

# Dersingham Village Voice

Issue No 20

February 2003



*Hanover Court ready for occupation 1980*

Here we are into February after the cold and icy weather of January. It's so nice to see lighter evenings, the bulbs appearing and to realise that spring is on the way. The major event this month is Valentine's Day – a busy time for the florist and a happy time for all lovers, young and old.

A number of readers sent in solutions to the Dersingham Teaser item in the last issue for which we are very grateful, and some of these are set out in this publication. We are especially grateful to Pam Smith of Mere House who sent in several suggestions and also some interesting reminiscences connected with the locations which we hope to include in the next issue. The naming of Sugar Lane drew particular interest and a late suggestion was that 'sceacera' (an olde English word for 'robber') may have been the origin. This word has been found in Dorset where it has been corrupted to 'sugar'. So Sugar Lane might have originally been named 'Robber Lane'.

Please continue to send in your items - letters on any subject you wish to get off your chest are also welcomed.

*Teresa Southam, Editor*

## **Have you ever thought of becoming a Parish Councillor?**

Could you spend a few hours a month working with others to make Dersingham a better place in which to live?

### **What is involved?**

Traditionally, Dersingham Parish Council is non-Party political, with members working co-operatively on behalf of the village.

The Parish Council looks after some direct services in the village – most street lighting, the recreation ground, litter bins and so on – and liaises with other authorities on behalf of residents. The Council is also consulted about all planning applications affecting the area.

The full Council meets monthly, usually on Monday evenings.

Most councillors are members of one or more of the 5 committees that deal with the details of the Council's work. On average, these meet every 2 months or so, meetings being arranged at times to suit the members.

The Council mostly raises its money through the council tax set by the Council each January.

If you would like to find out more about what being a Parish Councillor involves, please get in touch with the Parish Council Clerk, Kim Dunford, at the Council office in the Dersingham Police Station, Manor Road, Dersingham, PE31 6LH (tel: 01485 541465. Email [DersPC@bun.com](mailto:DersPC@bun.com))

### **Still Interested?**

Parish Councillors are elected for a four-year term. In May 2003 all 18 seats on the Parish Council come up for election (May election timetable below). As you will see, nomination papers, which are obtainable from the Borough Council or from the Parish Clerk, must arrive at the Borough offices by 18 March 2003.

### **May Election Timetable:**

Notice of election	10 March 2003
Nomination papers due to BCKLWN	18 March 2003
Statement of persons nominated	20 March 2003
Public notice of poll	9 April 2003
Election	1 May 2003

The next meeting of the Council will take place on Monday 24th February at the First School at 7.15 pm and will be preceded and terminated by a 15-minute session for parishioners to raise any matters.

## Heacham Group Practice

*This report from Dr Ian Campbell arrived too late for the December issue*

It won't have escaped your attention over the past few months that there has been something of a crisis in providing a full GP service in the area covered by our Group practice.

In October we reluctantly decided to close Dersingham surgery for a month because, quite simply, we did not have sufficient doctors available to keep it operational. This, of course, fuelled speculation that we were planning a permanent closure, and a local protest petition was compiled, with 1000 names.

This may be the time to set the record straight because although my partners and staff are heartened to know that there is so much support for maintaining our Practice as it is, we have been hurt by some of the criticism we received.

I can tell you in all honesty that we have no plans at the moment to close any of our three surgeries permanently – Heacham, Snettisham or Dersingham. Our temporary closure of Dersingham was brought about by unfortunate circumstances. My partners and I feel it is right that you should know why this happened.

The medical and nursing professions are not immune to ill health. In our practice we have lost two of our eight doctors to ill health and early retirement. The six doctors remaining have had to absorb the additional workload.

So how hard does a GP work? In most countries in the civilized world, the guideline is that to provide an adequate standard of care and attention, each GP should be limited to around 1,000 patients. In Britain the average list is about 1800 patients. In our Group practice each doctor now has approximately 2,400 patients to look after – a staggering number.

To top this, we are regularly responsible for an additional 2000 temporary patients each summer and we have way above the national average for over-65 year old patients. On one recent working day our Day Duty Team dealt with 132 patient 'contacts', either in person or by phone. And this is not unusual.

But our working day does not begin and end with our surgeries. Behind the scenes there is a tremendous amount of additional work to do, medical, administrative and professional. Despite this we are all resolved – doctors, nurses and our surgery staff – that our high standard of care over your health will not diminish.

*contd overleaf*

There have been times when emotions have run high and our frontline reception staff have been spoken to unnecessarily harshly by patients. Sometimes the sheer volume of work prevents us from responding instantly to the demands made on us.

So what is the solution? Recruiting two more doctors would help tremendously. We have advertised throughout Britain and on the internet for many, many months, without success. The simple fact is that there is a national shortage of doctors wanting to come into General Practice and in many ways I cannot blame them.

We are by no means alone in suffering this shortage. Practices throughout the country are reporting similar difficulties. Yet even if the position changed overnight and more people decided to train as doctors, it would be another ten years before the benefit was felt in General Practice.

Newly-qualified doctors are able to pick and choose more lucrative work in other parts of the profession or other countries. Many do not want the restriction or financial burden of becoming a partner in a General Practice where the hours are long and the demands are high.

If we are to continue serving the community at this demanding level and without additional staffing, we must modify the way we work and make the most efficient use of our resources.

One of the innovations we will introduce in the New Year is to concentrate the management of chronic disease on one surgery – Snettisham, in the middle of our catchment area. At the moment our Practice nurses spend more than half their working day dealing with this and we must find ways of streamlining our system if we are to free nurses to undertake other vital healthcare work.

I cannot over-emphasise the difficulties we are in as a result of the shortage of GPs. The situation nationally is dire, and the stress on all of us is severe. Despite this we remain committed to serving your best interests. I can promise you that no major changes will be made to the way we operate without consulting all those who might be affected. As always, we thank you for your patience and understanding but it is right that you should be aware of the very difficult circumstances we are all working under.

**Dr Ian Campbell**  
Heacham Group Practice

*December 2002*

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### **Do you use the Internet?**

For an increasing number of people, the Internet is becoming an important tool, whether for work, pleasure, education or just keeping in touch with friends and family. But using the Internet can be frustrating, especially when retrieving large files such as photos of the grandchildren, long reports, music, pictures of holiday resorts, software and so on.

The answer, of course, is Broadband. This speeds up the Internet by as much as ten times, is always on, and frees up your telephone line. But Broadband is not available in Dersingham, nor in most other rural areas in East Anglia. So the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) is running a £3m competition to kick-start Broadband in areas where it may otherwise not be available for some years.

Dersingham and Ingoldisthorpe Parish Councils, supported by the local Traders' Association and various individuals, are bidding for money to bring Broadband to the area. The aim will be to connect up to a hundred homes and businesses for free (the normal cost would be around £200) and possibly also provide subsidised access for an introductory period.

But we need as many local people as possible to indicate their interest if we are to have a chance of winning. You can help by registering with EEDA at [www.demandbroadband.com](http://www.demandbroadband.com). Please also let us know that you have registered by sending an email to the Parish Council at [DersPC@bun.com](mailto:DersPC@bun.com) headed 'I have registered on the DemandBroadband site' and including your name and address. This does not commit you to anything but will give you the opportunity later to sign up for the free connection if you want to.

**This is urgent:** competition entries close at the end of February. If you want to know more, please contact Parish Councillor Paul Burall on 01485 540289 (email: [paulburall@prburall.demon.co.uk](mailto:paulburall@prburall.demon.co.uk)).

Answers to **Dersingham Teaser** in *December's Village Voice*, kindly provided by Bryan Tann, Neil Adams and Dick Melton, *speculative answers in italics.*

- 1 Sugar Lane – called *Sugar Lane* because sugar beet grown in fields - ground too dry/steep to be likely. A Mr Sugar lived in the house at the bottom, Lanes End - no recorded evidence for this. Due to its use by lovers/sweethearts the name may have originated.
- 2 The spire was removed from the church in 1798.
- 3 Post Office Road was possibly called *Middle Street* - also suggested *Hall Road* or *Green Lane*.
- 4 Kerrich Close was named after Samuel Kerrich or his son, Thomas, vicars in the 1700s.
- 5 The Old Hall (Gamekeepers) was famous for growing Lily of the Valley and White Lilac.
- 6 Courcelette – after WWI battle - Mere House, 7 Manor Road was so named until 1936.  
Wellswell – once a private school, Wood Royal in Manor Road  
Blackheath Lodge – Beck House, Chapel Road
- 7 Laundry Yard - sometimes known as Washerwomen's Yard - was the row of cottages that back on to Mere House, Manor Road.
- 8 Doddshill cottage on The Green was hit by a zeppelin. *One person was killed.*
- 9 William Potter's smithy was at the corner of Post Office Road and Centre Vale (mounting block is still in place)
- 10 The site of Mr Reynold's nursery is the Library and Orchard Close.
- 11 Manor House (see Q7) used to be the village workhouse.
- 12 The 3 windmills were top of Mill Road, near the station and Hill House, Sugar Lane.
- 13 The doctor's surgery was at the corner of Bank Road and Hunstanton Road.
- 14 Norfolk Stores was in Chapel Road next to King's Croft, now a private house. Playford's Bakery was at 46 Manor Road near Police Station.  
Terrington's Grocers were next to Playford's.  
Parker's Stores were at the bottom of Sandringham Hill junction with Manor Road.  
Linford's Grocers - corner Station Road - now Tropics TakeAway.
- 15 The White Horse was situated in the precinct - roughly where Moss is located.  
The Albert Victor – the Dance School in Manor Road.  
The Alexandra Hotel was at the bottom of Station Road on right-hand side.  
The Cock – now the Feathers Hotel  
The Dun Cow – demolished to make way for Budgens. The 1930s public house replaced an earlier inn of the same name.



## TRUST ME!

*by Hugh Mullarkey © January 2003*

Once upon a financial time  
Before the days of habitual crime  
There was an old woman in London Town  
Who went by the name of Prudence Brown.  
Now Prudence the Prudent had always relied  
On a nice juicy pension 'til the day that she died.  
She blithely assumed that it was solid as rock  
So the summons from her bank came as rather a shock.

She hurried and worried to Threadneedle Street  
To the other old woman she'd been directed to meet.  
It was Edwina George the Manager elect  
Who proceeded to tell her her pension'd been wrecked.

Like yesterday's curry the news was not tasteful  
For her pension provider had been very wasteful.  
It had blown all the money on feeding fat cats  
While leaving investors as food for the rats.

'But we don't want to give you that!' said Edwina  
Noticing Pru's crestfallen demeanour.

'We're going to give you a lovely new ISA  
Whose flavour is sure to get nicer and nicer'.

'I'll no get an ISA with funds I've nae got'  
Grumbled Prudence while thinking 'Och aye that's me lot!'

'Nonsense dear Pru you can have it on tick  
But hurry 'cos the offer expires pretty quick!'

Now Prudence the P was a canny old Scot  
And the house where she lived was full of dry rot.

But she knew that in order to secure any loan  
She'd have to make sure that this fact was unknown.

'It's my wee bonny house you'll be wanting for sure  
To make all this credit quite safe and secure?'

'No problem, no problem!' Edwina opined  
'It's all guaranteed as soon as you've signed'

Thus ends the parable about mutual trust  
Where the left hand keeps playing though the right hand's gone bust.  
If our bank is Micawber and our Chancellor's Scrooge  
Which one is the Comic and which one's the Stooze?



**Valentine's Day**  
*by Patricia Youngs 1998*

A card was popped through the door.  
There inside was a verse and kisses galore.  
Words were written so loving and tender  
But who was the mystery sender?

I racked my brains for some clues.  
Was it Matthew, Robert or handsome Hugh?  
Not Hugh, he took no notice of plain old me.  
So who could the mystery admirer be?  
Perhaps the milkman playing a joke  
Or the local postman – he is a happy bloke.  
I reread the card, this time in reverse.  
Mystery solved, the clue's in the verse.  
It said With Love and Kisses from your Gardener, Don.  
Please be mine, now I'm the lucky one.



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PALS is also a way of improving service quality and highlighting gaps in service provision.

Contact: PALS  
Freephone: 0800 587 4132

**Parish Council Office, Police Station, Manor Road**  
Open Monday to Thursday 10 am to 2 pm (Tel: 541465)

**DERSINGHAM FIRST AND NURSERY SCHOOL**  
**Happy New Year to everyone from us all at the first school.**

We have another twenty-two children starting at our school and so we have grown to eight classes. They are all named after the colours of the Rainbow and we have one class called Rainbow as well. We have welcomed Mrs Sue Scott to teach Purple Class for this term and the Summer Term. She has already been a supply teacher in the school and so knows us very well. It's lovely to have her on the staff team. Also on the staffing front we have advertised for a new Deputy Headteacher and hope to make the appointment by mid February for him/her to start in September.

We have been fortunate to have received a grant to enable us to give our children some extra environmental activities. Norfolk Wildlife Trust will be visiting our school to work with the children to look at aspects of animal and plant life in our own school area. Then later in the term children in year 2 will be visiting a coastal environment so that the children can look at the plant and animal life in two contrasting habitats.

We look forward to working closely with the village community once again in 2003. If you feel you would like to come and help in classes and become more involved in the school do give me a ring on 01485 540022. We would be only too pleased to have your help.

*Jackie Austin, Headteacher*

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**WEST NORFOLK BEFRIENDERS**

Loneliness can only be alleviated by fellow human contact. Could you provide a listening ear for someone? The West Norfolk befriending scheme is a partnership of 3 voluntary organisations, West Norfolk Age Concern, West Norfolk Deaf Association and the West Norfolk Carers' Project. The befriending scheme hopes to recruit and train volunteers to enable them to visit people who are isolated and lonely due to age, hearing impairment or because they are a carer.

- ◆ Volunteers urgently needed
- ◆ Are you interested in people?
- ◆ Are you a good listener?
- ◆ Do you have time to spare?
- ◆ Would you like to be involved in this new and worthwhile project?

If the answer is YES contact details are shown below:

Carmel Wolverson, Befriending Co-ordinator

West Norfolk Age Concern

11 Wellesley Street, King's Lynn, Norfolk. PE30 1QD

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## Nuthatch of the Day

The chickadee and nuthatch are more inspiring society than statesmen and philosophers... *A Winter Walk* - Henry David Thoreau - 1843

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Feeding garden birds is an increasingly popular pastime. A recent MORI poll found that 67% of adults in this country fed the birds in their garden either by putting out scraps or by using bird tables and feeders.



Woodland is the natural home of our garden birds. We are lucky in Dersingham because we live in a well-wooded area

and are surrounded by large numbers of birds that can be easily attracted into our gardens.

Cold weather is the biggest killer of garden birds. This is because they are small and lose heat quickly. Some birds move to milder climes when the weather gets cold – robins often arrive in this country to escape severe weather on the continent. While others, such as the small tits, do not fly far and many rely on the food we put out for them to survive the winter.

I use suspended feeders that I hang in a tree and fill with black sunflower seeds. I also provide peanuts and fat. Black sunflower seeds are rapidly taking over from peanuts as the most popular wild bird food. I buy in bulk and store the seeds in a plastic dustbin - a dustbin full usually lasts the winter. Black sunflower seeds do have the disadvantage of being rather messy and the discarded husks need to be cleared away regularly. It is now possible to

buy sunflower kernels to avoid this mess. A number of wild bird foods are available and some are used to attract particular species. For example, nyjer seeds are produced to attract goldfinches and are put out in special feeders. Wild bird food is becoming big business and the quality and price can vary. You will find that the birds do seem to prefer the higher quality and more expensive mixes. Whatever type of food you buy, make sure that any peanuts it contains are guaranteed aflatoxin free.

We are not the only country to feed the birds in our gardens. A number of Americans have taken things one-step further by putting live webcam images of their feeders onto the Internet. After looking at a few of these I decided to waste a bit of time by having a competition to see whose feeder would attract the most bird species in one hour. I could see my feeders and the computer monitor at the same time so it was simply a matter of listing the birds as they arrived. I recorded the birds actually on the feeders, which seemed fair because this was the only view I had of my competitors set up.

I selected a lively looking feeder in New England and things started well. The usual number of great tits, blue tits, coal tits, chaffinches and greenfinches were using my feeder. Over the 'pond', a handful of house finches and black-capped chickadees were the only birds to be seen - joined at one point by a downy woodpecker. However, it proved to be a game of

two halves. The house sparrows, starlings, goldfinches and marsh tits I was expecting did not show. Neither did the regular flock of foraging long-tailed tits. These birds descend on the fat and feed for a minute or so then fly off to another garden or piece of woodland. This is a very different feeding strategy to most garden birds - they usually stay close to the feeders until all the food is gone. I was also very disappointed that my 'bird of the year' did not turn up. This is a brambling, which has been feeding on the sunflower seeds for the past couple of months. Bramblings are winter visitors from continental Europe and can best be described as orange chaffinches. I have seen others in Dersingham from time to time so it is worth checking the chaffinches in your garden for orangeness.

Meanwhile, the computer screen showed that birds were piling into the Yankee feeder. Brightly coloured American goldfinches and white-breasted nuthatches were the star players supported by several drabber species including a familiar house sparrow - ironic that they had a British native bird that I lacked. I also got a brief glimpse a northern cardinal that could only just be seen behind one of the feeders. Northern cardinals are bright red birds about the size of a blackbird with a large crest and a stubby bill.

I lost 5-7. Defeat is particularly hard to take when you invent the game, write the rules, select the opposition and are the only person in the world playing!

Feeding garden birds does have some drawbacks. Birds are concentrated in one place and can attract predators such as cats and sparrowhawks. A sparrowhawk occasionally dives into my feeders. It hasn't made a kill so far because the feeders are in a tree that gives the birds some cover. Bird tables in the middle of a lawn are more vulnerable. Hunting sparrowhawks are a natural hazard and the small number of birds they catch is insignificant compared with the number that would be lost to the cold if food were not available.

Another problem related to the density of birds congregating in one place is the possible spread of disease. It is important to wash your feeders in dilute disinfectant and sweep the bird tables regularly. Also, try to move your bird tables and feeders from time to time to prevent the ground becoming contaminated. The diseases are mostly transferred from bird to bird but it is still essential to wash your hands after handling the feeders.

Vermin can be attracted to the food put out for birds - particularly kitchen scraps thrown onto the lawn. I don't deliberately put wild bird food on the ground - except for a few apples - because enough falls from above to satisfy the ground feeding birds such as dunnocks. If vermin become a problem try using suspended feeders with trays to catch the waste - squirrel proof feeders are also available.

The latest advice is that it is best to feed the birds all year round. If you

*continued overleaf*

do make sure that peanuts are not available for the birds to take back to their nests in the spring. Clean water is also important summer and winter for drinking and bathing.

A lot of pleasure can be had from feeding garden birds – it also makes a significant contribution to their conservation. The chaffinches that visit our gardens got their name from their habit of feeding on cereal chaff during the winter.

The countryside is becoming increasingly sterile and chaff free. Our gardens are a refuge for many species of bird and the food we put out an important part of this.

To find out more the library has free RSPB leaflets on 'Feeding Garden Birds'.

*David Bingham*

### Goose News

The highest pink-footed goose count at the Snettisham RSPB Reserve this winter was 37,050 on the 9<sup>th</sup> of December. The highest combined count including the North Norfolk roosts was 91,740 on the 27<sup>th</sup> of November – a new record count for the area. The world population of pink-footed geese is 225,000.

The geese will soon be leaving to return to Iceland. There is a serious threat to the breeding grounds of up to one in seven of these geese. An American aluminium company plan to build a smelting works on the east coast which will require the flooding of 22 square miles of the Kanahnjukar wilderness – where thousands of geese breed – to power a hydro electric scheme for the factory.

Opposition in Iceland is being led by Bjork's mother Hilda Runa Hauksdotter who has been on hunger strike in protest against the plans.

Please note the telephone number to book an RSPB guided walk is 01485 210779. Apologies for the omitted digit in the number in the December issue.



*Long tailed tits*

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**Closing date for copy for April 2003 issue - 18th March 2003**

All articles and items are welcomed for inclusion and are accepted written in longhand, typed, or on floppy disk. Please send to Teresa Southam, 78 Mountbatten Road, or the Parish Council Office, Manor Road, or by Email to [stella.caunt2@zoom.co.uk](mailto:stella.caunt2@zoom.co.uk)

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**Dersingham Community Centre**

On 23 November a Christmas Craft Bazaar was held at Dersingham Community Centre in aid of the Macmillan Cancer Relief - £192 was raised.

Many thanks to Thaxters, Budgens, Moss Chemist, Dersingham Post Office and the Craft Stalls for donating raffle prizes.

Thanks also to Pearl and Lauren Richmond and Emma Claxton for selling the raffle tickets. Thanks also to the young ladies in the kitchen who provided us with refreshments all day.

A big thank you to all the stall owners and to the public for supporting this event. On behalf of ...*DERSINGHAM COMMUNITY CENTRE*

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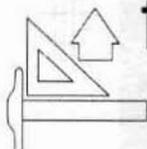
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## Dersingham Surgery Horticultural Society

December Meeting – this was, as usual, our Christmas social evening. Delicious food provided by the members contributed, in no small way, to the festive spirit which pervaded the occasion. Once again, an ingenious quiz, provided by Doreen and Derek Asker, ended the evening on an entertaining note and the 60 or so members who attended departed in happy mood.

Our January Meeting – saw a return visit by David Grimes who gave a presentation on “Sandringham”. Several earlier generations of David’s family had worked on the estate and he had many personal recollections of life in the area in former times. David has made slides from his extensive collection of old postcards, many rare, some unique, which, interspersed with modern photographs showing some of the changes that have taken place over the years, provided for an evening of pictorial interest, historical fact, humorous anecdote and reflections on the Royals and state of the nation. For me, and I suspect other members, after a talk which was much longer than usual, our interval refreshments were most welcome!

### **EARLY WARNING! Two dates for your diary**

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup> May      | Gardeners’ Fair, which this year is transferring to Orchard Close (from the surgery) |
| Saturday 6 <sup>th</sup> September | Annual Show at the Church Hall, Manor Road   |

*David Clark (543182)*

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### **1st Dersingham Scout Group**

The first Dersingham Scout Group is still unable to re-open the Cub Pack as no-one has come forward to take on the roles of Cub Leader and Assistant Leader. The Group is therefore still urgently appealing to any suitable adults who would be prepared to at least give the two posts a try. Contacts are Rodney Saunders (542885), Roy Cator (540434) or Terry Finbow (540643).

A reminder that the Scout and Guide Mini Fete will be held this year on Saturday 21st June at the Scout and Guide Headquarters, proceeds from which are applied to the general running of the Headquarters. To repeat the past splendid support for the event would again be most heartening - and anyone willing to join the Committee will be very welcome - contacts as above.

Again, a big, big thank you to all who continue to make the effort by taking their newspapers and magazines to the Scout and Guide Headquarters for re-cycling, monies from which help both the Headquarters and the Scout and Guide Groups. This form of re-cycling directly supports the young people in our village who benefit from the two movements.

Finally, all in the Scout and Guide Groups extend their very best wishes to everyone for a healthy, happy and prosperous New Year.

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Creating opportunities with disabled people

**LEONARD CHESHIRE**



Park House Hotel, Sandringham, is part of Leonard Cheshire, one of the leading disabled charities in the UK and abroad. Park House Hotel is a unique hotel offering holiday opportunities for people with physical disabilities, their carers and/or companions. Park House periodically seeks quality bank staff in the following disciplines:

**Care Staff, Housekeeping, Kitchen and Restaurant**

Lack of skills or knowledge is no barrier, as training will be given to suitable applicants.

**Calling all Volunteers**

Your contribution could make a real difference. Volunteers with Leonard Cheshire add a special element to the lives of disabled people. The fact that you are giving up your time is recognised and highly valued. Full training will be provided.

Park House Hotel seeks motivated volunteers who are able to offer their free time in the following areas:

**Shop, Vehicle Escort, Minibus Drivers and Activities Support.**

If you are interested in any of the above, please contact 01485 543000 and ask for details.

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**Dr Ian Campbell**

Readers will be delighted to hear of Dr Campbell's award in the New Year's Honours list - Lieutenant of the Royal Victorian Order - a personal 'thank you' from the Queen for his services as Apothecary to the Royal Household at Sandringham.

## Greenish Fingers' Garden Notebook

### February

February is the start of longer days and warmer sun, the reappearance of frogs, the early springtime antics of blackbirds, the preparation of vegetable beds, the turning of compost heaps.

Compost heaps don't have to be turned, but they mature more quickly if they are. Anything of vegetable origin will turn into compost if left long enough in a pile, but it's more satisfactory, and satisfying, to make yourself a couple of bins, or ideally three, if you have room. At its simplest, enclosed on three sides with chicken wire. As you fill it you can line it with cardboard or a thick layer of newspaper to keep the warmth in, the cold and wet out. Give it a warm covering of a piece of old carpet or more thick cardboard. A compost heap needs to be kept warm and moist, but not wet. It also needs air. You achieve this airiness by a clever mixing of the materials you put into it.

Materials suitable for the compost heap: vegetable and fruit waste (uncooked); tealeaves, coffee grounds, nutshells, egg boxes (after soaking and tearing up a bit), torn up letters, small amounts of shredded newspaper, old woollies and cottons if torn up and, of course, almost all your garden waste, such as prunings, deadheadings, grass mowing and annual weeds (use these before they flower and seed if you can, but in any case place them in the centre of the heap as you build).

Eggshells take ages to decompose, but will eventually if crushed first. Ditto teabag sachets, but I chuck them onto my heap anyway and keep re-composting them as they turn up in the soil.

Turning your heap is no problem if, each time you add to it, you toss the top 6 inches or so in the air a bit with a fork or handfork, rather as if you were haymaking! For the very best compost depends very much on your mixing your materials well, rather than applying them in layers. If you have two or more bins you can "turn" the contents of a full one into an empty one, aerating and mixing in one fell swoop. Cover this and leave it for several months to a year, depending on the season. Your reward will be compost that smells sweet and looks invitingly moist and crumbly like a rich, dark cake.

PS Before plunging a fork into your heap check for frogs and hedgehogs.





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## **IMPORTANT DATE FOR YOUR DIARY**

Dersingham Parish Council

### **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

Monday 14 March 2003

at 7 pm in St Cecilia's Church

Do try and attend - meeting open to all Dersingham residents

## Out and About

by Kathy Jordan © 2003

To our Dersingham door came the new bus at nine  
So we'd reach the prized venue in plenty of time.  
Out and about we were going just for the day  
Off to London we headed down Haymarket way.  
A quick lunch we devoured near Piccadilly  
Eros 'watched' as we shopped though the weather was chilly.  
To Her Majesty's Theatre we swiftly turned turtle  
Our tickets reserved in the grand Royal Circle.  
The view was unbroken but seating was narrow  
Were Victorian ladies built like a sparrow?  
Or were spectators' benches of wider berth then  
To hold crinoline dresses with hoops at the hem?  
Despite our discomfort the drama was magic  
with some scenes amusing and others so tragic.  
Effects were intriguing with chandelier lighting  
Parts acted with gusto in costumes so striking.  
After thunderous clapping and the final encore  
Our 'carriage' awaited right outside the front door.  
Driven with ease though rush hour rages flared hotter  
We stopped for a meal at the pub - Lazy Otter.  
Then from murky coach windows a mirage emerged  
Through the mist of The Fens a strange spirit had surged.  
All the way back from London I was fearful to find  
The Phantom of the Opera had followed behind!  
So beware on our streets once so tranquil and still  
For now he - in his mask - may be waiting to kill!

*I composed this poem after my husband and I had a lovely day with our local Out & About Coaches. On 7 January 2003 we travelled with them to see The Phantom of the Opera at Her Majesty's Theatre, Haymarket, London*

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### Dersingham Churchyard Update

The Parish Council have been informed by the Parochial Church Council that with the plots currently available and by the process of reburials the churchyard could continue for the next 50 years. This information takes away the short term fears regarding burials in the village. The Village Environment Committee is to advise whether further action should be taken.

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## TREE PLANTING IN THE VILLAGE

The Tree Warden would welcome suggestions for tree planting in the village on Parish Council controlled land. If you have any suggestions please contact the Parish Clerk, Tel: 541465, who will be able to let you know if locations you suggest are controlled by the Parish.



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**References Available**

### **WESTERN AREA MOBILE POLICE OFFICE**

**Budgens – 28 February, 28 March, 25 April, 23 May, 20 June 1000-1200**

The Western Area Mobile Office offers a variety of services and support to the community, some of which are listed below:

We can:

- ◆ Give general advice
- ◆ Record and give advice on crime related matters
- ◆ Gather and pass on information
- ◆ Deal with Lost and Found property

We stock:

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