

Number 91

December 2014

Village Voice

The Dersingham Magazine



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M. J. S. K.

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Editor's Notes



Our Indian summer seems to have drawn to a swift end and the Pink Footed Geese are already heralding the unique winter experiences of our locality.

Our seasonal cover picture for this year was specially painted by my good friend Mike Smith in his studio at 17 Old Hall Drive. If you would like to see, or indeed purchase, the original or any other of his splendid works, he can be contacted on 01485 541262 or email: jamijazuk@gmail.com. Thanks Mike!

This year, we have taken advantage of some great off-peak holiday bargains, something I could never do when I was restricted to an academic calendar. In October Lindsey and I were pleased to be able to spend a very happy week in the sheltered bay of Elounda in eastern Crete. The particular lead we wanted to follow up there was to visit Spinalonga, a small strategically placed island at the mouth of the natural harbour, with a checkered history of ownership and fortification. During the last century however it was adopted as an isolated area to banish those suffering with leprosy, right up until 1957 in fact when proper medical care for this debilitating disease became available. More recently this became the subject of a popular and very moving factual novel "The Island" by Victoria Hislop (wife of Ian Hislop), who is now regarded as something of a celebrity in those parts since a film, based on her book, was made for Greek TV.



The following week, we had family to stay and were delighted to be able to visit the newly refurbished Hunstanton Sea Life Centre, which has only just re-opened following the heart-breaking damage caused by the surge last December. Despite the many amazing and exotic attractions to be enjoyed by the whole family, for me it was the hall dedicated to species that are found locally in the Wash that appealed the most. I was spellbound by the huge open tank with local rays and dogfish gracefully gliding around and the peripheral tanks for smaller creatures such as the shrimps and *lesser pipefish* (just like we have often caught using a simple shrimp-net at low-tide in Hunstanton). The staff really pulled out all the stops to make the half-term visit an informative and entertaining experience for a tremendous number of visitors.



This issue contains three pages of interesting letters, some of which I fancy will draw a response or two from Dick Melton and others, as well as our usual variety of contributions, but also:

A Competition: 'Hunt the Poinsettia'



To keep you on your toes, as you comb through this issue, I have hidden some tiny poinsettia flowers images like the one here only smaller. Your mission (*should you choose to accept*) is to count them up (including this one) and send how many you think there are along with your name, address and phone number to me either on a card handed in or posted to the office or emailed to the address below by **11am on Monday 15th December 2014**. Budgens have kindly donated a **£20** voucher prize to be spent in their Dersingham store for the first, randomly drawn, correct entry.

Now, with the final issue of 2014 in the bag, my sincere thanks to all who have contributed to, distributed or administered Village Voice throughout the year, as, for a short season, I swap my Editor's hat for an RSPB volunteer's one and lead some of the early morning *breakfast walks* down to Snettisham beach to watch the *Pinkies* set off on their day's foraging. So, I'll wish you a very Happy Christmas and New Year and hope that, where possible, you can help make someone else's Christmas and New Year happy too!

Steve Davis - editor@dersingham.org.uk □



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Dear Village Voice

Please email (editor@dersingham.org.uk) or write to us at Village Voice, Dersingham Parish Council, 4A Post Office Road, Dersingham, King's Lynn, PE31 6HP with your thoughts or memories of village life, comments concerning items read or ideas for the future. Ed.



Terry, Brenda and Debra Wagg along with Michelle Howlett would like to thank all who came to help at or give donations or raffle prizes for our MacMillan Coffee Morning in Saxon Way. We managed to raise £282.

Brenda Wagg

I'm sure thanks must go also to others who arranged similar events in aid of this wonderful cancer support charity. My wife and I certainly enjoyed the one we were invited to in Glebe Close. Ed.

In answer to Dick Melton's question. Yes I remember Uncle Two Foot Daniels very well. He lived in one of the cottages that ran parallel to the Coach and Horses. When school had ended for the day, you would find Uncle Two Foot leaning on his garden fence waiting for us kids with a smile, a word and a pocket full of sweets. A lovely old man. Today I suppose he would be looked upon with suspicion and told to stop. But it was the early 1950s and life was much simpler then. I wonder how he got the name Uncle Two Foot?

Does anyone else remember another character from the early 1950s: Billy Cook and his one man band? Whenever I hear the old song "My Grandfather's Clock", I think of Billy. His son Freddie, who was in the same year as me at school, was sadly killed when he fell off the bus going over the new bridge at Snettisham.

Doug Gelder

Folly House at Sandringham has been mentioned recently. My father worked at Sandringham for fifty years. When we were talking about the Folly he told me the Royal Family wanted somewhere they could look over the Wash, so a house was built at the highest point in the area. When it was finished, the Royals went to look and could not see the sea for trees and the King said "Oh what folly!", hence the name.

Dick Melton mentioned Uncle Two Foot, I don't think I ever knew what his real name was. He lived in the row of cottages next to the Coach and Horses, and would spend a lot of time standing at the top of the row, most people in the village knew him as Two Foot and children Uncle. Sometimes the boys would call him Two Foot, but if you did it was best to keep out of range of the stick he always had with him. Something to think about how did he get the name two foot? Talking to an old Dersingham boy who lives away now, he tells me Uncle was a roadman for the council and got the name Two Foot simply because he was not very tall.

Bernie Twite

Seems a plausible reason to me! Ed.

With reference to Keith Starks letter in Village Voice concerning the NAAFI. One of the printable acronyms was Never 'Ave Any Fags In. He also mentions singing along to *Island in the Sun* which if I remember was definitely not printable!! But one such ditty, which relates to the subject, and was sung to the tune of *The Church's One Foundation* went as follows with some words (in quotes) altered to spare blushes:

*We are redundant airmen no 'blooming' good are we,
The only time you see us, is NAAFI dinner and tea
And when the sergeant calls us we shout with all our might
Per Ardua Ad Adastra, 'blow' you Jack I'm all right.*

Also I spent time in the Canal Zone where we had "NAAFI ackers" which were plastic coins that could only be spent in the NAAFI and were red for 1/4 Piastre and green for 1 Piastre.

4098014 SAC Beales, Ground Wireless Mechanic



This is me showing Village Voice to Mickey Mouse who I met at Disneyland Paris. My favourite ride was Thunder Mountain and I would recommend Disneyland as a special treat. **Nicolas Bubb**

Nice one Nick! And one more of my darling wife engaged in essential holiday reading whilst overlooking the bay of Elounda in Crete.

Keep the pictures coming! Ed.□



Letters of complaint about any of the services provided within the Village are really much more effective if sent to the Parish Council or service concerned directly. Normally I would simply forward them on to the appropriate body. Since this next letter however is representative of an issue that is heart-felt by so many, I have included it along with the Parish Council's response, but please address any further comments on the matter to the Council directly. Ed.

I was born in Dersingham but moved away from the village when I was about sixteen, married a Yorkshire man and have lived in Yorkshire for 55 years. Sadly my husband passed away last year. He also loved Norfolk and we had many happy holidays there. This year I stayed in Dersingham with my sister for three-weeks and it was good to see family again. Many members of my family are buried in the churchyard and I always lay flowers on the graves when I visit.

The churchyard, however, lets the lovely village of Dersingham down. The grass has grown so high and near the wall many graves are covered in ivy and cannot be seen. Luckily for our family, my brother-in-law keeps the grass around our graves neat and tidy. I do hope that when I visit next year something will have been done. Dersingham has such a lovely church so why is the graveyard so awful?

Pauline Robinson nee Drew

It is clear that the attempts to cut the grass in the churchyard have proven to be extremely difficult. The Council followed the book in seeking tendering for the work. Contrary to some rumours, we did not set a low price - we simply sought bids. The first contractor relinquished the contract fairly quickly and the second (local) contractor failed to meet the specification laid down, both in terms of the areas to cut and the frequency of cutting. It never occurred to any of us (and this seems to have been the case) that neither of the contractors would bid without doing a detailed survey of the churchyard.

In view of the obvious failure to achieve the desired result, we have had discussions with the Church and have offered a grant so that the Church can source their own contractor to cut the grass for the rest of the year. This will save time as the Church is not required to retender as the Council would have to. If this proves satisfactory we will consider extending this arrangement for future years. The only drawback is that it will cost the Church more if the contractor is VAT registered as the Church cannot recover VAT as the Council can. If we have to retender the work next year, I will strongly recommend that the tender bids submitted should include a statement that the bidder has fully assessed the churchyard in terms of the amount of work required.

Brian Anderson – Chair of the Parish Council Environment Committee

While we have been renovating the bungalow behind Dersingham News on Hunstanton Road, we have unearthed 2 old milk bottles marked Riches and Gilbert, Tuberculin Tested Milk, Dersingham. Can anyone in the Village tell us the history of these bottles?

We also found an old well with the pump still attached, we would be interested to know more about this plot.

Douglas and Lorraine McNeil

On the 22nd of October 2014 Ken Martins, a dear friend of mine from Dersingham, sadly passed away at the good old age of 93. Ken was known to most of the people in Dersingham and he was a friend to many, a village character who led a busy and full life.

He worked at Sandringham when he left school then, during the Second World War, he was called up and was on the Normandy landings in 1944. In later years he went back to Normandy to look at the beach where he had landed.

Ken was married to Rene, who sadly passed away in 1994. They had one son, Christopher, who still lives in the village and, just like his father, he has a passion for vintage farm machinery. Ken bought a small cottage: 60 Lynn Road (Rose Cottage) with five acres of land, where he kept cattle, pigs, chickens and goats. Ken hired a lot of land off the estate and there was a time when he farmed 146 acre in and around Dersingham, but he always called himself a little higgler.

For many years he was a part-time post man; he would start his round at 5:30am till 9am, then he and Rene would work on the land till late in the evening; and often Ken and Rene would be out in the yard at night with a tilley lamp, sawing and chopping logs or working in the greenhouse, where he grew the best tomatoes in Norfolk.

Ken was a good old Norfolk boy who knew a lot about farming and the countryside that he loved. I helped Ken on his farm for six years as did other lads from the village and he taught me a lot more than I ever learnt at school. Ken could tell a good story, all of them true, so I shall write some of them at a later date. God bless you Ken and do you keep a troshin.

Dick Melton

Some years ago, on a visit to a flea market at the Corn Exchange, I purchased this postcard that was sent to a Miss E M Spencer, Rose Cottage, Gayton and postmarked Stoke Ferry, Norfolk, 19th December 1908. The picture is labelled as "The Chestnuts", Station Road, Dersingham, though clearly it is a view of Chapel Road. (No doubt the person taking the photo walked from Dersingham station and simply thought they were in the continuation of Station Road!). The rather

terse text appears to read: *Dear Edith Thanks for handkerchief, excuse the writing, we have been examined. It was very nice. We had a concert here the other night, very good. You will be out of the examinations at school now. Mother is coming Christmas I shall be coming at Easter I suppose or before. I will write again at Christmas. I never wrote before as I didn't know how long you were staying at Attleborough I hope you enjoyed yourself. How is old Gayton looking now should like to see it. Have you seen Lilian since she has been there. Hoping you & your mother are alright & also your father & A & F. With love & kisses from Marion*



Gerald Warne

Picking up on Tony Bubb's article, last April, about Walter Ralph, my grandfather George Mann was a son-in-law of Frederick Ralph (senior) 1836-1919, who was a photographer to the Royal family at Sandringham. He had two sons, Frederick Junior and Walter Ralph: Walter had a studio in Dersingham, known as the Cameo Studio in the 1910's but would not have been producing colour postcards until the 1920s. Like Tony, I have, somewhere, a souvenir pack of coloured postcards from Dersingham that Walter produced. My grandmother, Olive Mann, nee Howe, left me an extensive postcard collection that, when I visit Dersingham again, I would like to share with you the Dersingham related ones sent during the First World War.

Bruce Barnes

I'm sure that many would look forward to that Bruce. Ed. □

Parish Council Report by Cllr Suzy Daniels



It seems the summer weather has left us and autumn has arrived. The dark nights certainly feel like they crept up with great haste. Hopefully you have all had a very enjoyable Halloween and firework celebrations...it was lovely to see so many families and children dressed up and taking advantage of the community spirit. We currently have several council vacancies so if you are interested in having a say or making a valuable contribution to Dersingham please contact the office for an application to become a Parish Councillor on 01485 541465 or email clerk@dersingham.org.uk.

NEW COUNCILLORS: On behalf of the Council I would like to welcome Rex Makemson and Kurtis Green who were both co-opted at October's meeting.

CRIME: *Specific to Dersingham*

We now receive a police report which covers the Dersingham and Gayton area. Norfolk Constabulary asked residents to prevent thefts by securing property and contacting the Safer Neighbourhood Team if they would like security advice and information on alarms. Crimes in Dersingham were reported as one theft of a motorcycle, 7 assaults, 2 of which were linked and resulted in arrest. One Burglary within a dwelling. One attempted Burglary, but no entry gained. One possession of class B drugs along the A149 at the Dersingham roundabout. At the SNAP meeting the following priorities were agreed for Police action: parking problems around Post Office Rd and Centre Vale on Monday evenings and Woodside Avenue.

COUNTY COUNCIL: *Happy birthday to the Library!!*

Cllr John Dobson reported that a new Managing Director had been appointed, Dr Wendy Thompson. A 3 year spending review had taken place and the interim finance director produced a pessimistic forecast. The government will issue a budget settlement in November/December; however the outcome of the general election in May could alter this. Savings in procurement and staffing productivity would ensure savings and not cuts. Dersingham Library celebrated its 40th Anniversary. Staff were congratulated on doing a great job for the local community.

BOROUGH COUNCIL: *Pessimism, rats and white hatchings!!*

Cllr Bubb reported that Nick Daubney, Leader of the Borough Council had responded to a query regarding what the council did for rural areas: to enhance quality of life all across the Borough. The enhancement of Kings Lynn was of benefit to all those using the town for employment, to shop or for leisure. In the New Year Parking tickets could be purchased using a mobile phone and plans for some Public Toilet refurbishments had been approved. The Council is working to achieve improvement of broadband coverage in rural areas, as well as the collection of refuse and car parking. After attending an exhibition of the new road to Lynn Sport, which would include a 600-house development Cllr Bubb expressed concerns on the effect this would have on road traffic from Dersingham to King's Lynn. The glass bottle bins have been removed from Budgens Car Park as parishioners can put glass bottles in their recycling. (GREEN BIN). Two new Brown bin collections have been introduced meaning 12,000 could now be emptied. **Contact the Borough Council if you wish to purchase additional brown bins.** Cllr Collingham reported that she had been collecting information regarding rats within the Parish. The Borough Council no longer pay for rat extermination; however a system needs to be put in place when a problematic rat source arises. Please contact either the Parish or Borough offices to report any sightings. Complaints were put forward at the SNAP meeting and to Norfolk Highways regarding the white hatchings at the bottom of Fern Hill. These will not be removed until the road is resurfaced; however this doesn't mean cars cannot park there and she expressed concerns that it could lead to a false sense of security for pedestrians. Plans have already commenced for the 2015 Open Gardens.

COUNCIL COMMITTEES: All minutes for Full Council and Committees are available on the Dersingham Parish Council website.

OTHER MATTERS: Cllr Davey reported that the Village Centre event at Budgens had been very successful. All comments are still greatly appreciated. The cost of the project has been estimated at £930,000. The Parish Council has agreed that the first stage of application for National Lottery funding should go ahead. A further public meeting held on 25th October at the Church Hall was positively supported. Various concerns including car parking were discussed. The Recreation Ground re-vamp is going well, with all groundwork completed and equipment due to be installed from the 24th November. Cllr Hathaway is currently working on adding the footpath from Station Rd across the Warren to the definitive map. In order to protect the footpath the Parish Council will apply to have the footpath recognised. 12 volunteers who have resided in Dersingham for 20 years or more and regularly use the footpath are required to complete a supporting application.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

Squirrels Cottage, Centre Vale....Application for removal of existing concrete sectional garage and replace with new garageRecommend Approval.

Budgens Ltd, Lynn Rd....Application for change of use of 3 parking spaces and free space to hand car wash and valeting operation including installation of office and erection of a canopy....Recommend Approval

St Georges C of E Junior School (now known as Dersingham V.A. Primary School)...Application to provide a new biomass heating system, self contained in a 'heat pod' forming internal courtyard with existing building....Recommend Approval

23 Phillip Nurse Rd....Application for extension and garage conversion....Recommend Approval

1&2 Gelham Manor... Application for variation of conditions 2 and 4 of planning permission...Recommend Approval

DETERMINATIONS:

35 Chapel Rd...Granted

4 Heath Rd...Granted

35 Pansey Drive...Granted

6 Tudor way...Granted

6 Station Rd...Granted

All members of the Parish Council would like to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous, happy and healthy 2015. Please come along to the Full Council Meetings at 7pm on the last Monday of each month at Dersingham V.A. Early Years site (Saxon Way). □



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Walking Routes in North-West Norfolk

To walkers looking for places to roam in Great Britain, locations like The Lake District, The Peak District, The Cornwall Coast, The Welsh Mountains and The Scottish Highlands come immediately to mind. A mention of Norfolk is likely to produce a muffled laugh, a comment about the flat landscape with the word “boring” often featuring in such responses. But we here in North-West Norfolk know better, don’t we?

I grew up in Eastern Norfolk but when visiting North-West Norfolk as a youngster was struck by how different and varied the landscape was compared with where I lived and looked forward to such visits. Later in life, living far away from the tranquillity of this county, I started to become interested in walking, as an escape from my urban life, and visited all of the locations mentioned above, every so often straying back to North-West Norfolk and, as retirement approached, thinking what better place could I chose, not only to retire to, but also to walk in? It has almost everything that a walker might look for: sea-shores, woodlands, parklands and, often overlooked, rolling chalk uplands sculpted by ancient rivers which are now, if still existing, only small streams. No mountains of course, but at a certain time of life you start to appreciate them more from a distance!

So, just over five years ago, I settled in Dersingham and like my fellow whifflers (Pink Footed Geese) I started to explore the North-West Norfolk countryside, sometimes on my own but more and more often with local walking groups. I also started to record these walks, initially for my own reference, but eventually with a view to sharing them on a website.

If you are interested in seeing, or following, some of my walks on a map the website is called **WhifflersWalks** (sites.google.com/site/whifflerswalks). It has Google Maps of all the walks and there are links to Ordnance Survey Maps as well. As I write the total number of walks on the website is approaching 50 and I intend to continue to add to this number as long as I am able. Happy walking and whiffling!

***whiffling:** a term used in ornithology, describing the action of descending rapidly from a height once the decision to land has been made, involving fast side-slipping first one way and then the other. The term is usually applied to geese (family Anatidae), whose flocks whiffle spectacularly, especially when wishing to avoid a long, slow descent over an area where wildfowling is practised*

***whiffler:** an attendant who clears the way for a procession (historical); but could it also be applied to a walks leader?*

Whiffler □

You can also access this remarkable website from the www.dersingham.org.uk “Links” page. Ed.

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Another Holiday

by Brian Anderson



A few issues ago I wrote about "My worst holiday". This is about another holiday that occurred a few years earlier.

It was 1969 - late August to be more precise. Ivor features here too, although more peripherally. Ivor was on work experience from our course and worked with Jan who was on international exchange from Czechoslovakia. Jan was going back to Czechoslovakia in late July and I thought it would be nice to visit Prague. So I arranged to go and meet up with Jan and his family when I was there. I booked flights and hotel for the end of August, blithely unaware of what was happening at the time. This is the bit that my friends find difficult to believe. I had been interested in the politics of Eastern Europe for some time, especially in the prospect of Alexander Dubcek's attempt to democratise the communist system. I had also been in Moscow the previous year when the Warsaw Pact forces had displaced Dubcek in a brutal military intervention. *I hadn't noticed that my stay in Prague would cover the first anniversary of the Soviet-led invasion.* I flew out to Prague on the booked date and got to my hotel, which I noticed was on Wenceslas Square (*Vaclavski Namesti*). It isn't actually a square but a broad avenue in the middle of Prague. I phoned Jan and we met up for a couple (or so) of beers. At that time (and it may well be true still) Prague was extremely well provided with, what we would call today, micro breweries supplying perhaps only one beer cellar, so this was a very enjoyable experience. There were two other students staying at the hotel - Tony from London and Louis from Canada. I had a few beers with them too.

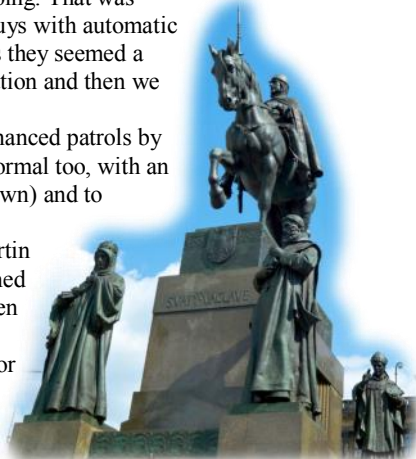
On 19th August there were noticeably more people in Wenceslas Square, moving in small groups and hanging around on the street corners. There was a noticeable group around the statue of Wenceslas at the top end where Jan Palach (a Czech student) had burned himself to death in the previous January. Even more appeared on the 20th and there was a considerable police presence with some violence. Then on the morning of 21st August (the anniversary of the invasion) huge crowds massed in the square. And then the riot police moved in. Looking back, I was faced with a choice at this point. Either I could hunker down and watch from the hotel or I could go out. At the time, the choice didn't present itself. The brutal behaviour of the police outraged my democratic socialist inclinations and I went out to add myself to the protesters. Some parts of the crowd started throwing cobblestones at the police who responded with tear gas. Tear gas has a horrible smell - rather like burning plastic mixed with acid. And it makes you cry enough that you can't really see. Get a lot and you'll salivate enough to feel nauseous.

This response seemed to inflame some sections of the crowd. I could see through streaming eyes that the riot police had been reinforced by troops and they were deploying water cannon. I retreated to the hotel to try to wash the gas residue off my face and met Tony who had the same idea. We went back out again and got soaked by the water cannon for our pains. Then there was the sound of gunfire in surrounding streets - whether this was tear gas, rubber bullets or live ammunition we didn't know. The last straw was the arrival of tanks at the far end of the square. We could just see them from where we were - they were T54/55s, the Warsaw Pact's main battle tank. We retreated at this point as there seemed nothing we could do.

Back at the hotel we wondered what had happened to Louis. In the meantime we fell into conversation with two members of the media: Tom Mangold of the BBC (you still see him occasionally on the television) and Dennis Newson of the *Sun* (this was in the pre-Murdoch days when it was still a newspaper). They'd seen more or less what we had. Tom Mangold left to interview someone and then Louis turned up, looking very shaken. He'd been picked up by the riot police and taken off to a detention centre somewhere where he'd been forced to run the gauntlet of two rows of police who beat him with truncheons as he ran. Dennis Newson said "Are you sure about all this?" Louis took off this shirt and showed the bruises across his shoulders and down his back. Dennis then wrote down his story.

In the end we told Louis we'd walk with him to the station and we'd see if we could pay enough for one of the hotel porters to come with us to explain to police what we were doing. It was after dark by now and we left for the station. We walked down the middle of each street and the porter explained each time we were challenged what we were doing. That was perhaps the most nerve-racking bit - being observed by guys with automatic rifles. I was glad they were army rather than riot police as they seemed a little more relaxed. All went well - we got Tony to the station and then we went back to the hotel.

I flew back to London and within a few weeks met Martin Postranecky. He and I worked together for a while. It turned out he'd joined the Anti-Soviet Resistance in 1968 and then had to flee the country. I told him what had happened to Louis and me. Czechoslovakia had to wait twenty years for freedom, for Vaclav Havel and *The Velvet Revolution*. I have only one regret - I didn't leave any flowers at the statue of Wenceslas in memory of Jan Palach. □



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Jennifer Aickin □



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Dersingham Day Centre by Alice Worth



On October 11th we held our Autumn Fair at the Dersingham Methodist Church. Volunteers had worked hard on the Friday evening getting the stalls ready and we got off to an early start on the Saturday morning. The weather could have been better but, nevertheless, we had a lot of people popping in for coffee and a look around our stalls. We had one stall of gifts made entirely by some of our Members and Volunteers including crocheted blankets and little crocheted Christmas Tree decorations, as well as a large collection of “good as new” jigsaws, games and books. The cake stall was soon sold out and is always very popular. “Guess the Name of the Doll” proved a challenge and the winner was Alison Girling with the name CHARLOTTE.

The refreshments, prepared and served from the kitchen, did a brisk trade with a variety of hot drinks, sausage rolls, mince pies and biscuits. It was a real team effort and, as you can imagine, we were all very thrilled to learn that we had raised £482.00 including donations. The Day Centre Committee wish to thank all those who came to support us on the day and all those who worked so hard to make it a success. Thanks also to members of the Methodist Church for their help and support, particularly Paul Clay who set all the tables and chairs up for us beforehand.

On 29th October two buses collected our Members and took them to the United Services Club in Hunstanton for lunch. The sun was shining when we arrived which made life a lot easier helping Members from the buses into the lounge of the Club. Coffee/tea was served to everyone once they were settled in before we moved into the dining area for lunch. There was a choice of chicken or roast beef with Yorkshire puddings, four vegetables, roast and mashed potatoes and a rich gravy. Everyone commented on the quality of the beef and how tender it was, and I can certainly vouch for the roast chicken. There were two sweets to choose from, fruit and ice cream or apple crumble and custard, followed by coffee or tea before setting off home. The drivers agreed to take us along Hunstanton front on the way home so we could catch sight of the sea – too cold for a paddle though!! Everyone agreed it had been a very pleasant outing and excellent lunch.

Volunteers and Members have already started making decorations for the tree we have sponsored for St Nicholas Church Christmas Tree Festival in December, including some very pretty and unusual items. As in previous years we hope to be taking all our Members to the Church to see the Christmas Trees on the Wednesday following the event.

At the time of writing we are looking forward to our 33rd Birthday Party in November with a fish and chip lunch, then our Christmas party in December with traditional turkey lunch. Brian Roy and Leigh Murfet will provide musical entertainment respectively for these events.

The Members and Volunteers of the Day Centre wish to thank all those in the village who have supported and encouraged them in so many ways throughout this past year, and we wish you all a Very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year. □

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Old Picture Corner from Tony Bubb

Two pictures of people this time. A playschool group from 1974, so they are all in their early forties now and a mob wanting the bypass, probably in the mid-eighties. I recognise a few faces but if you were there where was the picture taken?



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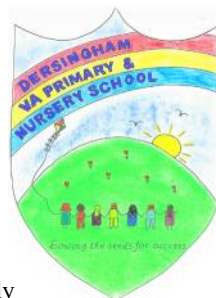
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Dersingham VA Primary and Nursery School

The children had a big surprise on returning to school to find an archaeological dig had been uncovered on the field. Classes have their own trenches and are gradually becoming expert excavators!

Digging Discoverers Class have been having great fun learning about the Romans and how they changed Britain after they invaded. They have planned how to run their own excavation trench on site by thinking about how to share the jobs out safely and record the evidence, and this week alone they have unearthed some pots, a sandal, a coin, animal bones, some armour, and possibly even some human remains! They will send bone samples off for analysis to possibly learn more.



Scavengers are investigating the Ancient Britons; Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age. They have been having fun digging their trench and have found some animal bones, pottery, nuts and stones. There is lots more investigating to do!

Voyagers class decided it would be best to divide into groups with each group having responsibility for part of their trench. They took turns to dig, sieve and record their finds. They carefully took the soil off layer

by layer, and sieved the soil so that they didn't miss smaller items such as glass beads and grains. They found several coins, some pots, parts of a skeleton and some finds that have not been identified yet. They have also uncovered some bits of wood, but are unsure whether it is part of a wooden house, perhaps a coffin, or even a boat. Experts have tested the skeleton and told us that it is from between 870AD and 1000AD,



which means that it could be an Anglo-Saxon or Viking. They are hoping to find out more as they research the artefacts.

The *Investigators* have discovered some gruesome human remains with chainmail armour still attached. Research has suggested they belonged to Anglo-Saxon times and the children are now busy writing newspaper reports to keep the rest of the school up to date!

Woodland Warriors have been helping Mr Crump, our caretaker, sort out the dusty old attic and

have uncovered a mysterious old trunk, which was owned by a Victorian school teacher. Through the powers of story land and some very special history magic dust, Mrs Chambers came to visit the children from the Victorian era to explain what the objects in her trunk are for. We will be visiting her school and her husband's apothecary soon to reveal even more information.

Sue Picton □



Puzzle Corner

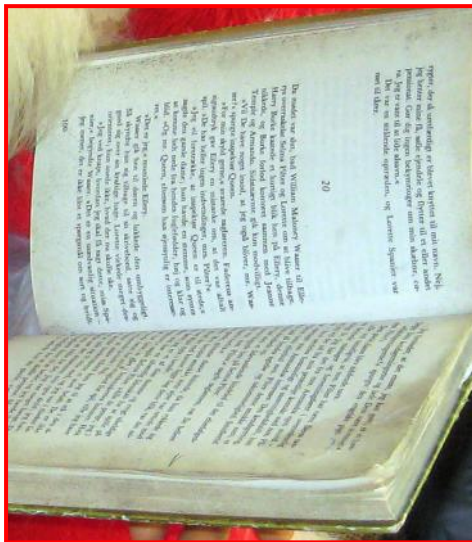
Answers on page 77

Sudoku No. 39 by Rob

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

Where is it? What is it? by Tony Bubb

Congratulations if you get this one! Ed



Word Wall by Philip Neal

Sort the following into four groups of connected words:

ALD	HILL	BISHOPS	BRUCE
ARTS	BAILEY	ATLANTIC	BARBICAN
CROXALL	LUD	1	NEW
LIVINGIT	BASTION	HUSAIN	KEEP

Dingbats submitted by Barry Beales

Look at the clues below to and say what you see to give 8 well known phrases or sayings.

1.
1+2+3+4+5+6
U

2. k k
c c
u u
t t
s s

3. Vad ers
tis + relax

5.
time of hands The

words words
words words
6. CCCCC
ticket

7. bathing

8. walk
H₂O



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Just a Thought...

from Rev Steve Oliver

Minister for Dersingham Methodist Church (West Norfolk Circuit)

I have never made it a secret that my favourite hymn for Christmas time is "O come O come Emmanuel". Ever since I was a child this hymn represented everything that Christmas meant and should mean.

As a child and as I do now, the first time I hear this hymn I know Advent has begun; it is a sort of anthem hailing the moment of rejoicing and expectation. Read those wonderful words in the chorus; "Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel" and let them sink into your very being. The truth is that not only did Emmanuel come to Israel but He came for us, the Son of God appearing on this earth as a baby and to change our world for ever.

It is extraordinary how God speaks to each one of us; whether it is through reading the Bible, walking in the countryside or the city, sitting and relaxing, or like me hearing this hymn. He comes to us with that still small voice which can make our hearts leap for joy.

Does your heart leap when you read the Song of Zechariah, or the Song of Mary (The Magnificat)? Does your heart leap when the birth of Jesus is announced or when you read the story of the shepherds and the Magi? I only ask the question because sometimes we can look at these passages and forget what a momentous time in history and in people's lives this truly was. The story of the birth of Jesus is not a story of yesterday, but a story of today, tomorrow and into the future. We must not let it become a story that fades because of growing pressure from those who preach political correctness.

I never want to lose the child in me when it comes to Christmas; the lights, the presents, the tree, the Christmas number 1s from years gone by (Slade, Wizard etc. etc.), they all make up a wonderful time. But what really makes it is the truth that

"God so loved the world that he gave His only-begotten Son so that everyone who believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)

Let your heart leap for joy this Christmas.
I wish you all a joyous Christmas and a peaceful and blessed New Year. □



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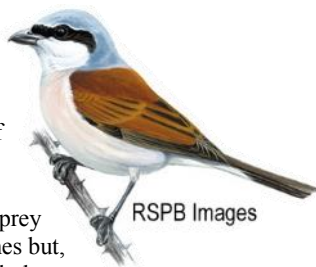


Dick Melton from Sunny Hunny



Disappearing birds

In the press this last week I saw an article about a red-backed shrike ('butcher bird') that was spotted on the North Norfolk coast. The article said how rare it was these days to see one of these birds in the British Isles. When I was a lad several pairs of these birds bred on the open common at Dersingham; they liked to spike their prey



on whin bushes (gorse bushes) or blackthorn bushes but, as soon as these bushes were taken out and their environment changed, they went elsewhere like the whitethroat and the linnet, both of which are very scarce in this area now.

The same goes for the shelduck. 60 years ago there would be at least 50 pairs of them breeding on Dersingham Fen. For years people would take their eggs for baking but they would survive this as their nests were so well hidden by the heather and bracken. But, as soon as the heather and bracken was taken away, the ducks had no hiding place and they moved on. If you see 4 or 5 pairs flying over the fen these days then you are very lucky.

The Drift

I read in the Village Voice that some trees are going to be planted on the area of land down The Drift, near the by-pass, that has been named The Warren. To start with this area of land was never a warren; it was always ploughed and set with barley or sugar beet. Also, you never have trees on a warren. The warren was down the left hand side of the seventeen acres of land that was called Ken Martin's Marsh. This marsh went from The Drift parallel with the railway line as far as the Red Dyke; Ken had his sheds on this land and on the right hand side of it he ran his pigs.

Just before you got to Ken's marsh, on the right hand side of The Drift was a small moat that had been there for hundreds of years but it was filled in when the development went ahead. Apart from the first field on your left (Parkers Piece) and Ken's marsh there were three other fields that were ploughed and cropped by the Baulding brothers from Dun-cow farm. When they gave up farming the Sandringham estate took them back as this is who they were rented from.

These fields now just lay rough with birch trees and scrub on them. On one of these fields near to the fen there has always been a small wood called Fiddler's Wood. This was so called many years ago when Mr Fiddler Mitchell, the carrier, kept his horse there. One day it dropped down dead so he buried it where it lay and that's how this small wood got its name. When the Gelham Manor estate was built after World War Two a sewage treatment plant was also built in one of these fields. So these fields down The Drift might look a bit rough these days, but over the years they have all been put to good use.

Norwich Gates

Thanks to Doreen Linford for her interesting letter about the Norwich Gates. During World War 2 all the iron railings around Sandringham Park were taken away to go for the war effort; this only left a small wall and this was how the deer herd escaped from the park, but the Norwich Gates, the Jubilee Gates, the cottage garden gates and the two lodge gates down the road to "Laycocks" were spared. Maybe the Norwich Gates were painted black so they did not shine in the dark.

The New Pavilion

I love reading old books and papers especially about West Norfolk, Hunstanton and Dersingham. The other day I picked up a St Nicholas Dersingham parish magazine for October 1967 and in it is a lot that I thought might be of interest to the readers of the Dersingham Village Voice. The first article I noticed was written by the then vicar, the Rev T.O.W. Glass, M. A. This is what it said: *On Sunday, 29th of October His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh will open the new pavilion*

on the playing field after the morning service. The morning service will be at 11am as usual but it will finish at 11 45 am to enable all who wish to attend the ceremony to be in their places before the Duke arrives.

His Royal Highness was timed to arrive at the pavilion at 12 15 pm precisely and will be received by the chairman and vice-chairman. The ceremony will last about 15 minutes after which the Duke will enter the pavilion where he will be entertained by the playing field committee and will also meet the specially invited guests. His Royal Highness is due to leave the pavilion for Sandringham at 1pm.

Spectators are advised that cars will not be allowed on to the ground, but Mr Jack Spencer from the Feathers hotel has kindly agreed to allow them to use his car park and a pathway will be made through the fence direct from the rear of the car park on to the ground.

This was a big day for Dersingham as the villagers had been trying to get a new pavilion built for many years. Though it only seems like yesterday would you believe that this all happened 47 years ago, though I am sure that there are still many people like myself that remember that day.

The Playing Field

Next we have another bit from the parish magazine about the history of the playing field, which was written by Major Middleton. Until 1947 it would seem that this land was part of the pastures, although thanks to the kindness of successive tenants, and in particular the Stanton family, this part of the field has been used as a playing field a long time before the 1914-18 war, for in those days a sports meeting would be held for which athletes from miles around came to compete. The royal family it would seem took an interest in these events, which on several occasions was graced by the presence of Her Majesty Queen Alexandra. In 1947 King George VI very generously leased this land to the parish council at a nominal rent as a sports centre for the village.

1967 Advertisers

Whilst looking through this magazine I found some more interesting tit-bits, especially amongst the adverts. For instance, Mr Playford was a high-class baker and confectioner who also made wedding and birthday cakes to order and his shop was in Manor Road. B Champion had a shop in Post Office Road where they sold, amongst other things, toys, groceries, confectionery, children's clothes and ladies dresses. Parkers Stores were still there at the bottom of Sandringham Hill; they were grocers, provision merchants and drapers; the proprietors them days were P Barnes and C Harvey. Mr Ted Cox and his son Roger ran the auto service station at 68 Hunstanton Road; it sold BP petrol and, even in those far off days, you could pay for it by Barclaycard. I well remember Ted having an automatic petrol pump installed that took £1 notes, but he got rid of it after a year or two as it was always breaking down and people would wake him up in the middle of the night demanding their £1 note back that was stuck in the machine. Dan Andrews and his son Willy had a shop in Chapel Road, near the Fern Hill junction, where they sold fruit, vegetables and groceries; they would go round the village twice a week with their horse and cart selling their wares, and every Wednesday in the summer months they would take a cart full of fruit and veg up Sandringham to sell on the green opposite the church.

✿ Well that's your lot for now; I will wish you all a very happy Christmas and don't get stuck in the snow.

PS Many people asked me what a harvest hawkey was at the bottom of my page in October. Well it was a party that farmers would give to their men when the harvest was safely gathered in. □

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Dersingham Walking Group

Welcome to the Dersingham Walking Group, which provides regular guided walks round the local countryside. There are some great walks coming up, with some good fresh air on the beach and the intriguing footpaths of Old Hunstanton Hall among them. There are also two walks that start right here in the village, including one on Boxing Day morning. The walks are free, just turn up on the day wearing suitable clothing and sturdy footwear. Dogs are welcome, provided they're well behaved. The length is shown for each walk but they usually take a couple of hours or so, with a stop halfway. Why not get some fresh air and exercise, you'll be in good company!

Wednesday 26th November 1.30pm

Starting point: The old lighthouse Hunstanton. Grid ref: TF 676 420

A beach circuit from Hunstanton to Holme. Length of walk: 4 miles

Leader: Steve & Lindsey Davis 01485 543138

Thursday 11th December 1.30pm

Starting point: St Mary's church car park Old Hunstanton.

Grid ref: TF 688 420 Length of walk: 5 miles

Explore Old Hunstanton Park and Ringstead Downs. Parking £1 per car.

Leader: Steve & Lindsey Davis 01485 543138

Friday 26th December 10.30pm

Starting point: Dersingham village sign.

Grid ref: TF 685 296 Length of walk: 4.5 miles

A Boxing Day morning walk round Dersingham and Wolferton

Leader: Tony Bubb 01485 542638

Wednesday 14th January 1.30pm

Starting point: Dersingham war memorial. Grid ref: TF 686 308

A circular walk round Dersingham and Ingoldisthorpe. Length of walk: 4 miles

Leader: Elizabeth Fiddick 01485 540940

Full walks programme available from the website: www.dersingham.org.uk/announcements

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. As Alfred Wainwright said "watch where you put your feet"!

If you would like more information about an individual walk, such as the going underfoot, stiles, etc. please contact the walk leader. **Stephen Martyn—Walking Group Co-ordinator** □



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Dersingham Library News

It may be Christmas time but there's always time to enjoy a good book with these new Christmas tales coming soon to Dersingham Library



A Family Christmas by Katie Flynn

Jimmy Trewin and his little sister are devastated by their mother's death and horrified to find themselves entrusted to the far from tender care of a hated neighbour, Mrs Huxtable. They hope their father will rescue them when his ship comes into port but this does not happen and when Cyril Huxtable is seen by the children hiding 'a wad of notes' away, a wad which subsequently disappears, they realise they are in deep trouble.



The great Christmas Knit-off by Alexandra Brown

Heartbroken after being jilted at the altar, Sybil has been saved from despair by her knitting obsession and now her home is filled to bursting with tea cosies, bobble hats, and jumpers. But, after discovering at work that she may have perpetrated the cock-up of the century, Sybil decides to make a hasty exit and, just weeks before Christmas, runs away to see an old friend in the picturesque village of Tindledale.



It must have been the mistletoe by Judy Astley

Thea's parents have split up but still seem to be together. Both her younger sister and her brother are Smug Marrieds. But Thea is newly single and very much wishes she wasn't. When her mother and father plan a great family Christmas in a big house by the sea, the idea is to make it all great fun and tremendously civilised - not remotely complicated despite the fact that what they will really be celebrating is the final break-up of their marriage and the moving on to new partners.

And for adults to share with children:



Are you caring for someone with dementia?

If you have dementia or are caring for someone with dementia, come along to our Carer's Group at Dersingham Library. You will meet friendly and supportive people and can spend time sharing information and experiences.



Location: Dersingham Library, Chapel Road, Dersingham, PE31 6PN
Time: First Tuesday of the month, 1 pm—3pm from January 2015

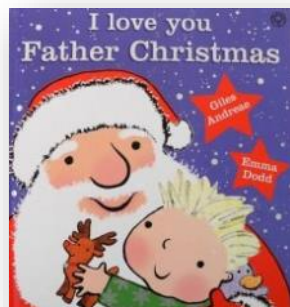
For more information, call Fran Woodbine on 07540 928741

We look forward to seeing you.

Alzheimer's Society operates in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Registered charity number: 1009046.

I Love You Father Christmas by Giles Andreae

The excitement of Christmas is perfectly captured through one little boy's boundless enthusiasm. The joyful rhyme and bold, stylish art make this a must-have book for anyone - big or small - who can't wait for Father Christmas to set off on his sleigh.



Christmas Art Ideas by Fiona Watts

Packed with Christmassy ideas for painting, drawing, printing, and making collages, this book helps children to explore different materials including chalk, paint, and pencil. The projects include creating gold-winged angels, sparkly baubles, fingerprint snowmen, frosty branches and lots more.

Alison Thorne
Community Librarian for
Dersingham, Kings Lynn & Wells □

Carole Brown Health Centre (CBHC) Patients' Participation Group (PPG) News

From: Tom Morris, PPG Committee



In September the PPG helped enhance the facilities and comfort for patients at the CBHC by funding the installation of air-conditioning in two treatment rooms, the pharmacy and the conference room. Reducing the room temperature by opening windows was not an option in these rooms where privacy was essential or where medicines had to be stored below a certain temperature! Pictured is the presentation of a cheque to cover the installation cost to Audrey Brown, Vida Healthcare's Head of Patient Services and Performance.



The PPG has been represented at the following meetings during September:

- ⊕ **West Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Group** meeting where the progress work related to the care of the frail, children and those requiring maternity services was addressed.
- ⊕ **Queen Elizabeth Hospital Trust AGM** where the annual report was presented and discussed. The fact that the hospital was placed in Special Measures due to its financial deficit and failure in some other performance areas gave rise to considerable concern to members attending. There did not appear to be a short term solution that did not involve some changes in the services available at the QE. It was emphasised by all who spoke that both the medical and nursing staff continued to work extremely hard to provide the clinical services that patients deserve but recruiting of nurses and doctors to the area presented a problem. The following facts were of special interest. In **2013/14** the hospital treated: **64,000+** inpatients, **274,000+** outpatients, **53,000+** A & E patients and delivered **2,331** babies. So we do need our local hospital!
- ⊕ **Older People's Forum** where a presentation was given on the Hospital at Home service (formerly called the Virtual Ward) and its success has undoubtedly resulted in many patients being allowed home promptly when medically fit or indeed allowing patients to be treated at home when hospitalisation is not essential.
- ⊕ **Vida Healthcare Patient Care** meeting where vacancies in various positions were discussed together with plans to overcome the shortages. The practice will endeavour to minimise any delays in appointments for routine blood tests or periodic chronic disease clinics. □

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Hunstanton Lions Turkey Tinsel Lunches 2014

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The Sandringham Newsletter

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



The Farm department completed their grain harvest in late August; the weather stayed mainly dry, so the grain had a low moisture content and there will not be too much grain drying to do before the crop is sold. While September was in the main gloriously sunny, warm and dry, October started wet and cool. This meant that the Farm department were able to start lifting sugar beet in September, and the cereals being drilled, including barley and winter wheat, had good germinating conditions. Green manures were also sown in some fields; green manures are fast-growing plants which cover bare soil quickly and help suppress weeds. The crop is then ploughed in, which helps improve soil structure and fertility.

Forestry staff were busy in the last couple of months tidying up windblown trees and trimming suckers on lime trees, as well as pulling ragwort in the Country Park. Gardeners were mowing grass until late October, as well as cutting short some of the areas of grass which were allowed to grow longer earlier in the year. The dry weather which was helpful to the Farm in August and September was less so for the Gardens, and irrigation of shrub plantings had to continue throughout August and September, using water from the Lakes. In September, Gardens staff trimmed and shaped hedges and topiaries both in the Gardens and at the Visitor Centre.

Members of the Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire branch of the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust were invited to an open evening in September to see some of the year-round conservation work that is done on the Estate, including forestry and hedgerow work and the planting of field margins. These encourage a wealth of insect life and provide both food and shelter for ground-nesting birds and their young.

When Buckingham Palace closed to the public at the end of September, the two miniature cars which were lent from the Museum returned to Sandringham. They are a Citroen/Daimler given to The Queen as a little girl, and an Aston Martin given to The Duke of York as a small boy, and they have been part of this year's Summer Exhibition at the Palace, "Royal Childhood".

Sandringham Park has been very well used over the last three months. Parties of scouts camped there overnight as part of their Jamboree meeting near Norwich, and the August Craft Fair was as busy as ever. At the end of August over 800 people joined the 10km walk organised by Marie

Curie Cancer Care, which wound its way through the Park and the Gardens of Sandringham House, before returning via the Country Park for a picnic and fireworks display late in the evening. Another very successful Game Fair and Country Show took place in the Park in September, with activities including gundog trials, fishing, falconry and clay pigeon shooting.

Successful participants in the Gold Award of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme attended a reception at the Visitor Centre in September and were presented with their awards by the Norfolk-born paralympic archery bronze and silver medallist, Mel Clarke.

At the time of writing, it is a little early to be thinking about Christmas, but in November the Christmas Craft Fair will return, with its usual mix of all sorts of craftspeople offering some unusual and unique ideas for Christmas gifts. The Visitor Centre Gift Shop has started changing its ranges to include Christmas gifts and decorations, and their range of hampers, either ready-made or assembled to order, is once again proving popular. The Visitor Centre Restaurant will be serving Christmas lunches daily from 21st November. Finally, the Light Up A Life service organised by the Norfolk Hospice, Tapping House, will be taking place at the Visitor Centre once again on Monday 8th December. □





Community First Responders

The Heartbeat of the Community



Could You Save a Life?

There may be many people asking "How?" By becoming a First Responder is the answer. To those of you who have never heard of First Responders it may interest you to know that there is such a scheme here in Dersingham.

So what is a First Responder and what do they do?

First Responders are volunteers from all walks of life who respond to life threatening 999 calls in the local area when NHS resources are stretched. They all receive first aid training and carry a first aid bag complete with a defibrillator. As they live locally they are often the first person in attendance when someone is in need of help so the ability to work under pressure and having a calm head are very good traits. As the title suggests they are the first response until back up in the form of an ambulance crew or paramedic vehicle can get to the scene.

Here in Dersingham the scheme has been up and running for a few years now, but currently there are only 2 responders. One of the original scheme members who is still responding is Yvonne Fuller, known to many as Yvonne the florist from Manor Road. So if you would like more information Yvonne is definitely the best person to speak to and can give you more information regarding the training and availability commitments required. She can be contacted by visiting her at the flower shop or by calling 01485 540628.

Further details can also be found on the website at www.respondersuk.org/norfolk

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Dersingham Guides Rock Wembley

On 4th October twenty members of 1st Dersingham Guides set off from their HQ to join Guides, Senior Section and their leaders from around the UK for the Big Gig at Wembley Arena, Girl Guiding's very own Pop Concert. Over 2 performances 21,000 Guides filled Wembley, raising the Roof repeatedly as they danced, sang and screamed along with the acts on stage. The girls were treated to performances from Union J, Stacey Solomon, Diversity, Kingsland Road and Neon Jungle amongst others. The finale was Little Mix, who were slightly surprised at how well an arena full of Guides sang their own songs back at them. It was quite an experience. Although it was a long day, it was a very enjoyable one for everyone.

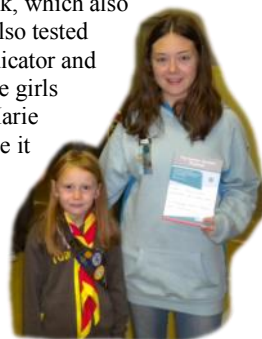


Brownies Turned Science Investigators



The 2nd Dersingham Brownies held their Autumn Sleepover at St Nicholas Church hall on the night of 17th October. This year's had a Science theme as the Brownies were completing their Science Investigator badge which they had begun during recent meetings. The girls had already decorated aprons to wear, built bridges out of Lego, created natural dyes using either spinach, onions or red cabbage for tie dyeing and made bubble wands. Now they tested their wands and revealed the effects of their tie dyeing. They recorded all their results in a lab book, which also

included the science behind their experiments. The girls also tested substances to see if they were acid or alkaline using a red cabbage acid indicator and saw what colours felt tips are really made up of using chromatography. The girls also made a famous scientists placemat displaying information all about Marie Curie and Charles Darwin. The evening included an indoor campfire before it was time for bed and eventually SLEEP! The next morning was very special as it was our new young leader's 16th Birthday and she was also making her Promise as a young leader. Therefore Sophie D, the Young Leader, was brought up to make her promise by Sophie D, the Brownie. It was a very enjoyable event and all the girls received their badges along with a special "I Love Sleepovers" badge for their blanket.



1st Dersingham Scout & Guide HQ Celebrates 40 years



On 2nd November 2014 the 1st Dersingham Scout Group (Beavers, Cubs & Scouts) and Girl Guiding Units (Rainbows, 1st & 2nd Brownies & Guides) held an Open Afternoon to celebrate 40 years since their HQ was opened. The HQ was finally built, after 10 years of

fundraising, on land provided by the Sandringham Estate to enable there to be a permanent home for the village Scout & Guide Units who had previously been meeting at a variety of locations. In recent months, the Scouts and Guides have again been fundraising, but this time to replace the ceiling, fit state of the art lighting and redecoration of the interior. The Open Afternoon included displays of the building of the HQ, memorabilia and photographs of activities the young people have enjoyed. A Celebration cake in the shape of the HQ (made by HQ Management Committee Secretary Jane Woods) was cut by the Mayor of Hunstanton, Cllr Carol Bower. The afternoon saw many current and former members and Leaders come together to celebrate Scouting and Guiding in Dersingham. **Lynne & Elizabeth Wheeler** □





The Winds of Change

by David Bingham

WeBS stands for 'Wetland Bird Survey' and is a partnership between the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust (WWT), the RSPB, the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC). The history of this scheme stretches back to the 1940s, when concerns were first

raised about declines in wildfowl numbers. The early surveys expanded to include all waterbirds, not just ducks and geese, and now an army of volunteers go out to count the waterbirds on their count sectors on one morning each month through the core winter months (and sometimes all year). The counts are co-ordinated to coincide with high spring tides, when wading birds are forced off their feeding grounds out on estuarine mudflats - making counting of their communal roosts a practical way to accurately assess numbers. The WeBS scheme also includes periodic low tide counts, which are designed to assess the distribution of birds at low tide to determine where the important feeding grounds are located. The count data currently held within the WeBS central computer would stretch for 40 miles if printed on A4 paper and laid end to end. This is an enormous amount of information and the scheme is well respected by central government and has influenced planning decisions regarding freight terminals and other developments on estuaries and wetlands - not always the most scenic places to argue a case on aesthetic grounds alone. The Wash is our most important site for wintering waterbirds with average peak winter counts of more than 350, 000 birds. The Wash hosts internationally important populations of pink-footed geese, dark-bellied brent geese, shelducks, pintails, oystercatchers, ringed plovers, golden plovers, grey plovers, lapwings, knots, sanderlings, dunlins, black-tailed godwits, bar-tailed godwits and redshanks. Having said this, all of our estuaries are important because the birds move between the UK wetlands and regularly fly across the North Sea to feeding grounds on the coasts of the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, Belgium and France. All of the records matter - from the counts on the big estuaries such as The Wash, Morecombe Bay and the Thames estuary to the records returned by the counter from the Sound of Barra - who braves the northern Scottish storms to count a hundred or so waterbirds.

I've been a WeBS foot soldier for getting on for twenty years and count the Heacham section, which stretches from Heacham North Beach to the Snettisham beach car park. It is a good sector because it includes the Snettisham Coastal Park and the Ken Hill grazing marshes. Most WeBS sectors around The Wash are counted from the sea wall and it is unusual to have the variety of habitats and the circular walk I have on my patch. I walk a set route and record my sightings as I go. A local birder, who is also a computer whizz, developed a counting game where swirling

virtual flocks of birds fly across the screen and the game is to estimate the number. This is unlikely to ever become a big seller in the computer gaming world but it is a good training aid for those new to WeBS counting. The counts would be easier to do if birds of a feather flocked together. As you can see from the photo of part of a wader roost, taken by Chris Gomersall at Snettisham, this isn't



always the case. This flock has knots and dunlins and they are in various stages of moult - changing from summer to winter plumage. The Snettisham RSPB reserve currently has over 60,000 knots roosting at high tide. Doing a WeBS count is a difficult skill to master.

Even without analysing the data, I know about some of the major changes that have occurred on my beat over the years. The sea was once an interesting place to watch with large rafts of sea ducks, such as eiders and scoters, as well as mixed flocks of gulls - often harried by marauding skuas in the autumn. These sights seem to be a thing of the past and may be connected to improved sewage treatment at the Heacham outfall. This is generally a good thing but probably reduced the organic content and fertility of the local seabed. The regular small flock of purple sandpipers that used to winter around the groynes just to the north of my sector have disappeared. Purple sandpipers are commoner in Scotland and their loss may be connected with a generally warming world. The arrival of the little egrets could also be a sign that the world is changing. I saw my first little egret in Dorset in the 1970s when they were a rare breeding bird. Now they are a familiar site on our estuaries and wetlands all year round. Disturbance has also increased over the years and I often have flocks of birds I'm trying to count disturbed by joggers and dog walkers. This can be important in the depth of winter when birds need to conserve their energy. Disturbance in the summer is also thought to be a factor in the decline of our beach nesting birds such as ringed plovers.

Doing the WeBS counts connects me to the seasons and there are things of interest to experience throughout the year - not always birds with webbed feet or long legs. The ice blue sea holly that grows in drifts along the top of the sand dunes in the warm summer months, flocks of snow buntings flitting around the strand line in the depth of winter, hundreds of goldfinches feeding on the teasel heads, the first wheatear of the year arriving in the coastal park on its migration north - and not forgetting stops along the way to taste the blackberries. I once had a close encounter with an octopus on a WeBS count. It was washed up onto the beach by the last gasp of a rising tide and lay sprawled out on the sand in a writhing mass of tentacles. I picked it up and threw it back into the sea - where it immediately emitted a jet of black ink and shot off out into safer waters.

October's WeBs day dawned misty and damp. I drove to the starting point of my count sector in the hope that the sun would burn off the mist. Sea anglers were on the beach casting out into the high tide. Okay for them because they don't need to see beneath the sea. But for me the conditions were hopeless because I couldn't count what I couldn't see. Mist and fog are pretty much the only weather conditions that make counting impossible. I usually manage to get around my patch in

around two hours. On clear days it is good to look out around The Wash imagining my fellow counters out and about at exactly the same time. The RSPB staff and volunteers at Snettisham, Frampton and Freiston, the farmers of Lincolnshire who have found an intense interest in the wild untamed saltmarshes and mudflats on the other side of the seawalls that bound their intensively farmed arable fields. And not forgetting the elderly counters of Terrington Marsh - some of whom have been counting the birds since the late 1960s. □



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Norfolk Family Walk 2014

The Eighth Norfolk Family Walk for Brain Tumour Research & Support once again took place in the grounds of the palatial Holkham Hall, Wells-next-the-Sea on Sunday, 19th October 2014. There were walks of one, three, six or ten miles long. The one mile walk for children had games along the way.

The weather was very kind this year and the sun shone on a record number of around 400 adults and children plus lots of four-legged friends, who enjoyed the walk

around the park, taking in the beautiful surroundings. The ten mile walkers also enjoyed the facilities of Wells-next-the-Sea, namely fish and chips, a pint or a cup of coffee!

When they returned to base, most of the walkers then took the opportunity to recuperate at the excellent café at the Hall, enjoying the lovely autumn sunshine. We recorded 2,039 miles walked by those who reported back to the finish tent which will be added to the miles walked by other brain tumour charities around the world. Last year we jointly walked three times round the equator! raising awareness of brain tumours.

The trustees of Astro Brain Tumour Fund would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to Adrian Flux Insurance Services who kindly once more sponsored the Walk's running expenses, Holkham Hall for their hospitality, Christine's merry band of helpers, and most importantly our walkers who took part and raised funds for vital research projects



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that the charity is currently funding. Huge thanks also go to everyone who has kindly made donations or sponsored their friends and family. Amount raised so far is in excess of £5,000 with sponsorship money still to come.

It was a happy and uplifting day with lots of people taking the opportunity to catch up with friends and family. We look forward to seeing you all again next year!

For more information ring Christine - 01485 572767 or Mary - 01485 525279

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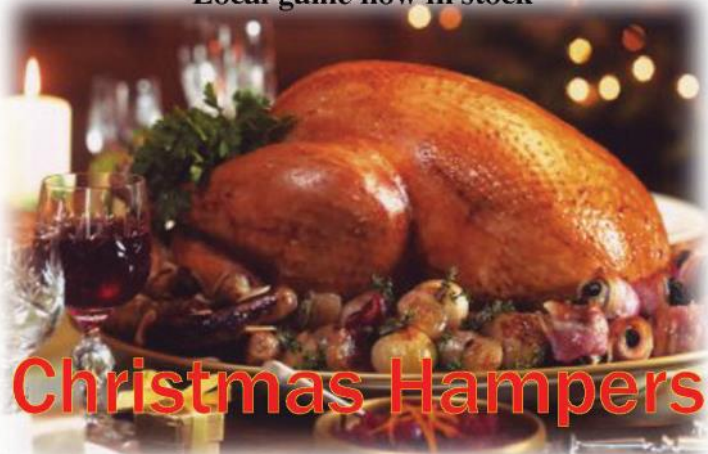
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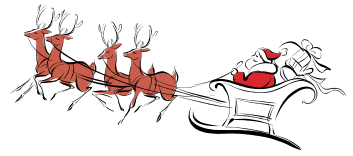
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A Christmas Tale by Valerie Anckorn



In his Magical Kingdom, Santa Claus was loading up his sleigh getting ready to set off for his mammoth yearly task of dropping toys down chimneys for all the children of the world. His team of reindeer, after a lovely long rest of roaming throughout the land and grazing on lush vegetation, had been limbering up ready for the big flight, getting their muscles firm and trim. They were excited because normally they couldn't fly and it was only once a year that Santa waved the magic dust over them when they found themselves levitating upwards into the sky and flying with no problems at all.

Santa kept quite a few reindeer and they all had different names. Apart from Rudolph, Prancer, Blitzen and Dancer, etc, there were others known as John and Jacob, Pamela and Mary, Nigel and Nancy. None knew whom he was going to choose for the big flight, so quite a bit of excitable hoof stamping went on until the flight team was chosen. Santa chose strong, robust animals, and he marched up and down, marking a chalk cross on the heads of those he felt would make the best team each year. Tonight, Mary was one of those who were chosen. She felt very privileged and so excited at the thought of flying up into the air and being part of Santa's sleigh team. This would be her maiden flight and because she was so keen to do it, she decided not to let anyone into her Big Secret.

Once the sleigh was loaded and Santa came out of his home garbed in his best outfit he heaved his way up into the driving seat while the livery lads hitched up the reindeer to the traces, checking all the straps and girths were secure. Hoofs were scraped across the snow in anticipation and tails flicked with excitement. Santa shook the bell-decorated reins, and after flipping them lightly over the leaders' backs, shouted, "Hup-hup!" and the reindeer began to move forward. They gathered momentum over the ground until they were going lickety-split and then to their great joy, they were soon airborne. Up, high into the sky and over the frozen wastes and soon they were flying to their destinations.

Somehow, Santa was able to do something special to *time* to enable his enormous task to be completed in one night. As soon as the sacks of toys were emptied, they magically filled again. Everything was accomplished in a twinkling of an eye. Eventually the sleigh could be seen to be flying over a certain big house in Anmer, where a special toy was sent down one of the chimneys. Then it flew over Sandringham en route to Dersingham. It was then that Santa noticed Mary seemed to be in some distress. "What's the matter Mary?" he shouted over the backs of the other reindeer. "Sir, I fear I am about to give birth. I didn't realise my baby was due quite so soon!" "Gracious!" exclaimed Santa who felt irked he hadn't realised he had a pregnancy amongst his team, "We must get you down to earth". They were flying right over the Royal Sandringham Stud Farm at the time and the life sized statue of Persimmon could plainly be seen standing in front of the stables. The team of reindeer with the sleigh came down right beside it.

As it happened, even at that late hour, the Queen was at the stables watching the birth of one of her foals and having heard some unusual noise outside, she went to peek around the corner of the stable yard. "Good gracious! What will they think of next? Those wretched press men are everywhere!" she said. Then, turning to one of the grooms, "Go and give some carrots to those reindeer and tell that corpulent chappie he can't stay there and take photos". About to turn back to regard her new foal, the Queen's observant eye noticed that one of the deer looked as if she were about to give birth, so going as fast as she could without losing any royal dignity, she went over for a closer look. Summing up the situation, she told the photographer man to bring the animal over at once to one of the stables where the reindeer could give birth in safety and comfort - but to leave his camera behind. She still thought Santa was a press hoax, but to her, any animal was important, especially when giving birth. Mary was coaxed into the stable where she slumped down in the straw. Already a small pair of baby hoofs could be seen, and before the eyes of The Queen, the Royal Vet, Santa Claus and a couple of stable hands, Mary's baby was born safely in

the stable. Everyone breathed a sigh of relief as the new calf was washed clean by Mary, her son almost straight away making the effort to stand on wobbly legs and quickly finding sustenance from his mother. Everyone watching said, “Ahhhhh.” Then Santa chortled, “Ho-Ho-Ho”. The Queen glanced at him sharply.

Santa looked at his watch. “Your Majesty”, he said, looking worried. “I have to go now as I haven’t yet delivered all the Christmas toys to the children. It will be dawn soon, and I have to finish by then. I have the rest of Norfolk to do, and then I shall be working my way South – an awful lot to do”. The Queen, raised her eyebrows regally, “How interesting”, she retorted. “Yes, of course, you must go on your way. You can leave the baby and mother here and pick them up after the festivities”. Santa looked concerned. “But M’arm, I must have Mary, the team won’t be even and we can’t get airborne without her”. Mary struggled to her feet and said to Santa – and by the way, we all know animals can’t talk, but they use telepathy to communicate, so can be understood by those who know the trick – “I’m fine” said Mary, “If I can leave my baby here until all the toys have been delivered, I’m ready to join the team again.” Santa looked at the Queen and asked her if he could leave the calf here until later as Mary had told him she was fit enough for the final run. The Queen raised her eyebrows, but animals were important to her, so she said kindly, “As you will. We have the facilities here to make sure the baby is kept safe and fed. What will you call the little creature? Noel, perhaps?”

The Queen, a couple of tired grooms, a weary stable girl and a yawning visiting vet followed Santa and Mary to the sleigh, where Mary was hooked up again in line with the other reindeer. Santa bowed to the Queen, then climbed into his seat and flicked some magic dust over his team. To the immense surprise of the Queen and her retinue, the sleigh took off into the air with the jingling of sleigh bells, and Santa doffed his hat to the ever-diminishing group of people standing near the statue of Persimmon. The Queen stared as the sleigh disappeared from view into the starry night. She was not a person to turn a hair at whatever life threw at her but this situation had truly flummoxed her. “Gracious!” she uttered, “and I thought it was just a media stunt. I can’t wait to tell little George the story of how I met Santa. Of course, Phillip won’t believe me – he’ll say it’s some kind of aeronautics.”

Turning on her heel, the Queen strode back to the stables to pick up her bag and to take a last look at the sweet little calf who had now burrowed under some straw, waiting for his mother’s return. Stepping outside again with a smile lurking on her lips, the Queen looked up into the inky black sky peppered with twinkling stars. “Look”, she said to no one in particular, pointing up at the sky. “Look at that huge star shining brightly overhead. It’s all very odd isn’t it! I wonder if we will remember this in the morning? Don’t forget to switch off the lights.” Rummaging through the dog biscuits in her pocket, she hooked out her keys, adjusted her headscarf and climbed into her vehicle, absentmindedly patting the heads of her waiting dogs with waggy tails on the front seat. Poking her head back out of the window, the Queen said to her staff, “Look after that little chap. He is very special” then drove herself back to Sandringham House to get some sleep before a busy day ahead.

A white owl flapped his wings leisurely, homeward bound after nocturnal activities hunting for supper. Snow then fell down softly and silently covering the neighbourhood with its white blanket and all was at peace with the world. □



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Bilton Silver (Rugby) Band with Conductor David Stowell

Since its formation in 1893, over 120 years ago, Bilton Silver (Rugby) Band's mission has been to serve its community, both in encouraging young (and not so young!) people to take up music-making and in performing at varied events including formal concerts, church services, parades, fetes and private functions.

In 2014, Bilton Silver has two bands: the Training Band, a thriving group whose three sections involve around 70 young people and adult learners each week, and the main band, a traditional contesting band with around 30 members who travel to Bilton to rehearse twice a week, from as near as a few hundred yards from the band room to many, many miles away.

The main band maintains its reputation through a varied membership, continuing to nurture



players with individual memberships of over fifty years, as well as attracting and welcoming high quality musicians as the need arises. This approach, together with the band's policy of introducing less experienced players from the Training Band as soon as they are ready, ensures a healthy mix of knowledge, skill and raw talent across a broad range of experiences.

Besides the band's busy and successful concert diary, it has enjoyed success in recent years in its partnership with their highly experienced Professional Conductor, David Stowell (ex Royal MSM & HM Coldstream Guards), bringing home trophies as Midlands Regional Champions and National Runners-up in the Second Section of the National Brass Band Championships in both 2012 and 2013. Gaining promotion to the First Section in 2014, the band was delighted to achieve a very satisfying 4th place at this year's regional contest. The band is looking forward very much to consolidating their place in their new section.

More information about the band and its current activities can be found at:

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A Cat, a Beaver and a Hedgehog The Babingley Three by Elizabeth Fiddick

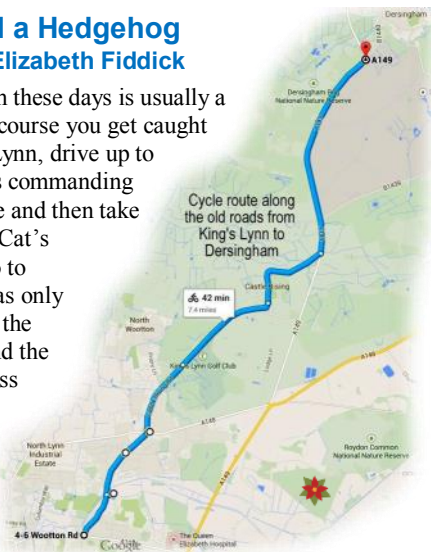
To travel from Lynn to Dersingham these days is usually a quick and easy journey unless of course you get caught up in holiday traffic. You can leave Lynn, drive up to the Knight's Hill roundabout with its commanding views of the surrounding countryside and then take the A149 down past Castle Rising, by Cat's

Bottom, through Sandringham Woods and so to Dersingham. However the A149 around King's Lynn was only constructed in about 1965 so before that you had to take the road through Castle Rising, pass its church on the left and the almshouses on the right and follow the road down to cross the bridge over the river. Only then would you drive through Sandringham Woods with the road to West Newton leading off to the right. The road from Rising church to the Bridge is now closed to traffic but is well used by walkers and cyclists and the lower part is known locally as onion corner due to the mass of

wild garlic that grows there and scents the air with its distinctive aroma. On Faden's map of 1797 this road is clearly marked and it shows the River Babingley winding its way between embankments over extensive marshes towards the Wash. Evidence of human settlement over hundreds of years has been found over this whole area. Flint arrowheads bear witness to prehistoric settlements. As you travel down from Knight's Hill on the right by the Castle Rising turning is Keeper's Wood where there is a large mound that may contain human burials of Neolithic times. Two smaller barrows nearby date to the Bronze Age. Between 1949 and 1951 part of a Roman Villa was found near West Newton. There were tiled floors, a hypocaust and a limestone chimney flue. A refuse pit contained not only pottery fragments but a huge amount of oyster and mussel shells. A further probable Roman Villa was discovered a little further away with the suggested presence of a cemetery. In more recent times metal detectors have unearthed Roman, Saxon, and Medieval coins, buckles and harness straps over the whole area.

The village of Babingley seems to take its name from Bab or Be, a fine winding river, and Ing and Ley as lying in meadows. The river, fast flowing and wider than at present, separated Babingley from its neighbour the village of Risinga whose name translates as People of the Gorse. The two villages shared 5 watermills and the estuary of the river provided access to the sea. Much trading was carried by the river before the establishment of the Port of Lynn.

During Saxon times a massive sea defence was constructed from North Wootton along the river and north to Wolferton. This protected the people from the frequent storms and high tides as well as making more land available for arable farming. Before the Conquest, Tort a Saxon freeman was the lord with one carucate of land in Babingley. A *carucate* was as much land as could be ploughed by one plough and eight oxen in a year. The actual amount varied according to the type of soil but is now considered to be about 120 acres. Tort was Lord of 4 villains, the highest class of dependent peasantry, 15 bordars, smallholding cottagers of lesser standing, and 5 servi, slaves of their Lords. Another estate was held by Sula, also a Saxon Freeman, with 2 carucates of land and villains, bordars and servi. 16 acres of meadow are recorded. The tenants had land for 60 swine, and 60 sheep. There were 9 salt pans held by 7 freemen. Salt making was a very important



industry and aerial photography has revealed evidence of many salt pans all over the marshes from North Wootton through to Babingley and Wolferton.

It is easy to imagine this Saxon village and the villagers tending their pigs and sheep, working on the salt pans, taking corn to the miller, fulfilling their duties to Tort or Sula and socialising with their close neighbours across the river. At this time the most powerful leader in East Anglia was Raedwald who is possibly the leader commemorated by the ship at Sutton Hoo. In 595 St. Augustine arrived in Kent and the conversion of the country to Christianity was begun.

Some time in 616 Raedwald was baptised in the faith but this may only have been a political expedient as he simply put up a Christian Altar next to his Pagan one. It was his son Sigbert who was the more significant as he was baptised and actively encouraged Christianity. It was Sigbert who sent St. Felix to East Anglia to establish the Christian Faith. Felix was Bishop of East Anglia for 17 years and travelled the whole area to promote the faith. He probably travelled by sea and up the Babingley River to meet the people of both villages. According to legend, on one of these trips a storm arose the ship was wrecked and Felix flung into the raging water. However a beaver came to the rescue and carried Felix to safety in nearby Flitcham. Felix, to show his gratitude, made the beaver a Bishop and it features on all the memorials to Felix in this area. The church at Babingley, now in ruins, is dedicated to St. Felix and it is said the site on which it stands was where St. Felix built the first Christian church in East Anglia. The earliest phase of earthworks at Risinga may have been the site where Felix established a monastery housing mendicant or poor monks.

The advent of the Norman Conquest signalled huge changes everywhere. Both Tort and Sula were ejected from their estates and the land handed over to followers and kin of the Conqueror. Peter de Valois, the nephew of the Conqueror, was given Tort's land. The estate of Sula, together with lands in Hillington, Dersingham and Massingham, was given to one Eudo who had distinguished himself in the Conqueror's service. At Risinga the estate eventually came to the King's Butler, the most senior member of the household, William

D'Albini. Although the colonization of Britain was a gradual process life in Saxon England was changed forever. Within fifty years the old Saxon names like Tort and Sula had disappeared to be replaced by William, Robert, Geoffrey and other names from their Norman overlords. The greatest change to Risinga and Babingley came when the Normans chose Risinga as the site for their castle. I wonder how the villagers felt in about 1150 as they watched the great earth ramparts being constructed and the grey stone castle keep grow to dominate their homes and the whole countryside around. Both churches in the villages were also built around this time and many locals probably worked on both sites.

The two Manors of Babingley were Butler's Hall and West Hall or Tateshall's Manor. An aerial view of the village, to be found on the internet, shows clearly the markings of the medieval village. The visible remains include part of the moated site of the Medieval Manor House which is now Hall Farm. Trackways and enclosures can be seen with evidence of the Arable field system. There is also a smaller moated site with the possibility of a dovecot. These two manors are now





bisected by the A149 but the moat and farms are marked on Ordnance Survey maps. Both Manors changed hands many times over the centuries. The Hall Farm estate came to the de Boteler family in the 14th century and their name survives to this day on modern maps. At the junction of the B1439 to West Newton and the A149 can be found the base and shaft of a medieval stone cross surrounded by a rusting wire fence, its name, Butler's Cross, being a

reference to the de Boteler family. The village of Rising was a parish in its own right but its estate stretched over several parishes and was known as The Chase, or Chace. It was originally a hunting estate and Butler's Cross, as the old metal nameplate indicates, marked its bounds. John de Boteler died in 1369 and his daughter married Jeffrey Cobbe of Sandringham thus joining the two manors. Eventually the whole estate passed to Henry Cornish Henley who sold it to Edward Prince of Wales in 1862. In a similar way Tateshall's Manor became part of the Cobbe's Sandringham holdings and later by marriage to Cornish Henley and thus to the Prince of Wales.

In 1768 a turnpike road was constructed, *"from Wootton Gaps, through the parish of Castle Rising to the South End of Babingley Bridge and then onto Babingley Lane in the Parish of Babingley"*. It was noted that before this the road was almost impassable from the depth of mud in winter time. The area was also subject to several serious floods from the sea throughout this time. In 1779 the whole area was under water and one Robert Reeve lost 60 sheep, drowned, and 10 acres of wheat spoiled. The 19th century was little better. In 1836 the village is recorded with just 38 inhabitants living in a few cottages alongside Hall Farm and Whalley farm. The church was described as being in tolerable repair and although it was partly repaired in 1849 by 1864 when the area was part of the Royal Estate it was mostly in ruins.

Whalley Farm which stands back on the landward side from the A149 was farmed by Arthur Boothby and Babingley Hall Farm on the seaward side by Charles Bradfield. However great changes were afoot in the 1880s as Whalley Farm had no tenant farmer but was managed for the Prince of Wales. Princess Alexandra converted the farmhouse into a small hospital with ten beds for the workers on the estate. Charles Dickens, the famous author, had during his lifetime published and edited two weekly periodicals. The first was titled "Household Words" which was replaced later by one entitled "All the Year Round". Underneath the title were the words "Conducted by Charles Dickens" and it was in these magazines that many of his novels were serialized. After his death his son Charles conducted the periodical and in February 1887 he wrote that he had taken the train down to Sandringham to see the latest improvements. He recommended that the traveller should come by Wolferton and return via Dersingham. He describes in detail his walk to and around Sandringham but goes on to write about the other villages nearby. Babingley is described as consisting of swampy meadows through which a rivulet meanders to the Wash. He mentions Butler's Cross and the ruined church but ends with the fact that only one farm house remains. He tells the reader that Princess Alexandra with her customary charity had converted the other into a hospital for the use of people suffering from illness on the Sandringham Estate.

By 1890 there were just 13 houses



in the village. Children attended school in West Newton and the nearest money order and telegraph office was in Dersingham. In 1896 a new iron church with a thatched roof was erected for the village by the Prince of Wales. This church still stands today a little way down the road leading to Hall Farm. It is now known as St. Felix Chapel for the British Orthodox Church Community of St. Mary and St. Felix. The British Orthodox Church is part of the Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria founded by St. Mark the Evangelist in 58AD.

The twentieth century dawned with many men from the area fighting in the South African War. In the Royal Photograph Collection at Windsor there is a small photograph album on the title page of which Princess Alexandra has written, *"Babingley House our little hospital for convalescent Officers from the seat of War in South Africa 1900"*. The last photo depicts four of the Officers in the garden of what may be the hospital. Although it is not positively identified it seems highly likely that this is the hospital the Princess set up in the 1880s. I have not yet established when the hospital closed but by the 1930s there is no mention of it and the farm is once again tenanted.

So I have come nearly to the end of my brief account of Babingley. But I hear you cry, "What about the hedgehog?" Well you will find on any map of the road close to Babingley an area with the intriguing name of Cat's Bottom as mentioned at the start of this account. But for this writer the name Felix always conjures up the picture of a cat. Perhaps Felix the Cat was a comic book character of my childhood or maybe just part of a successful ad campaign for cat food. But there it is. For me Felix is the cat. The hedgehog however is no figment of the imagination. If you walk up the old Lynn Road towards Castle Rising you will reach the bridge over the river. On the north corner of the bridge immediately to your right as you approach is a rare example of a World War 2 "hedgehog" type anti-tank block from about 1940. It is the only one of its type in the area. There

are 5 or 6 sockets into which rails would have been inserted to give it its hedgehog appearance. These have been sawn off flush to the surface now and many a time have I sat here during a walk to have a coffee or eat a sandwich. I didn't know then that I was

sitting on a hedgehog! In 2000 there were apparently still 4 or 5 anti-tank cubes lining the approach from the north side but I could not see them recently possibly due to the dense undergrowth. I'm sure some readers will know more about these items than I do but they bring this account to an end.

The cat, the beaver and the hedgehog between them cover over a thousand years of our history. □





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Katie and Kim □

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Dersingham Evening WI by Maggie Guest



The meetings on the third Wednesday of every month continue to flourish as do all the smaller groups and events where members get a chance to get to know other people in a smaller environment.

Coffee mornings continue to be popular but, by way of a change, the November one was a 'soup and roll' lunch, which was enjoyed by nearly 30 members. The WI has now been able to start up a new group which does 'keep fit' under the watchful eye of Peg.

In September a small group of members went to Berlin with our German speaking Antje. Wonderful to have our own translator with us. We saw so many things we had heard of over the years like Checkpoint Charlie, the remains of The Berlin Wall, The Brandenburg Gate and so on. The city, now united, has an air of energy and vibrancy about it. The Kaiser-Wilhelm-Kirche tower still stands as a reminder of the horrors of the War. The ruins of the tower were left standing after bombing raids as a memorial. Next to it, a modern church made of blue glass bricks was



built for present day worship. It is a stunning building from the inside with the sunlight shining through the blue glass bricks. Interestingly there is a Coventry Cross. This is a small cross forged from old nails found in the ruins of Coventry Cathedral and commemorates the bombing of Coventry by the German Luftwaffe in 1940. We had a lot of fun and visits to shops as well as sightseeing and I left feeling I wanted to go back and learn more.

The theme of our Christmas tree is to be "Hearts" and preparation for this along with our Christmas stalls is under way. □



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Other counties may have larger and grander stately homes but in Norfolk Oxburgh Hall is a real little gem of an example of a fortified Tudor Manor House. Teresa Squires, the General Manager, gave a fascinating overview of the Hall's history to a packed church hall which she subtitled Continuity Change and Catholicism. The Hall was built around 1482 by the

Bedingfeld family during the turbulent times

of the Wars of the Roses. The family, still in residence today, are Roman Catholics and maintained their faith throughout the upheavals of the Tudor and Stuart periods when Catholics lived constantly under threat. One Sir Henry Bedingfeld was even the jailer of the future Elizabeth 1. Needlework panels worked by the ill fated Mary Queen of Scots found at the hall and a Priest's Hole which can be entered by any intrepid visitor bear witness to these times. It is unlucky for us that just as we may make great changes to our homes to fit our modern lifestyles so too did one Bedingfeld who demolished the Great Hall. Teresa recounted how after World War II the current owner, like many others, realised he could not afford to maintain the house and it was put up for sale. The timber merchant who acquired it was only interested in the woods on the property and was prepared to leave the house to decay. Lady Sybil Bedingfeld bought the property back and in 1952 donated it to the National Trust. Teresa then outlined the constant effort the Trust has to make to restore and maintain such an historic property. She showed a wonderful view of the Parterre Garden taken from the roof and informed us that six and a half thousand bedding plants were needed to produce the intricate colourful designs. Great efforts are made to put on events to make an enjoyable day for all visitors, which have meant numbers increasing each year but such success brings its own problems. A new reception area is being planned for the future. If anyone reading this has not yet visited this jewel in Norfolk's crown I urge them to do so.

CLIO

Elgood's Brewery with Alan Pateman Tuesday 4th November



A convivial evening was enjoyed when Elgoods chief brewer and production manager, Alan Pateman, told us the story of beer. He passed round some of the main ingredients of beer: malted grains of barley and hops for us to smell, feel and taste (he didn't bother to pass around the other one: *water*). Elgoods is by far the oldest local craft brewery in the area being founded in 1795. Located in Wisbech, so it's almost in Norfolk. Elgoods, we were told, also has a large garden open to the

public and with a brewery tour it makes for a good day out.

After the break Alan got the beer out and we tasted 7 different varieties of bottled beer, most of which were excellent. I wasn't too sure about the Apple and Vanilla flavour but each to his own. Judging by the smiles on faces at the end it was a successful evening.

The brewery is open on December 6th/7th for free tours and a look at the gardens. **Dumpling** □

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Random Jottings

by Tony Bubb



There are posters around at the moment (mid October) advertising The Ladykillers. Our Christmas treat at school, indeed our only treat unless you counted the time that a Tizer lorry destroyed the Freemantle Gate entrance one foggy and frosty morning requiring the unbroken bottles to be spirited away from the scene and consumed at morning break before returning the empties to the wreckage. Strangely we had three entrances to the school, one at either side which everybody used and a grand main entrance complete with massive double doors into the building, obviously built at vast expense, only ever opened for the school concert. But I digress. The Christmas treat was to be shown a film. Always a comedy, always in glorious black and white. One year the film was The Ladykillers. All went well to start with, the hall blacked out, a few well chosen words from “Harry” the headmaster and then the film. About halfway through, the Bell & Howell Filmosound projector decided to chew up the film and jam itself. End of treat! Next day, the last before the end of term, the film was re-shown in full. They obviously thought we would have forgotten the beginning. Roll forward a year and it’s the Christmas treat again. Same idea, curtains, “Harry” and off goes the film. What is it this year? The Ladykillers! We never did find out where the mistake occurred, no-one was owning up. Well it was better than lessons but only just.



In all the years I have lived in Norfolk I had never managed to see any seals. I’ve seen them in Cornwall, Wales, Scotland and off the Cumbrian coast but never round here. That is until the other day when, it being fine and warm and the last Tuesday in October, we took ourselves off to RSPB Titchwell. It was packed. The staff blamed it on being half term, but there were few

children to be seen and most of the visitors were far too old to be holidaying teachers, so it must have been the weather. The crowds thinned the further away from the visitor centre we walked and by the time we reached the beach there were just the usual few with huge telescopes pointing out to sea. We walked east towards Brancaster and on rounding a corner came across an inlet with a large ball floating in the middle but it was not a ball it was a seal. Then another appeared and another until there were seven of them cruising around. A couple of hardy types turned up with wetsuits and got into the water which gave the seals something to come and look at (we seals don’t have bright pink heads do we?). The swimmers’ dog stayed on the bank, meanwhile, not impressed by his companions activity. So that’s another tick on my list.

For reasons I can’t quite remember I have a collection of Loch Ness Monsters and was wondering what a collective noun for them would be. Please send answers via the editor.



And finally a friend spotted this philosophical poster:

Do have a good Christmas and a Happy New Year and perhaps join me for the Boxing Day walk I am leading. □





Rotary Matters

by Phil Newell & Rene Rooth

We have been busy this autumn, following our two major events of the summer, the Norton Hill, Snettisham, Light Railway weekend and the Kite Festival and Classic Car day. Over the year we have managed to earn £20,000, all of which is used for charity purposes.

In early October we celebrated our Charter event. This is Rotary's name for its birthday! – in our case, 1976, and it is one of the two black tie events of our Rotary year. We listened with interest to distinguished speakers. Our Club President for this year, Rotarian Peter Atterbury, carried out a presentation to Rotarian and Past President Brian Devlin. Brian has worked tirelessly with great enthusiasm for Rotary and, completely unaware of what was to happen, was called forward by our President to receive a Rotary award. This award is the highest that Rotary gives – the Paul Harris award for exemplary service.

The second half of the event had some fascinating entertainment by a very clever magician, Gus Wilson – fortunately he did not make any of us vanish!

Back in the month of May in the Dersingham Village Voice we told readers of the table tennis progress of eleven-year old

Mollie Patterson. Readers will, we are sure, like to know of her progress since then.

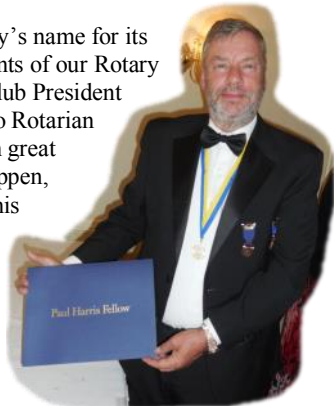
Like us you will probably gasp when we say that she recently won the Norfolk Junior Table Tennis Championship in her age group, plus the under 15 yr and the Under 18 yr groups. With her partner she was runner-up in the Open Junior Doubles event. Her talent has been recognised in that she is now no.2 in her age group in the whole of England!

We have had a varied programme for our regular weekly meetings during the last two months. We were fascinated by Brian Holmes' talk on the history of the local railway line. So many people nowadays are regretting the closure of local lines and the King's Lynn to Hunstanton line is no exception. We were amazed to hear from Brian that more than twenty trains ran daily, that the line was always profitable and that 90% of the line's route is still visible. His great wish is that more lines will open in Norfolk. Most of us will be delighted if road congestion is eased!

Another of the talks we received was from Councillor Richard Bird, taking us to the local Food Bank store and showing us just how the system is operated. The Food Bank is fundamental to Rotary aims in that it is to help people who are having difficulty and are in real distress. It is sad that in the twenty first century there are individuals and families who, through no fault of their own, find themselves in dire situations and need the help that the Food Banks can supply.

We have our Rotary Christmas lunch in December when we shall be presenting the cheques to the three charity organisers who had stalls at our Norton Hill Light Railway event. The charities are 'Keeping Abreast' (reconstruction after cancer surgery), 'The Norfolk Hospice, Tapping House' and 'West Norfolk Riding for the Disabled'. The cheques amount to a little over £3000 each and we are enormously grateful to members of the public for their support.

If you have any questions about Rotary or are interested in either full or associate membership, then please telephone either Club President Peter Atterbury on 01485 534820 or Rotarian Phil Newell on 01485 533864. □





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News from St Cecilia's Church by Patricia Nevin

The sponsored walk on Sunday 5th October was very enjoyable, with 14 walkers and 2 dogs, making the most of the lovely warm sunny weather on the day. A welcome cup of tea and cake was available at the parish centre upon our return. This event is a major fundraiser for the parish. The shared ladies lunch at St Cecilia's went well and the food was lovely. Miriam Cairns gave a talk about the Purfleet Trust, a charity in King's Lynn looking after homeless people. They also use food bank donations to provide a good meal each day. £70 was raised in the raffle for the Purfleet Trust. We are still collecting for the Food Banks in Hunstanton and King's Lynn which provide help to those in very real need in the local area. There is a collection point at both

churches. We also have a 'Fair Trade' stall in the church meeting room at St Cecilia's after Mass on the first Sunday of each month. Please support this.

At the end of October a group of parishioners enjoyed an afternoon at Norwich Theatre Royal for a fantastic performance of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat. The last social occasion of the year, apart from the Christmas raffle, was the delicious Harvest fish & chip supper at St Cecilia's on the 7th November.

Watch for our parish social events during the year which will be advertised on the website and in the weekly bulletins and church notice boards. 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 10:15am 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. Sunday Masses are 9am at Dersingham and 11am at Hunstanton.

Christmas Eve: 8.30pm Carols & Readings at Our Lady & St Edmund, Hunstanton

9.00pm 'Midnight Mass' at Our Lady & St Edmund, Hunstanton

Christmas Day: as Sundays ie; 9am St Cecilia's, Dersingham and at 11am Hunstanton.

The **Parish Office** telephone number is **01485 534675**. You can contact the Parish Priest, **Fr Peter Rollings** on **01553 772220** or email parish@hunstantoncatholicparish.org

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CT&A

Dersingham Bog News from Tom Bolderstone, Reserve Warden

Autumn is finally with us although the first few days of October have almost felt like summer with warm daytime temperatures around the twenty degrees mark. This has been particularly confusing I'm sure for the first flocks of pink footed geese that had arrived expecting colder weather.

Work is continuing with the winter scrub management and staff, volunteers and contractor are working hard to clear parts of the site from invasive birch and pine saplings. We have also been using a machine called a Rytec to help with this scrub management and harvest some heather areas. The Rytec is mounted to a tractor and functions much like a mower. There is one difference however as it has a hopper fitted to it to allow us to collect the material and remove it off site. This is particularly useful as we are able to remove the small scrubby trees as well as a small layer of soil. This reduces the amount of birch seeds that regenerate. Using this machine to mow the heather and remove areas of scrub we are able to let the heather regenerate and create a varied age structure in the heather. This is important for a variety of plants, birds, reptiles and insects.

Our volunteers have also been plugging away clearing rhododendron in the woods. When in flower the rhododendron is a pretty plant with pink flowers introduced from Asia. However, at Dersingham Bog it causes problems for much of the rest of the vegetation. Rhododendrons can shade out plants such as bramble and small saplings, stopping them growing, leading to an almost single species dominating the ground level of the woodland edge. By removing it we encourage the creation of a more species rich woodland edge, that will attract birds such as Blackcap and Willow Warbler as well as butterflies and pollinating insects when the flowers are out. We had volunteer groups from the College of West Anglia as part of their uniformed services course. 30 volunteers spread over two days cleared an amazing amount. Another group came from the legal services team at Aviva in Norwich. As well as clearing a substantial amount of rhododendron they had the chance to bond as a team. The help from these groups was invaluable and we managed to clear more than planned, which will allow the regeneration of this part of the woods to begin earlier than originally planned.



The morning of the 30th October was an interesting one for staff, particularly those interested in bird migration. Although the temperatures were warm the day started particularly cloudy and overcast, not a great day for spotting birds some would say. Whilst working clearing scrub near the boardwalk staff began to notice birds calling overhead. A quick dash for the binoculars and the first flock of 10 birds were identified as the winter visitor, the Redwing. Redwings are a small thrush type bird with a bit of a difference. They have prominent red colouring below the wing and mean looking eye stripes. They are similar in size to the resident Song Thrush but are distinctly different. Throughout the day flocks kept coming in 10s, 20s, and at one point a flock of 85. A total count by the end of the day was in excess of 650 Redwing. Most of these were seen on tea breaks and lunch so there were probably lots more passing over throughout the day. Also of note were 80 Fieldfare and a flock of 25 Pied Wagtail. Along the coast there were also big numbers of Redwing recorded. Maybe these birds were following the ridges of heather towards the river at King's Lynn before making their way inland!



RSPB Images

It just goes to show that when visiting a reserve the interest is not always on the ground level and it's definitely worth looking up in the sky; you never know what might fly over.

Email: thomas.bolderstone@naturalengland.org.uk □

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A Season of Ponderings with Ion Trewin



'How's your pond?' As autumn closes and winter approaches it is time for a stocktake and answer this most frequent question from Dersingham friends.

Village Voice readers will recall that over the past three years it has been drained and dredged with a pernicious water buttercup gradually eliminated. The once sludge-filled pond, which allowed a heron to walk across barely getting its ankles wet, now has an active population of ducks (all sorts) and, most pleasingly, several families of moorhens. Originally we had two who lived under a bramble that dipped into the water from the overgrown far side. With the pond cleared they nested amid some water irises, but no progeny survived. This year - how very different. I understand that 2014 has been a good year for many species. For us the sight in the spring of half a dozen tiny, fluffy grey moorhen chicks was a special pleasure. In the company of their parents they quickly learnt that our bird feeders provided a ready food supply. While the chicks waited below for seed that fell to the ground, the adults would scramble in ungainly fashion on top of the plastic feeders on our kitchen windows.



Inevitably the feeders could stand their weight no longer, but by then we had been able to study these quaint, slightly ungainly birds. We had never seen moorhens in close-up before. The huge, lobed feet of the adults betray their lifestyle. The red and yellow on the beaks of the males is unexpected, but attractive. However we soon learnt that they are timid birds, easily scared, and yet would return again and again close to the house.

As for the ducks the Mums usually lay up to a dozen eggs and soon we would see them leading a crocodile of ducklings to the pond edge where, to our surprise, they would immediately start swimming. However they are so vulnerable to predators: cats, raptors, herons, gulls and crows, so what begins as twelve ducklings soon declines to two or three. One female Mallard did, however, manage to raise a trio to adulthood. We became fond of them as each morning on opening the kitchen window she would appear with her ducklings behind her. Impatiently they would wait for a fresh supply of seed to be thrown onto the grass. The opportunity of food overcame their fears.



Our pond also attracted some unusual visitors. A red kite perched briefly on a fence post beyond it. Then a pair of shelducks passed through daily in mid-summer. But the most surprising one morning was a large black bird on the grass at the pond edge, which Sue soon worked out was a cormorant! One can only assume that it had flown in from the Wash and decided to dry its wings before flying back. It did add one unexpected species to the 20 or so we listed in our bird book.

Whether the pond is responsible for the weasel that has whizzed across the grass I think unlikely. The fact that on two sides we have open fields may be a more likely explanation. And the fields also attract a barn owl which hopes to spot voles and other meals as its flies back and forth. A green woodpecker and young have also been evident (and of course heard!). We realise just how lucky we are to have such a proliferation of wild life.



Back to our pond. Deciding what to grow on its margins has been interesting. A friend offered us several gunnera plants, some of which survived, even with drought conditions, close to the pond. We also have swathes of yellow irises, which seed themselves prodigiously. For a month in mid-summer they look superb.

Finally there is the pedal-boat Sue acquired a couple of summers ago. Studying the pond when on the water is a completely different and interesting experience from simply standing on the side. But getting in and out of the boat is not so simple, as many 'You've been Framed' videos will testify leaving the sailor doing the splits as the boat drifts away and, in Sue's case this summer, falling in! We have yet to devise a secure mooring system for entering or leaving. Perhaps next year. □

The Daily Doings of Mrs Dolittle (a.k.a Valerie Anckorn)



Well, Christmas is nearly upon us and while I still get excited in case Santa improbably slides down the chimney with a diamond necklace for me and that when I look out of my window the snow will be deep and crisp and even (I never give up hope), I now feel rather sad, as the big day belongs just to Remote Control Man, the dog and me – oh and the two parrots of course - who go a bit quiet until they see me get the small crown of turkey out of the fridge.

‘Phew’! They think to themselves, ‘saved until next year’.

Number One parrot, Mr. Flynn, starts saying ‘Merry Christmas’ in November, which is cute but my sadness is because my children flew the nest years ago and no longer want to come and eat their Mum’s delicious Christmas meal, preferring their own homes to celebrate in. Well, it’s only natural, but it’s probably the only day in the year that I really do feel the loss of my two and sadness, therefore, wells. My daughter has two children of her own, and my son, now moving in elevated circles, gets invited to Beaver Castle every Christmas. He talks ultra posh now. He does phone though. Number Two parrot, Dimity, by the way, just says, ‘Manners’. She says it in all scenarios. Something to do with ‘dim by name and dim by nature’ – but for us it just makes everything funnier. For instance, first thing in the morning when I get up, Mr. Flynn’s voice emerges from under his cage blanket, “Good morning!” and then from under the Dimity’s blanket comes, “Manners”! Sweet little creature, she does her best.

I loved all the excitement and the putting up of decorations when my children were little – I’d save all year in order to get loads of little pressies which I wrapped up in jolly paper and placed in a high heap all around the tree. My daughter liked to rip hers open as quickly as possible, while my son preferred to take his time...one Christmas eve when we lived in Kent and my other half worked in London, I asked him to bring a toboggan home for our little son. My daughter already had one, and I wanted them to have the same when they opened their windows to the snow that was deep crisp and even – me being ever and perennially hopeful. My husband forgot. I was so annoyed that, hands on hips, I sent him back on the train to Hamlyns in Regent Street to get one. Just as well I did, because that Christmas it really was deep thick snow when we woke in the morning and the children had a wonderful time, each with their own toboggan.

I’m exhausted. I always seem to be exhausted. Probably something to do with carrying a lot of weight around with me, but I just seem to be doing so much these days. For the past twenty-five years or so, I have belonged to a ladies evening club. There are twelve members, one for each month of the year and so, on our designated nights - drawn out of a hat - each hostess holds a supper evening with a guest speaker – the speaker to be secret so that members can’t think, “Don’t like the sound of that, so won’t go”. Well, it’s been a wonderful club and over the years we have had such diverse and interesting speakers, but nevertheless I decided I wanted to resign. A lot of reasons, but mainly because I get so exhausted! Anyway, I decided to go out on a bang on my last evening, with a theme of 40’s cinema glitz and glamour. My speaker to be Caroline Aston, who apart from being a wonderful and amusing orator is a Royal writer, is currently writing a TV series, is a celebrity speaker on The Queen Mary and has the most amazingly effervescent personality. She agreed to talk on 40’s scandal - both Royal and Film stars. That sounded promising. Then, as I had only recently interviewed for a magazine, a soft jazz singer, Chrissy D, whose favourite music is the 40’s American greats, I asked her if she would come and entertain us until it was my speaker’s turn. I then told all the club members they had to come dressed for Hollywood. No doubt they all groaned, but fell into the spirit of the occasion.

Well, I can’t tell you how much fun it was! Peep toed high heels, seamed stockings, wigs, false eyelashes, long gloves, glitter and glam. I decided to go overboard in a highly sequinned Liberace number and sent off for a £9.00 Rita Hayworth wig. I knew I would probably look like a drag queen, and I did! Never mind, I like making people laugh, and we did all laugh at each other.

There were a number of beautiful furs smelling slightly of mothballs – past relics of Mother's or Grandmother's glamorous lives and not dared to be worn these days without fear of death or stoning at the very least. I totally agree animals shouldn't be killed for their furs, but maybe if they are killed for our food, couldn't we use the furs please? So luxurious and beautiful.

So, since then my joints have ached from all the extra activity sorting out the house, cooking the food, walking back and forth a lot, something I just can't do these days without pain. If only I could lose about five stone life would be so much easier... however, it won't shift and so my theory is that in old age you either go scrawny or fatter. At least I don't have too many wrinkles as they are ironed out by plumpness!

At the end of the evening, as I waved everyone away and shut the door to peace and quiet, I was very pleased as we had all had such fun. Chrissy D (the singer) and Caroline Aston had done me proud, but do you know, I felt so relieved that I hadn't got to do this again? In my twenties and thirties and even forties I never balked at having twenty or more round for a meal, took it all in my stride and enjoyed every moment, but now, not being used to it these days, any more than two to feed is a nightmare of, 'Will it taste okay? Will there be enough? Will it burn? Will it be raw? I can't do cordon bleu' so on and so forth.

I've started art classes again in the hopes that I can perfect some techniques and turn out some nice paintings. I don't plan on any more after this term for if I can't do it by then, I never will. I shall just potter on at home and dream of fame and fortune as I always have, but know I never will! Not a case of being negative, but knowing that while I am quite good at a lot of creative things, I am not dedicated enough with any of my projects to master them. A clear case of that saying, which I can't at this moment recall (old age creeping in) that ends with 'master of none'. Ah, Remote Control Man has just reminded me – Jack of all trades and master of none. Yup, that's me, but I'm not complaining.

Well, that's about it for the moment. I shall wish you all a Very Happy Christmas, as that time is fast approaching, with All The Best for the Coming New Year.

PS Thanks to people donating to the Bile Bear fund after my charity garden sale, the final total came to £511.60 which I think is marvellous. My huge thanks to all concerned. Look out for an A-board by my home in Manorside. This will be on Fridays when my studio is open for ornamental candle and pottery sales to boost the bear fund. ☐



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John Lambert's National Service Experiences (No 1)

I was called up to do my 2 years National Service in the "Royal Norfolks" on 15 November 1951.

It was a bitterly cold winter and I was billeted at Britannia Barracks on the edge of Mousehole Heath, Norwich. We had a tortoise stove for warmth and we took it in turns to go out looking for wood. We used to stack this old stove up until it became red hot! The stove was also used to heat up the flat iron which we used to press our uniform trousers. On one particular occasion I had just lifted the iron off the stove and laid it on my trousers when the radio said "Here is a special announcement, your King is dead." This was the 6 February 1952.

I stood there motionless listening while the hot iron burnt a hole through my trousers the same shape as the iron! I stood there in shock. A corporal said to me, "If you take your trousers to a little lady in Britannia Road she will put an invisible patch in them." When I went to collect my trousers she told me how she had repaired them by taking the map pocket off the leg but leaving the buttoned flap on. I did 3 years in the army but no one ever noticed that repair! □

Dersingham Methodist Church by Elizabeth Batstone

Thank you to everyone who supported our Harvest Festival celebrations. The coffee morning was extremely well attended and we raised over £300 which was divided equally between the King's Lynn Food Bank and Church Funds. The celebrations continued with services and harvest lunch; the front of the church and the window sills were amass with tins, packets, jars and boxes, as well as traditional decorations of flowers, fruit and vegetables. We were able to give over 20 bags and several boxes of goods to the Food Bank. The October coffee morning raised £285 and was divided equally between the Alzheimer's Society and Church Funds.

We do hope you will be able to join us for our **Christmas Fayre on Saturday 29th November**, this will be from 10am to 2pm – longer than usual to enable you to choose Christmas gifts, cards, cakes, Fair Trade products. As well as the usual coffee and cakes, you will be able to enjoy a light lunch. All funds raised will be divided between East Anglia Air Ambulance and Church Funds.

The shops are already full of Christmas items and carols can be heard as you browse among the shelves. A number of people find all of this too much and the moans about the whole season will be heard. However Christmas is what you want it to be, you don't have to spend, spend, spend, or feel you have to do everything. The first Christmas took place in poverty with a stable and an animals' trough, the young couple had very little and yet the kindness of strangers – an innkeeper and shepherds gave them something intangible and wonderful. As you consider what you will be doing this Christmas remember love is the greatest gift and came in the form of a tiny baby.

Our Christmas services are:

**Sunday 21st December at 10:30am and
Carols by Candlelight at 6pm
Christmas Day service is at 10:30am**

May God's richest blessing be with you all this Christmas.

**For more information contact Elizabeth on
01485 541068—pebatstone@fsmail.net □**



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St Nicholas Church News

from Pauline Martin

A big thank you to all who contributed to our Harvest Festival - the Church looked wonderful, thank you to all who helped decorate it and thanks to Budgen's and Thaxter's who provided fresh vegetable produce. As usual our Harvest Gifts were delivered on the Monday to the local Women's Refuge who were very grateful for all the wonderful items they received.



Our Services and Events during December are:

Christmas Tree Festival – Friday 5th to Sunday 7th December

10am to 4pm Friday & Saturday & 12noon to 4pm Sunday

- ❄ 20+ trees decorated by local Clubs & Societies in the Church.
- ❄ Friday in the Church Hall where the Coffee Morning will continue all day with lunches being served and teas in the afternoon.
- ❄ Saturday in the Church Hall is the St Nicholas Christmas Fayre
- ❄ Father Christmas will be in his Grotto in the Church, please bring your children to meet him, there will also be craft activities for the children.
- ❄ The Dersingham Descanters – our Handbell group will be playing on Saturday between 2:30pm and 3:30pm.
- ❄ This year there will be the addition of a Christmas Market in Marquees on the Friday and Saturday with lots of Christmas Gift ideas and Food Stalls.
- ❄ Sunday Church open 12noon to 4pm - with refreshments available at the back of the Church.
- ❄ The Church will also be open Sunday 14th from 12 noon to 4pm with Tea & Carols from 3pm. An informal time of Carols & Readings for all the family and a chance to see the trees if you missed them during the Festival.

The Church will also open on Sunday 21st from 12 noon to 4pm to see the trees.

All our Services below will be held among the wonderfully decorated Christmas trees so another chance to see them. Please come and join us if you can:

Sunday 30th November at 6.30pm – Advent Carol Service

Sunday 14th December at 3pm – Tea & Carols, a light informal time for all the family

Wednesday 17th December at 2pm – Carol Service with the Mothers' Union

Thursday 18th December at 3pm – Christingle Service

Sunday 21st December at 6:30pm – Traditional Lessons & Carols

Wednesday 24th December at 4pm – Crib Service

at 11.30pm – Midnight Communion

**Thursday 25th December at 8am – Holy Communion
10am – Family Service □**





Nar Valley Ornithological Society (NarVOS)

invite you to The Barn Theatre, Sacred Heart Convent School, Swaffham.
(Access and parking from Sporle Road) on

Tuesday 27th January, 7.30pm for an illustrated talk:

RSPB Titchwell

Many of you will have visited the famous nature reserve, just 'down the road' at Titchwell. So, NarVOS is delighted to welcome Paul Eele, the warden, to give us the inside story on Titchwell, the RSPB's most-visited reserve in the country. This NarVOS meeting will start with a short AGM, prior to Paul's talk, but we request that everyone turns up for 7.30pm.

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.



Norfolk Wildlife Trust West Norfolk Members Group

invites you to

Hunstanton Methodist Church Hall, Austin Street

on Thursday 11th December – 7.30pm

for **A Christmas Miscellany**

of members' presentations followed by a quiz

and on **Thursday 22nd January 2015 – 7.30pm**



for **Macronesia**—an illustrated talk by Richard

Hobbs on the plant life of The Azores, Cape Verde, The Canaries & Madeira

Cost of each event: £2.00 members / £2.50 visitors

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Stocking Up with Caroline Bosworth



As the winter evenings draw in, I like to know that I have some healthy, comforting soup tucked away in the freezer after a busy day out and about.

For the best, life enhancing soup – you need homemade stock – now don't stop reading because you think that will be a faff... it isn't. Promise. I save up the carcasses of roast chickens – just tuck the bones in a freezer bag and leave them in your freezer until you are ready to use them. When I know I am going to be at home for a while – I take 2 or 3 bags of bones out of the freezer – how many depends on the size of your saucepans – you can use just one bag if you have small saucepans. I then cut in half an onion (leave the skin on as it will give the stock a beautiful colour), a leek, a stick of celery and carrot or two and anything else that you see in the fridge that needs to be used up. These veggies don't need to be peeled – and can be the tired ones that you may not want to use in anything else. Add a few pepper corns and a bouquet garnie sachet if you have one. Pour boiling water over the whole lot and bring to the boil... then simmer for a few hours. Sometimes I put all of the above items into a large casserole and leave the stock to simmer in the oven. Your house will smell heavenly whilst this is cooking – and is totally worthwhile just for this. After a few hours – strain the liquid into a casserole or glass bowl. Leave to cool and then chill in the fridge – it will set like jelly. Skim off the white fat when it is set. I then freeze the stock into small plastic tubs ready for when I want to make a risotto or soup. Just knowing these tubs of homemade stock are waiting in the freezer is enough to make your inner goddess dance with pure joy.

Now, when I want some healthy, hearty soup, I pull a tub or two of stock from the freezer and either peel and chop or whizz a heap of vegetables through the food processor. This can include carrots, celery, leeks, butternut squash, pumpkin (or other squashes) and potatoes. Sautee all the vegetables, apart from the potatoes, in a little butter and olive oil, then add potatoes, stock, maybe a vegetable stock cube and I always add the rind of the parmesan cheese. As we use parmesan across the year I freeze the rinds in plastic bags ready for soup making season. Simmer the soup for 30 mins or so until the vegetables are softened depending on how small you have chopped them. Then remove the parmesan rind and give to the wild birds and gently mash the soup with a potato hand masher. Don't whizz it with a blender or the potatoes will make it go starchy and gloopy.

Homemade soup will make this time of the year more pleasurable....serve with some warm part baked bread rolls, or if you have some bread rolls that aren't fresh today, sprinkle them with water and then zap them for a few seconds in the microwave. Enjoy!! □

Answers to Puzzles

Word Wall:

1. Gates: ALD, BISHOPS, LUD, NEW
2. Female BBC Presenters: Jane HILL, Fiona BRUCE, Martine CROXALL, Michal HUSAIN
3. SKY Channels: ARTS, ATLANTIC, 1, LIVINGIT
4. Parts of Castles: BAILEY, BARBICAN, BASTION, KEEP

Where is it? What is it?

Answer – This is the story book in the grasp of the automaton Santa in Thaxters Christmas area.

I guess the red and the white whiskery bits are a clue, though still doesn't really say what it is! Ed..



Dingbats

1. Counting on you
2. Too stuck up for words
3. Space invaders
4. Sit back and relax
5. Turn back the hands of time
6. Season ticket
7. Topless bathing
8. Walk on water

Solution to Sudoku 39

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

Village Voice Deadlines and Publication Dates

We love getting your reports of events and meetings, advertisements and advance details of forthcoming attractions, but please make sure any dates mentioned fall after the publication date.

Issue	Copy deadline	Publication date
No 92 (February 2015)	Wednesday 14th January 2015	Monday 2nd February 2015
No 93 (April 2015)	Wednesday 4th March 2015	Monday 23rd March 2015
No 94 (June 2015)	Wednesday 29th April 2015 (TBC)	Monday 18th May 2015 (TBC)

The amount of space available for articles is governed by the both the physical limitations of the publication as well as the revenue received from advertising. You are advised to submit items (articles and adverts) well in advance of the deadline to secure a space.

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. Normal prices for a (colour) advert start at £20 for an eighth page, £30 for a quarter, £55 for a half and £108 for a full page. (Prices inc. VAT).

To include an advertisement in the next issue, all details together with completed application form and payment should be with the Parish Office:
Dersingham Parish Council, 4a Post Office Rd, Dersingham PE31 6HP
by mid-day on Wednesday 14th January 2015

Enquiries regarding advertisements may be made by calling 01485 541465.

E-mail — villagevoice@dersingham.org.uk

Articles for Publication in the next issue of Village Voice

must reach The Editor, % Dersingham Parish Council, 4a Post Office Rd, Dersingham PE31 6HP or e-mail: editor@dersingham.org.uk before the **deadline date of mid-day on Wednesday 14th January 2015 for publication on Monday 2nd February**. (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 and commercial printing requires 300 dots (pixels) to the inch (about 118 per centimetre).

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 not to use names, addresses, etc, 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 may be made available. Please enquire.

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

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

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VILLAGE VOICE LIVE

Tuesday December 2nd

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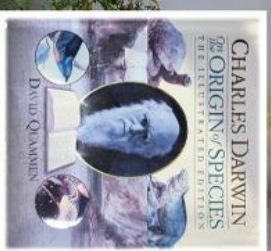
St Nicholas Church Hall, Manor Road, Dersingham.
7.30 pm Admission £3.50 including refreshments & raffle

VILLAGE VOICE LIVE

Tuesday January 6th

In Darwin's footsteps-
Ecuador and
Galapagos

with
David Collingham



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