

Number 68

February 2011

Dersingham Village Voice



"It happened in February" by Steve Nowell - Page 51



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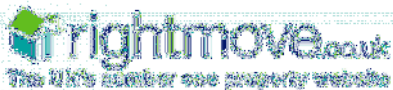
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Editor's Notes

Welcome to the first of the new year's Village Voices. As a run up to Christmas I thought I would read Dickens Christmas Carol. Though familiar with the story I had never actually tackled his version before. I have a complete, well almost, set of "The Works of Charles Dickens" in 18 volumes - I have seventeen and I have yet to decide which one I am missing - published in 1868 by Chapman and Hall of Piccadilly. These I bought on a whim at one of the auctions held by Peter Leach at the Old Hall some 30 years ago. It was hard work, the reading that is not the buying, as the type is all set in 7 pt on thin, now well yellowed, paper. So to the point. Dickens refers to "Norfolk Biffins". Any one know what these are?

Ahead of each deadline I send a round robin e-mail to all our regular and irregular contributors (prune juice is good for this problem I hear) but always a few come back as undelivered so if you used to get one and have not told me of your change of address this is why they have stopped.

If you haven't seen Dick Melton about the place for a while it is because he has damaged his knee. Get well soon Dick. It does not, however, seem to have affected his writing.

I spotted this sign in a shop window whilst on my travels - I like his attitude.

How did you get on with the Teaser last time? There were 11 differences for you to spot. There is a new puzzle on page 63.

This year's photo competition is for pictures of Dersingham's Heritage. This probably means pictures of older buildings but you are free to interpret in any way you please. Do remember, however, that the picture must be in portrait format (that is upright) to be considered. Go on, have a go - you might win!

I was sorry to hear of the passing of two past members of the Parish Council. Jean Riches served for many years retiring a few years ago and more recently John Pattison was a member for a short while before ill health forced his resigning. Both of them did good work.

There should be 18 people on the Council but inevitably there will nearly always be a vacancy or two due to natural wastage so if you would like to join please contact the office.



It's likely to be a dull few weeks to come. There is nothing to put in the "Whats Happening" box that is normally found below. So if you are putting summat on do let us know.

Just before Christmas I went along to a very enjoyable, unpublicised event. An evening of seasonal entertainment put on by the Strolling Players in the Feathers Stable Bar. Just a handful of us were there for songs, readings and dissertations for the festive season. If you see that they are performing do go along.

Happy reading.

Tony Bubb



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Dear Village Voice



We would like to say thank you to everyone who helped with the Poppy Appeal this year, especially the door to door collectors, the people who stood outside the shops on the 6th. November and also to the businesses who gave us precious counter space for our collecting tins, and of course everyone who made donations to the appeal. The total raised was £5804, which we feel was very good. If we didn't get it quite right this year please tell us, so we can make adjustments for next year. We are also in need of some more people who can give an hour or two of their time to help with the collections. Anyone interested please ring us on 544404 or 540236. Thank you all once again.

Pamela Kendal and Karen Bushell, Poppy Appeal Co-ordinators.

Dick Melton raised the question of potato crisp making in Dersingham in the October issue of DVV, my recollections may therefore be of interest.

The story starts in the mid 1930s a few years before WW2 when the Fisher family moved to Dersingham from Blackpool to run the guest house (now Ashdene House B & B) over the road from Linford's Corner Stores. They were Mr and Mrs Alexander Fisher, a son Alexander and an adopted daughter Marie.

They moved on after a few years to the fish and chip business in Lynn Road, and I expect some folks will remember them there very well. I certainly did plenty of errands to get fish and chip meals. There was usually a queue at busy times and there were one or two people I dreaded being behind because they always had orders for no end of neighbours.

Son Alex was in the army during the war and came back to the business after demob. In 1947 the Fisher family acquired a new member when my aunt Edna Linford and Alex were married in St Nicholas Church.

In the post war years potato crisps were in great demand but were in very short supply. The Fishers recognised that frying crisps was not much different from frying chips, so they purchased a potato slicing machine and fried crisps in the fish and chip range when it was not in use for fish and chip frying.

Bagging machinery was also installed and little twists of salt were put in, just like the Smith's crisps of pre war days. The Fishers recruited people in the village to prepare the salt twists and earn a little money. The crisp making was a great success, and I can tell you that "Fishers Golden Crisps" were very tasty and moreish.

After this early success the Fishers had an idea that flavoured crisps might appeal to people and they developed a way of producing Oxo flavoured crisps. I asked my aunt Edna, the only surviving member of the business, if she could remember when the Oxo crisps were first produced. She said she remembered going to the Oxo offices in London to arrange the contract but could not remember exactly when. This is a pity because I think they could have been the first flavoured crisps on the market.

The Fishers eventually sold the Dersingham business and moved to Hunstanton. Crisp making continued in Hill Street in an old laundry which had gone out of business.

The big crisp manufacturers however eventually got into gear in the mid to late fifties I think. The Fisher crisp business could not compete so was wound up. It is hard to believe to-day when you go shopping in a supermarket and see shelf after shelf stacked with all sorts of potato crisps that there was a time when they were as rare as the proverbial hens teeth.

(By the way, note for Ion Trewin, Pat is short for Patrick.)

Pat Linford (Old Dersinghamite)

I think this has to be the last word on the subject for the time being - time to packet in. Ed.



Shoppers at James Graven’s Budgens in Dersingham have the opportunity to raise money for the two schools in the village. The Local School Voucher Scheme will run from January with customers receiving a 10p voucher for every £10 spent in the store. These vouchers are being collected by both the Dersingham Infant and Nursery School and St George’s C of E Junior school, who can redeem the vouchers for cash in April.

Caroline Bosworth, Community Liaison Manager, James Graven



We have been renovating our house for several years now and we were wondering if anyone has any old photos of our street and house. We have asked before but didn't get any response. We live at 26 Brook Road. We will be doing some outside renovation work soon so it would be very helpful if we could have an idea of what it looked like originally.

John Murray

Here is what the property looks like now in case you have a picture but don't know where it is of. Ed.

Very many thanks to those of you who supported the Shoe box appeal 1,116,918 boxes left this country for 15 countries abroad, namely Romania, Serbia, Ukraine, Montenegro, Kosovo, Bosnia, Belarum Kenya Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Haiti, Mozambique, Liberia, Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan 303 of which were from Dersingham. It is good to know that so many children would be delighted to open a box, perhaps the only gift they ever receive.

Thank you again .

Joan V. Schorah

Village Voice Sudoku No 15 Solution									
9	4	6	8	1	2	7	5	3	
3	1	8	7	9	5	2	6	4	
5	7	2	6	3	4	8	1	9	
4	3	5	1	8	7	6	9	2	
2	8	9	3	4	6	1	7	5	
7	6	1	2	5	9	3	4	8	
8	5	7	4	6	3	9	2	1	
6	9	3	5	2	1	4	8	7	
1	2	4	9	7	8	5	3	6	

WANTED.....



Sofas, tables, chairs, beds, cabinets, bookcases, wardrobes.....

In March 2010 *The Norfolk Hospice* is opening a furniture warehouse in the King's Lynn area. Our aim is to be able to sell good quality second hand furniture of all types. We are looking for donations **NOW** so we have plenty of stock to open in March!



Perhaps you are having a spring clean or new makeover for your home? Perhaps you want to make room for a new suite or sofa but your old furniture is too good to throw away? Perhaps you are thinking of selling your old items? Before you do, please spare us a thought? We can even collect!

If you think you can help please give the Fundraising Office a call on 01485 542891

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In the last issue of Dersingham Village Voice we announced the introduction of a second clinic in Dersingham Surgery. Please note that due to unforeseen circumstances and changes at Dersingham Surgery, our clinic times have changed to run from 2pm until 5pm.

Dersingham Surgery	Dersingham Surgery
Second Monday of the month	Third Monday of the month
2pm – 5pm	2pm – 5pm

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.

DERSINGHAM INSTITUTE BOWLS CLUB

Our news for this edition is some good and some bad. The bad news is that vandals entered the Bowls Green during the Christmas holidays and removed the frost protection from the water taps that are used to water the green, turned them full on and left them running. One of our lady bowlers, Ruth Ince, was out walking Christmas Day afternoon. Passing the club she noticed the green was completely flooded with ice forming on the surface of the water. Ruth, walking ankle deep in water, tried to turn the taps off but was unable to. She eventually managed to turn off the main stopcock so stopping any further wastage. Well done Ruth. Checking the water meter we find that 135 cubic meters of water have been wasted, costing us about £150. What sort of people could find pleasure in committing a vandalous act like this?.

Now the good news, the green keeping equipment is becoming worn and needs constant servicing and repairs particularly the lawn mower which needs replacing. Being a costly item I applied to Sport England for help and they have come up trumps. They have given us a grant of just over £6000 to obtain some new equipment, this will make it a lot easier for us to maintain a good class bowling green.

Gordon Fisher (Chairman)



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St Nicholas Church News



Christmas Tree Festival

Despite the terrible weather we had a wonderful response to the Festival with people coming from all over to see the wonderful display of 22 - 6 foot decorated Christmas Trees in our Church. The St Nicholas Christmas Fayre on the Saturday was also well attended and also thanks to the kind organisation of Joan Schorah's daughter and husband, a visit from **Father Christmas** to our Church during the Fayre and it was wonderful to see the children waiting to give Santa their Christmas Lists.

The trees stayed in the Church the whole of December, making our Christmas Services very special.

Lent Lunches

We again will be having Lent Lunches on each Friday during Lent from 12noon to 1.15pm with Soup & a bread roll with a cup of tea for £3.50 with an optional dessert at a £1 All the soups & desserts are kindly donated by members of the church and all the monies collected will, as usual, go to



Charity. This year it will be split between The Befrienders and the Community Car Scheme. Lunches will start on Friday 11th March and following Fridays until and including 15th April.

Future Events

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| 30 th April | - | Grand Sale in Church Hall |
| 29 th & 30 th May | - | Open Gardens |
| 18 th June | - | Concert in Church in Aid of Centenary of Church Hall (details to follow) |
| 14 th to 17 th July | - | Flower Festival |
| 10 th September | - | Last Night of the Proms |
| 22 nd to 24 th September | - | Arts & Crafts Festival |
| 2 nd to 4 th December | - | Christmas Tree Festival |

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Community Lunch

November's was the eleventh community lunch and was sponsored by Rounce & Evans (estate agents and property management). Held in the St Nicholas Hall and superbly catered for by the Evening WI, Bob Tipling, in front of some 80 lunchers, welcomed the deputy mayor and his wife as guests of honour. Mr Manley spoke about the West Norfolk Young Carers charity. We were also taken on a very enjoyable photo trip down the Beach Road by Steve Davis.



Coral Manley & Trevor Manley
with Bob Tipling



Sara Vertigan, Vanessa Blythe,
and Jean Griggs



Sue Eastmure and Doreen Asker



Cyril Critchett, Neil Adams
and Marguerite Wright



Sue Payne with Dick Murrell



Elizabeth Fiddick, Heather Titcomb,
Heather Nicholas and
Gordon Fisher



Sponsors Luke Loades
and Tim Rounce



Joan Scorch, Sue Macdonald,
Dianne Neave, Olive McCrea,
Shirlet O'Connor, Diane Hall
and Irène Williams - the W.I. team



Ian Cotterell, Mathew Pooley,
Caroline Bosworth, Cyril Critchett
and Danny Callaghan



Tom Morris, Pam Manship,
Chris Tansley, Walter Blaney
and Ruth Mountain



Geoff Hazel, Gay Watt, Suzy Daniels
Lindsey Davis, Margeurite Wright
and Lucy Batterbee



Amanda Standen, Danny Callaghan,
Lynn Francis and Tony Francis

GRAND SALE

**at Dersingham Church Hall, Manor Road,
Saturday, 30th April 2011, 9.00a.m. - 12.00noon
Admission Free. Light Refreshments available.
In aid of St. Nicholas Church**

A large selection of good **SECONDHAND BOOKS** (plus jig-saw puzzles).
a varied and interesting collection of **BRIC-A-BRAC**,
plus a range of well-presented **NEARLY NEW CLOTHING**.

Donations of items will be most welcomed, but unfortunately we are not able to
accept any electrical items, or large pieces of furniture
or anything that is upholstered.

Items of Bric-a-Brac should be delivered to the Church Hall as early as possible
on Friday 29th April, from 9.00a.m. onwards.

Books and clothing can be received at any time during the coming weeks, and
can also be delivered to the monthly Coffee Mornings at the Church Hall.
Alternatively you can contact one of the people listed below.

Clothing contact: Mary Sharp, Tel: 01485 540350.

Bric-a-Brac contact: Doreen Asker, Tel: 01485 540601.

Contact Neil Adams (01485) 540857 about Books and for general enquiries
about the sale.

Please make a note on your calendar, tell your friends

DERSINGHAM OPEN GARDENS

29th and 30th May 2011. 2.00p.m. to 6.00p.m.

This local event is increasing in popularity each year. Please note the date and
also bring along friends and family. When relatives are visiting on a holiday
weekend it is good to have a special attraction to take them to.

The gardens that are open are inspiring and all uniquely different. Added to this
Cream Teas and a variety of other refreshments will be served in the Church
Hall from 2.00 to 5.00p.m.

We are always interested in including new gardens for viewing, as well as the
several favourite ones. Do you have a special garden feature that you would
like to show others. If you would like to discuss the possibility of opening,
please
give me, Neil Adams, a call on 01485 540857.



DO YOU HAVE THE TIME TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN DERSINGHAM?

Town, Village and Parish Councillors are essential to creating the “Big Society” and contribute enormously to the local community. Dersingham Parish Council, enhanced by the coalition government’s initiative to modernise local government and make it more accountable to the local community, needs you!

If you:

- Care about getting the best for your community;
- Have a willingness to represent your electorate;
- Want to make a difference;
- Are prepared to take training courses;
- Prepared to register your interests;
- Are enthusiastic and committed; and
- Have the time

Then you could really help your local community and make a real contribution to our local “Big Society”. You could also benefit from Councillor training – through the EALC – which will enable you to take part fully in your new role. Apart from general Councillor training there are opportunities to learn about roles & responsibilities, law, planning, finance, budgets and employment.

How much time does being a Councillor take?

This can vary from one Councillor to another. Typically, many Councillors say their duties take up roughly three hours per week. Some Councillors spend more time on this and others less depending on their involvement.

Councillors Code of Conduct

You MUST

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- Ensure you do not use the authority’s resources for political purposes unless it is part of the functions of either the authority or your elected office

You MUST NOT

- Compromise the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the authority
- Disclose confidential information without valid consent
- Prevent anyone getting information they are entitled to
- Bring your office or authority into disrepute at any time
- Use your position improperly to advantage or disadvantage yourself or anyone else

If you are interested in learning more please contact:

Rosie Kitchen
Dersingham Parish Council Office
7b Hunstanton Road
Dersingham
Norfolk PE31 6HH Tel: 01485 541465

Stella Gooch

That's my business Debra English, Foot Health Care Practitioner

I was born in Pott Row, went to school in Swaffham, moved to the Midlands for some time before moving back and I have been living in the village since July last year.

I was nursing in Birmingham for some time but after having a back operation 15 years ago I had reflexology as part of my healing process. I then went on to train as a reflexologist and have been doing this for 13 years. I am also an advanced practitioner and qualified to do vertical reflex.

After seeing clients' feet in such bad condition I went on to train as a foot health practitioner in Birmingham. I am also a qualified beauty therapist and make up artist. I also do Reiki Healing, Hopi Ear Candling and Airbrush Tanning. I have set up a therapy room in my home but I am able to be mobile for those unable to get to me.

I really enjoy my work but I have 2 horses and 6 grandchildren to help me pass my leisure time.□



COVER PHOTO COMPETITION 2011

This years subject is - **DERSINGHAM'S HERITAGE**

Get one of your pictures on the cover of the October Village Voice. Take a photo of your interpretation of Dersingham's Heritage. You may submit entries as prints or electronically, on a disc or by e-mail for the closing date of **Wednesday 7th September**. Pictures must have been taken within the parish boundary, not have been previously published and not have been digitally manipulated. Remember that the cover is portrait (upright) in format so we may have to crop your work to make it fit. Good luck and happy snapping!



Send your entries to:-

Village Voice photo competition
Dersingham Parish Council
7b Hunstanton road
Dersingham PE31 6HH
or e-mail to:-

villagevoice@dersingham.org.uk



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The Dersingham Beat

Happy New Year to you all and I am pleased to report that we are already off to a good start for 2011.

I have just looked at our Anti-Social Behaviour figures for Dersingham and Gayton and noticed a pleasing reduction in overall ASB of 12% on this time last year! I am extremely pleased with this performance especially when you bear in mind that we have a slightly smaller team than twelve months ago.

In addition to this, the whole policing area in which Dersingham fits has also come out on top in the whole district regarding "Satisfaction and Customer Service" (I know we're not M&S! it's modern terminology and basically means how you rated the experience when the police tried to help you) The document I read showed that 84% of the public were pleased with our efforts – my team do work hard and this evidence supports that and I hope that you feel reassured by this.

On the crime front we have had no significant crime to speak of since mid November when we had a burglary and antiques were targeted. We have had a car broken into whilst at the Doctors Surgery at St. Nicholas Court but the good news with this one is that it is linked to a stream of offences throughout the area and a team from Cambridgeshire were responsible. A number of arrests have been made and those responsible are currently remanded at Her Majesty's pleasure. This is an appropriate time to remind you not to leave valuables on show in your car – anywhere. Yet again, we have taken reports of minor damage to garden furniture and "For Sale" signs in the village – but nothing since the beginning of December, perhaps he or she got an 'X Box' before Christmas to keep them amused?

Vegetable, fruit and herb gardener.

- * Plant & prune fruit trees & bushes (until April).**
- * Erect greenhouses, polytunnels and rabbit proof fencing.**
- * Make wildlife ponds & compost heaps.**
- * Prepare your vegetable patch for spring.**
- * Sales of seedlings including some unusual varieties.**

The Garden Farmer

Bryan Beers

01485 540724

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I recently received a complaint regarding the fact that none of my staff were at the Safer Neighbourhood Team Surgery in Budgens on the 3rd of December. In fact, 25 minutes after they had opened their Surgery they were called away to a missing elderly person in Hunstanton who was suffering with Alzheimer's, my team responded appropriately to what was an emergency. I do however apologise for any inconvenience caused should any of you have made a special trip to speak to PCSO Sally Calaby or PCSO Katie Richardson. I hope that you understand their absence.

That's about all I have for you at the moment, here's to a crime and ASB free New Year!

However, should you need to contact us please call and leave a message on the 08454564567 number or e-mail us on dersinghamgaytonsnt@norfolk.pnn.police.uk *
*Please note there is a slight change in our e-mail address.

"As always, mind how you go"... **Andy**



From the Parish Council Office....

The last few months of 2010 saw a time of change in the office staffing, with maternity leave and sickness meaning a complete change of personnel was suddenly needed. So the Parish Council Offices are currently being staffed by myself, Rosie Kitchen, as 'Acting' Clerk, with the Assistant Clerk's role being partially undertaken by Gay Watt. Overall, however, there are less 'staff hours' available than usual, so we are having to operate restricted office opening times for the next few months.

My sincere apologies, therefore, to anyone who has contacted the office lately and not received the service they expected – please bear with us, and we will endeavour to answer all your queries in time!

Much of my time recently seems to have been taken up with the vexed question of gritting in the village. The recent icy weather caused a variety of problems in rural areas – certainly not restricted to Dersingham! However, one of the major worries during a recent icy snap was the gritting (or not!) of the new bus route, and the problems encountered by buses trying to negotiate those glassy roads.

The County Council Highways Department, who are responsible for all Norfolk's gritting programme, responded to our requests and treated the roads the same day as an emergency, and we are assured the bus route has been put forward to be included in the gritting programme for next winter. In the meantime, the Parish Council is working closely with First Buses and Highways to ensure the buses will continue to get through if we have further bad weather this winter.

Other measures the Parish Council is looking at are private road gritters and more grit bins, though both of these options will involve spending more (of your) money! The possibility of re-classifying the village as something larger, therefore qualifying for increased gritting, is also being considered, though this would not automatically guarantee a great increase in gritting, certainly not away from the main routes.

By the time you read this, however, February will be underway, with thoughts of the approaching spring – but rest assured, the Parish Council will continue to pursue this issue throughout the coming year, to ensure the village is better prepared for next winter's weather!□

Nar Valley Ornithological Society (NarVOS)

"A week in Alaska"

an illustrated talk by Chris Knights.

Tuesday 22nd February 2011, 7.30pm at the Barn Theatre, Sacred Heart Convent School, Mangate Street, Swaffham.

Visitors (£2) and new members will be most welcome.

Come along to find out about our monthly outdoor bird-watching trips and other events.

Refreshments available.

March meeting: 29th March "A Fair Isle Season" by Rebecca Nason.

NarVOS 2009 Annual Reports are now available from Philip Parker
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THE VISITOR

by Maggie Grey

The weather was perfect for gardening on that first day I ventured outside, just a hint of warmth in the sun, a gentle breeze too. But as soon as I had fetched the tools from the shed, I had the uncomfortable feeling that someone was watching me. I looked around, but the garden was empty. I called out, "Is anyone there?"

There was no answer; I must have been imagining things. Even so, the sense that I was not alone wouldn't leave and I felt uncomfortable. At one point I even thought I heard someone breathing, a wheezy kind of noise which I put down to some small wild creature snuffling about in the hedgerow. I replaced the tools in the shed and was almost relieved when I went indoors and locked the back door behind me.

I'm not normally a nervous type, and had had several months to get used to living and sleeping alone. After my husband Ben died, following a long illness, I decided to sell up and move away, buy somewhere of my own where I could build my own memories and leave the too-painful ones behind. We'd had several pleasant holidays in this area, had even daydreamed about it being a good place to retire to, when the time came. Sadly, for Ben, it never did, but there was nothing wrong with me following the dreams.

Jasmine Cottage was just perfect, though in need of some TLC which suited me fine and kept me busy over the winter, and now it was time to take stock of the garden, which had been neglected by its previous, elderly owner.

One day, about a week later, I was sitting outside with a notepad and a collection of seed catalogues, happily lost in daydreams of fresh salad crops to pick each day, bright scarlet flowers of runner beans climbing up canes, crisp green cucumbers in the greenhouse as well as rich red tomatoes, the deep purple of aubergines grown in some large pots I had found, when I heard the wheezing noise again.

The wind stirred the tops of the conifers in my neighbours' garden, and the wood pigeons flew out with a clapping of their wings. There was a faint smell in the air that I couldn't put a name to, maybe it was the wind carrying the smells from the farmyard across the field. A small ginger cat suddenly scuttled out from beneath a broken cold frame in the corner and then ran like mad across the garden, its tail straight up in the air. Again there was the feeling that someone else was in the garden, but this time, I felt them closer to me, and in a panic jumped out of the chair.

I had sensed a presence, and knew that if I let the feeling get the better of me, then working out in the garden would become something I avoided, and I wasn't about to let that happen. At first I had felt apprehensive, now I was beginning to feel angry that someone had the nerve to try and spoil all this for me. That someone was playing a trick on me, hiding where they could see me quite easily it would seem, but I couldn't see them.

Still, undeterred I continued to spend some time in the garden most days when the weather permitted, never quite getting used to the feeling of being watched, but determined not to be put off by it. Even so, I was always glad when it came time to go back indoors.

Then one day I was sitting on the bench I had placed near the kitchen door, wondering if I should do something to make the soil a bit more fertile, when the voice of an old man interrupted me.

'If it's manure you're after, there's stables out on Foxley Road, where they do riding and such like. Have more muck than they know what to do with, it's where most of the locals go when they want manure.'

I looked around towards the garden gate, assuming this was some old chap who'd seen me on his way past to the post office just down the road perhaps, and wondering at his ability to read minds. But there was nobody there and then out of the corner of my eye I saw a movement by the shed. Sitting on an old ladderback chair was a whiskery old man, collarless shirt tucked inside worn corduroy trousers, which were held up by string round the waist and a pair of frayed red

braces. On his feet were leather gardening boots, bearing the scars of many years of wear.

He had a rather endearing face, which had once been handsome and still had a glint in the eyes. There was something rather endearing about him which touched me so that whereas normally I would be angry at someone having the nerve to just walk in and make himself at home in my garden, I felt relaxed and even pleased to see him.

“Oh right, thanks...I’ll go along later.”

“Ah well, they’ve got bags of the stuff lined up by the roadside at the minute, just waiting for takers. You get yourself there lickety spit girl, before all they weekend gardeners do. It’ll soon go, mark my words.”

I was about to ask if he wanted me to pick some up for him whilst I was at it when I heard the telephone ring in the kitchen. “Won’t be a minute!” I shouted as I ran indoors, but when I came back there was no sign of him. It was only later that evening when I realized there had been no sign of the chair either. What sort of strange person was this, who carried a chair with him on his perambulations around the village? Did he like to be able to stop and sit whenever he got tired or the fancy took him I wondered?

From then on, every time I was out in the garden he would suddenly appear, almost from nowhere. He offered me bits of advice about where to plant this, what I needed to do there, and always with some old gardening tricks he’d picked up over the years I imagined, certainly not text book stuff, or not in my gardening books anyhow!

Then last Friday I’d been baking in the morning, deciding that when the old man turned up again I’d offer him a cup of tea and some of my homemade shortbread, ask his name, where he lived, get to know him. But he never turned up. I felt quite let down and disappointed, and realized how much I’d looked forward to seeing him sitting outside the shed. I went for a walk around the village, hoping to catch sight of him, wondering was he ill perhaps and that was why he hadn’t visited, but without any luck.

I also realized that apart from helping me with the garden, he’d helped me in other ways. Since he came along I’d stopped daydreaming over the past for hours at a time; instead I’d been thinking ahead, planning my future, what I would grow in the garden as well as looking into doing some voluntary work in the village. I was happy, and once I had accepted there was no need to feel guilty about that, I felt even happier!

He didn’t appear the next day either, in fact, weeks went by and there was no sign of him. In the end I decided to ask the village postmistress about him, since she knew everybody.

“Mrs Grady, I wonder if you can help me please? There’s been this old gentleman coming and sitting in my garden when I’m working out there. I have no idea who he is or where he lives, but he’s been so helpful. I’m sure I’m going to have prize-winning tomatoes thanks to his advice,” I laughed. Briefly I described the old man to her, told her without going into too much detail how he had helped me in more ways than one, but that I hadn’t seen him for some time and was worried. “Do you know where I can find him?” I asked.

She laughed. “Oh yes, I know where you can find him all right. Just go up the cemetery, and underneath the lilac tree by the side door, that’s where he is. His name was Jeremiah Hendry, and he was born in your cottage about a hundred and fifty years ago. Not only born there, but raised



there, lived there when he was married, and died there. Ever since,” she continued, “he’s appeared from time to time in the village, talking to people what’s a bit troubled like, he seems to know when things aren’t quite right with folk. He just visits them for a while, sits and chats about the garden, and once he sees there’s no need for him to visit any more, that’s it. Back he goes to wherever he is.’

I listened to this with some doubt, but I’ve since spoken to some of the older villagers when I deliver their library books, and they all confirm the story. That somehow he helped them get through a bad patch without their realizing it at the time. He had helped me through mine too, and even though his visits have long since stopped, I often say a quiet ‘thank you Jeremiah’ when I’m out in the garden.□

A Season in Antarctica

Village Voice Live, 7th December 2010

Making our way to St Nicholas’ church hall for this event, in cold, snowy and icy conditions, it was heartening to see that quite a crowd had also turned out to hear and see more about the cold, snowy, icy conditions of Antarctica! In contrast to the more conventional illustrated talk with slides that these very entertaining monthly sessions take, this was actually a 45 minute film and talk given by Ken Hill from King’s Lynn (not to be confused with the woodland area between Snettisham and Heacham, as our Village Voice host and editor pointed out!)

After a brief word of explanation from Ken in the flesh, the digital video film took over the main introduction with him speaking relatively recently aboard an attractive old rigged sailing vessel moored out from some exotic shoreline (*Portsmouth actually, Ed*). What we had not bargained for was that the main part of the film was actually shot originally using a wind-up standard-8 cine camera back in 1956/57 when Ken had successfully applied as an ex-naval radio operator to join a 14 month research team based in Antarctica. Now transferred onto video it was supplemented with Ken’s running commentary and appropriate mood music composed and played on guitar by his son Samuel.

Fourteen months is a long time in Antarctica and for the most part hazzardous weather conditions and almost non-existent winter lighting made filming only viable for some 20 or so days. Users of such wind-up cine equipment will remember that as the motor wound-down, the playback speed of the film would speed up! Nevertheless a remarkable extract of life in such a climate was made, from refelting cabin roofs (believe it or not whilst stripped to the waist – well it was 50°F at the time!), managing and travelling with packs of husky dogs (lots of ‘aaah’ factor with the puppies) to visiting or even hunting penguins, seals and the infamous sea-leopard not that that would be allowed now.

After the refreshment break and raffle draw, the Dersingham Descanters team of hand-bell ringers entertained us with some Christmas Carols before Ken fielded questions from the floor, in



particular throwing light on how improved electronic communications, greater conservation awareness, and a ban on non-native species of animal including of course huskies had greatly changed the way life in the Antarctic was conducted.

If you have yet to attend one of our Village Voice Live gatherings on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30pm, then you really are missing out on a great low-cost evening of informative entertainment!□

Bruce
(See the back cover for details of future events)



The Sandringham Newsletter

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

Just before the House closed for the winter, we welcomed a group of correspondents from the Foreign Press Association; journalists from China, Pakistan, Estonia, Sweden, Spain, Germany and the Czech Republic spent a day at Sandringham, organised by Norfolk Tourism who are already beginning to promote the local area to people planning to attend the 2012 London Olympics from all over the world. West Norfolk was an area none of the journalists knew, so we were very pleased to be able to give them a flavour of the warm welcome we offer to all our visitors.

Apple picking has now finished for this year at the Royal Fruit Farms. This year for the first time the Fruit Farm manager also offered cider made and bottled at the pressing plant, which proved very popular, selling out in four weeks. The Fruit Farms now have their own website, www.royalfruitfarms.co.uk, with lots of information and an online shopping facility.

Visitors to Sandringham House have a habit of leaving coins for luck at the feet of the Chinese Buddha statue beside the North Garden. A season's worth of coins have now been collected up and a total of almost £700 has been given to St Mary's for the repair and maintenance of this beautiful church.

The Christmas Craft Fair in Sandringham Park returned at the end of November, with its Fine Food Hall, crafts, gifts and demonstrations, and on 5th December the Royal National Lifeboat Institution was to hold its Reindeer Run at Sandringham for the first time but this had to be cancelled due to the bad weather. This very popular fundraising event is a 10km run through the Country Park – all competitors are given a pair of reindeer antlers and a flashing nose to wear, which should have been a sight worth seeing, and there would have been a hot drink and mince pie waiting for all the runners at the finish.

The Visitor Centre was very busy with some of the regular winter events. We welcomed soldiers of the 1st Battalion, The Mercian Regiment, and their families in late November – about 250 people in all; they travelled down from Catterick in Yorkshire and used the Visitor Centre as an assembly point before going on to Sandringham House to be presented with campaign medals and Elizabeth Crosses by Their Royal Highnesses The Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall.

The Norfolk Hospice, Tapping House, held their annual Light Up A Life service of prayers and carols at the Visitor Centre in early December and the Committee of the Sandringham Flower Show held a reception there the same week for representatives of charities who have received donations from the proceeds of the Show.

Fruit Farms staff are continuing to press apple juice for sale next year and have now moved on from the earlier varieties to press Cox's Orange Pippins and an organically-grown variety called Red Devil. They have also begun work on producing cider for sale next year as this year's experimental vintage was so popular.

The snow which arrived in late November made life more difficult at the Visitor Centre and across all parts of the Estate. For example, the Farm department are trying to continue to lift sugar beet, but frozen ground means that the harvest has to stop, which slows the supply of beet to the factory.

In the glasshouses, daffodil and hyacinth bulbs were brought into the warm to flower successively over Christmas and into the early part of the New Year. Conversely, in the walled kitchen garden, the tubers of dahlias which make such a splash of late summer colour were lifted before the snow came, to be stored in cool but frost-free sheds. Gardens staff began the planting of a new yew hedge along the fence line, but freezing conditions made it impossible to continue. Gardens staff also do the majority of snow clearing on paths and drives within the Gardens and at the Visitor Centre, so they had plenty to keep them busy recently.□

THE GARDEN FARMER - DIG FOR THE FUTURE

Bryan Beers

I have been making the most of the dreadful winter weather by perusing some of the many excellent gardening books that are available from the library. They have a good range of fruit and veg growing guides and I would suggest that if you seek inspiration to start growing your own the library is well worth a visit.



One particularly interesting book I found is a compilation by garden historian Twigs Way of the Ministry of Agriculture "Allotment and Garden Guides" which were issued each month throughout 1945 to encourage amateur gardeners to keep going with the wartime "Dig for Victory" campaign which was initially launched in 1940. Apparently the campaign only really took off when the country's food supplies began to run short, particularly when there was a potato shortage, this doing more to encourage people's efforts than any amount of Government propaganda. Military successes during 1944 had, however,

lead many people to return to gardening for flowers and re-laying lawns, whereas the government wanted to try to keep people focused on the need to continue to produce their own food; the guides were published as a response to this. The June issue, coming after V.E. day, warns of the continued need to dig for victory as "...world food shortage has now become a reality."

The guides emphasize growing those crops which were considered to give good returns without excessive outlay of effort. So tricky crops such as celery and cauliflower were not encouraged and "luxury" crops such as asparagus and cucumber were discouraged for giving little nutrition in return for much effort.

One of the main aims was to try to encourage people to concentrate on food growing for the long winter months. This, as all veg growers know, is a much more challenging proposition than growing for the summer harvest. I have found that much of my winter produce has suffered due to the exceptionally cold weather we had in December. It has been hard to keep stored produce frost free and a number of squashes and lots of onions have been spoiled. In the ground, my leeks and winter spinach are very sorry looking specimens and even the kale is struggling.

Clearly fruit and vegetable plants grow now much as they did in the 1940s and there is plenty of advice in the guides which is very useful; although there is great emphasis made of the benefits of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, some of which would not now be legal. A large part of the land which was newly converted to veg growing would have had relatively poor soil, lacking the nutrients needed to ensure good growth and a quick fix of nutrients would be regarded as desirable. In 1942 the government began producing its own



"National Growmore Fertilizer" with a balance of nitrogen, phosphate and potassium. This was initially met with distrust by many experienced gardeners as they had not previously needed to rely on using artificial fertilizers. However, for those who were new to veg growing, there is no doubt they boosted crop yields.

I think many people today have an increasing concern about future food security and a desire to grow their own food. In my newspaper last week there was an article suggesting that world food prices are at an all time high and we can all see that in Britain food and fuel prices are increasing more rapidly than inflation. Although I don't agree with all the methods advocated by the wartime Government's garden guides, I do believe that the sense of urgency expressed in them is as important today as it was then.□

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Two walks - one short, one long

Village Voice Live, January 2011

The first Village Voice Live of 2011 presented the organisers with somewhat of a challenge when at short notice they were told that the scheduled speaker was unable to attend due to illness. They rose to the occasion and provided those present with a most rewarding alternative. Steve Davis took us for a walk along the footpath to the sea that runs from the end of Station Road to the RSPB Bird reserve at Snettisham.



With a series of wonderful photographs taken at different times of the year we followed this path in the early morning mist, at sunrise and sunset, with the moon shining on misty fields and even at times snowbound. We saw herds of deer quietly browsing, and a family of weasels crossing the path each holding onto the tail of the one in front. Using video clips Steve showed us a barn owl gracefully but silently hunting, a hare racing away and geese flying overhead. At the RSPB Reserve, again using the video, we were able to witness the demented

behaviour of the hundreds of Knot as they raced first one way and then the other before taking off and swooping overhead in a great cloud. We enjoyed seeing the graceful egret, the iconic avocet, and all the varied waders strutting their stuff before returning to our starting point and looking back over the sweep of the Wash.

After a welcome cup of tea and slice of cake we returned to our seats and with the aid of a DVD Tony Bubbs introduced a very different world. With the help of a camera on board a helicopter we travelled the entire 260 odd miles of the Pennine Way. We followed the path as it wound through tidy grey stone villages sitting snugly in wooded valleys, along river banks and by the side of huge reservoirs. Then we watched as the path snaked up the steep sides of the fells to the open desolate moorland where the views all round were stunning. We admired the stamina of the walkers we could see below us toiling up the steep rock strewn slopes to reach the cairns at the top. We flew over High Force Waterfall, the Great Dun Fell, Windy Gyle Hill, the dark waters of Malham Tarn and followed part of the line of Hadrian's Wall. It was a stunning journey and reminded us all what an amazing island we live in.

It was a most enjoyable evening and at a time when so much of the news seems full of doom and gloom it is good to remember that if we are able we only have to walk across our by-pass and take a few steps down that footpath to join that magical world that is right on our doorstep. How lucky we are! □ *(See the back cover for details of future events)* CLIO

Goose News

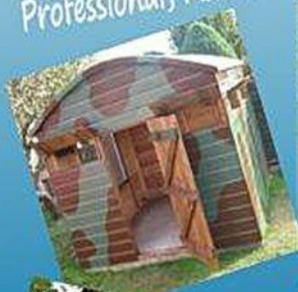
The highest pink-footed goose roost count at the Snettisham RSPB Reserve so far this winter was 37 350 and this was on the 10th of January. The highest combined Norfolk count as been just over 84, 000, which is about average for recent years but lower than the record breaking counts of over 100, 000 that were made a few years ago.

The counts were not very high when the snow was on the ground and this may be because the geese felt confident enough to remain out in the fields all night because any danger could be seen approaching over the snowy ground. □



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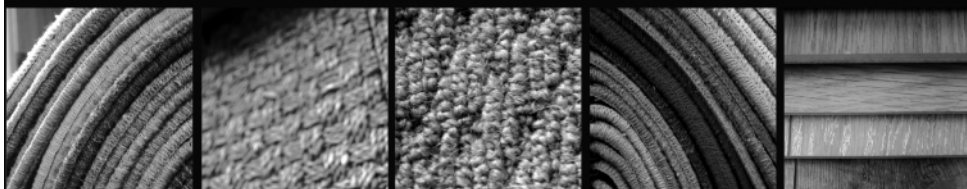
Two different pictures this time. The first shows the bypass nearing completion, opening up development opportunities in Dersingham and further along the coast.

The second is of a Chapel Party in the 1950's. Obviously it was taken on a summers day but was it for a special occasion? Can we put names to the faces? I think I recognise one or two.

Tony Bubb



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DERSINGHAM WALKING GROUP

We had our first 'Sunday Afternoon Stroll' on 21st November when 15 of us enjoyed a 2.5 mile stroll across the Common and through Dersingham Wood. The weather was kind to us: it was fairly mild and the rain kept off till after we had finished. By the date of our next walk (on 8th December) the temperature was much lower but, even so, ten intrepid walkers braved the snow and ice for a walk around Sandringham Country Park.



Snow and ice being braved!

We hope for better conditions for our walks in 2011, so why not make a New Year's Resolution to come and join us?

The walks planned for February and March include our first walk led by our new leader, Steve Martyn and a repeat of the popular walk through Ringstead Downs and the grounds of Old Hunstanton Hall.

The full programme is:-

WEDNESDAY 9th FEBRUARY

Start at 2.00pm from Brancaster Church (map ref.L 132/772 439). A 5 mile circular walk around Brancaster and Barrow Common led by Lindsey and Steve Davis (543138).

SUNDAY 20th FEBRUARY

Start at 10.30am from the Pump House on the Fring/Bircham road (approx 1 mile southeast of Fring) (map ref.L132/753 337). A 7 mile circular walk around Bircham Newton, Great Bircham and Peddars Way led by Steve Martyn (07879 885516). **Bring a packed lunch.**

WEDNESDAY 9th MARCH

Start at 2.00pm from Snettisham Common car park (off Beach Road) (map ref.L132/672 335). A 4.5 mile circular walk around Snettisham led by Valerie and Michael Smith (540728).

SUNDAY 20th MARCH

Start at 2.30pm from St. Nicholas Church Hall car park (map ref.L132/692 302). A 2.5 mile circular Sunday Afternoon Stroll led by Lindsey and Steve Davis (543138).

THURSDAY 31st MARCH

Start at 2.00pm from Ringstead Village Hall (Parking 50p per car) (map ref. L132/692 302). A 5 mile circular walk through Old Hunstanton Park and Ringstead Downs led by Keith Starks (542268).

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)



Dersingham Infant and Nursery School

A New Year and a New Term

Here is a glimpse of some of the exciting activities our children are involved in.



Red Woodland Class finding out about their local environment.



Arctic Orange Class receiving a message from Mummy Pig asking for help in designing houses for her babies.



Jungle Unit's Reception children exploring materials and developing their language skills as part of their work using creative thinking.



Nursery Children getting to grips with nature!

Answers from page 63

Scrambled eggs
Open Sesame
Overwhelming odds
Breaking up
Good intentions

Three degrees below zero
In the bag
Good afternoon
Skating on thin ice
Ambiguous

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Dick Melton

There was a very interesting article in the December issue of *Village Voice* by Valerie Anckorn about what she called 'Heath Road Woods.' This area of land is called The Shut-Up Common, so-called because it is fenced in all round so as the people of the village of Dersingham could graze their animals on it, a right that they have to this very day.

The trees there are silver birch, not oak. When I was a boy, there were very few trees on this land. It was just covered in bracken (brakes) and people like Dan Greef, Fred Howard, Signalman Brown, Mr Lines and Mr Cross would cut the bracken with a scythe when it was green and then leave it to dry out and go brown. Then it was used to litter down their pigs or as frost protection around their potato graves. Most of the birch trees those days were to the south of the Common and around the top edge. These young birch trees were used for pea sticks, bean poles, trellis work, linen props and firewood.

Right in the middle of The Shut-Up-Common was a cycle speedway track built by us boys of the village.

Dan Greef kept a donkey on the Common and, as far as I can remember, the last man to keep a horse there was Norman Towers, the butcher, who used it to pull his butcher's cart.

The village rubbish dump was just inside the gate to your right until it was moved to the first hill on the Fen just behind the sand pit.

Fishers Crisps

I would like to thank Ivan Green for his response to my request for information about Fishers Crisps. My cousin Jane worked there in the factory with Mr Fisher; and her mother, my aunt Mrs Nelly Hunter, would sit up her table in her home putting the salt in the little blue papers. Mr Bernie Macrow was the van driver, delivering the crisps all over Norfolk and beyond. Mr Fisher then bought the old Jacksons dry cleaning factory in Hill Street, Hunstanton as the building at Dersingham got too small.

Mr Fisher and his wife and family lived in the house next to the factory in Hill Street and he opened two fish and chip shops in Hunstanton: one near to the Fairground in Seagate Road; and another one in Greevegate. The one in Greevegate still trades under the name of Fishers today.

Old Dersinghamites

Many thanks to Pauline Robinson (née Drew) for the nice things she said about me. It is good to get letters from Old Dersinghamites as that is one of the things the *Village Voice* is all about. I often wonder what happened to some of the others from Dersingham who I went to school with, like Bob Bennett and Steward Bush, who both lived down Wash House Yard; and Tony Southgate, who lived at the Albert Victor public house with his grandfather, the landlord, and his grandmother.

The shellfish dealers

I had a gentleman by the name of Ken Parker, who was after information about a shop in Chapel Road at Dersingham, get in touch with me. His grandmother, Mrs Agnes Neave, kept the shop in 1930. I found out that, in fact, there were two shops near to the chapel in Chapel Road at that time. One was kept by Mrs Neave and another by a man by the name of Slasher Britton. Mrs



Neaves's maiden name was Daniels and her mother's maiden name was Flegg. Her father was Walter Daniels, who, in 1925, was a shellfish merchant or dealer living in Ingoldisthorpe. Her uncle, Sam Daniels, was the landlord of The Ship public house in the same village. At this time there were a lot of shellfish merchants and dealers living in the area, like the English and Mitchell families who lived down Fisher End in Snettisham.

Felling of fir trees

I have been housebound since October with a smashed knee so cannot get out and about, but I have been told that a lot more fir trees have been felled around the edge of Wolferton Warren. With all these trees being felled and the ones at Dersingham Fen, is it the intention of English Nature to turn these two areas of fen and warren into a grouse moor? Grouse were introduced to this area many years ago but they did not survive. As I have said many times before, the only way to keep the Fen like it should be is to control burn it in the autumn time.□

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DERSINGHAM DAY CENTRE FOR THE ELDERLY



On 24th November the Day Centre celebrated its 29th Birthday with a special Birthday Cake, made for us by Priors the butchers (honestly). It also happened to be the Birthday of one of our Members, Elsie English, so she had the task of cutting the cake for our afternoon tea.

On December 1st we had to cancel due to extremely bad weather conditions. We managed to open again on the 8th December but had to cancel our planned visit to the Church Christmas Tree Festival that day. Although

a number of our Members were unable to come due to illness or hospital appointments (why are there always so many appointments on a Wednesday?) we managed to have a good day with our once a month Bingo session in the afternoon. We got everyone away and home safely before the weather started to deteriorate again.

On the 15th December we held our Christmas Lunch and Party. This was our first Christmas in the Church Hall and the morning team of volunteers were on site early. Decorations had to be put up, tables put into place and then set and decorated for lunch. Ruth Mountain and her band of Elves were busy in the kitchen, preparing vegetables etc., and by the time the first Members arrived on the transport, coffee and teas were ready to welcome them. At mid-day Members and Volunteers together with their Guests, forty three in all, sat down to lunch - sadly some of our Members were not well enough to come. We had a real feast of turkey with all the trimmings, followed by Christmas Pudding, coffee/tea and chocolate mints.

By the time the tables had been cleared our entertainer on key-board, Leigh Murfet, was ready to start. In what has become something of a tradition we started with carols, led by Michael Brock our Vicar and, as always, it was lovely to see everyone joining in with enthusiasm. We then danced and sang along to all sorts of old favourites and those of our Members who were able came onto the floor to join in – one complete with walking frame. Then it was time for tea and mince-pies and Christmas presents for everyone. Like all good things the party had to end but everyone agreed it had been a great day and we still had the 22nd December to look forward to – our last meeting before Christmas.

The 22nd December saw the snow back again. Fortunately we had managed to get Members, who wished to go to see the Christmas Tree Festival, across to the Church and back again before it began to settle. Volunteers and their partners joined the Members for lunch and then the afternoon closed with tea and mince-pies. As we waved everyone off on their journey home, it was very rewarding to reflect that we had not only survived the trauma of losing our Social Service Grant this year and then having to move from the Community Centre, but we had survived, and survived in style. The Church Hall was now 'home' and we were all happy there and the local community and organizations in Dersingham and Hunstanton, as well as individuals, had been generous in their donations and support, and we could now look forward to another happy and busy year ahead, starting on the 5th January.

The Members and Volunteers at the Dersingham Day Centre wish all Village Voice readers a Happy and Peaceful New Year.□





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Bog News



A Snowy Scene from early winter in 2010

This winter like the last has been particularly cold and snowy. This has given the reserve a totally different feel and has made completing some of the practical tasks all the more difficult.

Last year we were affected by the weather in our annual heather cutting. We aim to cut 2 ha blocks of heather each year to allow different ages structure of heather across the site. Last year we did one small area but were unable to complete this due to the weather.

This year as luck would

have it we cut all of the areas that needed cutting before the snow arrived apart from half a day's cutting.

The snow and icy conditions also affect our scrub management works as we are unable to cut pines and birch. Pines need to be cut below the branch in order to stop them growing but with a few inches of snow on the ground this makes cutting the smaller pine scrub very difficult. We have managed to clear some fairly large areas of small pines which have a dramatic impact visually across the site and allow spectacular views of the heath.

One of the more exciting things with the snow and ice is that you get to see birds closer than normally can be quite shy. Woodcock have been particularly easy to see and a trip down the Wolferton road at dusk can normally be rewarded with a view of woodcock feeding in the pools on the edge of the road. They are much easier to see in the snow as their normally excellent camouflage is useless in the bright white of the snow.

Another bird I was lucky enough to see was a male Stonechat. This may not seem exciting as Stonechats are normally seen at Dersingham Bog all year round, but this bird was colour ringed. Colour ringing is used by trained ringers to identify specific birds more easily. The combination of three colours and a metal identifying ring with number allows ringers to tell birds of the same species apart. This is particularly useful in identifying a bird's movement from when it was caught to ultimately its death. Many thousands of birds are rung in Britain each year but finding a bird with a ring on is quite difficult unless it's something like a goose. These ringing recoveries are important and help conservationists in planning for management for species especially some of our declining species.

This winter large flocks of thrushes and



Woodcock



tits have been quite evident. This is probably again due to the weather and the birds are trying to search for food. Redwings have been fairly numerous as well as large mixed tit flocks. Also flocking over the reserve this winter was a flock of Waxwings. This year has been a very good year for these Scandinavian visitors and I was lucky enough to see around twenty flying over the eastern edge of the reserve.

This winter's works have been progressing well with the final stage of large timber felling completed on the reserve. This is quite a big milestone for the reserve and although there may still be

some smaller trees to come out to finish the job off we are now able to concentrate on maintaining the site. We will encourage the scrub to grow up along the edge of the newly felled areas which will provide habitat for a variety of bird species as well as providing feeding areas for Nightjars. The scrub will be managed on rotation again providing scrubby habitat for birds such as grasshopper warbler and areas of open heath for woodlark and nightjar. The new areas of heath will be managed to allow the new heather to flourish and this will greatly increase a habitat which is becoming increasingly rare in England.

It seems like spring will be with us in no time. Already Robins have been singing as if it was a spring morning. I look forward to seeing you on the site this year and as always if any of you are interested in volunteering on the reserve please get in contact with me.□

Tom Bolderstone

Reserve Warden

Natural England

Dersingham Bog NNR

thomas.bolderstone@naturalengland.org.uk

NATURAL
ENGLAND



David Bingham

The Green Scene - Transport

This is our second severe winter in a row and although this does not change any of the science, which shows that climate change is happening and that we are the likely cause, it does alter people's perceptions and their willingness to act. Part of the problem is that taking action is often believed to involve sacrificing something important. This is particularly true when it comes to the thought of going without holidays in the sun or big fast cars and this matters because transport is a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions. I'm often being told that my own transport preferences – train, bicycle, walking – don't count because I enjoy getting around that way and you must suffer if you want to do something worthwhile. To try to get a handle on my own transport related CO² emissions I recorded all of my journeys during 2010 and used a carbon calculator to determine the carbon footprint of each trip. I hoped that the outcome of this rather anal exercise would prove that it is possible to find green ways to travel that are less stressful and more enjoyable than the usual options.

So what did I find? Work related travel was easy to measure because I usually cycle to work and when working away I travel on the train whenever possible, carrying my folding bicycle to use for the last few miles to my final destination. If trains aren't practicable I use a diesel fleet vehicle or sometimes my own car. The only exceptions were three trips to Northern Ireland where flying was the only sensible option. One of these journeys was from Dersingham to Belfast and back in a day and on this occasion flying was the *only* option. Buses don't feature much in my business travel statistics except for the occasional use of 'park and ride' schemes into big city centres. Ferries only appear once with a return trip to Rathlin Island off the Antrim coast. The only business travel that I didn't measure were four crossings of the Tees on the Middlesbrough Transporter Bridge. This



was too confusing because it was the bridge that did the moving - carrying the car along with it.

Holidays and general travel was a little trickier to calculate because I had to try to extract my personal share of the journeys. Our holidays have been quite green with a short winter break in Stamford, a long distance walk in the Peak District from Rocester in Staffordshire to Castleton in Derbyshire (The Limestone Way), a solo trip to The Lake District to do a couple of days fell walking (Scafell Pike and Pillar) and a holiday in Provence. We have also been to London a couple of times on the train. The



journey to Provence was on one of the French high-speed TGV trains and was a much more civilised way to travel than being crammed onboard a low cost airline flight. It was also a particularly low-carbon journey because TGVs are powered by electricity and France generates a lot more from nuclear power than we do in the UK. The train had room to move and a café bar on the upper deck where you could sit and watch the countryside fly by while enjoying a drink and a snack. The only downside was that the journey was over too soon. We stayed in Aix and didn't find the lack of a car to be a problem because it was possible to catch a bus to Marseille or a train to Avignon or Monaco. They also had a regular mini bus service to take walkers to various drop off points around Mont Sainte Victoire - a bit like our 'Coast Hopper' service. The mountain was a favourite of Cezanne and the lower slopes were carpeted with richly scented herbs. If you would like to try travelling through Europe by train there is an excellent website called 'The Man in Seat Sixty-One' at <http://www.seat61.com/> This site not only tells you about the 'nuts and bolts' of how to buy a ticket it also recommends routes and tells you how to make the most of your journey.

My green halo came crashing down over my head when I calculated my personal travel CO² emissions for the year. They came out at 4587 kg, not good when compared with the UK's average annual emissions that are estimated to be 10000 kg per person and this is for everything not just transport. I'm halfway to this figure in travel emissions alone. The safe limit is said to be 2000 kg per person. I thought it would be useful to try to visualise all this CO² because we can neither see nor smell it. Apparently, a kilogram of CO² takes up 509 litres of space at room temperature and standard pressure. So my little jaunts will have produced the equivalent of 313,044 wine bottles full of CO² - a staggering amount. My only excuse is that it could have been much worse. I did get tempted by the idea of a trip to Cape Cod and felt a slight tug towards a showroom displaying a sporty little Italian car (it was very shiny) when I was on my way to buy my 'cheap as chips' eco runabout. The other me in an alternative universe will have added over 2000 kg to his carbon footprint last year. However, viewed from a different perspective this excuse looks weak. The average Bangladeshi is responsible for producing a mere 300 kg of CO² per year and this is for everything. Bangladesh is also a poor low-lying country and very vulnerable to sea level rise.

Flying is something that obviously needs to be thought about carefully because the three short flights I made supplied a significant chunk of my total transport carbon emissions for the year. The trip on the TGV was a great success and although I can't promise never to fly again, I think that shifting from plane to train will be a pleasure and not a strain. Finally, I would like to 'big up' the humble bicycle. They do not emit greenhouse gases, they save money and they help you lose weight. A win, win, win situation!□

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New Parish Councilor - Edward Phillips

I was born in Pembrokeshire in West Wales where I grew up. Just before my 18th birthday I joined the Royal Marines. I serviced with various commando units in both the Mediterranean and UK-based. My career with the Marines ended due to a leg injury whilst serving in Northern Ireland.

After leaving the Marines I worked on building sites whilst studying in the evenings for further qualifications and this allowed me too eventually to gain a place at the University of Mid Wales and study to become a Building Surveyor.

On graduating I became a Site Agent Engineer before joining Somerset District Council as a Building Control Surveyor, I also joined Somerset Fire Brigade as a fire fighter for many years. I have since worked with other local authorities (Bristol City Council, Cambridge City Council and Kings Lynn Borough Council) before working on my own setting up a building surveying practice, and so Gemstone Building Surveyors was born.

In 2002 by wife Jane and I moved from King's Lynn to Dersingham to start a bed-and-breakfast business at Holkham Cottage, which has been very successful throughout its time.

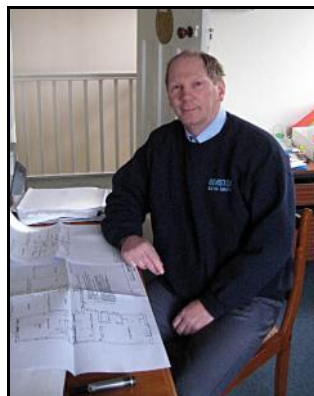
At first we ran the Gemstone Business from Holkham Cottage, but as the business grew we found we needed more office space, so moved into Amber House on Manor Road, Dersingham. At present we employ six full/part time staff and we continue to grow.

I have one daughter, Joanne, who is a marine biologist and is married to Ben. They live in London. Last year in February they got married in a small town on the Arctic Circle in Sweden (I still have no idea why). I can confirm that Sweden is one of the most expensive countries in

Europe and in February the temperature is below -20°C on a good day, very nice but I wouldn't go there on holiday.

In what spare time I do have I enjoy reading , walking Bobby the Labrador and going to the Gym as much as I can while working towards an Open University Course degree in engineering science.

By joining the Parish Council I hope to work for the benefit of the community and give a voice for businesses in the area.□




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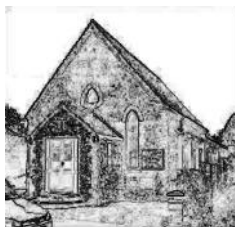
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Greetings from the manse

2011 marks the 400th anniversary of the completion and introduction of the King James Bible. It's words and phrases and rhythms have penetrated deeply into our language and over the years it has been held in such great affection by the nation, treasured as a symbol of national culture

and heritage. Even today, in a secular world, for many it is the Bible, the book to be used at special and important occasions where the scriptures make an appearance. But the question is to my mind, do people read the Bible? I have a sermon entitled "Use of the Bible." I list some of the uses I have seen over the years, for example, as a doorstep, collecting dust on bookshelves, somewhere to record family details etc. It's really at its best and most useful when it is read.

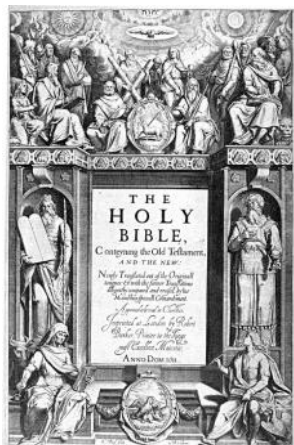
There will be 400th anniversary events to mark the occasion right around the English speaking world, and Hunstanton Methodist Church in our little way is organising a weekend of events in April, 8-10th, to celebrate, promote and encourage the regular reading of the Bible in conjunction with the "Bible Fresh E100 Bible Reading Challenge." And we are pleased to have Naomi Starkey as the key note speaker. Naomi is an author and Commissioning Editor for the Bible Reading Fellowship. She also writes for New Daylight Bible reading notes. Please look out for more details when they become available.

There is another little anniversary in 2011 for me, it will be 40 years since I did "O level Religious Knowledge", and got an A grade! I was taught by my maths teacher a lovely Christian man. I can remember really enjoying a first serious and reasonably systematic study of scripture. Little did I think that later I would study theology at university and train for the Methodist ministry. However, to me this was the beginning of a serious relationship with the Bible that continues on a number of levels, devotional, spiritual, as a disciple and follower of Christ in a living relationship. But it is important also to me to study the Bible, especially the New Testament and its world, using the tools of historical method and ancient languages. I have never had any difficulty combining the two and indeed would find it almost impossible to do the one without the other.

So then, I am going to write a monthly article giving a different perspective on the New Testament. I hope you will find interest to reflect on scripture and even more I hope you will add a new commitment to engage with its pages and just read it!

For this month I offer you the simple observation that we do not have the original texts of the New Testament. The original scripts are lost. It seems an obvious thing to say but it is hardly thought about. If it is then the presumption is that "it's the Bible" so all the copies would be the same. The texts we have are most definitely not all the same.

These originals are called "the autographs", the text, as it were, that left the hand of the writer as he intended it to be, as it was intended to be. In fact, we don't have copies of the autographs, or copies of the copies of the copies. But what we do have in existence are about 1500 texts of the writings or books of the New Testament, a few "extant" (whole documents in codices etc.) or in parts and fragments (some as small as postage stamps with just a few words or letters!) which are dated variously by scholars at the earliest to the opening to middle years of the 1st century AD. Did you really think they would agree! All the books of the New Testament were endlessly copied and passed around the Christian communities of the Roman world. There was no thought of conservation of the originals as precious documents for posterity as we would today. They were to be read and circulated and copied in the cause of Christian ministry, mission and community. It



The title page to the 1611 first edition of the Authorized Version Bible



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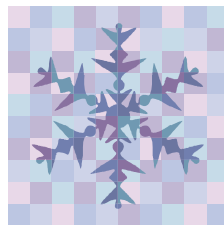
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The Dersingham Weather observed by John F. Murray



How do I begin to talk about the weather of November and December? On the 4th November we had the warmest November day that I have so far recorded; a warm 17.3°c. The previous three years the highest was 16.7° and that I'm afraid was the end of it. After that it became winter with unseasonal temperatures. We had snow which simply did not go away because of the very low temperatures. Here in North West Norfolk, once again, we fared much better than many other parts of the country but we still had the coldest November for the four years that I have records. The average was only 5.8°c whereas the three previous Novembers produced averages of between 7.1° and 8.7°, so it was noticeably colder. The Met. Office also said that nationally it was the coldest for many years. The lowest temperature this November was a chilly 6.1°. This was the lowest I had ever recorded; until December that is. Previous lows were nowhere near that. Last year it was -0.6°. In 2008 it was -1.3° and in 2007 -2.9°. There were many other below zero temperatures that kept the mean temperature low. However, compared to other places we got off lightly. Even though we had snow it turned out to be a comparatively dry November with 42.4mm of precipitation. Last year we had 108.5mm and in 2008 88.6mm. In 2007 it was very similar to this year with 41.1mm.

And then December came! The Met. Office said it was the coldest December for 120 years. It was certainly the coldest I have so far recorded. The average, or mean temperature was a mere 0.3°c. Previous Decembers were 3.6°, 3.8° and 5.2° so very noticeably colder. The highest temperature this December was 7.7° whereas in previous years it was between 12.2° and 14.1°, another noticeable drop. However, the lowest temperature I recorded was certainly a record for me at a very cold -8.7°. Previous years had produced lows of between -3.6° and -4.6°. December was also a very dry month with only 28mm of precipitation. (That is just a touch over one inch). Last year it was 82.8mm and the two previous were 40.9mm and 55.6mm respectively. This was also a record month for the number of hits on the weather web page. There were over 800 visits to see how our weather was going.

Now that 2010 has gone I can show how last year compared to previous years:



"We awoke to find 2 feet of snow on the pavement"

Year	Max Temp Rainfall	Min Temp	Mean Temp
2010	31.4 594mm	-8.7	9.6
2009	30.4 726mm	-5.3	10.7
2008	29.8 828mm	-5.9	10.5

These figures clearly show that 2010 was a colder and much drier year than previous ones. The only blip in the figures is the high temperature recorded. The one thing that concerns me is the lack of rainfall which was a lot lower than before. This could well be simply a part of a general cycle of the weather but it could also be, dare I say it, global warming.

Can I take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy new year and I am keeping my fingers crossed for a much better year, as far as the weather is concerned, than 2010.□

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IT HAPPENED IN FEBRUARY

By Steve Nowell

February holds many memories for me – some good, some bad. But let's not dwell on the negative. Let's remember something positive. I lived in King's Lynn when I was a lad so it was easy enough to pop into town during the February half-term and go to the Mart. It was great. I used to meet my school pals there and we'd spend ourselves penniless. But in the second and third years at the Grammar School things seemed to change. It was as though some of my mates preferred to go to the Mart to 'pull' girls – ugh! And they did silly things, like plastering their hair down with brilliantine (remember that?) and wear stupid shoes that would have successfully stuck in a dartboard. And trousers? They made you look as though you hadn't tucked your shirt in properly. But in my third year at KESGS (as it was then) a change took place which I did not understand. Perhaps it might not be so horrendous to take one of these 'girl things' for a ride on the waltzers. After all some of them *were* actually attractive and they didn't *all* giggle continuously. I sought the advice of a good friend. "It's quite simple – you've got to maintain a 'macho' image. You'll have them swooning at your feet." I thought about this. No way could I afford to buy a genuine black leather jacket. And I wouldn't be seen dead in a pair of those poncey, pointy-toed shoes. And as for trousers. 'Drainpipe' I think they were called, which was an appropriate description. Surely they would cut off the blood supply to the nether regions. But I had the answer.

My Grandfather had a 1920 Model T Ford flat-bed lorry. This fantastic piece of machinery had been put to rest in his garage since about 1926. Now Grandfather was a clever old chap and he could foresee that in years to come, provided the Model T was looked after, it might be worth some money. So he covered it in various materials to keep the dust, dirt and bird droppings off. One of these materials was a dirty, tatty, holey, but genuine 1925 style brown leather coat. Bingo!! What self-respecting young lady could resist me wearing that? The shoes were more of a problem. But again Grandfather came to the rescue. After some cajoling he lent me his pair of size 10, brown, tough, leather working boots, each boot being soled with 32 steel studs and 2 plates. And as an optional extra I managed to borrow a secondhand trilby from my Dad. (His trilbies became 'secondhand' when he had worn a hole in the front where the folds met).

With head high and singing the number one in the 'hit parade' I went to the Tuesday Market Place. In the middle distance I was sure I could see a couple of my chums – but they were heading away from me. I saw some more of my pals, but they too seemed to be taking evasive action. Dejectedly, I wandered over to the waltzers. There was a group of three girls standing and chattering. I didn't have to speak – the metalware on my boots heralded my arrival. The girls turned to look at me, then ran off, screaming. So much for maintaining a 'macho' image I thought. If the guy who had suggested that was there I would happily have strangled him. But something *had* changed. I looked at the oil stains on the coat. Then at the clonking size 10 boots. What on earth had possessed me? The word 'macho' never meant 'tramp-like' surely.

After promising my Mum that I would do the washing up for a month; and would try for 'A's in all my homeworks; and would do numerous other things which went against the grain, I managed to obtain quite a sizeable assisted loan. The whole lot went on clothing of various descriptions. I still jibed at winkle-picker shoes but that was a penance I would simply have to put up with apparently. The effect was immediate and dramatic. I had friends again, but best of all I experienced the delights of being able to 'pull the birds'. □



continued from page 46

was all very practical.

The question is then put, how do you know you have the correct text as it was meant to be or you might say, as God intended it? Actually in a sense, you don't! And when manuscripts and texts are compared it is evident that there are differences, in fact a lot of differences. It is calculated that there are as many differences between the existing copies of the writings of the New Testament as the number of words it contains. Most Bibles carry reference to some of these differences even in a very limited way, when a verse is highlighted usually with a letter that steers you to the margin or bottom of the page and gives an alternative reading from other "ancient authorities". So now you know!

The King James "version" as it says on the cover of my own copy, is itself the product of the scholarly work of 47 translators, Godly and faithful men of the Church of England, commissioned by James I in 1604, working on the manuscripts and texts that they had before them, to bring about the best translation they could to the glory and purposes of God. It took 7 years and doubtless much prayer and discussion!

The objective then is to arrive at an agreed text that carries support as the best text in representing the original. Within Biblical studies this discipline is called textual criticism and it has kept me busy and enthralled for many years now.

More next time.□

With every blessing, Rev. Kim Nally

Methodist Church

Fifty people sat down and enjoyed an excellent Christmas lunch on 12th December, followed by entertaining and enjoyable singing from the Heacham Songsters. This was the start of our Christmas celebrations. The Carols by candlelight service was very well attended, we sang traditional and new carols, and were reminded of the familiar story in a dialogue entitled "They could have said no!" Christmas morning service was again very well attended and much appreciated by everyone.

We look forward to seeing you in the New Year at any of our events and services. Coffee morning dates are 19th Feb., 19th Mar., 16th Apr. We wish you all a Happy and peaceful New Year.



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Old Girls Patch

by Meetze

Loads happened the last few weeks; I don't know where to start.

Saturday night we had guests. One 2-legged one and 2 cats. Princess, a tiny very wet looking Lady and Letch, a big handsome boy came to visit. No idea about the 2-legged one, I was not interested in her at all. Princess wobbled a lot and walked in circles. And she smelled of medicine and first thing she did was helping herself to some food purring loudly. Letch was a looker. Purrrrrr. But he did not pay any attention to me. What a prig. I tried everything from stroking him to bumping into him by accident. Nothing. He growled and hissed. He did that to my big friends and everybody in the house as well. After a while the 2-legged one and Princess left (she was still purring). Letch stayed for a sleep over. But his behaviour did not change. He kept growling at everybody and had a small fight with Stumpy over her food. What else? On Monday night he left.

Then it snowed outside and I stayed inside. Although it looks pretty, it is very wet and I do not like wet. Sidney and Johnnie went outside and jumped after the snowflakes and landed both deep in snow. You only could see their heads and tails. Looked sooo funny. Johnnie ran straight back inside. But Sidney stayed where he was and started crying. What a Wuzz. My big friend had to go outside and pick him up. How embarrassing is that??? Back inside he spread out on the big radiator and after a while he fell asleep.

After the big snowfall, the melt and the freeze, Granddad turned up. I don't know when he turned up or where he came from. He was just there when I woke up. He is handsome but very skinny.

Then there was Christmas. We all got a new bed and surprisingly enough, they are all very cosy because I tried them all out. I have chosen the one that was placed on the drawer in the big bedroom. The beds are apparently handmade by the mother of one of my big friends. All in 3-D optic patchwork. Stumps has made the one on the settee hers and Beauty the one on the armrest of the sofa. Johnnie and Sidney keep switching and Granddad prefers the one under the radiator behind the Christmas tree.

Ahh. The Christmas Tree. Johnnie had to climb up the tree. Of course she got stuck and did not know how to get down. So she called for help. Sidney came to her rescue. He climbed up after her and got stuck as well. What a rescue. What a picture. A tree full of cats crying for help. I laughed my head off. Silently of course, as I pretended to be asleep. Stumps was not so subtle. She sat in front of the tree and looked at

them. Or better she stared at them. She did not make one move to help. I think that she considered that as payback for all the jumps Sidney made on her. And Granddad laid under the tree by the radiator and slept. I think he is deaf. He did not even blink once. You must be deaf not hearing the noise those two teenagers made in that tree. And he looks so cute and athletic and handsome and fluffy and adorable and and.... I think I am in Love! Any tips to how seduce a Granddad are very welcome!□



KEEPING UP WITH TRADITIONS

There are so many traditions and so on connected with February 14th that it would be impossible to detail them all here. But February 14th was the eve of the Roman feast of Lupercalia, a time when some believed that the names of the single girls and women in the area should be written on pieces of paper and placed in jars during the festival itself. Single young men would then help themselves to a piece of paper and hope that the name thereon was that of their one true love. This could lead to problems presumably if you drew out the name of your maiden spinster aunt, or your sister!

There were many spells you could perform, potions you could create, to help you find the love of your life – remember this was in the days before online dating and the casual “You’ve pulled” became the fashionable mode of choosing your mate. In those days, young girls often went to the local cemetery on St. Valentine’s Eve on the stroke of midnight, where they would walk around the church twelve times then go home to sleep, and dream of their future husband. If tramping round a damp, cold cemetery on a winter’s night didn’t appeal, there was always the custom, performed in the comfort of your own home, which involved counting seven stars on seven nights and on the eighth day the first person you shook hands with would be your future spouse. This all sounds a bit tricky to me... what happens if it’s the vicar, or a married man, or a woman come to think of it? This doesn’t sound exactly foolproof does it?

There are spells involving candles and rose thorns, but if you want to attract someone who is just a friend but for whom you have very strong feelings, then you should dab a few drops of rosehip oil on your wrists before going to meet him. And talking of roses, this day is the one day in the year when sales of roses soar. And apparently, a good indication of how much a man cares for the woman he sends roses to, can be gauged by the number of roses he sends. For example, a dozen roses means ‘Be Mine’, while twice that number is a bit more serious with the hidden message ‘Forever yours’. I wonder what a single rose means?

February is also the month of Shrovetide, another occasion which has many traditions connected with it. In Sedgfield, County Durham, they play the Sedgfield Ball Game on Shrove Tuesday. Traditionally the ball, made from leather, was thrown into the market place by the Parish Clerk where it was fought over by the ‘mechanics’ and ‘agriculturalists’ of the town. At the other end of the country in St. Columb in Cornwall, they hold the annual Shrovetide game of hurling. The night before this boisterous game, local shopkeepers usually put up blinds and screens to protect their shop windows. Sometimes the game is short-lived, at others it can go on for hours.

Then there is rope-pulling in Ludlow, pancake racing in Olney, and let’s not forget Pully Lug Day in Cumbria, which occurs on the Friday following Ash Wednesday, a day when it’s all right to pull people’s ears apparently, but only up until midday!

March is the month when we celebrate several saints days, including Saints David and Patrick, and it’s the month for celebrating Mothering Sunday. This occurs on the fourth Sunday in Lent and can fall anywhere between the first of the month and the 4th of April. This was the day when young women who worked away from home, in the big houses and so on, went back home to spend time with their family, taking presents with them when they could. These days, it’s more likely to be called ‘Mother’s Day’ though, an occasion imported from America, and said to have begun in the early 1900s by Anne Jarvis, a schoolteacher who wanted to do something special to celebrate her own mother, and indeed mothers everywhere. Thanks to her lobbying, Congress recognized this as a special day in 1913. It seems to have been something of a moveable feast... in America it was set at the second Sunday in May at this time, and over here, where there were enthusiastic followers of the idea, it was early in August. These days, except by certain groups of people, Mothering Sunday has largely been overtaken by Mother’s Day, held on the same day as Mothering Sunday was traditionally, in this month of March.

The 25th March is known as Annunciation, or Lady Day, and since medieval times has been known as one of the key ‘rent days’. This was a day when rents and other legal debts were paid,

and also a popular day for 'Hiring Fairs', when those looking for work would gather, usually in the market place, and prospective employers would take their time wandering about, looking at what was available for hire, and which would best suit their needs. This is also the day of the Tichborne Dole. On this day, the villagers of Tichborne and the nearby village of Cheriton near Winchester, are entitled to go up to the big house, Tichborne Park, where they can collect a gallon of flour per adult, and half that for children, which is then blessed before being taken from large hoppers into sacks brought by the villagers themselves. This custom dates back some eight hundred years, and it could well be that the villagers don't actually need the flour now as they did all those years ago, but keeping a tradition going is what's important.□

Magwitch

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A massive thank you is being extended to the generous customers of James Graven's stores in Ely, Soham, Chatteris, Littleport and Dersingham who have donated in excess of £10,000 in the last 6 month period.

Community Liaison Manager, Caroline Bosworth, explained that staff at each store nominate a charity to support for the year and this then became a focus for fundraising activities at the site. Some charities were also supported across the group and these include the Wings Appeal, Poppies, Help for Heroes and Breast Cancer. Dersingham's Charity for the year was Diabetes UK; however they also supported several other local charities including the Salvation Army, MS, Keeping Abreast, Little Discoverers and the QE Dialysis Unit.

The staff at Dersingham James Graven's Budgens have decided to support Diabetes UK in 2011 again.□

Mince pies 'scent with love'

Students completing a Level 1 Certificate in Hospitality at The College of West Anglia very kindly donated mince pies for the refreshments at a recent fundraising event in aid of The Norfolk Hospice, Tapping House called 'Scent with Love'. The event was held at The Le Strange Arms and consisted primarily of floral demonstrations carried out by florist Nick Godfrey-Cole and raised over £1,300.

Hilary Auld, Programme Manager at COWA said, "The students are taking a Personal and Social Development course alongside their studies and the mince pies were offered as part of this qualification."

Zena Penty, Hospice Fundraising Co-ordinator said "We needed many mince pies in December for events and our 'Light up a Life' Services and the ones donated by the Hospitality students certainly ranked amongst the best. It is fantastic that young people in the area are really beginning to get behind the Hospice and offer their support in many ways. Earlier this year other students studying Travel & Tourism enjoyed a fundraising day by dressing up and raised £188.32 for which we are extremely grateful. Our Hospice is a service for all adults and although a significant number of patients are of a retirement age, certainly not all and tragically one patient this year was only in their 20's."

We would like to hear from anyone who has a fundraising idea for 2011 or would like to join in a sponsored event such as GEAR or a skydive and raise sponsorship for the Norfolk Hospice. Call 01485 542891.□



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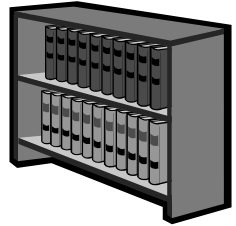
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****New weekly Knit and Natter group***

If you knit or crochet 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 come along to our weekly drop-in, **every Thursday from 10.30-12.** There will be lots of knitting books to provide inspiration, free library cards for those who aren't already members and free refreshments.

****Computer Helpdesk hour***

If you are having troubles with your email attachments, want tips on how to shop safely on the internet, or want to upload your digital photos... then come along between **12-1 on Thursdays** and we'll try our best to help you out!

****Books for Busy Parents***

No time to find a book for yourself? Would you like to talk about the books you like with other busy parents? Why not come along to this monthly group, meet other parents and let library staff offer help and suggestions? Under 5s are very welcome. There will be a story and a colouring activity and then a book discussion. On the first **Thursday** of the month **from 10.30-11.30am.**

****Weekly Scrabble Club***

Every Monday at 2pm. If you'd like to make new friends, and enjoy a game or two, then come along to the library. Refreshments are provided.

****Talking about books***

We have two groups – the Crime Book Club meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 6pm (Feb 8th) and the Reading Group meets on the last Tuesday of the month at 6pm (Feb 22nd) For more information and to find out what books they'll be discussing, please give us a call.

****Don't be bored during half term - come along to our board games afternoon!***

Tuesday 22 February 10.00am – 12.00noon

Will you get tangled up in Twister? Are you a 'Smart ass'? Can you play Kerplunk? Suitable for 7-12 year olds and their families.

****Calling all Nintendo DS fans!***

Thursday 24 February 10.30 – 11.30am.

Come along with your DS console and try out the games before you borrow them. Children under 8 must be accompanied by an adult

****James Bond - Spies like us!***

Thursday 24 February 5.30 – 7.00pm.

If you love the books of Ian Fleming and Charlie Higson then why not join us for an evening of espionage. Become a spy for the night and learn how to send secret messages, decipher codes, and about famous spies. This is a family activity aimed at the over 8s and everyone is welcome to dress as their favourite James Bond character. Spaces are limited so please book by calling the library.

Happy reading, *Alison*

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Steve Davis - Creating Memories

What with the cold icy weather, recovery from a successful hernia op (thanks to the very friendly, expert care and attention of staff at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital's Arthur Levin Day Centre) but tempered with a bout of one of the dreaded lurgies that seem to have afflicted so many, I have not exactly felt a bundle of energy this past month! Still at last I have regained a spring in my step, managed the odd gentle bike ride and can laugh without fear of blowing a gasket!

Although I cannot pretend that long periods of feeling restricted and cooped up inspire me a great deal, it did give the opportunity to re-live a few memories as I sifted through some of the monstrous collection of digital photos, video clips and writings that have built up over the last decade on my computer thanks to the wonders of modern electronic storage capacity. But with well in excess of 30,000 digital photos, and over 15 hours worth of digital video (mostly still on tape), memories can become something of a confused nightmare unless organised and collated into manageable chunks. Of course the need to do all this is not new to the digital age and like many, we have shelf-loads of photo albums, some that are now fading with age along with boxes of slides and other random photos doing absolutely nothing! It is just that whereas in the past I might have taken on holiday a couple of 36 exposure films and maybe three-minutes of cine, now I seldom seem to come back with less than a few hundreds digital photos and video clips! One day, I keep telling myself, I must sort them all out! But it can take a lot of discipline and diligence to organise them into a manageable form that others might care to view or that is worth passing on to future generations. Fortunately for some of the milestones at least in our life, I did have the forethought and wherewithal at the time to distil a few cross section photos and video clips into an acceptable length of slideshow or scrapbook diary. Although they say a picture paints a thousand words, I find that reading back diary notes or listening to a commentary I recorded at the time can often convey far more of a reminder of the mood and feel of an occasion than the pictures themselves.

As I gloated over one such triumph, I realised that this year marks the tenth anniversary of the start of Lindsey's and my 2001 Kent Coastal Odyssey – (living as we did then in the Medway Towns of Kent). Our resolution plan for that year had been to walk the entire Kent coastline in stages throughout. Now for one reason or another, not the least of which being the 2001 outbreak of Foot and Mouth when access to footpaths was severely restricted, it actually took us 20 months to complete and as many stages adding up to a total of around 170 miles. Not perhaps the greatest of epic journeys you might think, but a very definitive milestone in our life together, and one that stirs many a happy memory.

Determined to begin our Odyssey before the start of the new college teaching term, on Friday 5th January 2001 we caught the train to Dartford and walked up along the bank of River Darent to where it joined the Thames, the definitive north-west corner of Kent according to our OS map. From there we followed the Thames eastwards towards Greenhithe station our target for the first leg, barely a distance of six and a half miles but taking us under the Queen Elizabeth Dartford Crossing bridge, and getting a view of the area that few get to see. I remember vividly our excitement as once or twice a month, usually on a Saturday morning we would drive, bus or take the train to our last coastal destination, cover a stretch of between five and fifteen miles, train or bus back to the car, and invariably get back for a late lunch just as our younger teenage daughter (who did not do Saturday mornings) was beginning to emerge! Gradually we worked our way clockwise around the paths, banks, cliffs and beaches of the River Thames, River Medway, North Sea and English Channel until the climactic day when we reached Camber Sands in Sussex on Saturday 31st August 2002. Those interested can find the illustrated diary accounts of this particular walk along with another *Yorkshire Dales Three Peaks* epic that I undertook with a couple of friends by following the *Downloads* link on our website at www.davista.co.uk.



But how else can we make photo memories palatable for others or even ourselves to view years down the line? Old photos (and slides and negatives too if you have the right equipment) can be scanned into a computer and if necessary treated to a bit of restoration work. The good thing about digital photos is that they do at least automatically record the date and time and if you install something like *Google's* own free-to-download *Picasa* photo management software, it has a wonderful *timeline* feature that allows you to pick out all shots from a particular month and year. Then if you are prepared to put in the time, you can add captions to photos, link them to the place taken on *Google Maps*; even name the faces in the photos and it will find others like it for you! Slowly but surely you can turn your collection into a very manageable resource to dip into. From there you can go on to produce professional looking videos with your photos, zooming in and out and panning across, with titles and captions coming up, appropriate music playing in the background, even viewing them in glorious HD on your flat screen TV. Although *Picasa* and other free software can help with many of these things I have also been a fan of *Magix* software packages (www.magix.com/gb) over the years to produce many of the videos I have put onto DVD or which can be linked to on *YouTube* from my website.

Shortly before moving to Norfolk, I handed over all the extended Davis family Standard and Super-8 cine archives together with our faithful old Eumig projector to our son, in the vain hope that he might feel inspired one-day to make use of his digital camcorder to somehow copy and edit them onto DVD. After a labour of love spread over several years mainly on odd days when he was off sick from work, he finally presented us with a copy of his DVD which he had entitled "*Seagulls Not Included*". He explained on the back cover "*There seems to be have been a certain fascination amongst various Davis cameramen with all forms of ornithological life – mostly seagulls though ducks get quite a look in too! I'm sure this was very enjoyable at the time, but holds little interest as a historical record. I have therefore cut these along with other unidentifiable scenic shots, which disappointing though this will be to some enabled me to get it onto one DVD!*" Oh well, I guess he probably has a good point, but perhaps one day he will understand!



Our older daughter has quite a keen eye and patience when it comes to taking family photos, and probably has as many shots of our grandchildren as I have of birds! She has made very successful use of the services of www.bonusprint.co.uk to upload and produce the most wonderful professional looking photo-books, one even including the text of an accompanying story she has written based around the pictures to read to the children. These are a real treasure to browse through and take up a lot less space on the bookshelf than a photo album. It is well worth a look at the *Bonusprint* website (and others like it) which are very easy to use and have many customisable photo products on offer including calendars, mugs, jigsaws and even snow globes!

Yet in spite of all these photographic memories whether organised or not I know that before long I shall be out and about frantically adding to them again; it is I fear an insatiable obsession! I did visit the newly built Parrinder Hide at Titchwell the other day, and what an amazing futuristic construction that is! I foresee a few happy hours of digi-scope photography ahead there.

The success of a village magazine like ours is due in no small part to the forum it provides for sharing memories of recent and bygone days, both written and photographic, so do keep them coming. And whether you are falling back on re-living or organising your own old memories or about to create some new ones, may I wish you a New Year with plenty of happy ones!□



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As Always Think Outside The Box!

Barry Beales

Below are 10 challenges similar to "Catchphrase" but using jumbled words, numbers and letters only. Just find the appropriate phrase, word or saying in each of the boxes

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Answers on page 32

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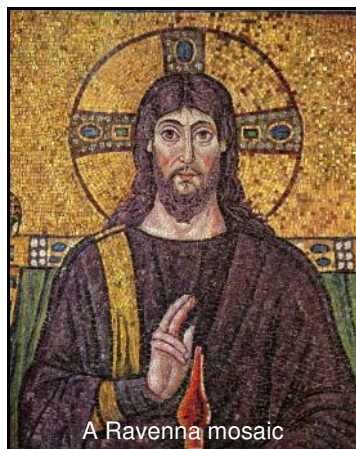
NEWS FROM ST CECILIA'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

At the beginning of November, a number of parishioners travelled to Bologna and Ravenna on pilgrimage, led by Fr James and by Fr David Baker from King's Lynn. A highlight of the pilgrimage was a visit to see the amazing mosaics at Ravenna, which date from the 4th to 6th centuries and are in a superb state of preservation. The site is designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site. Fr James and Fr Peter were also able to celebrate Mass at the tomb of St Dominic at his basilica in Bologna. It was a memorable trip for all concerned, and a happy opportunity to get to know more fellow Catholics who had joined us from the King's Lynn parish.



On Monday November 22nd we celebrated the feast of St Cecilia, the patron of our church, with Mass followed by lunch at Heacham Manor. Once again we had an excellent meal, and are already looking for an excuse to visit again in 2011.

In common with many other people, we suffered from frozen pipes and leaks at St Cecilia's at the beginning of December. The resulting flood meant that the church was not usable on December 8th, the date planned for the requiem Mass and funeral of Fred Pratt, a much loved member of the parish. We were most grateful to the Vicar of Dersingham, Rev. Michael Brock, for allowing the Mass and funeral to take place at St Nicholas and also to Neil Adams, the Churchwarden, who prepared everything for us and arranged for the heating to be turned on so that we had a truly warm welcome.



A Ravenna mosaic

St Cecilia's was warm and dry again in plenty of time for Christmas, and once again the church looked beautiful thanks to the efforts of the flower team and those who erected our crib and Christmas tree. Thanks to the slightly improved weather, the Christmas services were very well attended, and everyone was in good voice for the vigil of carols and readings and for both Masses.

We are now looking forward to the New Year, and once again extend a warm welcome to our services, to those visiting the parish from elsewhere, or living in the area. 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.□

Tricia Steel



St Dominic's tomb



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The Old Biddie and her cottage garden

Valerie Anckorn

November wasn't a bad month. Quite a bit of rain, but mild, and I managed to get out and do some trimming and tidying, though I find that my hips play me up a lot these days and I certainly don't have the energy I used to. Putting on three stone having gone on insulin doesn't help – all that extra weight to haul around. Aren't hearts wonderful things? They keep beating, keep you alive, despite all the extra stress and strain you put on them. I hope mine keeps on beating for a few more years – I have lots on my agenda.

Back to the garden. I've been astonished at all the late flowers in my garden. Lupins, delphiniums, fuchsias, roses have all been blooming through November and December, and in my hanging baskets petunias, pansies and a host of other plants have seeded themselves and flowered. Eventually the very hard frosts finished them off.

I've been exploring the Heath woods more. I got lost one day – well, I knew where I was, because I could hear the traffic, so guessed my direction, but I had headed off the routes I knew and found myself near Sandringham. The woods are so beautiful, and each area is different. Lots of squirrels nagged me when I disturbed their nut gathering, and a little deer was also put out as Crow and I passed by. There were even some rhododendrons blooming bravely. I was a bit worried as I had only meant to be out for a short while, but I was floundering around for about an hour. As a diabetic, I ought to take Lucozade and nibbles with me in case I get a hypo (which is very scary) so next time I shall make sure I take a backpack with those essentials. Just in case. What would Crow do, I wonder? Go and seek help, guard me, or run back home? I once slipped over and concussed myself and my dog at the time just went off and asked some strangers if she could go home with them and be their dog. Self-preservation, eh!

I have to say I was very nervous taking my dog in the woods after all the reports of dogs dying a horrible death after having been for a walk in Sandringham woods. Nobody yet knows the cause – it could be the dogs drinking from the little rills, it could be fungus, it could be poison bait – who knows, so although I enjoy the walk, I have to say I hope all will be well. In some parts of the woods the air was rank with rotting vegetation, and as Crow drank from a little stream before I could stop him, I wondered if there was any poison running through it from rotting plants....As it happened, he was fine, except that there must have been broken glass in the stream, or maybe a sharp stone, for he cut his pad badly and while it didn't seem to worry him, it worried me! It also worried me when I took a quick peek at the vet's bill. That was a career move I never thought of pursuing – vets must do quite well I imagine!

I've been out in the garden sawing branches from some of the bigger trees. My grandson, aged nine, came and helped – Kids these days are so used to sitting in front of their computers that they don't see much outdoors. Zach really enjoyed sawing branches and lopping. I just showed him the correct way to do it, made sure he didn't have his other hand too near to the saw in case it jumped out of the groove and cut him. Children are not stupid and learn quickly, and if you give them something fun to do in the garden, they will soon get interested – he even mused that maybe he could be a landscape gardener one day. I used to look after him when he was a baby and he watched from his pram while I dug borders and put in plants. I'd tell him all the names of the flowers, and loved his interpretations of the words once he could talk. I think my favourite were his 'daffofields'. I hope my tuition registered in his unconscious and that he will enjoy gardening as he gets older.

During the gales the back fence parted company with its posts. It's been 'going' for some years now and looks dreadful. It's so expensive to replace a fence, isn't it, and I can't manage it at the moment. Hope a few more nails will repair it for a while longer.

Well, since beginning this piece we had our snow, didn't we! And, didn't it look gorgeous, and wasn't it a damned nuisance to drive or walk on. It's still lingering and the heavy frosts have

turned the slush into ice-rinks. Not much fun trying to do anything in the garden now. I'm glad I hadn't got round to trimming the rest of my shrubs. The buddleias need cutting, but I have noticed the small birds clinging on and finding food, so untidiness reigns for the while.

Roses are still blooming, despite the snow and frosts – they do amaze me – and a lupin is still bravely flaunting its beauty outside the front door.

At night I hear the barking of the Muntjac deer – it's a strange sound, one note only, and I think of them shivering in the cold, but guess they are adept at finding a nice dense rhododendron beneath which they can keep warm and dry. It's a hard life for the wildlife in this snowy and icy weather – but they seem to survive. I saw a blackbird taking advantage of a spot where a rabbit had been scrabbling in the snow to find grass to eat. Worms had got dislodged, so two for the price of one, as it were.

Just a few days to Christmas now. What a glorious day. The sky is very blue with plump white clouds, the geese are flying overhead and all the trees, shrubs, weeds and whathaveyous are thick with rime right up to the toppiest branch. The crows and other birds are looking a bit fed up and on the look-out for people putting out food for them. Buying logs from Sandringham saw mills I noticed they had lots of lovely hanging bird feeders made from silver birch with sweet little roofs made from birch twigs – and I thought a very good price of £10.00 They've got struts around which stops the big birds like pigeons taking all the food, so the little birds can have a chance. Well worth a buy, if they have any left, for our feathered friends. As I write, I am watching a tit with a black head foraging on my seeds heads. So glad I left them – and they all look beautiful in their white hoar frosting, with little diamonds glinting here and there in the sunshine.

I've just bought the parrots new cages – the old ones were getting very rusty and were cumbersome things. I thought the birds might be a bit frightened but no, Dimity (my parrot) went in to hers without a problem and had a good old look around, tested the bars, tasted them too, and 'oohed' and 'arrhed' and said 'good morning' and went through her repertoire, which is not very lengthy, but was a sure indication that she was excited by the move. Mr. Flynn is not in his yet, as he is my partner's parrot (they bond with one person only, and alas, he did not bond with me!) so I am leaving his removal to Kent...this excitement, reminded me how all the animals I have owned over the years have all been so excited by new things, especially snow – I had one collie who ran as fast as she could, then threw herself down on her side and thus tobogganed down any available slope. My horse, Tiffany loved it too, and she would slyly push her bum against a huge old pear tree in her paddock to dislodge the snow on the branches, covering herself, and then slowly allowed her bum to slide down the tree trunk, her back legs slipping slowly forward in the snow, eventually sitting down in it – with forelegs still standing. Then, she would have a good roll, get up and then race around the paddock kicking up snowballs behind her.

Well, it's now almost New Year's Eve – I've never particularly enjoyed any festivities on this date, especially since a drunken piper fell on top of me, bagpipes and all, so I steer clear of any such alcoholic reveries and just look forward to a brand New Year and make sensible resolutions. They have to be sensible, don't they, otherwise you give up after day two. This year I plan to get on with my second book. This one will be a true life story about my uncle who was a Japanese Prisoner of War and was in one of the hospital beds at the Alexander Hospital in Singapore when crazed Japanese soldiers raced through the wards bayoneting injured soldiers in their beds. For some reason, my uncle was not run through with a steel blade and lived to tell the tale. He is a born raconteur, so I have many tapes of his story – but I am not looking forward to translating them – too many stop-starts with the cassette recorder as I don't have a proper dictating machine – but then it is a story that has to be told, so I shall persevere.

One of my uncle's anecdotes is how he managed to get some eggs to feed himself and his hut mates. He was a magician and up until his imprisonment had been in the camp concert entertaining the troops. The Japanese ordered him to do a magic show for the camp commandant. My uncle informed the guards that he would have to practice and would need a lot of eggs to get the trick

correct. He only needed one egg, and needed no practice whatsoever, but by being ‘clumsy’ he was able to collect enough eggs to make a hearty omelette – and when you are used to a couple of grains of mouldy rice per day for survival, an omelette was sheer heaven.

My uncle was proficient at Pitmans shorthand so that when he was eventually allowed to send a short postcard message (always checked and censored) to his parents he managed to include, in shorthand squiggles, the name of the camp and other details into his signature. As his mother knew shorthand, she was able to decipher and to gain the information as to where her son was imprisoned.

I wish you all the best for the coming New Year, with lots of sunshine and a few light showers for the flora and fauna, and hope that everything in your gardens comes up rosy.□



Photo - Valerie Anckorn

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Recipes from the Bluebell Cottage Kitchen

by Lindsey Davis

Winter Warmer Soup

As promised to those of you who have been attending the informal Winter Warmer Worship sessions at St Nicholas Church on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month during the winter months (between 3 and 4pm), here is the recipe that inspired the name. Not really a soup as such at all, but a tasty main meal that we have enjoyed for many years based on a recipe broadcast on the BBC's Blue Peter programme.

Ingredients

*1 onion
3 or 4 carrots
1 large parsnip
1 small sweet potato
1 courgette
1 handful of pearl barley
1 handful of red lentils
1 tin of chopped tomatoes
salt, pepper and herbs
1½ pints of vegetable stock
3 or 4 large slices of bread
150g of grated cheese*



Peel and chop vegetables and put in a large casserole dish.

Add pearl barley, lentils and tomatoes, salt, pepper and herbs to taste.

Pour over stock and mix well.

Cook in Gas 4/180° oven for approx 2 hours.

Remove from oven, stir and place slices of bread to cover the top entirely, then sprinkle grated cheese evenly over that. Return to oven for approx 20 mins or place under grill until cheese is melted and bubbly and bread is toasted at the edges.

Serves 4

Spicy Apple Gingerbread

Ingredients

150g (5½oz) butter (or margarine), plus extra for greasing; 175g (6oz) soft light brown sugar; 2tbsp black treacle; 225g (8oz) plain flour; 1tsp baking powder; 2tsp bicarbonate of soda; 2tsp ground ginger; 150ml (5fl oz) milk; 1 egg, beaten; 2 dessert apples, peeled, chopped and coated with 1tbsp lemon juice

Grease a square 23cm (9in) cake tin and line with baking parchment. Melt the butter, sugar and treacle in a saucepan over a low heat and set the mixture aside to cool. Sieve the flour, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and ginger into a mixing bowl. Stir in the milk, beaten egg and buttery liquid, followed by the chopped apples coated with lemon juice. Mix everything together gently, then pour the mixture into the prepared tin and smooth the surface. Bake in a preheated oven, 160°C (325°F, Gas Mark 3) for 30-35 minutes, until the cake has risen and a fine skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Leave the cake to cool completely in the tin. Then carefully turn it out on to a board or plate before cutting into 12 bars for serving.□



A VERY SUSPICIOUS DEATH part 2

by Elizabeth Fiddick

The story of Amy Robsart.

It must have been a memorable occasion that day in 1553 for all the people of Lynn, the fisher folk and the children to hear the news that the young boy King was dead and to witness the proclamation that the Lady Jane Grey was now Queen of England. They would have jostled each other to see Robert Dudley, son of the most powerful man in the Kingdom, the Mayor of Lynn, all the important people of the Town and other equally grand gentlemen assemble in the Tuesday Market Place and make such an important announcement. But it was Robert Dudley's misfortune that as he declared the Lady Jane Grey Queen of England in our market place far away the people of London were declaring the Princess Mary the rightful Queen. From there a rider was despatched at once to Lynn with a warrant to arrest Robert and escort him to Framlingham. The Mayor of Lynn recorded the event, "*This year the Lord Robert Dudley came to Linn and proclaimed the Lady Jeanne queene and afterward he was carried to Framlingham before Queene Mary.*" No doubt many watched as Robert rode out of the town under guard. At Framlingham Castle Robert begged the Queen's mercy but on July 26 1553 he was escorted to the Tower where he also found his father, brothers and the unfortunate Lady Jane Grey.

On the 22 August Robert's father was executed and from the Beauchamp Tower where they were imprisoned Robert and his brothers watched as their father's dismembered body was wheeled back from the scaffold on a wooden cart. We get one of the rare glimpses of Amy at this time from a letter sent to the Lieutenant of the Tower giving her permission to visit Robert in his cell. Robert was the last of the brothers to be charged as he had not proclaimed the Lady Jane Queen in London but far away in Norfolk. It was at Norwich that he was found guilty of, "*possessing King's Lynn in a warlike manner,*" and later in London on the 22 January 1554 he was sentenced to death for treason. How the times had changed. Now Amy, once a member of the most powerful family in the land, saw her father-in-law executed and her husband and brothers awaiting the same fate.

Just a month later on 12 February Robert, possibly with Amy beside him, said his final farewell to his youngest brother, as Guildford Dudley and the unfortunate Jane Grey were led away to the scaffold. It was a dark time for Amy as the brothers awaited their fate for she had also learnt of the death of her Father in June of that year. However in October 1554 John, the oldest Dudley, had become extremely ill and Queen Mary, in an act of great mercy, granted the release of the brothers on the 18th October. John died just three days later. Robert and his brother Ambrose were eventually able to return to court and in due course received a pardon from the Queen. Robert's fortunes however were not that secure. Although Amy's father had died it was not until 1557 when her mother died that she and Robert were able to take full possession of the manors of Syderstone, Bircham Newton and Bircham. This meant that although they owned much land here they still did not have a house to live in. Robert considered it very important that if he was to establish himself among the Norfolk gentry he needed a good house. So he began negotiations to purchase the Manor at Flicham, very near to this village, where he and Amy could settle at last. However events were once more to intervene to change the course of their life together.

In November 1558 Mary died and the princess Elizabeth succeeded to the throne as Her Royal Majesty Queen Elizabeth of England. Elizabeth and Robert had already met when they were both imprisoned in the Tower so it was perhaps little surprise that he was summoned to court and appointed Master of the Horse. Thus began the relationship that was to cause such consternation. Robert was constantly at the Queen's side and during the times they were apart they kept up a daily correspondence so that it was not long before gossip and rumour surrounded Robert and his intentions. Although his visits to Amy became fewer and fewer as his relationship with the Queen deepened she was not neglected and he made certain she was well provided for. She did comment once that she was saddened by his absence but while Robert's star rode high at court Amy seems to

have travelled from house to house staying with friends. Rumours abounded and the suspicion that Robert planned to poison his wife was openly expressed. Then of course on that fateful day in 1560 Amy's body was found at the foot of those stairs. So was it a tragic accident or something far more sinister?

The report from the Coroner's inquest recorded that she had been found at the foot of a stone staircase with two severe wounds to her head and a broken neck. The jury did consider the possibility that Amy was in fact quite ill and so could have fallen through weakness. They also examined the possibility that she committed suicide but dismissed both ideas as extremely unlikely. Death by misfortune was the final verdict.

Her death changed Robert's relationship with the Queen and he was never able to escape the suspicions that he had ordered it. He left court for a while but it was not long before he returned and resumed his position. Over the years however the accusations against him kept coming back. Even Amy's only surviving half brother John Appleyard expressed his suspicions that Robert and other important men had conspired in her murder. His comments alarmed Robert so much that John was arrested and placed in the Fleet prison. Under investigation John changed his testimony several times and begged to be released from the harsh conditions of the prison. This was eventually done but in 1570 John led a rebellion in Norwich for which he received a sentence of life imprisonment. He served four years before ill health led to his release to the house of the Bishop of Norwich where he remained until his death. In his recently published book Chris Skidmore brilliantly examines the possibilities that Amy's death was indeed murder. It had long been rumoured that attempts had been made to poison Amy and that was one reason why she continually moved from house to house. The severe wounds to her head could have caused by the sharp edge of the stone stairs but could also have been inflicted by an intruder.

John Appleyard was not the only one to suggest openly that Robert was involved. At one time a pamphlet had been published accusing Robert's own men of ordering the murder. It even named the prime mover in the enterprise. It was certainly possible due to the layout of the house for an assailant to enter undetected and to escape unseen once the deed was done. It would have been in their interest for Robert to attain such a position of power that marriage to the Queen would have given him. If this was their thinking it backfired for as we know the Queen never married although she kept everyone here and abroad guessing as to her intentions. Robert remained at Court but he gradually became more a trusted friend. In 1578 Robert, conscious of his advancing years and perhaps keen to have a family, married Lettice Knollys which infuriated the Queen so that she nearly had him committed once again to the Tower. He was banished from the court for some while although he never really fell out of favour. He and Lettice had one son whom Robert always called his "noble imp". Sadly in July 1584 after a very short illness the little boy died leaving Robert heart broken. Robert himself died on 4 September 1588 at just 56 years of age.

Elizabeth always denied that she had ever been in love but after she died in 1603 a small silver gilt casket was found next to her bed. In it bound in silk ribbon was Robert Dudley's final letter to her written just days before he died. On the back of the letter written in her own hand were the words. "his last letter".

Little remains to remind us of the unfortunate Amy Robsart from Norfolk. She had been buried with due ceremony at Oxford but over time her tomb had been dismantled and forgotten. There is just a small marble tile on the floor of the chancel of the church to record that Amy Robsart wife of Lord Robert Dudley had been buried there on Sunday September 22nd 1560. The mystery of her death still lingers.

For those wishing to read a much fuller and more interesting account of this mystery I recommend "Death and the Virgin. Elizabeth, Dudley and the Mysterious Fate of Amy Robsart."

By Chris Skidmore.□



Veronica

Allan Coleby

Dr Barley wished with all his heart that he did not have to go to address a medical conference at York. He had to leave his London practice at noon one sombre November day, drive two hundred miles along the A1, spend an evening being self-important and pleasant, and suffer the return journey the following day.

Among other things, one reason for his not wanting to spend a full day away was the condition of Mrs Veronica Haynes, an elderly patient of his who was suffering from cancer. He had been closely concerned with the course of her illness for two months now, steadily increasing the strength of her drugs, and reassuring her as well as he could. He admired the air of patient resignation and cheerfulness with which she sat each day, enduring her pain, murmuring softly to herself, her hands damping the sleeves of her woollen cardigan, ignoring the throbbing ache in her arthritic limbs.

Her spirit had not been crushed. She entertained the other hospital patients with stories of her early life on the Norfolk coast. Dr Barley's long experience with similar patients, however, had taught him that there comes a point when the brightness and energy seem to fade from the eyes, the strength and vigour drain away, and an immense tiredness settles on the face. Veronica had reached that point, and Dr Barley felt he wanted to be near her.

So it was in a sullen mood that he drove north. She was never far from his thoughts. The unyielding bleakness of the granite sky matched his mood. The car radio did not work. He listened to the singing of the tyres on the road, the monotonous hum of the engine and the faint whine of the transmission.

It was with some surprise that he saw a woman standing at the end of a lay-by asking for a lift. She was going to Grantham, she told him through the wound-down window. She had to get there urgently. Dr Barley motioned her in, engaged the clutch and moved up smoothly through the gears. He glanced at his watch and noted that it was four thirty.

They talked only briefly. Each seemed preoccupied. The doctor glanced quickly at her. He thought it must have been a very old brown coat that she gathered round her thin, straight shoulders with a frail, bony hand. A wide-brimmed hat was pulled low onto her forehead, but he could see she had a sharply pointed nose and high, hard cheek bones. She glanced back with old, knowing and placid eyes, and the cracks round the corners of those eyes darkened in a faint smile. Then she dropped her eyes slowly and watched her fingers as they wrestled sluggishly on her lap. A brooding silence settled between them. He glanced at the farmland, at a tractor on its coughing,



lurching patrol of the endless flat fields, followed by the flashing shapes of marauding birds as they paraded their insolence in the shining new furrows.

Just past Huntingdon, huge, black clouds began to push across from the west with a tramp of thunder. Then it began to rain with big, fat drops thudding up the roadside dust in little spurts. The road was peppered with black spots, and a freshening wind slanted the rain. It raked through the air, drummed on the roof, stuttered on the windscreen and knocked the remaining leaves from the trees. Little rivulets, and then pools, began to edge out into the roadway. The car hit one of them with a swish, and Dr Barley could feel the tug at the wheel. It had not rained for weeks, and he knew the rain would be forming a greasy film on top of the rubber which had been left on the road surface.

Now all the traffic hissed and fizzed and swished past. As daylight thickened into dusk, visibility was poor. Just after passing the Ram Jam Inn, the doctor moved out to overtake a long line of heavy, slow-moving lorries. Suddenly, from the middle of the convoy, one of the lorries moved out and blocked his path. The tail lights loomed large. He dabbed at the brakes and felt the car start to slide. A hand seemed to clutch at his heart and his breath rasped inwards. The wheel was wrenched from his hand and his passenger was leaning across him. They rocked and bucketed across the rough grass between the two carriageways and slewed back onto the tarmac. They approached a lay-by and the doctor steered into it and squeaked to a halt. His body was running with sweat. His hands, even his arms, were shaking as he fumbled for his handkerchief and wiped his face. Then he was aware that his passenger was getting out on the nearside. He grabbed her arm. "I think you've just saved my life, and I don't even know your name," he gasped.

"It's Veronica," she said. There came the faint smile again and she was gone. The doctor breathed deeply, and rested to recover his composure.

It was dark as he moved off and glanced at his watch: just five o'clock. Soon it stopped raining. His headlights tunnelled the night and an owl flashed in and out of his beam. Far ahead, a rabbit crossing the road looked into the lights so that its eyes glowed red, and then it hopped clear into the ditch. With difficulty, he focussed his mind on the approaching meeting, and he was soon in York.

"There was a telephone message for you, Dr Barley," said the attendant, as he took his coat and showed him into the hall. "Mrs Haynes, one of your patients, died this afternoon."

Dr Barley turned quickly. "Did they say exactly when?"

"Four thirty, sir".□

Dersingham Parish Council Office Opening Times

Due to staff sickness, the Parish Council Office will be open
at the following times until further notice:

Monday	10.30am - 2pm
Tuesday	10.30am - 2pm
Wednesday	10.30am - 2pm

Please telephone the office on 01485 541465 to check it is open before calling in,
or to leave a message. You can also email to dersinghampc@tiscali.co.uk.

In case of emergency, please ring the Acting Clerk on 07950 169244

We apologise for any inconvenience caused by this .

Orange Trade Refuse Sacks - £50 inc. VAT per roll of 25,
Tags for Black Refuse Sacks £1.00 each,
can be obtained at the Council Office during the above times.

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 69	Wednesday 16th March	Monday 4th April
No 70	Wednesday 4th May	Monday 23rd May
No 71	Wednesday 6th July	Monday 25th July
No 72	Wednesday 7th September	Monday 26th Sept
No 73	Wednesday 9th November	Monday 28th Nov

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 am	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 £15.10 for an eighth of a page black and white or £21.25 for colour per issue, to be very cost effective. (Prices include VAT)

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 16th March 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 16th March 2011 for publication on Monday 4th April 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.

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 of Dersingham

Local School Voucher Scheme

For every £10* spent in store, customers will receive a 10p voucher which can be given to either Dersingham Infant and Nursery School or St George's Junior School for them to redeem at the end of the scheme.

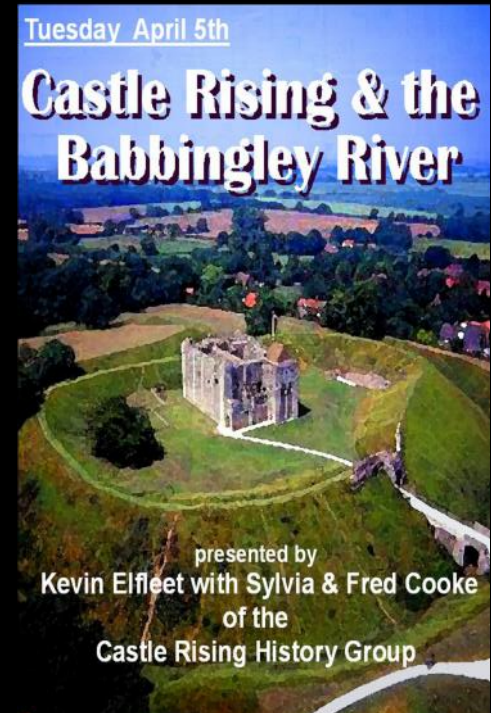
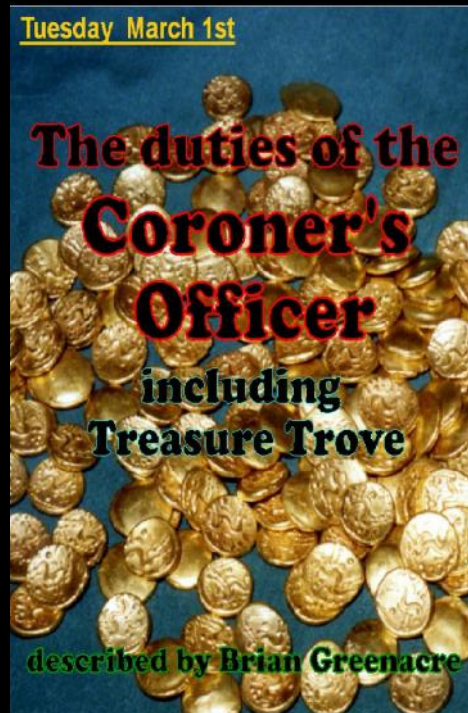
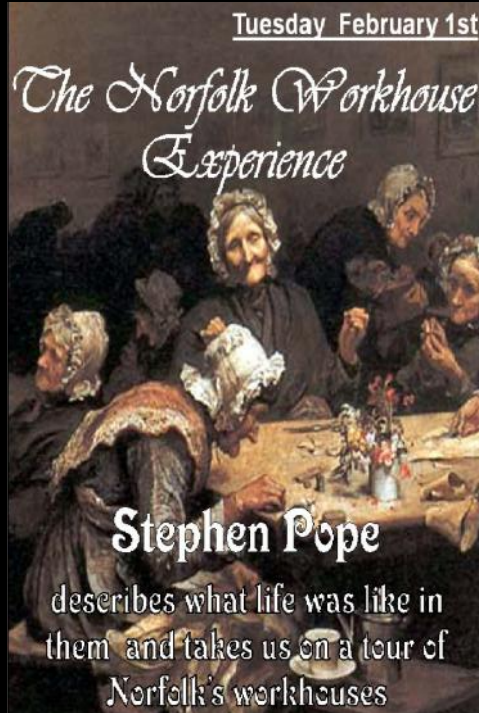
The scheme runs from 10th January 2011 until 4th April 2011.

* Excludes the following items:

- Tobacco
- E-Top up
- Stamps
- PayPoint
- National Lottery

Local Family Values
since 1860

VILLAGE VOICE LIVE



St Nicholas Church Hall, Manor Road, Dersingham.
7.30 pm Admission £3.00 including refreshments & raffle