, and a chance to test your knowledge of all her books. This evening is aimed at 8-11 year olds. Please come dressed as your favourite Wilson book character. Spaces are limited so please book by calling the library on 01485 540181



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NEWS FROM ST CECILIA'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

We were blessed with a fine day for our sponsored walk in September, and sixteen members of the parish, well fortified with soup and rolls, set off on the familiar circuit. The statutory ice-cream stop was enjoyed by everyone, and all the walkers made it safely home for tea and cakes. The walk raised over £900 for parish funds and our thanks go to the walkers and to all who so generously sponsored them.



On the same weekend, Pope Benedict made a state visit to this country. A number of parishioners went to the prayer vigil in Hyde Park, while others were lucky enough to be at Crofton Park for the Beatification Mass for John Henry Newman. All found the occasions both moving and uplifting. For the rest of us, who followed the events on television, the sights and sounds of a very special four days will remain in our memories for ever.



We were very pleased to welcome a number of ladies from Dersingham and further afield to our autumn Ladies' Lunch in October. As usual, the food on offer was excellent, and we all forgot our waistlines and enjoyed tasting each other's culinary efforts. The meal ended with a quiz and a sing along session. We were all in good voice for the singing, and the team that won the quiz very generously offered their prize chocolates around, so we all went home having had a very happy time.

Advent, the four weeks in preparation for Christmas, starts on November 28th. During Advent we do not have the usual flowers in the church, but we mark our passage through the season using an Advent wreath. This is a circle of evergreen branches surrounding five candles – three purple, one pink and one white. The three purple candles are lit for the first time on the first, second and fourth Sundays of Advent respectively, whilst the pink candle is lit on the third or Gaudete Sunday (Gaudete comes from the Latin word for rejoice). This third Sunday marks a change of emphasis from penitence to the anticipation of the joyful celebration of Christ's coming, and acknowledges that Advent is half over. At the first Mass of Christmas the fifth candle, in the centre of the wreath, is lit. This is the white candle, representing the coming of the Light of the world.

Details of our Christmas services are:

24 th December (Fri)	8.30pm	Vigil of Carols and Readings – Dersingham
CHRISTMAS EVE	9.00pm	'Midnight Mass' - Dersingham
25 th December (Sat)	9.00am	Mass of the Dawn - Dersingham
CHRISTMAS DAY	11.00am	Mass of the day – Hunstanton
26 th December (Sun)	9.00am	Mass at Dersingham
THE HOLY FAMILY	11.00am	Mass at Hunstanton
27 th December (Mon)	10.00am	Mass at Hunstanton
St John the Evangelist		

We will be very happy to welcome visitors to these services, whether they are visiting the parish from elsewhere, or live in the area. We would also be delighted to see visitors at our regular services. Refreshments are served after the 9am Mass at St Cecilia's on the first Sunday of the month. We also have a friendly and informal gathering after the 10.15 Mass at St Cecilia's on Wednesdays. Do come and visit – we'd love to see you.□

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Parish Council Report

Suzy Daniels

Wow! What a huge Public participation at September's meeting, with over 30 Parishioners in attendance! But not quite so high in October!! It is hoped that you continue to attend these meetings and have your say, even with the nights again pulling in rather rapidly with the changing of the clocks!! I hope you all had an enjoyable Halloween and Fireworks night!

Crimewas up!!!! The police reported 11 crimes during this 8 week period which seems a lot in comparison to last time, but it was actually double the time period. These comprised 5 thefts, 5 criminal damage and 1 assault...which resulted in a person being detained under the Mental Health act.

New Parish Councillors.....Welcome back and welcome!

Borough Cllr Roy Johnston and Dennis Wright applied for the two vacancies and it was resolved to co-opt them. This took us back up to Full Council, but at October's meeting there were two resignations leaving two vacancies once again. If you are interested in becoming a Parish Councillor please contact the Parish Council Office.

Presentation by Andy Crown....Where should the MUGA go?

Sergeant Andy Crown's proposal for A MULTI USE GAMES AREA to be placed in the village was met with total support from the Parish Council. In 2008 working with the BCKLWN local youths were asked whether a MUGA would be required in Dersingham. The feedback was very positive. As one of the largest villages in the area there are very few amenities for the youth. The site previously suggested was the Tennis Courts on the Sports Ground. This would involve renovating the existing Tennis Courts which are dangerous and require work and also making provision for other sports to be played in the area. It would also give the youth an area other than the Recreation Ground. This has been a source of discussion amongst the Police, the Sports Ground Committee and The Tennis Club all with differing opinions. One major concern was vandalism, but it is felt that if the youth were to take ownership of a designated area this was unlikely to happen. It was resolved to consider all sides and make further enquiries into the location.

County Council....

Cllr Dobson expressed disappointment that the Sports Ground Committee had turned down the offer of funding for a MUGA on its land. But further discussion is taking place with all concerned. It was felt that the Pedestrian crossing by Budgens is not visible enough, and vehicles parking close by are making the situation even more dangerous. The police had been contacted to deal with parking issues but were unable to help claiming lack of resources. It was resolved that a request is placed for a lights-controlled crossing, and the police again be requested to monitor the parking situation more closely. The subject of the Right of Way through Life Wood was raised and Cllr Dobson requested the relevant paperwork in order to pursue the matter. Problems of leaves on the paths around the village were discussed and it was explained this is a Borough Council issue. It was resolved to contact the Borough to obtain a street cleaning schedule and request an extra autumn leaf sweeping. Cllr Manship felt that several of the yellow lines in the village required repainting. Cllr Dobson explained a recent survey by highways showed all yellow lines to be correct and legal. A request was made for a list of all street lights in the village that the County were responsible for. Concerns were expressed about flooding outside the Surgery, and by the traffic lights where road works had left a drain malfunctioning. These will be passed to the County Council.

Borough Council....we are on the right financial track

Cllr Johnston reported there would be 25-40% cut in the Borough Council's budgets following the recent review. However, the Borough Council were looking to make savings through increasing collaborative working with the other local authorities, specifically in the areas of rubbish collection, revenues/benefits and I.T. It was intended that that local services would be maintained, with saving made through economies of scale. These changes would take place over a period of time depending on the current contracts. So far there had been no need for any compulsory redundancies from within the staff, but this may not always be the case. It was explained that at present the Local

Governments for this area are on track with the budget cuts and doing the utmost to maintain this. Cllr Johnston highlighted the Borough Council's intention to cease paying 50% of the parish's election costs. He agreed that this would affect the smaller parishes more than Dersingham who could afford to pay. It was also felt that proportionately it was a heavy financial burden for the parishes with relatively little saving to the Borough. Proposed Planning changes were explained, which would be likely to give more responsibility to Borough Council and ultimately smaller local groups like parishes and local enterprise groups. The handing over of the Sandringham View areas that will become Parish Council responsibility had been delayed by sickness and staff leave, but all staff had returned so it should now progress fairly rapidly.

Step Forward...

On the 28th October the Step Forward team arranged for some equipment, borrowed from Smithdon High School to be placed at the recreation ground to enable the local Parkour group to practice their techniques. This sport requires a huge amount of strength and energy. It was a very enjoyable afternoon for the Group of youngsters and also for the spectators. It is hoped that more events of this type, catering for the youngsters will take place in the future. The Parkour Group and the Step Forward team are in the early stages of planning permanent equipment on the recreation ground. A brief outline has been drawn up by the Parkour group of their requirements.

Planning Applications:

27 Fern Hill...single storey garden room extension...*Recommended approval*

65 Valley Rise...Extensions and alteration...*Recommended refusal*

9 Onedin Close...Demolition of existing building and construction of 3 new dwellings with associated garages, vehicular parking, access road and landscaping...*Recommended refusal*

15 Jannochs Court...conservatory extension...*Recommended approval*

30 Gelham Manor...replacement of existing outbuilding with annex...*Recommended approval*

Determinations:

28 Gelham Manor...Rear extension...*Granted*

24 Station Road...Construction of garage...*Granted*

22 Post Office Road...single storey extension...*Granted*

57 Chapel Road...Extension, alterations, construction of garage and new access...*Granted*

79 Lynn Road...Extension and alterations...*Granted*

23 Woodside Avenue...construction of 3 bed chalet style bungalow...*Outline refused*

8A Saxon way...change of use from surgery to offices with alterations...*Approved subject to amendments*

Tree Preservation Order...Land to rear of 27 Pansey Drive...*Order confirmed.*□

Apricot Almond Cake from the Bluebell Cottage Kitchen **by Lindsey Davis**

A delicious alternative to the traditional Christmas cake for those who like something not quite so rich, or like me, do not like dried vine fruit.

Ingredients

8oz dried (ready to eat) apricots, chopped, 8oz soft margarine, 8oz castor sugar, 3 eggs, 4oz ground almonds, ½ tsp almond essence, 8oz self-raising flour, ½ oz flaked almonds, 1 level tbsp granulated sugar.

Method

Grease and line 8" or 9" deep cake tin. Cream together margarine and sugar until very light and fluffy. Beat together eggs and almond essence and add to creamed mixture alternately with ground almonds, beating well after each addition. Sift flour, fold into mixture with apricots. Turn into prepared tin and level top. Sprinkle flaked almonds and granulated sugar on top.

Bake Gas 2 - 150C°. Test after 1 hour.□

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Steve Davis Reflecting on Life's Punctures

The undisguised smugness I felt from visiting 45 churches over a meandering distance of 68 miles between here and Cley-next-the-Sea on the *2010 Norfolk Churches Trust Sponsored Cycle Ride* last September has all but worn off now. Compared to the intrepid exploits of Trevor Riches, it is of course but a trip around the park! Nevertheless I would like to thank all who sponsored me, which together with two other riders from St Nicholas Church raised £561. Certainly things worked out better for me than last year's similar ride when I suffered the set back of not one, but two punctures along the way – one in each wheel and I had only taken one spare inner-tube with me! In my follow up Church magazine article I reflected that *"Life can be a bit like that; one minute you are freewheeling and then when you least expect it you are slowed down with a*

puncture!"

I was all booked up and looking forward to another cycling jaunt in October with my military historian friend to visit the WW1 battlefields around Ypres in Belgium, staying at Talbot House (*Toc H HQ*) in Poperinge, hoping then to write about my exploits for this issue. However, another unexpected 'puncture' put paid to our plans; the bike is fine, it is just me that now has a hernia! I can manage short local cycle trips, but anything that involves standing around, lifting or sudden movements is definitely off my agenda. *Things like carrying shopping, washing up, etc – you know the sort of thing?!* So with great reluctance we had to postpone our trip only a few days before it was due. I have been moping around a bit since, feeling sore and restricted. I take some encouragement and am indeed surprised by the number of men around here I have spoken to who boast of having had not just the one hernia, but two or even three to deal with! *Ouch!*

It makes me realise though just how much I take my health for granted at times. Of course, one does not have to look far to realise that it is a very minor ailment compared to what so many amongst us have to endure and I am always inspired by those who despite set-backs have pressed-on with life and brightened the lives of others in the process. I think especially of Jennifer Adams, a dear friend to me and so many in this area, who sadly lost her eight-year battle with cancer in September. Perhaps *battle* is the wrong word, for she positively ploughed on through one difficulty after another continuing each aspect of her life and work as she was able with faith and a radiant smile, whether as a physiotherapist, Reader at St Nicholas Church, Branch Leader of the Mother's Union, tending the allotment, being a loving wife to Neil (also a Reader and Church Warden), devoted mother and grandmother, or simply by engaging in bright and encouraging conversation with all whom she met. Even in the advanced stages of her illness, folk would be a little alarmed to see her cycling around the village as she simply refused to accept that her time was nearly up! We miss her greatly, though her legacy of taking such a positive attitude to life is an inspiration that lives on!

Folk who read my articles will no doubt have got



the message that Lindsey and I are very fond of living in Dersingham and the sense of community that we enjoy here. Compared to our previous existence in an ever increasingly crowded and built-up city area, with what for me was becoming a tedious job coupled with kids having all flown the nest, I could certainly feel down in the dumps over life and easily suffer from the *miserable old git* syndrome with the worst of them! So, we took steps to change our life and chose to move to Dersingham. Is it just that it is a wonderful place with its caring community and easy access to places of natural beauty or are we just seeing things through rose-tinted spectacles? I know that in taking such a step, we also became determined to try and adopt a more positive, out-going and engaging attitude towards life. I appreciate though that not all see things quite as we do. Many have struggles with neighbours and harbour grudges that go on for years. Many have mobility difficulties and feel trapped or a sense of isolation. Some regard Dersingham as having nothing much to offer and cannot wait to get away quick enough, judging by the speed they race through our narrow streets! Some seem totally unmoved by the richness of the natural beauty and sights that surround us, even of the sight and sound of the skeins of pink-footed geese winging and calling out overhead, having chosen our area in which to see out the winter. Only last week, a friend of mine who lives in the village was out for an early morning jog with his dog. The dog ran right in front of him and he tripped headlong sustaining a badly cut knee (which turned septic), a cracked elbow and an impact wound to his hand. As he writhed in agony and blood on the deck, he noticed a man come out of the house opposite, look across the road at him, then simply get in a car and drive away! Whether the man understood the situation or what, who can say? It may sound pious to suggest that it smacks of the story of the *Good Samaritan* told by Jesus in response to the question “*And who is my neighbour?*” (*Luke 10:25-37*) although in this case my friend was left to struggle to his feet and limp home alone. We all have our differences and problems, but surely good neighbourliness, trying to see things from another’s perspective and an appreciation of our natural heritage go a long way to making life so much more pleasant and liveable.



Prior to our abandoned Ypres trip, I had been researching online the background and sorry plight of the WW1 troops in the Trenches. I was very moved by the stories concerning the famous impromptu *Christmas Truce* that took place along the *Western Front* in 1914 and to a lesser extent in 1915. Here men with such limited resources in pitiable conditions heard singing coming from the other side, so the story is told, and considered how the enemy too were struggling to make the best of a similar predicament. They took time out to see things from the others viewpoint and realised the similar orders, pressures, feelings, fears,

family ties and aspirations that they had in common and for a few memorable hours crossed the lines to share their meagre resources and celebrate together. Although begrudgingly condoned by senior officers for that brief period, it could not last, but what must have gone through the minds of the troops as they continued with the onslaughts that followed, one can barely imagine. I think perhaps they might have understood the whole plot of Christmas a bit better than we do now. A simple *Google* search on *Christmas Truce* will reveal pages of information on the subject and several *YouTube* videos, including a very touchingly warm song with slide show that can be found at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=8tFP1ySGYEU .

So what can we do this Christmas? In amongst all the festivities, why not try mending the odd punctured relationship? In my experience it is always worth the effort and may just mean being willing to make the first move and going easy on the conditions. Perhaps what starts as a Christmas Truce might extend into the New Year too!

The *Christmas Tree Festival* starts on 3rd/4th December in St Nicholas Church (now with its new heating system in operation), informal *Tea and Carols* takes place again between 3 and 4pm on 12th as well as all the usual Christmas Services at all three Dersingham Churches throughout the season, so why not invite friends and neighbours?

By the time this reaches you, I hope to have seen the consultant regarding getting my 'puncture' fixed and hope that for the time being at least, I can get away with just the one! Then I can be off freewheeling again, albeit with a little less complacency.

May I wish you a very happy and puncture-free Christmas!

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That's my business - 3 Geoffrey Collings & Co

I was pleased to be asked by your editor to write a few notes about the firm of Geoffrey Collings & Co and the property market in Dersingham and area. What you may ask does Jeff Hazel know about the Dersingham property market, Geoffrey Collings & Co have only been in the village for 2 years! Well our association with Dersingham goes back much further. Many of you will remember that our founder Geoffrey Collings himself lived in Dersingham for many years and I was born and bred in Wolferton and have been involved in many of the village organisations over a long period of time.

The firm of Geoffrey Collings & Co commenced in King's Lynn in 1965, when the old firm of Miles, Collings & Landles split and Geoffrey Collings set up his own business in the present premises at Blackfriars Street in King's Lynn. At that time, David Wilson a young junior with the Firm had worked with Geoffrey for 6 months, and I started on day one of the new firm. David Wilson and myself remain as Partners and in 1993 Andrew Holford joined us in Partnership having worked with the Firm for some six years. Since those original beginnings in King's Lynn the Firm has expanded and has offices Long Sutton, Lincolnshire, Terrington St Clement and of course, Dersingham. All Partners within the Firm are members of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and we offer a complete range of professional services to the property market.

Obviously our experiences in Dersingham are of particular interest to the readers of this magazine, we have of course, since 1965 seen many changes take place in the village of Dersingham. When we were first selling properties in the village it was a much smaller community than it is now. Geoffrey Collings & Co were involved in the development and sale of estates such as Kingscroft, The Oaks, Sandringham View and Clayton Close. At the same time we were busy surveying for various Building Societies and watching the development of Centre Vale and Valley Rise so we have experienced a very substantial increase in the size of the village.

Looking back to those early days it is perhaps surprising that with a population that was considerably less than it is now the village offered rather more facilities particularly with its range of shops, bakeries, railway etc. Dersingham has experienced the great change in shopping habits that has been experienced in other communities in the district.

Estate Agency has also greatly changed and in 1965 there were Agents in King's Lynn and Hunstanton but none in between and properties in Dersingham would be sold by the Lynn Agents or old Hunstanton firms such as Ingram Watson & Son. Now Estate Agency is far more localised with many villages including Dersingham having Estate agency firms represented within the village and offering a range of services.

Changes have we seen – well obviously prices are much higher now than they were when we commenced although the market has dipped a little over the last 2 or 3 years, they are still hugely more than in 1965. We also now see property looked upon as a method of investment with many buy-to- lets being acquired, people feeling that their money is safer invested in bricks and mortar than other forms of pension investment. This has also led to there being far

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more properties available to let on the open market now than there were in the 60's. In the early days if you wished to rent a property the chances were that you would look to the Local Authority to provide accommodation. Now the housing associations have limited properties available but there is a wide range of residential units made available by private investors. The demand for rental property has also increased as high prices mean many potential first time buyers are now unable to purchase.

Having looked at the past what about the present? Well Dersingham is still a very popular village greatly sought after by both local purchasers and people moving to the area. It offers easy access to attractive scenery, beaches and the popular North Norfolk coast where only the wealthy can afford to buy. Although many shops have gone from the village there is still an excellent range of facilities and a public transport service to the more major areas. The Dersingham bypass has also seen the quality of life having improved in the village with much less traffic. There is a demand in the village for a wide range of property buyers include families, the retired, investors and those seeking that little holiday property and with this wide range of demand the village has perhaps not seen quite as marked a reduction in values as other communities.

What of the future? Well, development continues within the village and the demand for correctly priced property is still very steady. We note that individual properties are keenly sought after particularly if they have some special feature such as a large garden and also there is a very keen demand for run down properties which need a little TLC, as many buyers prefer to choose their own bathrooms, kitchens and decorations rather than purchase and pay for someone else's choice. Whilst we do not know what will happen generally in the country with the economy, I'm sure that Dersingham will continue to be a sought after area for people to live in. I look forward to seeing the changes during my next 45 years.□

Jeff Hazel, FRICS

DERSINGHAM INSTITUTE BOWLS CLUB

On Friday 22nd October club members enjoyed a presentation lunch rather than the usual annual evening dinner. The event took place at The Birches Hotel Bircham Newton which proved to be ideal with superb surroundings and good food.

Everyone enjoyed themselves especially those who received awards, namely June Backmeier winner of the Edies Cup, Pauline Kelly was runner up,... John Pattison won the Institute Cup Ross Letts was runner up,... Norma Bruford with Richard Burden won the Eddie Roye pairs, Val Reader and Mike Picton were runners up,... the Powle Pairs was won by Val & Derek Reader, with Sue Eastmure and Ernie White runners up,... Jean Thompson and Richard Bridges beat Jane & Richard Burden to take the Brian Morters pairs cup,... Ladies Bush Cup went to June Backmeier with Jane Burden runner up,... Val & Derek Reader with Sue Eastmure won the Shirley Meredith Triples and Jane & Richard Burden with Dick Murrell runners up,... the Derek Newell League trophy was presented by June Newell to Ross Letts, Jim Skerritt and John Chilvers, second were Jenny Pattison with Jane & Richard Burden,... the New Institute Cup winner was Jean Fisher, Ross Letts runner up,... the Tom Ward cup went to Jim Skerritt with Keith Richardson runner up.

The next club event was the A.G.M, held in the clubhouse on the 1st November. Over 30 members attended and the management committee, apart from a second vice-chairman, had all the existing officers re-elected.

The treasurers report revealed that the clubs finances were in a satisfactory state which members found very pleasing. Bob Meredith (President) has introduced a new savings fund with a large donation to which will be known as "The Shirley Meredith Equipment Fund" in memory of Bob's wife Shirley, further donations from anyone will be most welcome. Other points of interest, mainly concerning club members will be published in a news letter and passed directly to them.

Once again I would like it to be known that the club will always welcome new members and visitors with our season for 2011 commencing on Saturday April 16th.□

A VERY SUSPICIOUS DEATH Part 1

Elizabeth Fiddick

Sunday September 8th was a sunny day which was very pleasing to the people of Abingdon as it was time for the annual fair. Fine weather would bring in the crowds which was always good for business. A short distance from the town in Cumnor Place, the attractive Manor House owned by George Owen, the lady of the house summoned her servants and insisted that they should all attend the fair that day. Some protested that they did not wish to leave her ladyship on her own as she had seemed out of sorts. She replied that Mrs. Owen the sister of the owner was coming shortly to stay with her so they must all go. However Mrs. Odingsells one of the senior members of staff said that Sunday was the day reserved for the ordinary working people to visit the fair so it was not a suitable day for gentle folk to attend. She would visit on the next day. Although her mistress grew angry Mrs. Odingsells would not change her mind. Later that day after all the servants had departed Mrs. Odingsells and Mrs. Owen were amusing themselves playing cards when they heard a loud noise. They made a facetious comment but continued their game. So it was not until much later when the servants returned that they found their mistress lying dead at the foot of an old stone staircase just eight steps high. Her neck was broken but, strangely, as everyone remarked, her headdress remained undisturbed. The year was 1560. The unfortunate lady was Amy Dudley wife of Robert Dudley, Master of the Horse and constant companion and favourite of Her Royal Majesty Queen Elizabeth 1.



Amy's death is one of the enduring mysteries in our history. Was it just a tragic accident or was something more sinister involved? Rumour suggested she had been murdered but if so who was responsible? Her husband Robert was the obvious suspect. At this time he was 28, six feet tall, athletic, and with the dark good looks that earned him the nickname "*the gypsy*". His relationship with the Queen was the subject of intense scrutiny and gossip. As soon as Elizabeth had succeeded to the crown the most important matter occupying all her advisers was the question of her marriage. To secure the succession and thereby ensure the stability of the state it was

essential that there was a male heir. For Elizabeth not to marry was unthinkable and the political advantage of a marriage to the English queen was obvious. At one time there were twelve ambassadors from all over Europe in the English court pressing the suits of their masters like Philip of Spain, or Archduke Charles of Austria, and my particular favourite Prince Eric of Sweden. (However I think his was a lost cause from the beginning. I mean Queen Elizabeth and King Eric, or Elizabeth and Eric of England, does not to my mind quite have the right ring to it.)

The idea that Elizabeth would marry Robert was impossible while he was already married.



Cumnor Place

However on the death of his wife anything was possible and the consequences of such a union were for some of the most influential men in the land too awful to contemplate. If Robert attained such a position of power many even feared for their own lives as well as the future of the country. *"The Queen our Sovereign discredited, condemned, and neglected; our country ruined, undone, made prey."* There were rumours that Robert had attempted to poison his wife before and even the French court was alive with gossip. So who was this young woman Amy Dudley and why am I writing about her in our Village Voice?

Amy Dudley was a Norfolk girl. She was the daughter of Sir John Robsart, a wealthy landowner who owned the Manors of Syderstone, Bircham Newton and Great Bircham. Syderstone is a small village that lies just off the B1454 between Docking and the A148. There is a village hall now named The Amy Robsart Hall and the Manor House owned by Sir John once stood in the grounds of the present rectory. However the manor house had been in ruins for many years even before Amy was born. In 1530 Sir John married Elizabeth Appleyard whose first husband had died prematurely leaving Elizabeth a fine house and landed estate. On their marriage Sir John and his new wife lived at her house Stanfield Hall just two miles east of Wymondham. The Hall still stands but only a very small part of the original sixteenth century house can be found among all the alterations and extensions. Elizabeth had four children from her first marriage, John, Philip, Anne and Frances. Sir John had an illegitimate son Arthur but two years after the marriage on June 7th 1532 Amy was born. There is evidence that Amy had a good formal education and as her father was now well established among the Norfolk gentry and her step brothers and sisters had married well she moved freely in that society.

Unfortunately there are almost no portraits to give us any certain idea of her appearance but in



view of later events I would guess that she was a very attractive young lady. It was in 1549 when she was just 17 that her life was to change dramatically and the first steps to that fatal day in 1560 were taken. Two years previously the nine year old son of Henry VIII had succeeded to the throne as King Edward VI. With a child on the throne there was much intrigue at court as the various important men of the time sought to gain influence and hold the reins of power. It was an unsettled time and there were countless disturbances around the country including a very dangerous uprising here in Norfolk. It was mainly concerned with the enclosure of land for sheep walks. Robert Kett from Wymondham had come into dispute with Sir John Flowerdew over the demolition of parts of the monastery in the town which the townsfolk feared would damage the church. Their request for the demolition to stop was granted but Sir John continued. The dispute

escalated and the crowd began to pull down the fences that had been erected around enclosed land. Kett became the leader and huge crowds joined him as he drew up a list of their demands. As often happens what started out as a single issue grew into an expression of all the many grievances felt by the ordinary man at that time. Over 3000 rebels joined Kett as he marched towards Norwich capturing a number of the gentry on the way no doubt as bargaining chips. This revolt had now become such a challenge to the authorities that the King's advisers knew that it had to be dealt with severely. It must have been both a frightening and exciting time for seventeen year old Amy to have such disturbing events right on her doorstep. Moreover Sir John Flowerdew was a friend and frequent visitor to the house as Amy's half sister Frances was betrothed to his oldest son William. Also to add to the Robsart's tricky situation the sister of Amy's mother's first husband was married to Robert Kett. In addition Amy's half brothers John and Philip Appleyard were among those seized by the rebels and taken to the camp outside Norwich. The house must have

been in uproar but Sir John Robsart was determined to put aside family loyalties and support the King. The Government acted quickly and ordered the Earl of Warwick with a substantial force to march on Norwich immediately and deal with the situation.

On the way the Earl's army was boosted by 1000 troops from Lincolnshire and on the 2nd of August 1549 this great army arrived and set up camp just outside Wymondham close to Amy's home. The Earl was accompanied not only by other Lords and distinguished gentlemen but also by his son Robert who at just seventeen was already in command of a company of foot soldiers. It is not hard to imagine the excitement at Stanfield Hall when The Earl of Warwick, his charismatic son Robert and all the other important men crossed the moat and clattered into the courtyard to stay and be entertained before dealing with the trouble in Norwich. It is doubtful that the house had entertained such a distinguished company before. So it was that Robert Dudley met Amy Robsart. They did not have much time to be together, if at all, as by dawn the next day the company had left the house and the great army camped outside was on its way to Norwich. The full story of Kett's rebellion must wait to another time but the rebels were soundly beaten. Robert Kett was hung in chains from Norwich Castle walls and his brother William from the high steeple of Wymondham church. Did Amy see that I wonder? The meeting between Robert and Amy although brief must have been significant for the following year on June 4th (1550) at the royal palace of Sheen in the presence of the young King Edward VI Amy Robsart married Robert Dudley. Her new Father-in-Law was now the most powerful man in the kingdom. After his success against the Norfolk rebels the Earl had ousted the Duke of Somerset from his position as the boy King's advisor and assumed the reins of power. But instead of ordering Somerset's execution, in an extremely astute political move Warwick released him from prison and on June 3rd 1550 Robert's older brother John married Somerset's daughter Anne. So now Amy was a member of the most powerful family in the land. Robert's father was determined to make Robert an influential man in West Norfolk and gradually introduced him into local affairs. He was made Steward and Constable of Castle Rising. Later he became an elected Knight of the shire and with his father became Lord Lieutenant of the county. His father also granted him the Manor of Hemsby in Great Yarmouth so that Amy and Robert would have a good house in Norfolk. Meanwhile Robert began to make his presence known in court circles. He established a reputation in the Royal jousts and began to obtain some lucrative positions. He was appointed the keeper of Somerset Place, the newly built palace on the Thames and it seems likely that he and Amy lived there. There is not a lot of information about Amy at this time. Unfortunately for us she is a rather shadowy figure but there are some letters that show she was involved in the day to day running of the Syderstone property.

However the next most significant time for Amy was in 1553. It was on July 6th of that year that young King Edward VI died. Before he died Edward had written his sisters Mary and Elizabeth out of his will and named the heirs of his cousin Francis Grey to inherit the throne. There was only one child, the Lady Jane Grey, who was now Edward's sole heir. Robert's father, now the Duke of Northumberland, in another clever move had married Jane to his youngest son Guildford. Four days after the King's death Jane was taken to the Tower and proclaimed Queen. The London crowd received the news in silence except for one Gilbert Potter, a pot boy of Ludgate, who shouted that the Princess Mary had a better claim. For this he was arrested and nailed by his ears to a pillory in Cheapside. Now Robert was ordered by his father to use his growing influence here in Norfolk and bring Mary back to London from Sawston Hall where she was staying. Robert galloped through the night towards Cambridge but arrived too late. Mary had realised what might happen and had fled to Framlingham Castle in Suffolk to gather her support. Robert was furious and ordered Sawston Hall to be ransacked and burnt. This was a bad mistake as it earned him the hatred of the local people and persuaded them to support Mary. Robert however then rode on into Norfolk and came to King's Lynn. He came to the Tuesday Market Place and there with George Rewley the Mayor and three hundred other townsmen he proclaimed the Lady Jane Queen of England.□



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Village Voice publication dates

We love getting your reports of events and meetings, advertisements and advance details of forthcoming attractions. To make sure you hit your targets please note the publication dates of this magazine:-

No	Copy deadline	Publication date
No 68	Wednesday 12th Jan 2011	Thursday 4th Feb 2011
No 69	Wednesday 16th March 2011	Monday 4th April 2011
No 70	Wednesday 4th May 2011	Monday 23rd May 2011

The earlier you get your copy to us the more we like it and the better position it gets.

DIARY OF REGULAR EVENTS

Do please let us know if any of these details change.

Date	Time	Organisation	Event	Venue
Every Monday	2.00 pm	St. Cecilia's Church	Rosary Group	St. Cecilia's Church
Every Monday	2.00 pm or 7.30 pm	Freebridge Community Housing	Bingo	Orchard Close
Every Monday	6.30 - 8.00	Dersingham Cubs	Meeting for boys age 8 - 10 1/2	Scout & Guide HQ Manor Road
1st Monday of Month	12.15 pm	Methodist Church	Lunch at the Chapel	Methodist Church, PO Rd
3rd Monday of month	6 pm	Dersingham Library	Dersingham Reading Group	Library
Every Monday in Term Time	12.45 to 2.15 pm	Sticking Together	Toddler Craft Group Meeting	St Nicholas Church Hall
Last Monday in the Month	7.15 pm	Dersingham Parish Council	Full Council Meeting	Infant and Nursery School, Saxon Way
Every Tuesday	5.30 to 7 pm	2nd Dersingham Brownie Guide Group	Meeting for girls aged 7 - 10 years	Scout & Guide HQ Manor Road
Every Tuesday	10 to 3pm	Lavender Lace Makers	Lace Making	The Feathers Hotel
Every Tuesday	7 pm	Dersingham Bridge Club	Bridge Evening	The Feathers Hotel
Every Tuesday in Term Time	8.30 to 11.15 am	St Nicholas Parent & Toddler Group	Parent & Toddler Group Meeting	St Nicholas Church Hall
Every Tuesday	8 pm	Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes	Sandringham Lodge Meeting	The Feathers
1st or 2nd Monday in the Month	2.15 pm	Royal British Legion Women's Section	Dersingham & Sandringham Branch Meeting	Orchard Close Community Room
1st Tuesday of the Month	7.30 pm	Village Voice 'Live'	Presentations by Guest Speakers	St Nicholas Church Hall
1st Tuesday of the Month	7.30 pm	Dersingham Methodist Church	Art Club	Dersingham Methodist Church Hall
2nd Tuesday in Month	7.30 pm	Royal British Legion	Branch Meeting	Feathers Hotel
Every Wednesday	10.00 am to 4.00 pm	Dersingham Day Centre for the Elderly	Recreation & Leisure and Mid-day Meal	St Nicholas Church Hall

Every Wednesday	10.30 to 11.30am	Music+Movement	Pre-school Music, Dance & Drama	Dersingham Methodist Church Hall
Every Wednesday	2.00 to 4.00 pm	Dersingham Methodist Church	Carpet Bowls	Dersingham Methodist Church Hall
Every Wednesday	6.00 to 7.15 pm	Beavers	Meeting for children aged 6 - 8	Scout & Guide HQ Manor Road
Every 2nd Weds of the Month	10.30 am	St Nicholas Men's Group	Men's Group Meeting	St Nicholas Church Hall
Every 2nd Weds of the month		Dersingham Walking Group	Circular walk	See programme for details or contact Keith Starks 542268
Every 2nd Weds of the Month Sept to April	7.30 pm	Albert Victor Bowls Club	Prize Bingo	Albert Victor Bowls Club, Manor Road
3rd Wednesday of the Month	7.15 to 10.00 pm	Dersingham Evening Women's Institute	Meeting	St Cecilia's Church Hall
Every Thursday	10.3 am to 3.00 pm	North West Norfolk Phobbies Club	Meeting	St. Nicholas Church Hall
Every Thursday	4.00 to 5.15 pm	1st Dersingham Rainbow Guide Group	Meeting for girls aged 5-7 years	Scout & Guide HQ Manor Road
Every Thursday	5.30 to 7.00 pm	1st Dersingham Brownie Guide Group	Meeting for girls aged 7-10 years	Scout & Guide HQ Manor Road
Every Thursday	7.00 to 8.30 pm	1st Sandringham Guides	Unit Meeting	St Cecilia's Church Hall
Every Thursday	7.00 to 9.00 pm	1st Dersingham Scouts	Group Meeting	Scout & Guide HQ
Every Thursday	7.00 to 9.30 pm	Norfolk Army Cadet Force	Sandringham Detachment Meeting	The Drill Hall, Dodds Hill
Every Thursday	7.30 pm	St Nicholas Church	Badminton Club	St Nicholas Church Hall
Every Thurs Sept -June	2 pm	Park House Hotel	Rubber Bridge	Park House Hotel
Every Thursday	7.30 pm	Hunstanton and District Camera Club	Meeting	St Nicholas Church Hall
1st Thursday of Month		Dersingham Flower Club	Meeting	St Nicholas Church Hall
2nd Thursday of Month	7.30 pm	Dersingham Horticultural Society	Meeting	St Cecilia's Church Hall
3rd Thursday of the Month	9.30 to 10.30 am	Dersingham Methodist Church Jigsaw Club	Meeting	Dersingham Methodist Church Hall
Every Friday	9.45 am	Freebridge Community Housing	Coffee Morning	Orchard Close
Every Friday in Term Time	9.15 to 10.45am	Puddleducks Toddler Group	Toddler Group meeting	Scout & Guide HQ
Every Friday	6.30 to 8 pm	1st Dersingham Guide Unit	Unit Meeting	Scout & Guide HQ
Every Friday	6.45 to 9.15 pm	Dersingham Carpet Bowls Club	Club Meeting	St George's Middle School
Alternate Fridays	2.15 to 4.30 pm	Dersingham Seniors Club	Entertainment and Outings for the over-60s	St Cecilians Church
1st Friday of month	10.00 to 12 noon	St Nicholas Church	Coffee Morning	St Nicholas Church Hall
Every 3rd Saturday of the month	10 to 3 pm	Lavender Lace Makers	Lace Making	The Feathers Hotel

Advertising in Village Voice

The Editorial Team would like to thank all of those who so generously support our magazine by placing advertisements in it, for without the income so generated there would be a possibility of the publication ceasing to exist. With this in mind it would be helpful if you were to support those who do advertise, and to then let them know that you used their services because you saw their promotion in our magazine. For those readers who perhaps provide a local service but who do not currently advertise with us, you may consider a fee of from £14.75 for an eighth of a page black and white or £20.75 for colour per issue, to be very cost effective. (Prices include VAT at 17.5% which will rise to 20% after Jan 1)

Advertisements for inclusion in the next magazine should be in the hands of Anita Moore, Dersingham Parish Council, 7b Hunstanton Rd, Dersingham PE31 6HH by **Wednesday 12th January 2011**

Enquiries regarding advertisements may be made by calling 01485 541465.

E-mail — **villagevoice@dersingham.org.uk**

Articles for publication in the next edition of Village Voice must reach The Editor c/o Dersingham Parish Council, 7b Hunstanton Road, Dersingham PE31 6HH or e-mail; **villagevoice@dersingham.org.uk** before the **deadline date of mid-day on Wednesday 12th January 2011 for publication on Thursday 4th February 2011**. (Contributors who are promoting events should take note of this earliest date of publication). Should you be providing graphics to accompany advertisements or articles, it would be appreciated if these could be in JPEG format.

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 will appear on the Parish Council's Internet web site. The copyright of all articles remains with the author. The editor does not necessarily agree with opinions that are expressed, or the accuracy of statements made, by contributors to the Village Voice.

Copies of most of the photographs published can be made available. Please enquire.

The Mobile Police Station is no more.

Instead there are Police surgeries being held in Budgens foyer,
the next being on December 3rd between 10am and 12 noon.

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

The Production Team for this edition consists of
Editor: - Tony Bubb. Editorial assistant - Rob Smyth
In the office - Anita Moore, Distribution - Steve Davis

Printed by Clanpress Ltd, Dundee Ct., Hamburg Way, King's Lynn, Norfolk



James Graven's

Budgens

Spend £20* or more and we'll deliver your shopping to your door absolutely free.

There are three easy ways to take advantage of our home delivery service:

- **Drop in your shopping list, we'll do your shopping and deliver it to your home**
- **Telephone, fax or email your order through and we'll do the rest**
- **Come into the store, do your shopping and tell a member of staff that you would like our home delivery service**

***All orders to be placed by 11am for same day delivery.**

Deliveries will take place Tuesday to Friday between 12 noon and 2 pm.

***There will be a charge of £5 for orders under £20 or outside the five mile radius. This service is only available to customers over 18. Please ask in store for details.**

Dersingham Budgens

Tel: 01485 544055

Fax: 01485 543508

Email: dersingham@jamesgraven.com

VILLAGE VOICE LIVE

Tuesday December 7th

A SEASON IN ANTARCTICA

*A film and talk by
Ken Hill*



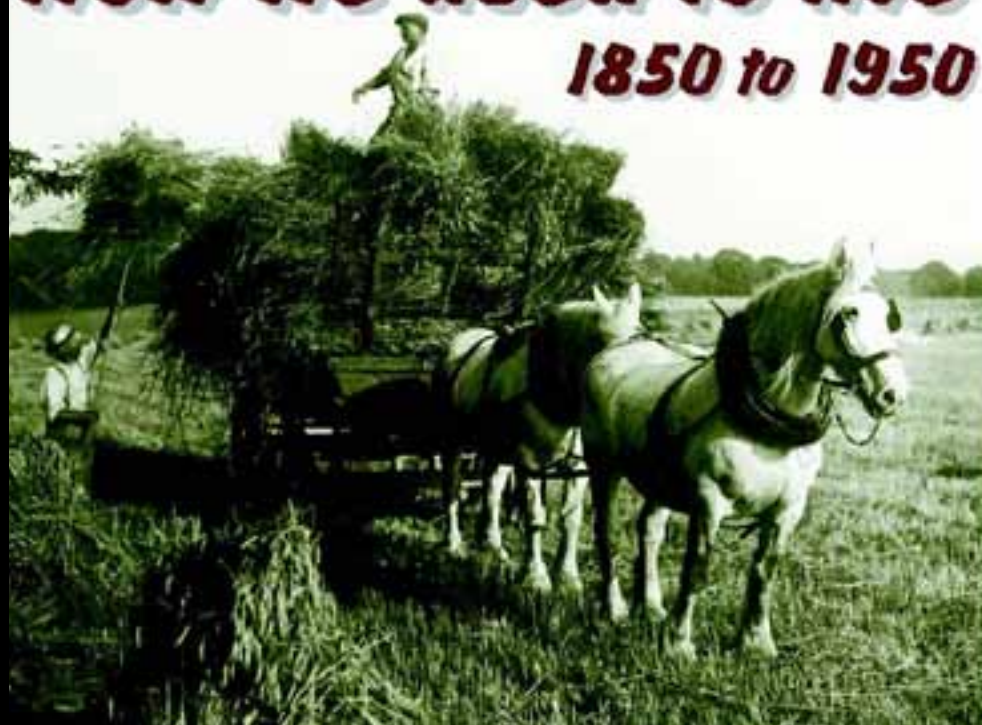
*Plus some seasonal Carols from
The Dersingham Descanters*

St Nicholas Church Hall, Manor Road, Dersingham.
7.30 pm Admission £2.00 including refreshments. Raffle

VILLAGE VOICE LIVE

Tuesday January 4th

How we used to live 1850 to 1950



A slice of history in words and pictures from

David Grimes

St Nicholas Church Hall, Manor Road, Dersingham.
7.30 pm Admission £2.00 including refreshments. Raffle