

Number 81

April 2013

Village Voice

The Dersingham Magazine



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Editor's Notes

This is the 30th edition of Village Voice that I have edited and is the last. I have really enjoyed doing this task. It has taken me to lots of places both physically and in the written form that I might otherwise have missed. But now the time has come to hand the post on to another. He is no stranger to these pages and Steve Davis will, I am sure, do a good job. This parting will give me time to catch up on a mountain of decorating, gardening and maintenance that has taken a back step these last five years. I will still, however, be looking after the advertising part of the operation without which there would be a very thin magazine. Advertisers report a good response to their advertisements from you. Pat yourselves on the back then.

The success of Village Voice is really down to our contributors and advertisers, our volunteer deliverers and especially Anita in the office for her terrier like determination to get advertisers and authors not missing the deadlines.

We have, as usual, a mixed bag again this time, with a new poet, the start of a book review series, a haunting tale, David Bingham on Ring Ouzels and all the other things you expect to see etc etc. In other words plenty to read and enjoy.

The recent reports of a Sea Eagle sighted around Holkham make me wonder if and when we will get Red Kites around here. There is almost always one to be seen around Harewood House in Yorkshire and they are in the southern midlands in quite good numbers, so it surely cannot be long before they find their way here. They are no threat to livestock and wild animals as they almost exclusively feed on carrion. It will be interesting to see how they get on with our Buzzards and Marsh Harriers.

Talking of Harewood House, home of the Earl and Countess of Harewood who have the family name of Lascelles, I remember my old friend Roger Lascelles - the publisher not the clock maker - telling me of a visit he once made there. Finding himself with a spare hour or two and passing the gates, he decided to pay them a call. The whole estate is approached through paybooths and the man on duty stopped Roger to demand payment. Roger, who was brought up in New Zealand, was dumbfounded and exploded with the cry of

"what, you want me to pay to see my cousin George!"

The attendants demeanour changed immediately and he obsequiously ushered my friend through only for Roger to find, upon his arrival at the house, that George was out.

On page 46 there are a couple of stills from an old film supplied by the "Old Biddie" Valerie Anckorn. Her father, Gordon, was a professional photographer retiring here from Sevenoaks where he had been a press photographer. I would often spend a pleasant hour in his company when he would tell of encounters with Churchill, Mr Pastry and other famous people. A keen pilot, he also told me that he had half of his lungs removed leaving him with one and a half. (do I need some salt to pinch?). Some of you may have his book "A West Norfolk Camera" which I think is in the library if you missed the chance to buy one.

Enjoy your read.

Tony



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Dear Village Voice

In answer to your article 'Glorious Isolation' in your Dersingham Village Voice December 2012 regarding the Isolation Hospital, I certainly remember it as my eldest son was admitted there in October 1952 when he was five years old. He had Scarlet Fever. He was there until January 31st 1953 and was discharged at 4.30 p.m. on the 31st January just before the hospital was flooded at 6 p.m. (in the great flood of 1953) when all the patients had to be evacuated. So he was very lucky after being in there for three months. I lived in Dersingham for about 30 years until 4 years ago.

Mary L East

Re: Village Voice Old Picture Corner 1977 Jubilee. June 2012 issue.



There still appears to be uncertainty about the location. Rob Neal, Jacky Dingle and Pauline Pratt identified in their letters that the sports field was the location but they gave little detail. May I now give this detail before another stab in the dark by Dick Melton completely misses the target.

In the top photo the details are this:- On the extreme left is the roof of a bungalow of the type that can be seen at Centre Vale when viewed from the sports field. On the extreme right just above the heads of the children can be seen concrete posts and wires (try a magnifying glass). This was the boundary fence, literally for cricketers between the sports field and the actual pastures as it was at that time. The fence line ran from the rear boundary with the Coach and Horses to a point where Centre Vale backs up to the Hanover houses. This disappeared in the 1990s when the All Sports area was developed and today's boundary is some 25 yards further back. In the same part of the picture can be seen trees and large bushes and the ground appears to rise. The camera creates



an illusion, as the sports field in this area slopes away from the camera and the higher ground is the 'earthworks' of the many dykes and sunken drains of the pastures.

In the lower picture are other clues. Mention has been made of the mysterious window that will be revealed later. In the upper left half of the picture can be seen a column of brickwork with a rainwater pipe affixed. This was, at the time, the right hand side of the sports pavilion (now extended and altered). The area of vegetation behind Terry Finbow is the boundary hedge and gardens of the cottages behind the pavilion. To the upper right of the picture can be seen a VW Camper vehicle. This is in the Feathers car park as is the electric pole.

So, the mysterious window. At the time of the Jubilee the old chapel (I knew it as the school dinner canteen) had a window that looked out over the gardens of the mentioned cottages. The building and surrounding area is now much altered and obscured. Perhaps those with interest might visit the sports field to check this out, that this might be an end to the Jubilee saga.

Ian Skerritt

I have a brother who lives in Dersingham and I stay with him for a couple of days every so many months when I feel able to travel the distance and I need a break from my severely disabled husband. I live in North Essex.

However, he always saves me the Dersingham 'Village Voice' which I find extremely interesting with lots of news from different clubs etc.

My brother came down today and brought the February 2013 edition with him as he knows I love the magazine.

I must admit that it nearly brought me to tears after reading Hugh Mularkey's poem about Dersingham. He obviously feels that it is home from home and I really do look forward to reading some more poems from him in future editions if he feels well enough to put pen to paper. I must say that your 'Village Voice' has far more going for it than our local PC magazine (although we do only have just over 300 people living here).

Pamela Dixon

I have been meaning to write since your December 2010 Village Voice magazine but am now prompted further by the December 2012 edition because even more names, places and events that you have included have coincided and stirred more happy memories, and one scary one! In December 2010 Village Voice Bernie Twite submitted a photo of a group of men who worked on the royal estate on Show day, which includes Don Bridges. I recognised him from several photos I have of him with my father, Geoff Seaton, when they were Royal Norfolk prisoners of war together.

Here is one in 1944 Stalag 344 when they look optimistic, knowing at last some of what was happening in Europe following D Day.

Geoff Seaton was my father. He died in 2004. He and my mother had lived on Hunstanton Road. My mother is now very happily a resident of The Gables in Post Office Road.

The article also mentions Bill Quick, who, as a friend of my father, taught me to fish. Bill didn't drive so the deal was that my Dad would take us at all times of the day and night to prime sites Bill had access to. One was Hunstanton Hall moat. In December 2012 Village Voice an article by Dick



Geoff Seaton 2nd from left back row,
Don Bridges far right back row

Melton mentioned the Grey Lady ghost of Hunstanton Hall. Well, I saw her in 1957 when I was 8, although I didn't know who she was, nor tell anyone about it until I came across the history, by chance, in a "Let's Talk" magazine in 2004 (*see page 23*). It was like this. It was one of my first fishing trips with Bill, a fine evening, fishing from the bank of the moat, roach and rudd, midges swarming, evening light slowly fading. Bill goes to check the fishing on the other side of the house. It is all very quiet and still. I'm concentrating on my float. Suddenly something makes me look up. At one of the upstairs mullioned, glassless windows (the house was a burnt out shell) was a lady in a grey dress, white lace collar, silver hair piled high, watching me across the moat. Sudden chill, tingling, hairs on end, couldn't move nor shout, and then she was gone, so weird as you could see there was no internal structure left in the ruin except some charred beams and, yet, she was at an upstairs window. Bill came back. I remember him enquiring quite earnestly if I was alright. I dare not tell him, nor my parents later, of what I had seen in case they thought I had 'gorn soft' or it could, in some way, prejudice future fishing trips. Time diminished the experience until I read about the legend 47 years later.

Further on in Dick's article he mentioned George Clayton. His son, Ian, was my best mate. We went to Ingoldisthorpe Primary School (also mentioned in December 2012 Village Voice) together

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from 1953 to 1959, headmistress Mrs. Newton. Below is a school photo from 1959 and some names I can remember.

We were also in Dersingham St. Nicholas Church choir together as trebles. You pictured the



Ian Clayton, Me, ?, Andrew Harlow,?,?
Miss Pull, Mrs Newton
Raymond Tagg, Roderick Lincoln,?,?,?,?, Diana Fox, Irene Burlingham, Fay Bruce
?, Linda Collison, Kevin Pentney,?,?, Peter Vawser
Front 2 rows were the junior class

choir post war with Mr. Rye, slightly before our time, also in that December 2012 issue. We sat in those two front left seats. Mr. Rye was still choirmaster and organist and Mr Twite and Mr. Linford were still stalwarts, with a young Mr. Bell and several ladies.

After 11 plus Ian went to the Grammar School and I went away to school, but we kept up our friendship in the holidays, always out on our bikes, down the shingle pits, sand pits, woods or fishing.

The Reverend Glass re-established the Youth Club

and provided musical instruments for a pop group band with regular dances and discos in the Church Hall. Ian played bass, David Crane lead guitar and there was a brilliant drummer who lived in Manor Road whose name I can't recall. So we were teenagers growing up in the Swinging Sixties. The group and the discos were fantastic and a lot of fun.

Sorry I have 'bin running on' a bit but, one last thing. You mentioned, in Village Voice, the village sign. I think I remember being told that a Mr. Carter from Swaffham, a brother to the famous Howard, was one of the original and best known village sign craftsmen.

David Seaton

The picture on page 33 of the February Village Voice took me back almost 30 years to Tuesday 27th of September 1983, when, as a local Police Constable, I received a radio message informing me of a reported aircraft crash on the marsh somewhere between Dersingham and Wolferton.

I remember the evening as being that of a typical Indian summer and dusk was approaching.. Firstly I attended the informant's house in Station Road Dersingham to attempt to get more details and a better location of the crash. Unfortunately nobody was home. I started to think that maybe this could be a hoax call until a passing gentleman said words to the effect "if you are here about the air crash it's down on the marsh".

I set off down the old concrete beach road and in the fading light could see, in the distance towards Wolferton Pumping Station, an orange glow emanating from a hole in the ground. This glow clearly illuminated numerous people around the area of the air crash, there was also a tractor which appeared to be backing up towards the crater. By use of the various tracks across the marsh I arrived at the scene and with quick thinking dispersed the people present by using the Tannoy system, to warn of the possibility of bombs on board the now obvious Tornado Jet.

I stayed throughout the night helping with the organisation of the combined ground, sea, and air search which had been implemented in an attempt to locate the Pilot who was believed to have bailed out with the Navigator.

The Navigator had landed near to the railway crossing house on Beach Road, Snettisham where he was recovered safely and uninjured. It soon became apparent that the Pilot had stayed with his



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Tornado Jet, the aircraft was recovered with the Pilots remains at a later date. The reason for the air crash was complete electrical failure.

The picture that appears in Village Voice is of an RAF Memorial dedicated to Squadron Leader Mike Stephens, the Pilot who died. The English Oak was also planted with kind permission from Her Majesty The Queen, and is situated down the marsh road at Wolferton, towards the Pumping Station.

Pat Sheppard (Retired Police Officer)

Re: Issue No 80 Page 38 — Dersingham Community Christmas Dinner

May I please draw your attention to the statement within the article by Stella Gooch and point out that Mr Massen was not the Founder of Campaign Care '94. He was a Trustee and founder member but definitely not the founder.

It was my privilege to have founded the fund raising organisation. I would be grateful if you would please ensure that an addendum to correct the apparent misunderstanding as published recently is duly pointed out in the next issue. *(No problem, Ed.)*

Steve Hammond

CAROLE BROWN HEALTH CENTRE (CBHC) PATIENTS' PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG) NEWS

From: Tom Morris, PPG Committee

PPG MEETING - 21 FEBRUARY

The main purpose of the meeting was to receive an address from Valerie Newton, the Deputy Director of Patient Experience at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. It was particularly relevant to hear from Valerie in view of recent reports concerning Patient Care within NHS Hospitals. The report by Robert Francis QC on the failings of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust was particularly alarming and was a “wake up call” for all hospital trusts. It was comforting to learn that at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust the care of and the compassion for patients is being addressed with some vigour with special attention being given to the following areas:

- Dignity
- Communication with patients and relatives
- Nutrition
- Patient Safety
- Personal Care
- Measurement of performance in the above

All the above aspects were addressed by Valerie and it was comforting to hear that the QE is “well ahead of the game” in ensuring that patient care receives the attention that patients rightly expect from clinical and non-clinical staff.



Valerie addressing the PPG.

PATIENT SURVEY

Nearly 300 patients took part in the Patient Survey conducted over 3 days in January at the CBHC with the help of PPG Committee members. These surveys provide the major indication to



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the practice on how well it is performing and where improvements can be made. Unfortunately, the male population attending the surgery were reluctant – for whatever reason – to participate in the survey and some patients either failed to complete every question or to be consistent with their responses. Nevertheless, the survey results indicated a high level of satisfaction with the health service provided at the CBHC. Of those surveyed, 75% did not use the on-line booking system and around 50% did not use the 24 hour telephone booking system. Those who did use either system expressed a high level of satisfaction with only 7 respondents being unable to obtain the appointment requested. See below for further information on these systems and their future development.

ON-LINE BOOKING SYSTEM.

For those with access to the internet, this system provides a convenient and easy way to seek or to cancel appointments, to request repeat prescriptions, to take part in a Patient Survey, to subscribe to an e-mail edition of the Patient Newsletter, to change an address or telephone number and to help the practice keep your clinical records current. In the not too distant future, patients will be able to obtain their patients records and blood test results etc. on the system.

It is therefore in your interest to use this system if at all possible. To access the system you will need a 'user-name' and password and these can be arranged at Reception. You will need to have photographic evidence of your identity.

24 HOUR TELEPHONE BOOKING SYSTEM.

This system is most convenient for those without access to the internet. As indicated, it is continuously available, is cheaper than the 0844 system to use because you are only charged national rates and waiting an unreasonable time for a response is less likely especially if you use it during the evening or night hours.

FUTURE PPG MEETINGS

The next meeting will be on 18th April at the CBHC and the AGM will be on 4th July. It is in your interest to attend. □

News from Ingoldisthorpe C of E Primary School.

As usual this half term has been very busy. Our article this month has been written by two budding reporters in year 6.

Keith Twaites, Head teacher.

This term our children have enjoyed taking part in cross country. The children went off to Lynn Sport and raced against pupils from other schools. Many of our pupils did well, winning their events and therefore going on to represent their area. We need to make a special mention of Ella, Katie, Anna and Benji, all of whom did very well.

Another event worth mentioning was our annual pancake race on Shrove Tuesday. The whole school gathered on the playground with mums and dads watching. Then each year group took part in a pancake race running the length of the playground. Lots of children took part and after the race we all tossed our pancakes in the air.

By Maisie and Lucy Year 6.



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St Nicholas Church News

Easter Events:

During Holy Week there will be a Maundy Thursday Communion Service at 7pm.

On Good Friday there will be a short service at 9.30am followed by a Walk of Witness around the village calling at the Catholic and Methodist

Churches and finishing at the Church Hall for hot cross buns and a cup of coffee. At 2pm there will be a devotional service 'The Cross of Christ'.

Easter Sunday at 10.30am is our Easter Sunday Communion Service, followed at 3pm with an informal Easter Tea with activities for families.

Forthcoming Concerts & Events

Saturday 6th April at 7.30pm

There will be a Concert in Church by the Thurrock Male Voice Choir – they are a choir of around 40 strong and were formed in 1938. Tickets £5 on the door.

Saturday 27th April, 9am to 12noon

Grand Sale in the Church Hall – Bric-a-brac, second-hand books and nearly new clothes.

Refreshments available. All monies raised are used to help buy the flowers for the Flower Festival in July.

Saturday 4th May 7.30pm

West Norfolk Singers once again will be giving a Concert. Tickets £5 on the door.

Saturday 25th May 7.30pm

Centre Stage Swing Band Tickets £10 (phone Alan/June on 01485 543836) or on the door.

Proceeds for the Children's Project of the CofE Churches in Heacham, Snettisham and Dersingham.

Open Gardens 26th to 27th May

We are again holding this event thanks to Judy Collingham who is organising this for us.

Refreshments will be available in the Church Hall.

Afternoon Bridge for the first time!

Hunstanton Bridge Club are announcing afternoon bridge for the first time in their long history. The club has played bridge on two evenings a week for as long as members can remember. We have in mind those of you who play regular afternoon bridge and would enjoy playing in a group.

Mark and Sue who are responsible for group coaching at the club have responded to pressure to experiment with Friday afternoons. Its not everybody's cup of tea to turn out in the evenings, particularly on a cold winters night and there is a lot of interest. Please ring Mark on 01485 544895.

There will be 6 trial sessions starting the Friday the 1st. of March from 2 p.m..until 5.00p.m. at the Conservative Club. There will be a gentle introduction to duplicate bridge. All will be made welcome



The Dersingham Weather Recorded by John F. Murray

I wonder how many of you are early morning people and like me you have been wondering when the mornings would get lighter? It has been getting lighter in the evening but the mornings have been really dull and dismal, until the 28th February, when suddenly the overcast skies cleared and we had a really beautiful morning. We had high pressure for a prolonged period and thick cloud but little rain. The length of time that it was heavily overcast prevented the sun from warming things up and consequently the average temperatures for both January and February were low. The mean temperature for January was 3.7°C and February was only 3.2°C. The coldest January and February was in 2010 when we had the bad winter that is still quite fresh in our memories. This February was therefore our second coldest and January was a very close third coldest.

The highest temperature recorded this February was also poor. At 10.1°C it is the second worst high temperature, beaten again by 2010. Compare this to last February, when we had a high of 17.7°C, and it again shows that it was a pretty cool month. January this year produced the lowest temperature I have recorded for that month; a very chilly -9.7°C. Strangely, it also produced a joint equals highest; 14°C, the same as January 2008.

Although we have not had a lot of rain this year, the cold weather has not allowed the ground to dry out and walking the dog over Sandringham has involved picking my routes carefully. The rainfall in January was 40.8mm which is below the average of 57.9mm. In February we had 31.2mm, again below the average of 45.7mm.

All in all I don't think it is a particularly auspicious start to the year. However I draw a little bit of hope in that it is unlikely that we could get consecutive summers like the last one. Or is it? Remember what a great March we had last year? Time will tell. □

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Village Voice Live

RAF Marham - Past and Present, Tuesday 5th February

Near blizzard conditions during the late afternoon had clearly deterred some from attending, but still a reasonably sized audience were present for a talk by Squadron Leader Harry Pearce on the past and present of RAF Marham. He began by introducing himself as a resident of the village and talked of his association with RAF Marham over a 16 year period, initially in an educational role, progressing to his present media relations role.

The talk then progressed on to the history of Marham, commencing in 1916, when it was associated with the nearby Narborough aerodrome, and re-emerging in 1935 when construction started on the present day Marham aerodrome. He provided details of operations carried out from the aerodrome in the past and many of the aircraft based there, the details of which he acknowledged were provided by a colleague.

We then moved on to more recent and the present day operations, much of which revolved around the squadrons of Tornados based there. We were reminded us that although perceived by the public as a modern aircraft the Tornado is now 30 years old. He then touched on changing operational roles of the RAF over recent years which have needed to adapt to the changing challenges of modern conflicts, through Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya to present day Mali, stressing that while it is the bombing raids, such as the direct attack on Libya from Marham, which make the headlines, it is the continuous photo reconnaissance work which probably has more day to day importance in that it provides essential intelligence to troops on the ground.

There followed many questions from the audience which were enthusiastically, but sometimes diplomatically, responded to by the speaker. Those that braved the weather were rewarded with an informative insight into the history and operations of our noisy neighbours, which was clearly appreciated by the audience, although some more photographs, particularly of the aircraft being talked about, would have welcomed.

Whiffler

“Local Seas Managed Well”, Tuesday 5th March

It is always a pleasure to listen to someone with a sound knowledge, alertness and passion for their work, and none more so than our speaker for the evening: Eden Hannam from the Eastern Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority (Eastern IFCA), who with his enthusiastic New Zealand accent gave an illustrated PowerPoint presentation before fielding an extensive question time.

“Local Seas Managed Well” is IFCA’s abbreviated slogan arising out of their more extensive vision statement. Funded by respective local authorities, there are 10 such IFCAs covering regions around the English coast, the Eastern (and largest) IFCA comprising just 24 staff with offices in King’s Lynn and Sutton Bridge covering Norfolk, Suffolk and Lincolnshire. Dealing with contrasting aspects of coastal life from fishing, both commercial and recreational, to conservation of birds and the marine environment at large, it was made clear that IFCA were not there to impose bans so much as to find out how we use our waters and balance out that use responsibly to everyone’s best interest.

Possibly the most telling fact of the evening on our English tastes was learning of the extent to which the fishing in our home areas (The Wash especially) is nearly all bound for the export market! We left an interesting evening albeit a little different perhaps from what we might have expected, happily bearing copies of leaflets, maps and appealing wall stickers illustrating the legal sea-food quarries of our indigenous species.

Their website, well worth a look, can be found at: www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk.

Brucie

Norfolk Wildlife Trust

Norfolk Wildlife Trust are running the following free talks and adult wildlife workshops in the King's Lynn area during April



Adult Wildlife Workshop

Saturday 6 April
1pm-5pm

Beginner's Guide to Tree Identification

By looking at their leaves, bark, buds, twigs and general shape Nick Acheson introduces you to tree identification.

Location: Reffley Community Centre (includes a visit to Reffley Wood)

Details: Free. **Booking essential** – 01603 598333

Adult Wildlife Workshop

Sunday 14 April
10am-1pm

Woodland Wild flower Identification

As the woodland wild flowers begin to emerge, join Nick Acheson as we go in search of some of the beautiful plants that can be found growing in this ancient woodland.

Location: Reffley Wood

Details: Free. **Booking essential** – 01603 598333

Wildlife Talk

Friday 26 April

Bamboozled by Barnacles and Mystified by Mussels

7-8.30pm

In this talk Rob Spray from SeaSearch East introduces some of the amazing marine wildlife found off our coast. **Location:** Reffley Community Centre, Reffley Lane, King's Lynn, PE30 3SF

Details: Free. No need to book.

Gemma Walker, People and Wildlife Officer

Office: **01603 625540** Web: www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk

Also:

Thursday 28th March – 7.30pm

The West Norfolk members group invites you to

A short **AGM**, followed by an illustrated talk by Conservation Officer Helen Baczowska
“**County Wildlife Sites in West Norfolk**”

Venue: Hunstanton Methodist Church Hall,
Austin Street

Cost: £2.00 members / £2.50 visitors

Thursday 25th April – 7.30pm

The West Norfolk members group invites you to
an illustrated talk by Mike Linley

“**Confessions of a Wildlife Film-maker**”

Venue: Hunstanton Methodist Church Hall,
Austin Street

Cost: £2.00 members / £2.50 visitors

Sudoku No 28 solution								
1	5	3	9	6	4	2	8	7
9	7	2	8	1	5	6	4	3
4	6	8	7	3	2	1	5	9
6	3	7	4	5	8	9	2	1
2	8	1	6	9	3	5	7	4
5	9	4	1	2	7	3	6	8
8	1	6	2	4	9	7	3	5
3	4	9	5	7	6	8	1	2
7	2	5	3	8	1	4	9	6

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Old Picture Corner

This is a photograph of Mr Riches' shoe shop in Dersingham in 1956. The photograph shows from left to right, Mr Ernest Riches, centre Mrs Patricks, right Alice Riches with Mrs Patrick's brother in the background,. Ernest's father died in 1903 of pneumonia which meant that Ernest was now the bread winner. He started in the shoe business on his own from his mothers front room when he was 17 yrs old and his mother also took in washing to support the family. After father had died there were 5 children left behind . There was little or no public support in those days and Ernest kept the family with help of his mother.

At 21 Ernest had married Alice Bond aged 20 and she lived three doors from his workshop, which was his mother's front room. Alice and Ernest had 9 children over a 21 year period and three of his five sons served in the second world war.

Claude, 18 yrs old, was a radio officer in the Merchant Navy, he was drowned in the North Atlantic in 1943. His first trip was the Russian convoy route to Murmansk. Bob, the second eldest son, was injured whilst being shelled in Holland. Clifford the oldest, served the whole of the war and he was in the expeditionary force and later on was part of the second day of the Normandy Landings. Eric was a blacksmith, a reserved occupation for the duration of the war.

Ernest worked in his shop most evenings until 9 o'clock in the evening and the youth of the village gravitated to the shop on winter evenings for somewhere to go as there were few village outlets for pleasure at this time.

I took the Business over, in 1954 and Paul Spaarns, who learned the trade of the shop, continued the Business in 1996.

The Business flourishes with Paul having the reputation of giving good service to many customers throughout the area.

John Riches



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A VERY ESTRANGE HAUNTING

This article, sent to us by David Seaton, was first published in Lets Talk Magazine in June 2004 and is reproduced with their kind permission.

Nicola Ann tells how a young wife's act of generosity to her husband's tenants stirred the terrifying wrath of one of his ancestors at Hunstanton Hall

Emmeline shivered. She could not get used to this cold English climate, especially out here on the Norfolk coast. However, she was married now and this was her husband's ancestral home so she would just have to.

Although new to her role as Lady L'Estrange, today she believed that she had demonstrated that she would be a kind and generous mistress. For she had personally visited her husband's tenants, distributing food as well as pieces of carpet for their floors. They had been taken from an old and mouldy Persian carpet that she had found during her explorations of the attics of Hunstanton Hall. Emmeline suddenly stopped. Somebody was staring at her. She looked around but there was nobody to be seen.

Then out of the corner of her eye she caught a movement at one of the upstairs windows of the Hall. Although dusk was fast approaching, Emmeline could make out the outline of a person in one of the rooms. It was a woman with fine aristocratic features.

But there was such malevolence in her expression that Emmeline clasped a hand to her throat and gasped. Rooted to the spot, Emmeline saw the unknown woman draw even closer to the glass so that her cold white face and staring hate-filled eyes were clearly visible.

Suddenly the door to the Hall opened and warm amber light spilled out over the ground, reaching Lady L'Estrange and freeing her from her trance-like state. The butler was waiting and Emmeline had no choice but to enter.

"I see we have company," she said, with a slight tremble in her voice. "No ma'am," the butler responded. "Nobody has been to call since you left this afternoon."

"But I saw someone at the upstairs window," Emmeline insisted.

The butler was adamant that nobody other than the normal staff were inside the house. That night as Emmeline descended the grand staircase she glanced up at the many portraits of the family of Hammon, her husband.

He could trace his family roots all the way back to the 12th century. Then her eyes fell upon one particular portrait. It was the lady that she had seen looking at her from the window.

In this portrait the lady's expression was serene, a faint smile ghosting her lips. But it was definitely the same woman.

"Hammon," said Emmeline as she entered the drawing room. "Who is that lady dressed in grey in the portrait third down on the stairs?"

"Why that's Dame Armine L'Estrange, who lived here during the 1700s. In the attic is a large trunk in which is contained a carpet that was given to Armine by the Shah of Persia. On no account is that carpet to be removed from this house. It was Armine's dying wish and something of a family legend and curse".

"But I have already removed and disposed of it." Emmeline gasped.

Hammon L'Estrange looked at his American bride of a few months, his face draining of colour.

"What have you done, my wife?"

That night Lord and Lady L'Estrange were awoken by a gigantic crash in the house as though some large piece of furniture had been overturned. As they roused themselves in their large curtained bed they both heard slow but distinct footsteps making their way down the corridor to their shared bedroom.

Dame Armine L'Estrange had returned. □





Dersingham Walking Group

Welcome to the Dersingham Walking Group, which provides a regular programme of guided walks round the local countryside. I would like to thank Michael and Valerie Smith who have been coordinating the programme recently, but are now going to spend more time renovating their new house! I shall be picking up the baton, sorry walking stick, so if you would like to know more about the group please feel free to get in touch. New walkers are always most welcome.

You'll find my contact details are below.

On Wednesday 13th February there was a chilly breeze blowing as the Walking Group met at Heacham Duck Pond for Steve and Lindsey Davis's walk along the beach. The breeze turned into a gale as we reached the shoreline, but on the return leg along the bank behind the dunes it was at least at our backs. Some good views though and definitely one to blow the cobwebs away!

A little later in February it was still rather chilly as on Sunday 24th Stephen Martyn lead around eighteen walkers through the woods from Sandringham Visitors Centre and out to Wolferton, where we saw the Galloway cattle that have recently been introduced to graze the fen. Having circuited the fen we re-crossed the A149 and took a different path back through the woods, returning to the Visitors Centre at 4pm. Although a little wintry the woods provided plenty of shelter so it was a pleasant afternoon.

Details of our next walks are:

Wednesday 17th April 2013, 2-00pm

Starting point: Courtyard Farm, Ringstead, car park off Ringstead to Burnham Road. Grid ref: 722 405

The chance to see cowslips and other early wild flowers.

Sorry, no dogs on this walk

Leader. Keith Starks 01485 542268

Friday 26th April 2013, 5-30pm

Starting point: Old Dersingham Railway Station, Station Road, Dersingham. Grid ref: 680 307
A there and back walk to the Snettisham Bird Reserve, where a high spring tide may give us a good display of wading birds.

This walk is 6 miles long. Estimated finish time 8-30pm.

Leaders. Steve & Lindsey Davis 01485 543138

Wednesday 8th May 2013, 6-00pm

Starting point: Car Park opposite West Lodge, Bircham Road, Houghton. Grid ref: 777 289.

A leisurely stroll around the Houghton Estate, with the chance to maybe see deer and enjoy the woodland in the evening light.

Leader. Christine Taylor 01485 542807

The full Dersingham Walking Group programme can be viewed on the Parish Council website. www.dersingham.org.uk/announcements

*There is **NO CHARGE** for these walks: just turn up on the day wearing suitable clothing and sturdy footwear. **WELL BEHAVED** dogs are welcome. The walks are usually between **4 and 5 miles long**, taking around a couple of hours. Quoted grid references are for the relevant Ordnance Survey map, usually Landranger sheet 132 or Explorer sheet 250.*

The leaders are happy to organize 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 about an individual walk, such as the going underfoot, stiles etc. please contact the walk leader.

For general enquiries please contact the group coordinator:

Stephen Martyn Tel: 01485 541333 Email: stephenmartyn@gmail.com



Stephen Martyn leading the walking group on a recent exploration of Dersingham Bog and Sandringham Woods. *photo Steve Davis*

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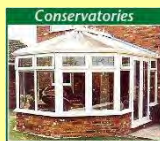
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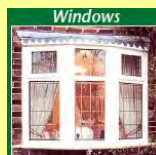
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The Sandringham Newsletter

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

The total rainfall recorded here at Sandringham for 2012 was 35 inches, compared to 20 inches in 2011, which about sums up the year as far as weather is concerned. A long dry spell up to March gave the Farm an excellent start to the season, but after that rain made the rest of the year a long, hard slog.

Both the Visitor Centre and the Sawmill were very busy before Christmas, with the Sawmill seeing its best ever Christmas tree sales and the Gift Shop experiencing record demand for Christmas hampers. Once the snow arrived in mid-January, visitor numbers naturally fell dramatically, but staff were grateful that it had held off until then.

At the Fruit Farm, this year's pressing has almost been completed in the apple juice factory. Older blackcurrant plantings are being removed to be replaced by winter wheat, and fresh fields are being cultivated before new blackcurrant cuttings go in.

In the Gardens, the snow's arrival in January produced beautiful scenery with trees and hedges draped in white, and the intricate scrolled ironwork on the Norwich Gates picked out in every detail. It also brought large numbers of curlews inside the Gardens for the first time this winter, probing the ground with their long curved bills to find worms and other small creatures for food.

On the Farm, ploughing for next year's sugar beet crop and lifting this year's sugar beet resumed last month after a pause because of January's snow. Sowing spring barley continues to be a slow process, held up first by the wet ground and then by the snow.

Gardens staff were delayed starting the long job of pruning the red-twigged limes that make up the pleached tree walk around the North Garden because of the weather. While waiting for the snow to disappear and the ground to dry out, they spent time cutting willow and birch brushwood to use as plant supports for herbaceous plants in the North Garden and the Walled Garden, and using willow to weave cones for sweet peas, clematis and other climbing plants.

At the Visitor Centre, new carpet was laid in the Restaurant and Terrace Coffee Shop, using a British-made wool carpet supplied by Brinton's Carpets who hold a Royal Warrant. The design of the carpet is in warmer colours than the previous one, and catering staff think it makes the Restaurant and Coffee Shop feel more welcoming. The shops at the Visitor Centre also had work done in this fairly quiet time, including relighting and painting, to spruce them up before the Visitor Centre starts to get busy with the House, Museum and Gardens opening at the end of March. □

WITH ONE ACCORD

by K Mellor

If a village life you seek
Dersingham is hard to beat
It sits betwixt the town and sea
At times, close by, dwells her Majesty

There are leafy lanes and woodland walks
Where friendly people stop and talk
With many shops it is complete
All your needs they can meet

There is lots to do, no time to be bored
With Sporting Teams and Clubs galore
There is something here for one and all
As we do try to live with one accord

It is not all quiet serenity
We enjoy lots of fun and frivolity
But if a peaceful life you need
Your privacy we will heed

Should you hanker for a town
Near by too they can be found
But being only minutes from the sea
Dersingham is a very special Community

News from St Cecilia's Church

We are having a Mass with anointing for the sick of the parish at 4pm on Wednesday 20th March at St Cecilia's. This was very well received when we held a similar Mass last year.

The Women's World Day of Prayer was held this year at St. Mary's church, Heacham on Friday 1st March. France was this year's host Country. The church was full and it was a joyous ecumenical occasion. There were refreshments and a chance to mingle and chat together after the service.

We are having a quiz night at St. Cecilia's on 24th April starting at 7pm, and there will be a fundraising coffee morning at the convent in Hunstanton at 11am on 20th April. All are very welcome. Look out for details of our Easter services and all of our social occasions on the Parish bulletin board, or on the website.

We have several regular groups in the parish. The Rosary prayer group meet every Monday afternoon at 2pm in Dersingham. A Mothers' prayers group meet every second Monday afternoon at 2.30pm in Hunstanton and there is Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament every Thursday afternoon between 4pm and 5pm at the Convent. See the bulletin for details.

Our daily Masses are usually held at 9am at St Theresa's Convent, 27 Sandringham Road, Hunstanton on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday and at 10.15am at St Cecilia's, Dersingham on Wednesday. These are subject to change, so please check Church notice boards, website or phone. Sunday Masses are 9am at Dersingham and 11am at Hunstanton.

Everyone, whether Catholic or not, is welcome to all of our services and social occasions. We have refreshments after the 11am Mass every Sunday and after 10.15 Mass every Wednesday. There are also refreshments after the 9am Mass on the first Sunday of the month at Dersingham.

Please come along, you will be most welcome.

Resident Priest: Father Michael Ryan, 81 Mountbatten Road, Dersingham, PE31 6YE

Website: www.hunstantoncatholicparish.org **Email:** parish@hunstantoncatholicparish.org

Nar Valley Ornithological Society (NarVOS)

Tuesday 30th April 2013, 7.30pm at the Barn Theatre, Sacred Heart Convent School, Swaffham. Access and parking from Sporle Road.

Where is it?

Easy to see what it is but where is it to be seen?



Please come along to this illustrated talk by Nick Moran, entitled: Bird Migration in the Middle East

Nick Moran's talk will focus on the United Arab Emirates. Nick works for the British Trust for Ornithology in Thetford. He has contributed to a number of books and magazines and he was Editorial Advisor to 'Birds of the Middle East', so Nick obviously knows the subject of his talk particularly well.

Visitors most welcome. Admission £2 on the night if you are not a NarVOS member. For more information about this meeting or NarVOS call Ian Black on 01760 724092

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1.00p.m. to socialise and exchange experiences**

**The meetings are sponsored by the following three local charities whose members can
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Astro Brain Tumour Fund

www.astrofund.org.uk

The Lisa Wiles Red Wellies Brain Tumour Support Fund

www.redwellies.info

Reach for a Star

www.reachforastar.co.uk

The dates for 2013 are:

April 18th May 16th

June 20th July 18th

August 15th September 19th

October 17th November 21st

December 19th

**To let us know if you are interested in attending or for more information please
contact:**

Christine 01485 572767 : info@astrofund.org.uk

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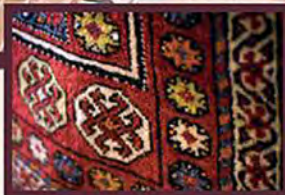
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MAGGIE'S MISCELLANY

With more tales of life in a Norfolk village by Maggie Grey

VILLAGE TITTLE-TATTLE AND HEARTS-A-FLUTTER!

When you want to know what's going on in a village, there are several ways to go about it. You can join a group like the W.I., stay behind after church for coffee in the vestry, hang around the post office on pensions day, sit at a table in the local and earwig barside conversations, or maybe stand at the school gates – although in these times it's best to do the latter only if you have a child to collect or drop off, or be with someone who does. But in our village, life is made so much easier, thanks to Elsie Drewitt. You may remember her from previous tales from the village, she is the purveyor of village news and gossip. So, it was thanks to Elsie that we heard Hugh (Mr Bartholomew to her) had been seen driving Tilly (that's Miss Asquith to her) and her cousin, who arrived last month to help look after Tilly while her ankle repaired itself and she could get around on her own easier. Elsie says he must have hated having that gooseberry of a cousin, but that things are back to normal now, Tilly able to get about and the cousin long gone and yet he is still spending an awful lot of time at Tilly's cottage. How Elsie knows this, we're not sure, for they live at opposite ends of the village. But we know from past experience it's best not to ask how she knows. Someone once had the temerity to ask, 'But how do you actually KNOW this for sure?' to which Elsie's response was to turn her head slightly to the left, wink with the right eye, tap the side of her nose and then make a closing zip movement across her lips.

It was Elsie who told us about the strife in the village band, all thanks to a flighty young piece called Marilyn, who has big blonde hair and plays the cornet. Now for most of us the band is just something that's been a part of the village for the last couple of decades or so, playing at the fete, local fundraisers and travelling to other villages to do more of the same. It also plays carols at Christmas here, and outside the village, and occasionally has been known to take part in competitions. But as to the mechanics of how a band works, the hierarchy and so on, most of us are ignorant.

But not Elsie of course. According to her, this young 'blonde piece', single and in her twenties, is in line to be the next principle cornetist. The significance of this was lost on those of us listening in the post office to Elsie's latest 'bit of news', but apparently this exalted position is usually combined with being the head of the band, so it is a position that most young members dream of and aspire to. Marilyn came into the band and within a month was made up to principle cornetist, and so we naturally asked, does this mean she is going to be the leader of the band soon?

This wasn't to be the case, and was mystifying to use Elsie's words, and as far as she was concerned, and several other people as well, it was merely a ploy on the part of Royston, who has some position in overall charge of the band since he helped to form it, to ingratiate himself with her. He's a bit of a fusspot, a figure of mirth to many younger members of the community – the older ones are more discreet about they feel! He is inordinately proud of what is really a very boring uniform, and struts about the place, full of his own importance. It was reported one day, that when he had taken his nets down at the living room window to wash them, he was seen hovering the walls! And wearing some kind of frilly cap on his head!

When Elsie heard this she said it came as no surprise to her. But then if you believe Elsie, nothing ever does.

Since the economic downturn, the property market has been very quiet as we all know. There are quite a number of houses in the village that have been for sale for over a year, but one which has sold and set the tongues wagging, is the rather sad looking end of terrace cottage which stands on one of the dead end roads leading off the green. Unlike the rest of the terrace, this one was double fronted, and used to look very pretty with its wisteria clambering over the flint walls at the front of the house, and the apple and plum trees full of blossom in the back garden. It had been

lived in by Harold, a retired schoolteacher, for many years until it became clear he could no longer look after himself properly and he went into a residential home. Since then, well over a year ago, the house has remained empty and unloved, the garden quickly became overgrown and neglected, and the lime trees which gave the cottage its name in need of attention. Inside no doubt damp had done its damage, and the neglected air continued.

Suddenly one morning a sticker bearing the word SOLD appeared across the front of the agent's board in the front garden and so the speculation began as to who would be the new owner. And when a new face began to appear in the village shop, and then the newsagent one Sunday morning, the mystery was (almost) solved. Elsie was the only one nose, sorry brave, enough to approach and ask if he was the new owner of Lime Tree and she couldn't wait to get to church to spread the news. Especially to Daisy, an unhappy spinster looking for love, a task Elsie had decided to make her next mission in life.

She described him to Daisy as 'tall, blonde with grey eyes, wears silver-rimmed spectacles, well built though not muscly or fat, very nicely spoken with an attractive hint of Norfolk in his accent, and aged in his late forties. "Though I can't be sure Daisy as I only spoke to him for a second". He also didn't wear a wedding ring, and as he only bought masculine newspapers, a small pack of cigars and a bottle of milk, obviously single. It won't be long before she knows his name, occupation, where he was born, his family background, does he have a wife/girlfriend, prefer tea or coffee... and when Daisy sees him her heart will definitely be fluttering.

DISCLAIMER – Any resemblance between characters in this story with people of the same or similar names, any likeness between the village and any others, is purely coincidental. □

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Turdus torquatus torquatus

David Bingham

Ring Ouzel Year

‘Yet despite the human influences in their making, the moors of Britain and Ireland have become wild places for numberless people, who leave behind the confines of their cities to enter another realm: of mazes made by troughs and hags, of wheatears flicking between stones, and of mica sand that causes stream-beds to flash in the sunlight with a silver fire.’ *The Wild Places* by Robert Macfarlane

I saw my first ring ouzel in the summer of 1969. It was a brief encounter - not much more than a blur of feathers as the bird flew across the road in front of me as I cycled up a hill in the northern Pennines. This was a typical sighting and I come across ring ouzels most years when I'm walking in the uplands or when they arrive on the north Norfolk coast during migration. Ouzel is the old name for a blackbird and male ring ouzels look like blackbirds with a white ring around their breast. They are sometimes called mountain blackbirds because of their close association with upland habitats.

Last spring I did a study of ring ouzels in the Peak District National Park (the first and still the best national park in the country). My aim was to investigate the interaction between breeding ring ouzels and the people who work in or visit the area around the gritstone edges, which border the eastern moors of the national park and are a favourite breeding site for ring ouzels and a favourite recreational landscape for visitors – particularly rock climbers. When I arrived snow was piled up against the dry stone walls. It was cold, very cold, with temperatures forecast to fall to minus five – not a good day to be camping but that's what I was doing. I managed to pitch my tent in an empty field on some snow free ground left by another happy camper who had cut and run. My wife had insisted that I take a fluffy pink hot water bottle along with me and the sense of this dawned on me as I filled it by the light of a big cream coloured moon – ringed by a halo caused by the refraction of moonbeams on ice crystals in the atmosphere. I got up early (my boot laces were frozen solid like iron rods) and I was picked up at five o'clock in the morning by my contact, Bill Gordon, to begin my ring ouzel apprenticeship. Bill is a park ranger, farmer, artist (Royal Academy graduate with a garden full of his Polynesian inspired sculptures) and ring ouzel fanatic. We spent the day walking in the arctic landscape and I learnt a lot about the local breeding population of ring ouzels. I learnt the meaning of the various calls the ouzels make and how the dialect of Peak District birds is different from Yorkshire Dales birds (Bill makes recordings and uses computer generated sonograms to analyse the calls). I learnt how to find nests and how the birds are affected by the activities of visitors and locals. It was dark when we finished and the moon was out again. I had the strange experience of being attacked by a cock red grouse while slipping and sliding down from Stanage Edge - there's never a toff with a gun when you need one! It was here that I met my first rock climbers who had come from Sheffield to spend the night in caves or to sleep in bivi-bags out in the snow on the open moor so they could be first on the climbs the next day. By comparison with these guys I felt I was being a bit nesh in my tent with a hot water bottle and mug of Horlicks!

The snow melted but was replaced by constant rain. I can only recall one warm sunny day when things were as I'd dreamt they would be. Wheatears were everywhere, pied flycatchers darted out from



Stanage Edge

nearby trees to catch flying insects above my tent and brilliantly coloured redstarts flashed their tails on top of dry stone walls. But the weather didn't spoil things - it was all good. I chatted to a lot of rock climbers from all over the world who were attracted by the excellent climbing to be found on the gritstone edges. I also found nests that were confirmed by local climbers (the climber in the photo was confirming a nest I had spotted in Green Crack) and I helped them to put out signs asking their fellow mountaineers to avoid routes near the nests. Nest finding was difficult because the birds didn't want to be found. They always land away from the nest and creep in so watching for them leaving is the best technique to use. The access rights in the Peak District were hard won (I had a friend who was on the mass trespass on Kinder Scout in 1932) so it was good to see the level of co-operation being shown by the rock climbers. I did climb up to peek into one of the nests and found it to be very well made with a coarse grass base a waterproof layer of dried mud and a soft mossy cup. The nest I saw had three Smartie blue eggs in it.



My main focus was Stanage and Burbage but I walked all of the gritstone edges from Bamford to Curbar and had fantastic views of ring ouzels every day. I also began to understand what people were doing in the area, including activities that were new to me such as bouldering and weaselling. Humans have been living and visiting the Peaks for thousands of years and they have left plenty of evidence – Bronze Age stone circles, Iron Age hill forts, Roman roads, medieval pack horse bridges, lead mines, fine stately homes and hundreds of millstones that were hewn from the gritstone and left where they lay when the industry collapsed. I tried to make sense of all of this and found that not all activities were detrimental to the ring ouzels. Bill's sheep graze the moors and form short cropped 'lawns' where the ouzels find worms, local gamekeepers control stoats and weasels, which would kill the young ouzels or take the eggs given half a chance and the national park authority protects the landscape from unwonted development.

Our ring ouzels have the scientific name *Turdus torquatus torquatus* and there is another sub species living in central and southern Europe called *Turdus torquatus alpestris*. I managed to catch up with some of these in the high alpine village of Murren (altitude 5413 ft) later in the year. They look a little different to our ouzels with brighter scaling to the breast feathers and their song is another language rather than a dialect. Their habits are strikingly different and they habitually nest in trees rather than in rock crevices or on the ground like the ring ouzels in this country. They are also much more confiding and the Murren birds were acting like blackbirds and could be found every morning in a postage stamp sized patch of lawn that was tastefully furnished with a giant plastic windmill.

My final ring ouzel moment of 2012 came on a still October day when thousands of



Turdus torquatus alpestris

Scandinavian thrushes arrived along the Norfolk coast. It was a misty morning in the Snettisham Coastal Park and every hawthorn bush seemed to be weighed down by redwings, blackbirds, fieldfares and robins. I eventually caught sight of a ring ouzel, one of dozens that turned up in Norfolk that day. They were on their way to North Africa where they spend the winter feeding on juniper berries in the foothills of the Atlas Mountains.

Before they are due to return I have an engagement to give a talk to the Ring Ouzel Study Group in a hotel in Cumbria. I'm a bit nervous about presenting my findings to a gathering of the greatest ring ouzel brains in the land – but comforted by the thought that there probably aren't that many of them! □



Dick Melton

Here we are, another issue of the Dersingham Village Voice and more and more people keep on asking me about the history of Dersingham. First of all this month a gentleman asked me how the area of Dodds Hill got its name.

Well, for hundreds of years it was called 'High Crofts', which means 'pasture on the hill.' A gentleman by the name of Dodd came to live there in 1883 and the name was changed to 'Dodd Hill.' In 1916 a Zeppelin bomb was dropped on Dodd Hill; and at the time Queen Alexandra was staying at Sandringham House and she said, 'I must go to Dodd Hill to see what damage has been done.'

Some time after that people began to put a 's' on the end to make it Dodds Hill and therefore it has been known as Dodds Hill ever since, right up to this very day.

Joe Painter

On Tuesday the 29th of January I was invited to Dersingham Library to take part in a talk about the 1953 floods, as it was the 60th anniversary of the floods on the 31st of January. Whilst talking about the floods the name of Joe Painter came up so, though I have written a bit about him before in May 2004, I thought that there must be a lot of people now living in Dersingham who had never heard of Joe and all the things he was famous for in Dersingham.

Joe was born in Snettisham. Every one called him Joe, but his real name was Philip. Joe was not a tall man, about 5 feet 4 with a weather-beaten face. Just after the second world war he came to Dersingham with his wife, Edna, and their family to live at number 4 Pleasant Place, right next to the Open Common or Hoddy's Hole as it was then called.

Joe was employed as a bricklayer on the Sandringham estate but he was also a right handyman and could turn his hand to any thing: plumber, carpenter and, most of all, chimney sweep. I would think that during his lifetime he must have swept every chimney in Dersingham, including a lot of the chimneys at Sandringham House, when he was not at work on the estate. Evenings and weekends Joe could be seen pushing his trade bike around the village, laden up with his tools and brushes, off to do a job for someone.



He was well known in the village and around for three things: pansies; bonfires; and, most of all, 'goesunders' or chamber pots, of which he had three hundred in a shed in his garden. Joe's garden was about fifty yards long from his back door to the top hedge; a path went all the way up one side; and each side of this path was a foot wide border where Joe grew his pansies. They were the biggest pansies you ever saw with flowers as big as dinner plates. If you asked Joe how he got them to grow like that he would just look at you and say, 'soot', as that is what he would spread all around them.

Joe's bonfires

Joe Painter was also famous for his bonfires on the fifth of November and the secret of these was rubber tyres. He lived right opposite Eric Hyner's garage (later Charlie Wisker's) and they would give him all their old tyres. Just before the big day Joe would knock in some long iron poles on the area of ground where the bonfire was going; then he would lob the tyres over the poles and cover the lot with old bits of wood and any other rubbish. When lit on the night the bonfire could be seen all over the village so lots of people would come to see it and bring their own fireworks. Of course, with Joe's garden being right next to the Common you knew what would happen. Yes, that's right, the Common would catch fire. All the men, including my father, would get buckets of water and try to put it out, but in the end they would have to call the Fire Brigade, which then days was stationed in Miss Mann's barn in Heath Road, so they did not have far to come. Whilst they were putting out the fire Joe and his wife, Edna, would always give the fireman a cup of tea or something to warm them up. When the bungalows were built in Manor Side (Tuck's Field) a firebreak was put in from Hoddy's Hole to Heath Road, but by then Joe had stopped having his bonfires.

'Goesunders'

Now we come to Joe's 'goesunders' or chamber pots (see left). He first started collecting them when he was doing a house up and there was some old ones laying about. Then, when he told people about his collection, they would take him some more. In the end Joe had a collection of more than 300 pots, all different colours and patterns. One day, when Joe was doing some work at Sandringham House, Prince Charles was talking to him and Joe told him about his pots. The Prince was very interested so it was arranged for him to go to Joe's house to look at them, which in due course he did.

How Joe's name came up at the flood talk at the library was the fact that one day, in September 1953, Joe was down The Drift picking some blackberries in the Little Wood when he found the decomposed body of a man from Snettisham, who had lived in a bungalow on the beach and had been drowned in the January floods.

Well that's a little bit about one of Dersingham's most famous people. Now you might ask what happened to all those goesunders (chamber pots). Well I do not really know, but I did hear once that the whole collection was bought by an American and shipped to America. Does anyone out there know if this is correct?

Dersingham Fen

I was very interested in the editor's notes in the Village Voice February issue, especially when he says that he went for a walk over Dersingham Bog. He says that it is sometimes called other names. This area of land, some of which is within the parish of Dersingham, has only two names: Dersingham Fen or Cranberry Fen. It has been a fen for hundreds of years and was never called a bog until after 1990, when the by-pass was built and English Nature took over the management.

The editor comments on the lack of wildlife on the fen. Up to 1940 there was a large herd of red deer in Sandringham Park but, when the iron railings were taken down and the park ploughed up for the war effort, most of these deer moved onto the fen. Since 1990, with a lot of the trees being taken away and always the sound of machines working on the fen, they have once again moved on. When I was a boy, in the spring and summer time you would get up to four hundred pairs of shelduck breeding on the fen, but now that most of their cover has been taken away you are lucky if you see twenty. It would be nice if English Nature would just go away and leave the fen alone. If they cannot do that, would they stop calling it a bog! It never has been a bog; it is Dersingham Fen and it could be a most wonderful place once again, just as it used to be.

Well that's all for now, by the time you read this that icy old wind will have gone away (we hope) and spring will be here. □

Bernie's Bits

In a previous edition the editor asked what the D in D Day meant, having seen no answers here is a brief explanation. The name was given by the U S Army, in WW1 the time and day of an operation was shown as H and D, H being the hour and D the day. The Normandy landings were called Operation Overlord, and to prevent the Germans finding out the start became known as D Day. There seems to be three possible definitions for the D, day of invasion, first day or designated day. If anybody is interested to find out more about this, google origin of D Day and its all there.

During the past year there have been some people asking about rights of way and access. What links all these is all the people were challenged while out walking as to their right to be where they were. At least one person took the matter further and proved they had every right to be where they were, others didn't but were in areas where people have always walked.

A few years ago the government were promoting open access and right to roam but its not so easy as it sounds. In one area near Dersingham a farmer has left strips around his land for the public to walk, but the land owner next to him has put up gates and no entry signs. The Drift is a public footpath and bridleway and I have always understood it was the route for horses and wagons to get to Dersingham harbour years ago. It has always looked the same for as long as anybody can remember and, until the bypass was built, was used by all kinds of four wheeled vehicles for access to the marsh. About twenty years ago a gate was put up across the entrance and was kept locked up. It was put there by a builder with the help of a then nearby resident, the builder was losing materials from his site, some going out through the Drift. The gate was put up without permission. The Parish Council wanted it removed and asked the Borough and County Councils to help, they said they wanted proof of ownership to the Drift before they could do anything and the best they could achieve was to get the gate unlocked. The matter was finally resolved when it disappeared one night. Did someone want a good railed gate or did a resident decide to sort it out? Either way it sorted it out.

I see from Parish Council minutes the police stopped a resident from taking wood off the common, the Trustees have published parishioners rights on the fen and common several times, perhaps a copy to the police.

The end of what I have written takes me back to the beginning , people are being stopped in places they have always had access to. Do the people who are saying you should not be here have the ownership or rights over what they claim or are they just trying it on? □

Bernie Twite



Muntjac

Steve Davis spotted this Muntjac going for a paddle at Snettisham and they are a regular sight beside the A149 most evenings but how far are they coming into the village? If you get deer of any kind visiting your garden please let the Parish Council know.

Recent reports of expanding deer populations highlight the danger to motorists, the destruction of habitat and how, when deer numbers get too large, that they are starving. This is mainly down to the lack of predators. Now we probably don't want wolves and bears back so responsible culling seems to be the answer, but what do you think? Do let us know. □

Bog News from Tom Bolderstone

These last few days have seen the proper arrival of spring on the reserve, the days are beginning to draw out, daffodils are beginning to poke their shoots through and the birds have begun singing.

As a warden on a nature reserve spring is an exciting time. The short dark days give way to longer and lighter days and more opportunities to get out on site. This time of year sees us begin surveying for breeding birds on site. The Common Bird Census is a survey undertaken on many sites to monitor the populations of breeding birds. These surveys begin in earnest at the end of February and last right through until August. It involves an observer walking a set route through the reserve at least ten times, with at least ten days between each visit. This survey records all birds and all birds' activities on a map for each visit. We have three routes that encompass the reserve and give full coverage of the entire site. These maps are then collated to give total territories for each transect and then a full total for the site. This allows us to monitor population change on the site. We currently have seven years data for the full three transects. This also allows us to relate population estimates to weather patterns and migration highs and lows.

This time of year can also see the first butterflies emerging and species such as Comma and peacock can often be seen on a warm summer's day. Butterflies and Insects are an important part of the site and we monitor these species just as we would birds. We also survey and monitor mammals through general observations and specific surveys as well as monitoring the plants and mosses on site. Fungi get a look in as well and these are surveyed by The Dersingham Bog Mushroom group. By collecting and collating all these



different surveys we can build up a picture of the species diversity on the site. We can then monitor the effects of changing climate and other sources such as pollution, high water levels. By monitoring these species each year we can monitor change over a period of years.

Many of you will have noticed that we have been clearing some areas of rhododendron in the woodland on the site. Although the rhododendron has striking flowers it is actually a very invasive plant. Rhododendron is an introduced plant from Asia and is very vigorous and can grow quite large in a short space of time. The rhododendron shades out the ground flora meaning that other plants are unable to grow and the diversity of the woods are lost. By removing the rhododendron from the woods we are allowing the structure of the ground flora of the woods to improve. In areas we have cleared we are now starting to see grasses, bramble, mosses, fungi and young saplings appearing in parts of the wood that they haven't been seen for many years. These plants in time will grow and create a woodland structure that will support a wider range of birds, plants and insects and increase the overall diversity of the woods. Some of the areas we have cleared of rhododendron have now become sunny glades which in time will attract a variety of butterflies to bask in the sun.

We are always on the lookout for volunteers to help with the management and visitor management on the site. If you are interested in finding out more about volunteering please email Thomas.bolderstone@naturalengland.org.uk.

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Dersingham Day Centre for the Elderly by Alice Worth



The Day Centre had to cancel two meetings in January due to the snow. However, when we did meet up again at the end of the month, even though it was still bitterly cold we were able to keep everyone warm, thanks to the very efficient heating system in the Church Hall.

Unfortunately, as is usual at this time of the year, several members were absent through illness, but most of them were back with us by the end of February.

On Wednesday, 20th February we had one of our regular visits from Teresa English and, as usual, she brought a good variety of clothes for us to choose from. Her visits are always popular and her selection of clothes never fails to please.

On Wednesday 27th February we had a musical afternoon. Brian Roy, a talented singer and guitarist, entertained us with songs from the past. He really gave an excellent performance and it was so satisfying to see how much our Members enjoyed singing along to songs spanning several decades. It always amazes me how one can recall the words of songs that you probably haven't sung since your youth. I think one of our Members summed the afternoon up so well when she said "that's done us all good".

It is always a plus when we can find ways to make life easier for our Members. We can now take people across to the surgery for any appointments they have on a Wednesday, which means they don't have to miss their day out. Having the surgery in the Barns has proved to be very convenient. One of our Volunteers, Jean Anger, now goes across to Prior's Butchers each week armed with a shopping list of goods our Members have ordered. Each item is individually wrapped, named and put in our fridge until home time. Only small things but we know they do make a difference.

Hopefully, the worst of the Winter is behind us now and already we can see the early signs of Spring. We are looking forward to a visit from the Village Fryer on the 6th March and plans are under way for our Easter Party. No doubt Carol, our crafts lady, will be encouraging the decorating of Easter Bonnets ready for our annual competition. We have lots of things to look forward to. □

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VOLUNTEER CO-ORDINATOR
TEL 01485 543000**

email; stephen.tyers@LCDisability.org

Mystery Parade

These two pictures were culled from a ciné film by the late Gordon Anckorn. Shot by Mr Playford, it was bought at a local sale and shows an unknown parade in Manor Road. The car in the background looks like a post war Lea Francis but beyond that there is no date for it.

So what was the occasion, when was it and are you in the pictures?



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DERSINGHAM ROVERS FOOTBALL CLUBS

Dersingham Rovers Football Clubs are based at The Pastures in Manor Road.

This season 2012-2013 two senior men's teams are competing in two leagues. The First Team is in The Anglian Combination Premier League and the Reserves in West Norfolk Division Two League.

With increased interest it is proposed to have three senior teams next season 2013-2014 which starts in April.

Training evenings differ throughout the season with the weather dictating the venue. To find out more contact Secretary: Aidey Peck 01485 – 544896

Sponsorship, either through voluntary help, advertising in the programme and/or web site (www.dersinghamroversfc.co.uk) or supplying kit, is always being sought and anyone interested can contact Barry or Penny on 01485 - 541047.

Dersingham Rovers Youth FC are currently rebuilding through the youth system. The Club's primary objective is to provide Association Football, coaching and personal development for all the playing members.

As a club we aim to generate an atmosphere and safe environment where young players can develop their skills and enjoy the game of football. Our emphasis is around personal development through enjoyment, fair play and promoting team spirit and team play.

At present we have the following teams:

Mini Rovers (3-6yrs) every Saturday 9.15am -10am Training

Under 7's every Saturday 9.15am - 10am Training/Match

Under 8's every Saturday 10am - 11am Training/Match

Under 9's every Saturday 10am - 11am Training/Match

Under 10's every Tuesday 5-6pm Training 10am Saturday Match

Under 11's every Wednesday 5-6pm training Sunday Match

Under 16's Sunday Match

New players are always welcome!! Please call Adam Seal 01485 779014 for more information.

Where is it?

Alexandra Cottages are in West Newton
in the road leading to the school.



Sudoku No 29

	7							8
		8	9		4			
		5	2			6		3
	2		7				9	
		6			8			1
	3						5	
1			5		9			2
	4			3		7		
	8					1		

A Cautionary Tale from John Lambert

This all started four years ago when a good friend of mine from our cycling club days back in the 1950s was listening to the radio one morning at home in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, asking for people who could raise funds for the Army Benevolent Fund. "I could do that" said Colin to his wife Joan and, with that, Colin set about planning a cycle from his home to Lands End and then from Lands End to John O'Groats and back to Cheltenham. This ended up distance wise 2,000 miles as near as damn it. Colin sent me sponsor forms to see if I could help him and the people of Dersingham did him proud. He did very well on the ride but that is another story.

My cautionary tale starts here and, remember, if you do consider raising money for charity, all expenses you incur along the way, bed and breakfast, meals, repairs are all down to you so beware of any pitfalls as some of them can be deep. By the way, I never had any grand illusions about emulating Colin, all be it a fantastic achievement but, with all the expenses incurred, you find yourself paying out money just to raise it. So I did my bit in a different way without too much expense.

The way I went about it, I would pack sandwiches the night before, an independent person would check my cycle computer morning and night, my wife, bless her, cooked a meal when I got home, I pre-planned all my routes and kept in touch by mobile phone. I always carried 2 spare inner tubes, tools and a wetsuit. The only time it rained of any consequence I was about seven miles King's Lynn side of Downham Market. I carried on out into the deep fens. The rain just got heavier right through to Ely. Can you think of a more depressing place when it rains? My first pitfall happened when I was about 15 miles from home (You may remember the article I wrote in Village Voice at the time). A part inside the rear hub disintegrated. This part enabled me to freewheel but, without it, when I went to freewheel, the chain came off straight away. I had to ring my wife to come and pick me up and take me straight to Fat Birds at Hunstanton. Not only was I without a bike for 6 days but I had a £200 bill to pay. It just worked out cheaper to buy 2 new wheels. The other pitfall to me was soon after I had finished all my three 500 mile rides. I was out one morning walking the dog. I stopped to have a few words with a friend of mine. After we had said our goodbyes I noticed something very strange happening to my legs. For a start they felt as light as a feather with a mind of their own. Whichever way I decided to go my legs would go the opposite. To cut a long story short, I went to the surgery the next day and had a word with the doctor. I was then sent to hospital where they did numerous scans over my body. It transpired that one of my vertebrae had bulged to one side and trapped a nerve. The doctor told me there is a successful operation that could be performed on my spine. Then things should be back to normal within a few weeks. I have been to hospital numerous times for tests. The tests show that I have an irregular heart beat. At the moment I am on medication to rectify this. I can only put this pitfall down to the amount of wind I had everyday. It was quite difficult at times. I suppose I just did too much to it. You learn the hard way, so they say.

Over the last three years I have cycled 1,500 miles and raised approximately £4,400 for three different causes. They are:- Cancer Research, Alzheimers and Dementia and Macmillan Nurses. As I will be 80 years old in August the doctors have advised me not to do any more long rides. I had better take things easier from now on. I've had 62 years of cycling, racing, touring etc. I rode my very first race in April 1951. It was the Ely 25 and it snowed while we raced in shorts. I will carry on cycling in the future but at a more leisurely pace. The photo of me is on the Herts Hill Climb near Epping in 1951. □



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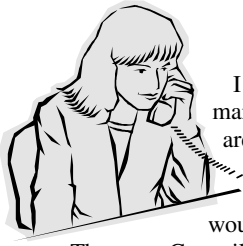
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I hope everyone is enjoying the sunshine and getting ready for Easter, and the many outdoor events I am sure are taking place in the village and surrounding area.

At the time of writing this the Council membership is at an all time low.

The Council is looking for six new Councillors to come and join. If you would like a say in what is happening in your village please come and join us.

The more Councillors that the Council has the workload drops for the remaining few holding the Council together. Please think very hard, any questions please do not hesitate to contact me. Your village NEEDS you.

The Recreation Committee is hard at work at the moment organising events for the Children during the Summer Holidays, mainly the week commencing 12 August and the 19 August. We have sports agreed for four of the days. If you would particularly like to undertake a sport, please let me know. Lazer Gaming may be an option, tag rugby, basketball etc. We need ideas to fill the rest of the time, come on children what would you like to do? Drama? Crafts? Cooking etc you let me know.

I hope you have all signed up for the Intervillage Games at Lynn Sport on the 30 June 2013. It would be good to put Dersingham on the map. Surely a village of this size can cover most of the events easily. The events are Badminton, Table Tennis, Mini Athletics, Indoor Bowls, 5 A Side Football, Darts, Gymnasticators, Mini Soccer, Archery, Fitness Triathlon, Rounders & Netball. For any further information please contact Louise or Michael Rice on 07889378030 or email louiserice005@aol.com. Please do not forget the Taster Roadshow at St George's Junior School on 20 April between 11am to 3.00pm. You might find out that you have a hidden talent.

The work still goes on to get Christmas 2013 in Dersingham more festive. The Council is currently working on lighting up the trees on the roadside of the Recreation Ground, and a Christmas Market. What else would you like to see? Please tell me.

Please remember if you want to advertise in the Village Voice you can still advertise in the following five editions. If you would like to send a relative/friend a copy of our great magazine, just get in touch.

If you have any ideas for the Council's Facebook page or Twitter page please let us know your thoughts.

Well I think that is all from me. If there is something happening in the village that you wish to know more about, or not happy about, please do not hesitate to contact me at the office, and I will do my best to help. □

Sarah



Table Tennis for Fun!

Did you play?

Would you like to have a go?

Vevue - Dersingham Social Club (opposite Budgens)

Provisional details -

When - Mondays 2 to 4pm

Format - Doubles games for enjoyment and exercise

Cost - £2.00 per session

Others - Soft shoes/trainers. Bats and balls provided until you get your own

Anyone interested in a club/drop in sessions please contact John on 01485 542103



A Good Read with Maggie Grey

When reviewing books was first mentioned I was more than happy to do this, but I shall apologise from the start if the books I review in the fiction genre are more aimed at women than men, since this is the type of book I read the most. If the idea takes off, and if the need arises, I can ask my other half to give me a brief review of books he is reading, or one of my male friends who reads. But for now, you get the books read by me, that I think are worth mentioning. And point out also that this is purely my view, you could Google others and get different reactions of course.

‘The Wonderful Weekend Book – Reclaim Life’s Simple Pleasures’ by Elspeth Morgan.

ISBN 978-1-84854-046-0

This isn’t a recent book by any means, it was published in 2008, but I know from my book blog that there are still a lot of people who don’t know about it.

For a lot of people the weekend is that couple of days at the end /beginning of the working week, in which you have to cram all the essential things of life – catching up with housework or family and friends, doing a ‘big shop’ along with half the world and its wife. Or a time when you just do nothing other than the bare essentials, just glad to be off the treadmill of work/school/home for a short time.

But it should be a time for recharging batteries shouldn’t it, whilst at the same time ‘reclaiming life’s simple pleasures’, or some of them at least. ‘A time to reconnect with the seasons and restore the balance in our lives’ the blurb on the dust jacket says.

Arranged in seasons, these ‘simple pleasures’ include planting a herb garden, going foraging, watching newborn lambs at play during Spring; making elderflower cordial, having picnics and beachcombing in Summer; making chutney and brewing hedgerow tipples in Autumn; making marmalade, learning to knit or crochet, celebrating Advent in Winter. Year round you can write proper letters, borrow a pet, take up photography or learn the ukulele, compile a recipe book, visit a museum or gallery. Elspeth also advocates bringing back Sunday, with a family walk, learning family history together, playing games, having a traditional Sunday roast with all the family, having some quiet time.

There are lots of other ideas too, making this book a joy to read and giving lots of ideas for how to spend your weekend, if you can. It is illustrated and really well written, worth buying or borrowing from the library. Maybe if you do the latter, you could spend a weekend compiling your own ‘Weekend Book’ choosing those activities that appeal most to you, that you know you would enjoy?

‘The Book of Idle Pleasures’ edited by Dan Kieran and Tom Hodgkinson.

ISBN 978-0-09-192332-7

This is similar to the previous book, printed in the same year, and is based on the idea that you can have a lot of fun for nothing, or next to nothing anyway; that we in the West have been under the misapprehension that pleasure is costly. The editors of the book aim to disavow you of this notion, and also to show how eco-friendly pleasures can be too.

Some of the ‘idle pleasures’ may sound a little off-beat shall we say, but each to his own. They include Poking the Fire, Slouching, Procrastinating, Strolling through the City, Reclining on the top deck of a bus, Looking at maps, Gathering food from the hedgerows, Sitting on the Loo, Gossip, Leaning on walls, Star-gazing, Smiling, Bell-ringing.... the list goes on, and on.... There are black and white illustrations on every other page, and often very brief descriptions of the ‘idle pleasure’. Take YAWNING for instance... ‘Deliciously contagious but hard to repress in the presence of a tedious bore, yawning is nature’s way of persuading you to take a break. Close your eyes, sit back and relax as the sensation of sloth envelops your mouth. Inhale luxuriously through your nose as your eyes lightly water and then revel in your impending triumph. Growl out your

yawn like a sated lion in the evening sun’.

It’s a book that is highly entertaining,, giving meaning to lots of things you do without thinking, but which reveal themselves as ‘ideal pleasures’ and not just natural functions!

I thought I should include at least one fiction book, and so have chosen crime fiction. Not all women like to read crime fiction, it’s not my favourite genre I have to admit, but having discovered Susan Hill’s crime writing, I am now reading it more often. I have always read classic Agatha Christie, Susan Hill’s work has been likened to hers. It’s not gruesome like some crime fiction these days, and the author herself says that whilst she had enjoyed reading ‘detective fiction’ she knew that she wouldn’t be any good at that type of story with dropped clues and so on. But she felt she could do ‘crime’ fiction, she was more interested in the WHY someone dunnit, than the WHO. She also wanted victims that the reader would care about, and to have one main detective with other regular characters making an appearance. And so Simon Serrailler was born. And on the recommendation of several female friends I decided to give them a try.

‘The Betrayal of Trust’ by Susan Hill. ISBN 978-0-09-949934-3

Published in 2011, this story is set like the others featuring DI Serrailler, in Lafferton, a fictional cathedral town, and where heavy rain has caused flooding, and a subsequent landslide has revealed a shallow grave containing a skeleton. It is the remains of a young teenage girl who had gone missing sixteen years previously, and with a police force that like, many in real life, is suffering with staff shortages, there aren’t the resources for investigating a cold case. DI Serrailler knows that if he wants to solve this mystery, he will have to do it alone.

This, for me, was a page turner, I loved the book and so much so that I am now slowly reading the earlier ones. If you prefer your crime fiction with less of the blood and guts, this is for you.□

Facelift for WRinKL and West Norfolk Mind

With the help of their local charity partners Veolia Environmental Services and Seetec Workplace Employment Programmes, West Norfolk Minds ‘Bits and Pieces for Mind’ furniture store has received a facelift to its furniture recycling business based in King’s Lynn selling not only good quality, budget priced furniture but now also bric-a-brac and a wide range of second hand books to browse through.

Also on the same site at Saunders Yard, (off Austin Street) in partnership with Seetec, West Norfolk Mind are developing a wood recycling project called Wood Recycling in King’s Lynn (WRinKL) which includes it’s surrounding area. The aim of the project is to give unemployed local people and West Norfolk Mind service users the opportunity to learn new skills, be creative, and produce saleable items to sell at their West Norfolk Mind charity shops and community events to raise much needed funds to support their services.

In addition to off-cut timber sales the range of items on sale include hand made wooden garden furniture, planters and bird boxes at very competitive prices, available to order in a variety of colours and can include delivery if required (charges apply).

The project however needs to attract ongoing donations of new and used wood of any size (must be untreated and unpainted) to survive. These can include surplus/damaged timber, off-cuts, used timber i.e scaffold boards or boarding discarded after renovation work.

Bits and Pieces is self funding and reliant on our loyal team of volunteers who run our busy showrooms and van alongside employed staff.

Why not pop in, have a browse, take home a bargain or pick up some information about the other services West Norfolk Mind can provide.

Bits and Pieces is open from 8.30am to 4pm Monday to Thursday and 9am – 4pm Fridays so if you have furniture or other items you would like to donate, or would like to ask about what we have in stock, please give us a call on 01553 763193.

For further information please contact Zena Penty, Volunteer Co-ordinator 07585 279215



Sandringham Squirrels by Alan Coleby



Girl squirrels

Ella
Eve
Cassie
Thora

*Stories for children: a group of eight young
squirrels play, feed and explore in the woods
of Sandringham.*

Boy squirrels

Scoot
Chip
Barney
Gus

Nests and Young Ones

Scoot, Ella and Eve had been very glad of their nest through the long, cold winter. They had all been born in the spring and had left the nest for the first time in early summer.

Living in the summer was easy and it was fun. There was plenty of food, and the two sisters and their brother had to learn all about what things could be eaten. There were many places to explore and many dangers to be faced. There were many other squirrels to meet and get to know. Some were nice to know; some were not.

But in the winter it was very cold. Mum had not had any more babies in the year they were born, and all through the winter the four of them stayed in the nest and kept each other warm. They slept for many days at a time and woke up only when they were hungry. Then they went out from the nest to find some water to drink and to get some food that had been hidden in the autumn.

Now it was getting warmer. The days were longer and the nights were shorter. There was much more singing by the birds in the trees and now the frosts had gone, the buds were showing green and there were more insects about. This would be what was attracting more birds, though there were not yet any birds' eggs in their nests to eat. Nor were there any nuts, acorns and fruit, as there were in the summer, so, even now, there was not much to eat.

Still, Scoot's family was thankful for the longer days and the warmer weather. The sisters thought that this was what was making their mother so restless. There was sleeping only at nights now, and not for days at a time. Everyone was in and out exploring places all day. This made them



more hungry and so they had to search constantly for food.

Mum was fussing around a lot with the nest. It had been strongly built in the fork of a beech tree quite high up. Just where it was built, the fork flattened out a bit and so it seemed very safe and was shielded on two sides. But the family had spent all last summer and winter in it and it was getting a little ragged and broken in places.

‘Let’s see if we can get some twigs to put round and strengthen it,’ said Mum to Ella and Eve.

So off they went in the woods around their beech tree and soon found lots of twigs – large ones, small ones, twisty ones and straight ones.

‘Come on! You help, too,’ Ella called to Scoot, as she saw him walking around, not doing much, and not looking very hard for twigs.

‘Alright, alright,’ replied Scoot, and made more of an effort.

Then they all took their twigs to Mum at the nest. She soon separated the older, drier twigs from the others and threw them away.

‘They’ll soon snap,’ she told the younger squirrels, ‘and that will weaken the nest. I want the tougher twigs that you can bend a bit and they won’t snap. Can you go and get a few more, Ella and Eve? And when you’ve finished, go along to those birch trees at the gorse end of the wood. You’ll find they’ll have some loose bark. Pull it off in strips and bring it here. That will make a really tough base.

‘No, not you, Scoot,’ she said, as she saw him galloping off with the girls. ‘I’ve got another job for you, so I can see how much you’ve collected. If you go over to where the houses are, you will see some moss in the lawns. Tear some out and bring it here. You might also find moss in old, last year’s birds’ nests. The birds won’t be using the nests yet, and they might not use them at all this year. If you can find any shaped like a ball with a hole in the side, they’ll have most moss, and you can bring the whole nest and I’ll sort it out. But look in cup-shaped nests as well and on the sides of trees and in grass.’

They set to work quite happily and soon they had a good collection of moss, twigs and bark. Scoot had also brought a small plastic bag that he was pleased with.

‘No. I don’t want that,’ said Mum. ‘It’s smooth and I can’t shape it. I can’t bind it in with the other things. Throw it away.’

‘I thought it might keep some of the water out when it rains,’ said Scoot.

‘No. It’s not worth it. That’s not as important as binding the nest together.’

The young squirrels watched as Mum wound the strips of bark and twigs round the outside and stuck them together with the moss and hollowed it all out by sitting in it. She was losing some of her fur as well, so she pulled some more out, and put it round as a lining. The young ones watched carefully because they realised that it might not be long before they would have to do that job for themselves.

‘Now there’s something I need to tell you all,’ she told the three of them when she had finished. ‘You will all have to go away and not live with me in this nest. I am going to have some more babies soon, and they will have to live with me in here for the summer and then through the winter while they learn all the things you learned.’

‘Oh! That’s a bit sudden,’ said Eve, who looked very sad, and so did Ella and Scoot.

‘Well, that’s how it is,’ said Mum. ‘I had to turn some of the young ones away when I had you three as babies, so now you have to go as well.’ Ella, Eve and Scoot still looked very sad.

‘I’ll tell you what, though. I feel a bit sorry for you, so I’ll help you make another nest in another beech tree that I know which has a hole in it. We’ll all gather some more twigs and bark and moss – damp moss if you can get it. We’ll just make it cup-shaped and you can all live in there until you have some babies of your own, and then you’ll want to go off and build yet another nest further away in the wood. Don’t forget to do some wee on the bottom of the tree you choose, so that you’ll know where you live.’

‘Babies of our own?’ said Ella, getting excited. ‘Coo! That’ll be good.’

‘Yes,’ said Scoot. ‘It will. You’ll soon have some of my friends after you.’ □

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Rev. Kim Nally

Hara is the first in a mini series on five Old Testament characters.

When I was a lad Sunday tea time was a time for David Kossoff to read stories from the, Hebrew Bible, our Old Testament, on TV. Often it was extra time for us kids because Sunday School was of an afternoon. Afternoon Sunday school was also known as “happy hour” by adults! However in contrast to the Sunday School teachers David Kossoff made the stories live with his obvious love for them. As I remember the stories he told were as relevant to him as they were when they were first told. He was able to communicate this love to a wider audience with his warmth, his wonderful voice and character acting skills. These programmes were truly memorable with timeless tales and lasting truths that stay with you through life. Skilfully David Kossoff could bring out the drama of the stories and introduce you to their special spiritual and moral meanings. If this was something that would have to wait for further maturity and life experience at least these stories became part of your world and outlook. They could live and thrive just as stories of course. However over the years these stories from scripture have given access to new layers and dimensions of meaning and understanding, certainly for me and for many others.



One such story is the tale of Ruth the Moabite woman. She was a widow, as were her mother in law Naomi and sister in law Orpah. When Naomi wanted to return to her own people in Bethlehem, Ruth refused to leave her and returned with her. There Ruth sought employment in the harvest fields of Boaz, a kinsman of her late husband. He showed himself kindly disposed towards her shall we say! and protected her, eventually marrying her and together having a son, named Obed. The story of Ruth is very ancient, but the book of Ruth in the Old Testament which tells it may have been written at any time between the reign of King David and the 4th Century B.C. Usually the story highlights Ruth’s amazing devotion to her mother in law and dead husband’s family, her readiness to leave her own land and traditions for a strange land with new customs and a new religion. There are, however, other layers to this powerful story with modern resonances.

The story of Ruth asks questions about immigration, mixed marriages and tolerance as well as the more obvious but no less remarkable loyalty of Ruth. It is thought the story first began to circulate at the time the exiles return from captivity in Babylon. During the exile the Jewish community would not have remained distinct in Babylon had an exclusive policy towards foreigners not been adopted. The returning exile however continued this policy outlawing mixed marriages and annulling previously contracted ones. These were drastic measures inspired no doubt by the fear that contact with other religions and cultures might tempt some Israelites to foreign forms of worship, which had proved the undoing of the nation in the past. The writer of Ruth points out that Israel’s greatest king, David, was himself the result of a mixed marriage. David’s great grandmother was Ruth the Moabitess no less. In fact the story really goes to suggest that many other peoples and nations became members of the covenant community through mixed marriages with Hebrews and like Ruth came to know and worship the God of Israel. And to top that if it were at all possible, the New Testament traces the genealogy of Jesus through David and consequently through Ruth (Matthew Chapter 1.v5). Also of course the Hebrew Boaz acts with justice and respect, compassion and generosity towards Ruth and her family. In both strands of the story there is a timeless plea for tolerance between peoples and races, something we do well to think about in our world today. □



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Items of Bric-a-Brac should be delivered to the Church Hall as early as possible on Friday 26th April, from 9.00a.m. to 12.00 noon.

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 and general enquiries contact: Neil Adams (01485) 540857
Books contact: Roger Leedham (01485) 544764

Please make a note on your calendar& tell your friends

Rotary Matters

from Rotary Club President Phil Newell and Rotary member Rene Rooth

Rotarians world-wide are working to remove Polio for ever! People who have read or heard about the events of Hunstanton & District Rotary Club will know how we try to support local charities to assist in their aims and, in particular, how we try to support people with disabilities. But how many know of our work to support people abroad – people who are in dire need of assistance? For instance, in 2004 as a result of the tsunami that hit Sri Lanka a party of 13 Rotarians from the Hunstanton Club went out to help build a much-needed extension to an orphanage. More recently we have provided equipment for a school in Indonesia and paid for an artesian well to supply water there. Then we have bought aquaboxes to be shipped abroad to help people in emergencies and we have financially helped Heacham Infant and Nursery School to fill shoeboxes which they have sent to needy people.

Over a period of 25 years we have given money to help to rid polio from the world. This year the recent Richard Dimbleby Lecture on the BBC featured Bill Gates, the Microsoft Computer magnate, talking about polio, its problems and how to remove it from this planet for ever. He has given large sums of money to assist the work. In his talk he mentioned Rotary and its 1.2 million members spread in Clubs across the world and Rotarians who have been working tirelessly to bring vaccine to all children - millions of them. Then the Times magazine recently had a lengthy feature on Rotary's work against Polio. Our club will continue to provide contributions until this crippling and killing disease is finally removed. The club is shortly to receive talks and advice given at its regular weekly meetings from senior Rotarians who are in the forefront of international work in Rotary, such as those described.

Our first meeting in January was a business meeting. Business meetings are held once a month. Following this, we have had some interesting meetings on a variety of topics during the rest of January.

Early on, we listened to Elaine Clutton, our local Mayor, who spoke on the project which has secured the use of a café in the centre of Hunstanton for the benefit of young people. Funding has been secured to train volunteers to help support the young people involved. Apart from a place for them to meet there will be courses to follow and free internet use. This will be helpful for career interests as well as providing a place where issues can be discussed with friends. Rotary is always keen to help today's young people and is supporting the project.

Not all our meetings are spent on deciding how we should distribute money to worthy causes however. Rotary meetings aim to be enjoyable and to engender fellowship. For example, last year's Mayor of Hunstanton and District, Carol Bower, our most recent member of our Rotary Club, told us briefly about some of her life experiences. Her father, being in the Navy, she travelled a lot with her family in her early life - Ireland, Malta, Kent, Wiltshire and Cornwall. She enjoyed sports and was a keen hockey player, playing for Norfolk, when the family finally settled. She trained as a nurse at St. Thomas's Hospital in London, specialising in renal dialysis.

On her marriage she took happily to rural life, running a smallholding while bringing up two daughters. On returning to Norfolk she worked for a time at Cromer Hospital and then at Holt Surgery and Gresham's School. At the latter she was able to explore all manner of other interests, including bee-keeping, cadet force, outward bound and so on.

After obtaining a science degree with the Open University, she changed to teaching primary subjects at Repton and elsewhere. On retiring to Hunstanton, where her husband taught at Glebe School, her interests led to her being invited to join the local council. Her work there in the fields of community and youth projects was quickly recognised for its value, leading to her being elected Mayor for 2011-2012. Many of you may remember the celebrations of the Royal Wedding and Diamond Jubilee, which were organised under her leadership.

We had a well-supported meeting with Inner Wheel Club members and our partners at the end of the month. We were honoured to receive a visit from Reis Leming's son, Michael, daughter

Deborah and Kath, his second wife. Reis rescued 27 people in Hunstanton in the floods of 31st January, 1953. He sadly died last November but we were fortunate in that his wife and family were able to travel from the USA to be with us and to attend the memorial service and wreath laying ceremony in the town. Reis had received the George Medal for his heroic rescues.



After a meal we were entertained by Christine Humphries who gave us an intriguing talk on family life in a Norfolk Village (Hingham) in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Her mother was the youngest of 17 children. The family were a hard working, fairground family making and selling leather shoes and other items. They had a good diet including rabbit, pigeon and game; vegetables were home grown and stored during the winter. All the children went to school though usually leaving before they were 14 yrs old. Even then this family knew the importance of education. The speaker had brought various items to show us, including hand made petticoats, children's shoes and boots, a warming pan and Victorian underwear! All the clothes were hand sewn, sewing being taught in school.

Rotarian Brian Devlin thanked Christine for a most entertaining lecture which kept us spellbound!

The photograph shows Christine Humphries and her assistant Marion Cross with a selection of items used by the family from a bygone era. For more information about the Rotary Club contact Phil Newell, tel 01485 533864 or Mike Warnes, tel 01485 534392 □

A little of your time could make a big difference...

Last year our Benefits Outreach service helped older people living in Norfolk receive a total of **£1,715,000** in unclaimed benefits. This would not have been possible without our valuable volunteers.

Volunteering benefits not just the older person receiving your support, but also their family, friends and the wider community - and you!

Volunteering for Age UK Norfolk is an opportunity to learn new skills and gain valuable experience, meet new people and make new friends, work within a friendly, professional organisation and have the satisfaction of knowing that you are making a real difference to people's lives.

But don't just take our word for it...

Here are some views from current volunteers:

"Since volunteering for Age UK Norfolk, I have gained a tremendous amount. I have a personal feeling of being able to help, if only in a small way, and giving something back to the community of which I feel a part. So to anyone who is considering becoming a volunteer for Age UK Norfolk, I would say "go for it, you won't regret it!" Information and Advice volunteer

"I love to fix things: working on the Information and Advice desk I know that I have played my part in Age UK Norfolk changing lives." Ann, Information and Advice volunteer

"I feel I am doing something useful in advocacy and get a lot of positive feedback from clients. I have also learnt new skills and my knowledge continues to grow." Jo, Advocacy volunteer

"Age UK Norfolk has a very professional approach and they offer several different service areas. One would be sure to be right for you!" Celia, Money Matters volunteer

We offer a wide variety of volunteering opportunities throughout Norfolk. Call our volunteer recruitment line on 01603 785241 or check out our website www.ageuknorfolk.org.uk to find out more.

Just a selection of volunteering roles at Age UK Norfolk:

· Telephone befriender, Day centre volunteer, Administrative assistant, Fundraiser, Information and advice assistant, Benefits outreach advisor, Older person's advocate, Trustee, Money Matters financial advocate. □

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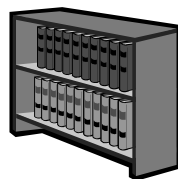
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Dersingham Library



DS tryout at Dersingham Library 3 April 2013 14:00 - 15:00

If you'd like to spend some time playing DS games before you borrow them, then come along with your DS console to our Nintendo DS event! Children under 8 must be accompanied by an adult.

Rathburger Night 4 April 2013 18:00 - 19:00

Come along and listen to the latest brilliant David Walliams book and take a copy home to finish. Please book in advance.

DVD Borrow one get one free (BOGOF) 4 April 18:00 - 19:00

Borrow the latest DVD bestsellers for just £2 for 2 nights.

Dersingham Weekly Knit and Knatter Group 4 April 2013 10:30 - 12:00

A weekly drop in morning for those who knit or crochet (or those who are interested in learning how to do both). If you are a knitter and are interested in helping others learn or if you would like to learn a new skill then please come along. Coffee and tea provided.

Big Book Sale at Dersingham Library 6 April 2013 10:00 - 13:00

Come along and grab a bargain.

Dersingham Library Scrabble Club 8 April 2013 13:30 - 15:30

Come along and make new friends at this weekly club. Refreshments provided.

Dersingham Library Crime Book Club 8 April 2013 18:00 - 19:00

New members are always welcome. Call the library to find out what we'll be discussing.

DVD Borrow one get one free (BOGOF) 8 April 18:00 - 19:00

Borrow the latest DVD bestsellers for just £2 for 2 nights.

Shopping online - all you need to know to shop safely 9 April 10:00 - 12:00

Learn about the risks and safeguards of shopping online and what you have to do to make a successful purchase. This is a free course run by Norfolk Adult Education Service. Places are limited so please book by calling the library on 01485 540181

Try your hand at speed stacking 10 April 10:30-12:00

Macmillan Coffee morning 11 April 10:30 - 12:30

Enjoy a cake and a cuppa and help us raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support. You can also browse and borrow our range of Macmillan Cancer Care guides.

DVD Borrow one get one free (BOGOF) 11 April 18:00 - 19:00

Borrow the latest DVD bestsellers for just £2 for 2 nights

DVD sale 13 April 2013 10:00 - 13:00

DVDs at bargain prices.

Great Big Read Goes to the Movies at Dersingham Library

Dersingham Library is on a mission to see how many members of the local community they can encourage to read and share the same books at the same time. The books we have chosen are One shot by Lee Child ('The thing about Lee Child's books is that you can't put the damn things down.' - Independent on Sunday) and We bought a zoo by Benjamin Mee ('Mee writes most movingly about his wife's fatal illness, his children coming to terms with this, his sprightly old mum and, of course, his 200 wild animals in all their diverse glory.' - Daily Mail) The read will run from then until the end of April. You can share your views on the Village read via our website at <http://norfolklibrarybookreviewblog.wordpress.com/> or on the Village Read noticeboard at the library.

Alison Thorne

Dersingham Rainbows, Brownies & Guides celebrating Thinking Day

The Dersingham Rainbows, Brownies and Guides came together with the other units which make up their district; the Rainbows, Brownies and Guides from Snettisham, Ingoldisthorpe, Gayton and Sandringham to celebrate Thinking Day at St George's School.

Thinking Day is 22nd February (we held our celebration on 1st March) and is a day when Guides all over the world celebrate and remember that they are part of a World wide family. The date was chosen as it was the joint birthday of our founders - Lord and Lady Baden-Powell.



At our celebration, the girls made flags of different countries and found out about Guiding in those countries - although we are part of a world wide family we are not all called Rainbows, Brownies and Guides and made flowers in the countries' flag colours.

We also had refreshments, played games, had an indoor campfire before finishing with a renewal of our Promises. Everyone who attended received a World Thinking Day 2013 badge.

Here's to next year. □

Elizabeth Wheeler

Sports Taster Roadshow Timetable All Ages Welcome

Sport	Time	Venue
Archery	11:00am – 12:30pm	St Georges CE Junior School
Football	11:00 – 12:00	St Georges CE Junior School
Cricket	11:30 – 12:30	St Georges CE Junior School
Athletics	12:00 – 1:00pm	St Georges CE Junior School
Badminton	12:00 – 1:00pm	St Georges CE Junior School
Table Tennis	1:00 – 3:00pm	St Georges CE Junior School
Fishing	1:00 – 3:00pm	St Georges CE Junior School
Tennis	1:00 – 2:00pm	St Georges CE Junior School
Netball	1:30 – 2:30	St Georges CE Junior School
Rounders	2:00 – 3:00	St Georges CE Junior School

Prove Dersingham is the 'Best in West Norfolk' and enter the Village Games at King's Lynn on Sunday 30th June

For more information visit www.activenorfolk.org/villagegames or call 01603731566



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- Cricket • Athletics • Badminton • Netball
- Fishing • plus other sports

Equipment is provided, coaches will be present.
Adult and children of all ages and abilities are welcome!



For more information, please contact Amy East on
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End of an Era - Exciting New Epoch!



From April 2013 our two schools will be amalgamated to become an all-through Primary School -

Dersingham V.A. Primary and Nursery School.

Mrs. Gayle Platt has been appointed as Headteacher of the new school.

The new school will initially remain on the current two sites but it is hoped that the refurbished and extended school building will be ready for the whole school to be on one site from the summer of 2014.

Our Mission Statement is 'Sowing the Seeds for Success' - planting has already started as we build on our current successes and branch out into the future!

Contact numbers for our new school remain as before while we are on two sites:-

Infants and Nursery - 01485 540022

Juniors - 01485 540308

Chubby Boy's Patch

by Vladimir

It is about time that I am allowed to tell what busy day I am having all the time. My day starts at 4am. Yes, that's right, 4am. Most humans don't even know that there are two 4 o'clocks in one day.

I wake up because my tummy is rumbling. So I start to make my way from my bed in the lounge to the humans, bed and start walking all over them. The male human usually makes some undefined noises but the female one starts stroking me. I am half way there. I now head butt her and she lifts her duvet for me to get underneath. That is so tempting that I sometimes forget my tummy and cuddle up there with her and go back to sleep for a while. If I do not forget my tummy, I ignore the invitation and start pushing my nose onto hers. Now I have her full attention and she gets up and gives my some food. After that I feel fat and have a snooze on her bed.

At 6am, when the male's square thing makes a noise, he gets up and I am up too. On his way out the bedroom I am making sure I am in his way every step. That makes him have to pick me up and I am being given a lift to our kitchen for a 2nd breakfast. But now I am not alone anymore, Armani makes her way down from the kitchen cupboards, Johnnie is stretching herself to the kitchen stretch by stretch and Sidney is already waiting. Now the four of us having a snack and after we finished, we go altogether into the humans' bedroom to nap on or next to the female human. At around 8 Sidney is getting up and sits next to our female's head and starts purring not just for England, but for the whole world. Sidney is more or less the equivalent of the male's square box for our female. She gets up and we all make sure, this time joined by Meetze and Sir Lancelot, that we are in her way every step. It is really not just a ritual anymore, it is an art how we do this every day. We all go into the kitchen and have a 3rd breakfast, well I am having a 3rd one. By the time all the food is gone, the humans, bed is made for us to rest, which we graciously accept. And sometimes I can hear the female leaving the house and when she comes back around 12 from somewhere, waking me up – totally uncalled for by the way – by making this strange noise with the door, I have a biiiig stretch and stroll towards her. She picks me up and cuddles me, giving Sir Lancelot a pat on the head on her way to the kitchen, where I am getting served my lunch joined by Armani and sometimes also by Sidney. Shortly after lunch I am having a wash, this is so exhausting, that I am laying down for a good couple of hours on the settee. My sleep gets interrupted by either Johnnie or Sir Lancelot, because it is playtime. Playing makes me hungry and I am snooping around Johnnie's Christmas toy, where there are always some nice bits hidden. It is quite hard work to get all those nice bits out and it takes me a good half hour to fill my belly this time. Especially since some of the bits I fiddle out get stolen by Sidney or Armani. After the interaction with this strange but useful toy I am absolutely knackered. Sometimes I don't even make it to the settee and I just fall over on the rug and go to sleep. The next time my dreams get interrupted by the male at dark o'clock, which can only mean that it is dinner time. I am having dinner with Armani and a little wash after that. I am just about done, when the female human comes home and everybody follows her into the kitchen. I don't really have choice but have some more dinner. Obviously I need another wash and I am ready for bed. I am always amazed how Beauty gets there, but she is always the first in the humans' bed. I do not see or hear her all day, but at bed time, she just appears. Well, whatever, I close my beautiful blue eyes and that is it – until the humans decide to go to bed too. They make such a fuss that I wake up and have to move. On the way to my own bed I coincidentally end up in the kitchen, where I find that some of us haven't finished their dinner. Now, that I can't just leave there. It will go off if I don't eat it, so I do. Now I am just about full and after a little wash can go finally into my bed. That is usually about midnight.

The Old Biddie and her Cottage Garden

Valerie Anckorn

I've just got a reminder from the editor of Village Voice and now have a deadline to race towards. Usually, I am a good old woman and write well in advance, but I am currently writing my memoirs for the family archives, which I am sure will be riveting, but will probably be consigned promptly into the bin, unread by my children, once the work is completed. I live, of course, ever in hope that I will find a publisher keen to print the story of my childhood as a war baby. This, however, is most unlikely but it has been a pleasant task, whiling away the hours during the winter months. Once you go back in time, the memories coming flooding back, and it has surprised me how much I have remembered.

I was going to add that the weather hasn't been good enough for gardening, but I notice that throughout the winter months my neighbours have been working in their garden in all weathers – so I have no excuse but to say that I just haven't fancied any gardening yet, and have been far too busy indoors writing away at my computer!

There is so much to do in the garden, as well. I will have to force myself out soon and get going, clipping back the buddleias and other bushes that have grown out of hand before the spring growth, but as I have mentioned before, I was glad this hadn't been done, for when sat here writing, and looking out of the window at the same time, I have watched so many little birds availing themselves of the seeds left on stems – so my laziness has been helpful to keep the birds alive.

A couple of years ago I was pleased to report that I had put up four arches in the garden, which had only cost me £9.00 each. I thought they would last long enough, but actually, they have not. One has collapsed completely, another is bent and will soon go – the other two still stand, but only because not much has grown up them. I will have to replace them with some stouter and clearly more expensive ones. You get what you pay for, don't you.

The back garden is still awash and water logged. I can't walk out there at all unless I have my wellies on and it is no pleasure – so I am turning a blind eye to that until the sun comes out and dries the soil – but everywhere is a mess. Of course, once flowers (and weeds) thrust through the soil and begin to bloom, no matter what, it will look pretty again.

Our cherry trees have grown so tall and need lopping. Him indoors mutters that he will have a go this year. I do hope he does, because while I love trees, they do cut out the sunlight, and in a small garden trees need to be trimmed.

All the bulb and plant magazines have been coming through the post. I love looking through these and writing down what I want to order. This usually comes to about £1,000. – so I chuck the lot in the bin and go without!

I keep looking online for 'sit up and beg' bikes. I need exercise, and because my joints get too painful, I am told that cycling is the way to go. They are not cheap, and then I think – well, I don't seem to find time to get out in the garden, walk the dog, or do my chores, so how am I going to find time to waste going out on a cycle, no matter how beautifully sit-up-and-beg it might be!

Whilst going through my memory banks for the memoirs, I recalled a time in 1947 when there was a village fete with competitions for children. One was to collect as many wild flowers as possible – one only of each species – and display them in a jam jar. Well, I picked so many that I had to put them in two jam jars, and my display actually looked awful, as they were so jammed in the jar – no that wasn't an intended pun – while the other children's displays looked very pretty. However, I won the prize as I had found by far the most of different wild flowers. The terrible thing is that today, I doubt that anyone could find even half a jar of wild flowers – so many have disappeared from our fields and hedgerows, where once so many grew.

My parents told me that when they were children wild flowers grew abundantly *everywhere* and that there were many, many more, a hundred years ago than even in my own childhood. I know I go on about it in my column, but the ecology *is* suffering and when one thing goes, so does

another – then other things get out of hand and we end up with an imbalance...and while we might regret that birds and wild flowers are not so abundant now, in the end it will be we, the human race, that will suffer.

That's enough of being The Oracle.

Just to finish off: Whilst writing my memories, I decided to Google 'Doodle-bugs' which is what we called the V-1 rockets that went over the houses during the war en route to bomb London. We were only 20 miles away from the city – which is not far as the crow flies - or doodle-bugs in this case - and sometimes, they fell short and dropped near us. We listened carefully, because if the sound stopped, we knew that the engine had cut out and the bomb was going to drop with only seconds for us to get to safety. Shelters were no use for direct hits, but one needed to get to a safe place away from debris and ceilings collapsing. The house would rock and shake when the bombs went off nearby. On one Google site there was a recording of the V-1. When I put the soundtrack on I just couldn't believe my reaction! I hyperventilated, my heart palpitated, I cried and shook all over. While I knew it was only a recording, and that my unconscious mind was warning me of danger – a hidden memory – I was astonished at how I felt. It took me about ten minutes to gather my wits and get back to normal. To think that hearing that noise after 67 years could affect me so physically, is quite amazing.

By now, the spring flowers should be coming into bloom and the promise of summer beckoning. Let us hope that we get a sunny season this time, with no more rain. We've surely got enough to fill the reservoirs now! Happy Gardening. □

BRAND NEW FEMALE CHOIR FOR KING'S LYNN

Sing For Wellbeing is launching a brand new Singing Group especially for females who are aged between 15 and 45 years old.

Beginning on 15th April the 12-week term will be held in King's Lynn on Mondays from 7pm – 9pm and offers a special introductory discount for the Choirs' very first term.

"The Lynn Female Vocale will be a performing choir designed to celebrate the female voice in all its creativity, inspiration and passion," said Carol O'Neill, Natural Voice Practitioner, Qualified Counsellor and founder of Sing For Wellbeing.

"The Choir offers women a chance to sing and bond in an imaginative, informal and fun environment where freedom of expression is encouraged."



"There has been a great surge in Military Wives Choirs since Gareth Malone made them popular in recent years. He has shown that there can be solidarity, support and friendship and that lives can be changed in a positive, life affirming way. "

Working on the same principles I feel that there is also a place for Civilian women to sing together in cooperative and supportive groups," she added. Singing is known for its ability to make us feel better as we breathe more, expanding the lungs to support the heart and lift the spirits. It doesn't matter if you can't read music and even if you have no experience of singing in groups it's definitely worth putting your brave boots on and having a go. Those who are keen to take part should telephone 01328 838316, email carol@singforwellbeing.co.uk or visit www.singforwellbeing.co.uk.



Steve Davis **...looking back and moving forward!**

If there is one person who has got me involved in Dersingham village life more than any other, it has to be our esteemed editor and Village Voice Live co-ordinator (amongst a host of other roles): Tony Bubb. Five years ago, with some uncertainty I placed an advert in our much admired magazine Village Voice offering my services as a home computing tutor. One day I got a phone call asking me how I would like to write an article or two on computing for the magazine, suggesting that it might help me to get better known! So it was that my first article entitled Google – It could be bigger than you think was published in the October 2008 edition. I got a few encouraging responses. One particularly memorable one came from a neighbour who said “I enjoyed your article – couldn’t understand a word of it, but it was good!” Since that time I have not missed an issue – this being my 28th, though that is nothing compared to some of our other long-standing regular contributors. Of course it did not stop there as quickly I was drawn into organising the distribution of Village Voice, serving on the Parish Council’s Communications Committee, taking charge of the Parish Council Website, eventually becoming a Parish Councillor myself, as well as serving, speaking and even singing at Village Voice Live, all thanks largely to the subtly persuasive and persistent you-know-who. I must say though that for the most-part, it has been a very pleasurable and worthwhile experience.

Although my ticket into writing for the magazine was as a computing correspondent, with each successive article I found myself wanting to push the boundaries into other areas of interest: particularly our local natural environment, people and places, and even occasionally venturing into the odd bit of theology and meaning of life, as I saw it! Once or twice our editor has dropped the odd hint to draw me back to my technical brief, but in fairness I have at least tried to include website references whatever the subject!

Four years ago I mentioned in an article about my trip to see my brother and sister-in-law who live on the Caribbean island of Cozumel in Mexico and of being able to cheat on two weeks of winter. As I hinted in my last article Lindsey and I have just returned from a similar visit. You can imagine what a relief it was with all the cold, wintery conditions and travel disruptions that have beset us this year to actually make it onto the plane soaring towards two weeks of shorts, tee-shirt and sandals weather. Mind you our holiday took a somewhat different course as my poor brother had slipped and broken his hip just five days before we travelled. But for us at least the warm air and Mexican Caribbean scenery and hospitality was a tonic, though so as not to lay it on too thick, we did experience some pretty torrential rain too! However, I do not want to give too much of the game away here as I will be sharing the experience at Village Voice Live on Tuesday 2nd April at 7:30pm in St Nicholas Church Hall, with pictures of the people, sights, scenes and wildlife of Cozumel together with the changes we have seen during 18 years of visits.

One year ago, I wrote an article extolling the virtues of the Kindle e-book reader that my daughter had received for Christmas. This drew a few comments from readers, mostly saying how much they preferred the tactile feel and smell of real paper, though one did say that it had inspired them to go ahead and place an order! Well, my wife and I have since become avid Kindle users ourselves. In fact I would go as far to say that during the last year, I have read more fiction and non-fiction books on more subjects than in any other year of my life. Quite apart from the wealth of free books available, every day there is a daily deal offer just one particular e-book for 99p, a huge discount of often 80% or more for that day only. Most of them I ignore of course, but having succumbed to some 60 or more during the year, keeping four or five of them on the go at once, it has truly transformed my reading habits! Opting as we did for the touch-screen version of the Kindle, whenever I encounter an unfamiliar word, instead of just having to skip over it hoping it might become clearer later or promising myself that I will look it up later (which I never do), all I do now is place my finger on the word and up pops a built in dictionary definition. Similarly when reading a novel, I can easily forget who the characters are from one night to the next. The built in

X-Ray facility draws together a summary of all the references to each character and place names within the plot. Whether I am in bed, on the plane or train, camping or at the beach hut, I have instant access to a whole library!

Three years ago, I wrote a piece singing the praises of the then fairly new Windows 7 that I had just installed on the laptop that has since served me well until just recently when things were slowing to snail pace especially when trying to edit very large files. So, I have just taken the plunge and equipped myself with a new so-called all-in-one desktop PC with touchscreen capability, wireless keyboard and mouse together with the latest Windows 8, derided by many, but actually I find I rather like! Many features of Windows 8 are certainly different from those we have grown used to in the past and it does take some relearning but, having mastered its idiosyncrasies, it is very flexible whether using mouse or touchscreen and so much faster in loading up and closing down than previous versions! I have also installed the new Microsoft Office 2013 suite, which includes Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, OneNote, Access and importantly Publisher 2013. Actually, I opted to do so using the new Office 365 Home Premium version that allows installation on up to five home computers/tablets etc on an annual subscription basis (see office365.com, though possibly cheaper from amazon.co.uk). One of the main reasons for this 'extravagance' is so that I am well kitted out to take over, as you may have read earlier, the editing of Village Voice as from the next issue. Tony relinquishes the role after a five-year stint (actually 30 issues), though he will for the time being retain responsibility for advertising, and I have no doubt will be contributing the odd future article. He is indeed a very hard act to follow! Building on Bob Tipling's sound editorship over the preceding four and a half years, and others before him, I think we would all agree that, through Tony's applied experience and energy, Village Voice has gone from strength to strength, bringing in colour, then thinner smoother paper to accommodate the ever-increasing variety of content. Over 3000 of our magazines each month are appreciated not only throughout Dersingham but any around and about who can get hold of a copy as well as those much farther afield who access it online from dersingham.org.uk. So with it is with some trepidation that I trust I will continue to do justice to its immediate future and look forward to being in touch with existing contributors and hopefully encouraging some new ones.

All this does mean that I shall be pulling back from other Parish Council involvement at a time when so much help and support is needed and some new blood too! There are now a number of vacancies for new councillors and to serve on its various committees (Environment, Recreation, Communications, Finance & General Purposes and Dersingham Centre). I know that folk often suggest that the council never seems to do anything or that councillors are only in it for their own benefit. I do not believe that either of these are the case; much goes on behind the scenes and stringent controls as to how business is conducted are firmly in place. The Parish Council is simply made up of ordinary people with ordinary everyday life skills along with their respective hang-ups too of course! But they are willing to make the commitment to try to help utilise and arrange for limited resources to be put to best effect within their community. It can be rewarding, frustrating, enriching and at times demoralising but it does need to go on if we wish to retain any form of local control. Please give the matter some serious thought and if you would like to know more, then get in touch with the Parish Office or attend a Council Meeting as published on the noticeboards around the village or on our website at dersingham.org.uk.

In the meantime Spring has arrived and I for one do not want to miss out on it, stuck in front of a computer! We live in such a great part of the country; let's together make the most of it. May I wish you a very Happy Easter with all the newness of life that goes with it!□



Email: steve@davista.co.uk or visit www.davista.co.uk for links to docs, photos & videos.

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 82	Wednesday 1st May	Monday 20th May
No 83	Wednesday 10th July	Monday 29th July
No 84	Wednesday 11th September	Monday 30th September

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

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 £17.20 for an eighth of a page black and white or £26.00 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, 4a Post Office Rd, Dersingham PE31 6HP by **Wednesday 1st May 2013**

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, 4a Post Office Rd, Dersingham PE31 6HP or e-mail; villagevoice@dersingham.org.uk before the **deadline date of mid-day on Wednesday 1st May 2013 for publication on Monday 20th May 2013**.

(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.

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In the office - Anita Moore, Distribution - Steve Davis

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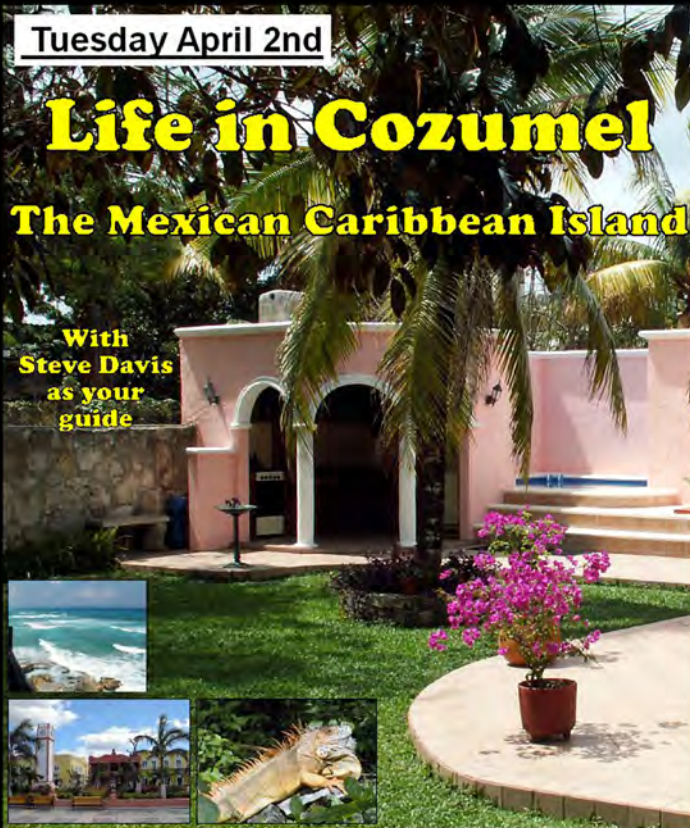
VILLAGE VOICE LIVE

Tuesday April 2nd

Life in Cozumel

The Mexican Caribbean Island

With
Steve Davis
as your
guide



St Nicholas Church Hall, Manor Road, Dersingham.
7.30 pm Admission £3.50 including refreshments & raffle

VILLAGE VOICE LIVE

Tuesday May 7th

Is the Bus a thing of the past?

Ben Colson

managing director
of Norfolk Green
discusses the
history of
public transport



St Nicholas Church Hall, Manor Road, Dersingham.
7.30 pm Admission £3.50 including refreshments & raffle