

Number 80

February 2013

# Village Voice

The Dersingham Magazine



Donna Nook gets the seals' approval  
Page 38



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## Editor's Notes

There was a nice bright Sunday morning in the middle of January so we took advantage and went for a walk on the bog (other names are available). They have been improving it, the track that is. Where previously there were muddy hollows work has been done to fill these in. It is a great improvement. After greeting the cattle and an obligatory walk around the boardwalk where, as usual, we saw nothing moving we wandered along the track back towards Dersingham. Other walkers we met told of deer that had just passed by and birds they had seen but for us there was just the one. Perched high on a birch was a largish bird silhouetted against the sky. Out with the camera, extend the lens, focus and of course the beast flew off. Not so quickly however that I failed to get a picture of a Buzzard. And that was it for wildlife unless you count a bit of tweeting from the heather. But that is not the point, this is a wonderful area to be in with sweeping views and plenty of paths to explore and it's right on our doorstep, wonderful!

Did you know that there is a weekly indoor market in Docking? No neither did I, but this fact was revealed during January's Village Voice Live. Starting at 10am till 3pm every Wednesday in the Ripper Hall, it must be worth a look. More details on <http://dockingmarket.com>.

It is 50 years since the long freeze of 1963. It actually started a few days after Christmas '62. I was travelling to the Isle of Wight on its first day. A blizzard was blowing as we boarded in the dark the passenger ferry at Portsmouth. Standing on deck for the crossing was very unpleasant so most people were to be found in the cafeteria. The passage took around forty minutes at that time and some passengers were tucking into drinks, cakes and meat pies with gusto. As I mentioned there was a blizzard and fifty percent of one of those is wind. The Solent got a bit lumpy as the ferry reached the half way point and this was marked by a constant stream of café patrons rushing outside to feed the fish! I remained warm inside with just a cup of coffee.

Next morning there was a 10ft snowdrift at the main gate of Westbrook House where we were staying (it was a house party for boys) and the milkman reported that it took him just an hour to dig his way through. I think the thaw, when it came, set in towards the end of February. Move on a few years and in 1968 the snow that fell at the beginning of January was still there as corrugated ice into April on my route to work, which did not do the suspension on my Singer Chamois much good. And now a few flakes disrupt the country!

Village history is always, it seems, a popular subject but it would be nice to have more contemporary input. Short stories, comments or wishes and ideas for the future from some of our younger residents perhaps. We must not fossilise the village. Make the history of the future here.

Inside you will find first details of the Open Gardens weekend. If you are planning a fete, event or attraction publicise it in good time by sending in details.

Some of the regulars have taken an extended break after the festive season but we do have some new contributions and the return of some old friends writing articles this issue. There is plenty to occupy you however, including the second part of the Route 66 trip and our cover story about the seals at Donna Nook which is just on the other side of The Wash. David Bingham has got to the last of his history series and will return to wildlife next time. I found these very interesting and hope you did too. It would be great to hear what you do like or hate occasionally.

This is the last edition of the current financial year - we run from April 1. This will not mean much to readers but it means a new season for our advertisers. We get good reports about the amount of business that VV brings so if you would like to join in with your business or service you might like to take advantage of our buy five get one free offer. We can only make this at the start of a new year - accounts and all that - so do contact the office soon.

I'll leave you with it then, happy reading.

*Tony*

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## Dear Village Voice



I'd like to respond to part of John Murray's article on Dersingham weather. He says that "man can hardly be blamed for the last ice age". This is true - all previous big climate shifts have been caused by natural events - changes in solar activity, volcanism, axial shifts of the Earth, asteroid impacts and the release of methane hydrates are examples. But I believe his reasoning that the current shift is also natural is a solecism (in the scientific sense). Because outcome X is a result of cause Y it does not follow that outcome X is always the result of cause Y. So it is with climate change. It is now generally accepted that we cannot account for the current perturbation by citing any of the natural climate forces - they have all been examined, measured and discounted. We have burnt in less than 200 years a substantial fraction of the sequestered carbon that took millions of years to lay down. The carbon dioxide resulting is acting as a very effective greenhouse gas. We have also damaged many of the natural carbon sinks in the global ecosystem. The excess CO<sub>2</sub> burden amounts to trillions of tons. It is this, and probably this *alone* that is causing the dramatic decline in arctic sea ice and many of the other catastrophic changes in our climate.

**Brian Anderson**

I came across your paper when I was researching our family history and looking for information on the Baldings of Dun Cow Farm as these were relatives of my father James Bertram Glover (Bert).

He talked about staying with his grandmother on the farm and helping at harvest time, probably around the 1930s. He also talked about someone from the family who worked as a gardener on the Sandringham estate.

I know he, his brother Alf and my sister came to Dersingham late 1970's to see if they could find anyone from the Balding family, not sure of the outcome I don't think it was very successful.

If anyone has any information on this family I would very much appreciate it if you could help me with my research. My email address is - [steven.ellis1@ntlworld.com](mailto:steven.ellis1@ntlworld.com)

Many thanks in anticipation.

**June Ellis**



Thank you to everyone who supported this year's 'Operation Christmas Child' by filling shoeboxes to send to disadvantaged children in Africa, Central Asia and eastern Europe. 176 boxes were collected from Budgens in Dersingham to join the millions of others being sent by the project to some of the world's poorest children . THANKYOU.

**Carolyn Brock**



I'm afraid to say the subject of dog-fouling rears its ugly smelly head again. Thankfully the vast majority of dog owners in the village are responsible people who pick up after their dog, but there are a few – you know who you are – who just either can't be bothered or don't like the idea of picking it up. Did they ever have to wipe a baby's bum I wonder, because compared to that, picking up dog poo with a plastic bag, or whatever, is a doddle!

Living on the main road through the village, like the majority of the houses, we have an open driveway which seems to be an open invitation to these irresponsible dog owners who, whilst thinking it not right that their dog should foul the footpath, think it perfectly acceptable to lead their dog onto a drive to do the dirty deed. People wake up! The drive is still walked on by others, and is private property. These people are lazy and lacking in conscience or any sort of social responsibility.

The same goes for the few (again thankfully) lazy tykes who think that hedges are for stuffing empty drinks bottles and cans inside, and gardens, driveways and footpaths are huge litter bins for their convenience, somewhere to drop their takeaway food wrappers, crisp packets etc.

Again people, WAKE UP! Take your rubbish home with you, and all of you have some pride in this lovely village where we all live.

**MG**

A few comments on previous issues. In April No75 Bob Tipling's article on bowling greens. My father told me that as a boy he was a bowls wiper for the bowlers at the working mens club. He played bowls at the Institute for many years and was club chairman. When what is now the Social Club was being worked on it was discussed whether to keep the bowling green and have a small car park or lose the green and have a large park. It was decided by the then committee to make the whole area a park.

My father also spoke of his time working at Jannochns Nursery at weekends while he was still at school, I think this would have been at the time of the first world war.

August No77. The photo of Lynn Road, the fifth house down was my family home, it was built in 1932. I am sure the electricity was on when it was built. In the picture the poles are on the left hand side of the road. I have always remembered mains water there but there was a pump in the kitchen by the sink so mains water came sometime after it was built. Where does the village water come from now? I believe when Dersingham was part of Docking R D C the water came from a bore hole at Fring.

Oct No78. I wrote of access to the Fen. I should have put Blackberry Fen Sandpit area which is now part of Dersingham Bog. I still think of the fen as one area and forget that the by-pass divided it.

In December's V V re the photo of the school sports team, I asked after Joan Ebert. I hear she is well and lives in Upminster. Her brother Tom had a piece in an early Village Voice about their time coming to Dersingham from London in the war, if anyone remembers Tom he died three years ago.

**Bernie Twite**

On behalf of Dersingham Evening WI, I am writing to express our concern about the amount of gravel that is creeping from drives onto pavements. Some of our members (and other residents) have either slipped or turned their ankles whilst walking on this loose gravel. We would greatly appreciate it if householders could take the care to regularly sweep it back into its place.

**Gilly Spencer, Secretary**

In my recent article "Plain Tea Sixpence" JL attributed the making of the triptych over the Memorial Chapel in the church to my Grandfather, Frederick Linford. However, I have since discovered that, in the Lynn News and County Press of the 11th January 1920, Mr Walden was mentioned as the maker of the panels and my Grandfather as having painted the names. My apologies to Mr Walden's family for not having given him the credit.

**Doreen Linford**

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A trip to the Library  
Reception/Year 1



Reception Class turned the  
Sensory Garden into  
Percy the Parkeeper's Garden

What on earth ? .....



At St. George's, there has been excitement of a different kind. Year 3 and Year 4 children started off the term by being faced with an alien robot crash landing. Alongside this dilemma, Year 5 and Year 6 children received a letter informing them that there was a WWII time capsule buried somewhere in the school grounds. These exciting 'events' have triggered our children's imaginations, resulting in amazing creative writing and expressive arts. The setting up of a new Art Studio has helped to enhance such creativity.

On the Creative scene, new activities at St. George's school include Drumming and Guitar lessons. We look forward to hearing from our budding musicians soon!



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## Dersingham Scouts and Guides by Lynn Wheeler

The 22nd December saw the Dersingham Scouts & Guides (Beavers, Rainbows, Cubs, Brownies, Scouts & Guides) hold a very successful Christmas Coffee Morning and Grand Draw. All the money raised will go towards the maintenance of their HQ. Many of the young people helped to raise the money by selling raffle tickets in advance to friends and family. On the day many people from the village and local community came along to support,



making it a very enjoyable morning.

There was also a surprise visit by the King's Lynn Scout District Commissioner Kim Smith, who had come along to present Scout Leader Tom Wheeler with a Chief Scout's Commendation for Good Service to Scouting. Tom has been involved in Scouting since he joined as a Beaver and has been Scout Leader since 2008.

In the afternoon a small group of young people went to the Gables Care Home in Dersingham to sing Carols to the residents to bring them some Christmas Cheer. □

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## The Dersingham Weather Recorded by John F. Murray

So we come to the end of another year. The Queen's Jubilee celebrations and the Olympics are all just a memory from the previous year and those of us who are interested in such things are wondering what sort of weather 2013 will bring.

Last November was a cold month with the average temperature of 6.7°C being the second lowest for November and the highest recorded temperature of 14.1°C being the lowest recorded for any previous November. It was also a wet month with a total of 91.2mm. The average for November is 69.2mm so this was well exceeded; however it did not get near to the November 2009 total of 108.5mm. The driest I have recorded is 41.1mm back in 2007.

December last year was a particularly unremarkable month. With the mean temperature being 5.3°C, the highest being 13.9 and the lowest at -5.7 it made all temperatures average for the month. The rainfall is the only thing worthy of note and at 88.6mm makes it the wettest December on (my) record. The average for December is 57.3mm.

Looking at 2012 as a whole, although the mean, or average overall temperature of 10°C was pretty similar to other years, the year produced both the lowest recorded temperature of -11.5°C in February and the highest ever recorded in August at 32.6°C. Considering that a lot of the year found us huddled under thick cloud cover, which would normally prevent very low or very high temperatures, I think that these temperatures are unexpected.

I have left the overall rainfall for 2012 to last. The Met. Office takes it's averages for the country from many locations and they have declared that 2012 was the wettest since, I believe, 1910. Not so here. The total for the year was 783.2mm which far exceeds the previous two years but just failed to beat our previous wettest year of 2008 when I recorded 828mm.

Those of you that read my articles will have noted over the years that I am something of a sceptic when it comes to climate change. I am also sceptical of record keeping. The reason for this is the way that we record it. Although the passage of time is a completely natural thing, for example, the earth spins on it's axis on a regular basis to produce what we call a day and at the same time it revolves around the sun, producing what we call a year the way we measure it is completely man made. The fact that there are 24 hours in a day is man made and the point at which we start to measure the time period for a year is completely false. January 1<sup>st</sup> does not occur in nature. The calendar month is different to the lunar month. If we had months of exactly equal lengths then the annual figures would still be the same but monthly totals would differ because for

example there would be extra days in February which would increase totals. When we start the New Year's measurements would also affect things. Prior to the adoption of the Gregorian calendar in Britain in 1752 New Years Day was March 25<sup>th</sup> so things were counted from that date. I don't want to get bogged down with this, all I am saying is that we record things with man made parameters and these records would look different if our man made parameters were different.

It is far too early yet to think about what type of summer to expect but may I stick my neck out and say that the spring must surely be better than last spring when we had heavy rain and low temperatures making it a poor year for gardeners, like me. Fingers crossed. Don't forget to check out the weather live on line using the link from the Parish website. □

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



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## St Nicholas Church News



We had another wonderful Christmas Tree Festival, with lots of visitors. We were very grateful that Father Christmas could make time and join us! even coming across to talk to those in the Church Hall. Also many thanks to the



Dersingham Descanters who played in the Church on the Saturday afternoon to a large audience, they then also played before our Lessons and Carols Service for which we are very grateful.

During Lent we will be holding Deanery Lent Services in our local Churches, they are held on a Wednesday at 7pm, below are the dates and Churches were they will be held.

- Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> February 2013 – St. Nicholas Church, Dersingham
- Wednesday, 27<sup>th</sup> February 2013 – St. Mary Magdalene Church, Sandringham
- Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2013 – St. Mary's Church, Old Hunstanton
- Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> March 2013 – St. Mary's Church, Heacham
- Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2013 – St. Mary's Church, Snettisham

This year will be holding an Open Gardens 26<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> May thanks to Judy Collingham who is willing to take on the task of organising this for us.

Below are a list of Events that are being organised, further details nearer the dates of these events.

## Events 2013

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <b>April 6<sup>th</sup></b>                         | <b>- Thurrock Male Voice Choir</b>  |
| <b>April 27<sup>th</sup></b>                        | <b>- Grand Sale in Church Hall</b>  |
| <b>May 4<sup>th</sup></b>                           | <b>- West Norfolk Singers</b>       |
| <b>May 26<sup>th</sup> &amp; 27<sup>th</sup></b>    | <b>- Dersingham Open Gardens</b>    |
| <b>July 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup></b>      | <b>- Flower Festival</b>            |
| <b>September 15<sup>th</sup></b>                    | <b>- Last Night of the Proms</b>    |
| <b>September 26<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup></b> | <b>- Arts &amp; Crafts Festival</b> |
| <b>December 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup></b>    | <b>- Christmas Tree Festival</b>    |



## Dick Melton

On the 31<sup>st</sup> of January 1953 we had the great flood. That is now 60 years ago so, as I was living in Dersingham at the time, I thought I would write a bit about it. I was only twelve at the time but it is one thing in my life that has always stuck in my memory.

At the time we lived at 'Restu', 63 Lynn Road, Dersingham. I remember it had been a cold and very windy Saturday. As usual my dad, Jim Melton, went round the corner to the

Albert Victor public house for a pint and a game of dominoes, leaving my mum and me in the house. At about 9 pm the door opened and Dad came rushing in.

'Get your boots on boy, the sea has come up as far as the station.'

Now, as a young boy of twelve, this took a bit of believing as the station was one and a half miles from the beach. We got our bikes out of the shed and off we went; we took a short cut across the recreation ground, but when we got to Station Road the wind was so strong we had to get off and walk. As soon as we got to the top of Station Hill we could see the sea in the lights of all the cars and tractors that were there. The sea was within fifty yards of the railway line with all sorts of debris being washed up like furniture, timber, pots and pans, clothes and all manner of things; also a lot of dead animals like cows, bullocks and sheep.

The police were there and after a while they said there was nothing we could do so it would be best if we went home to bed. When we got home mum made us a nice hot drink of cocoa, but I was nearly asleep before I drank it. When I got up next morning and looked out of the window I could not really understand why the sea was there only 2,000 yards away from our house. That was a night I shall never forget. Twenty-five people lost the lives at Snettisham alone, with 65 people altogether being drowned on the east side of The Wash and another 15 people being drowned in King's Lynn. When the storm first hit a lot of people who lived in the properties down Snettisham Beach tried to get out, but they were overcome by the tidal surge. Mr Foot and his housekeeper Mrs O'Brian were among them; they got in his van and tried to drive away, but it was washed into a dyke and they were found drowned the next day. Some people weren't found for a long time; one body was found in a wood on Dersingham Marshes in the September of that year by a man that was picking blackberries. There was a lot of brave people about that night including Peter Beckerton, who was drowned at Snettisham whilst trying to rescue some of his neighbours. He received the Albert Medal (posthumously); also Police Sergeant Gerald Bunney, PC Henry Nobbs and Mrs Vera Beckerton from Snettisham received the British Empire Medal. At Hunstanton Staff Sergeant Freeman A Kilpatrick USAAF and airman 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Reis Leming USAAF were both awarded the George Medal; Mr Geoffrey Searle from Hunstanton was awarded the Queens Commendation for brave conduct.

Reis Leming should have visited Hunstanton last November but sadly he passed away a few days before he was due to come over. In the Esplanade Gardens at Hunstanton, near the flood memorial, a footpath called Reis Leming Way has been named after him.

There have been many floods over the years on the east coast of The Wash. Way back on the 16th of February 1735 there was a great flood when water came up so far that it flooded half the village and the water nearly reached the church. Then, of course, many of us can remember the flood on the night of 11th January 1978 when we lost our dear old pier at Hunstanton; the water done a lot of damage that night, mostly at Heacham, but this time no lives were lost.

### Local hospitals

In the December issue of Dersingham Village Voice the Editor asks if anyone can remember an isolation hospital on the Hardwick Road at King's Lynn, near the cemetery. Well, I can. It was a very grey drab looking building with a long drive leading up to it; and you had a good view of it from the bus as you were on your way to Norwich.

In the King's Lynn Blue Book for 1978 there are listed four hospitals in the King's Lynn area and they are as follows: Isolation Hospital, Hardwick Road, West Norfolk; General Hospital, London Road; St James's Hospital, Extons Road; and the Trinity Hospital for Aged Ladies at Castle Rising. At one time we had a hospital in Hunstanton; it was situated at the bottom of Redgate Hill; it was

called the Hunstanton Urban District Isolation Hospital. The building is still there in the trees on your left as you are going up the hill into Hunstanton; it was closed down as a hospital many years ago and is now a private house.

### Access to the Fen

I read with interest what Ruth Mountain had to say about Bernie Twite's letter. At the present time I will make no comment. I would just like to point out that at one time, many years ago, the parish of Dersingham was a lot larger than it is today. With the Enclosure Act in 1779, 457 acres were enclosed for the use of the parish. This consisted of 329 acres of marsh and 128 acres of heath. Also, to the south of Dersingham, there was a rabbit warren of 1,900 acres.

### When the village sign was stolen

Just a bit about the village sign being stolen. The story was at the time that the blame was put on the Americans as, when it happened, a very large American car was spotted in the vicinity. No facts, just a story that went around the village at that time.

Well that's all for now, I hope you all had a good Christmas and by the time you read this you will be looking forward to Easter.□

*Dick included this picture with his article. It shows Harvest time rabbit catchers at George King's farm at The Drift in Ingoldisthorpe taken around 1940. Any of you still out there?*

Back row Left to Right:

Pauline Valentine, George Fenn, Margaret Payne, Geoffrey Woodhouse, Ruth Emmerson,

Front row Left to Right:

Malcolm Newell, Guy Emmerson, Elizabeth Valentine, Peter Woodhouse, Arthur Richardson,  
John Wharton, Gordon Newell, Cyril Woodhouse,

and kneeling in front: Maurice Valentine.





## Dersingham Walking Group

On Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> November Christine Taylor led a group of 22 walkers around Syderstone Common and through to Barmer on a beautiful autumn afternoon. We returned via tracks, through some established woodland and onto the new plantation known as Womack Wood before returning to the starting point near the church.

A crisp dry frosty day was in store for the 16 walkers who assembled at Harpley Dams on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> December for a walk led by Pat Reed. The white frost had remained on the trees and hedges, giving the photographers ample opportunity for some great shots (*see right*). The views across the landscape seemed better than usual in the winter sunshine.

For our first walk of 2013 on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> January we were once again fortunate with the weather, wall to wall sunshine and not too cold. Michael & Valerie led a group of 25 walkers from the Dersingham village sign through the village and climbing to join the permissive path at the top of Mill Road. The views across to The Wash were excellent. From here we dropped down to Ingoldisthorpe, crossing the by-pass to walk more permissive field edge paths back to Dersingham.

### Details of our next walks are:

#### Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2013. 2-00pm.

**Venue & Grid Ref:** Heacham; beaches & village. Meet at "Brays Pit", (Heacham Duck Pond) near the recreation ground. L132/673 374.

**Leader.** Steve & Lindsey Davis, Tel: 01485 543138

#### Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2013. 2-00pm.

**Venue & Grid Ref:** A walk in Sandringham. Meet at the Sandringham Visitor Centre. L132/689 287

**Leader.** Steve Martyn. Tel: 07879 885516

#### Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2013. 2-00pm

**Venue & Grid Ref:** A walk around Bircham. Meet at Bircham Windmill. L132/760 326

**Leader.** Elizabeth Fiddick. Tel:01485 540940

All of the walks listed in our programme will be between **4 and 5 miles long**. If you have any queries regarding any of the walks please contact the leader. All grid references given are for Ordnance Survey Landranger (L) or Explorer (E) series maps.

The full programme can be viewed on the parish council website. [www.dersingham.org.uk/announcements](http://www.dersingham.org.uk/announcements)

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

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

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

Michael Smith, ☎01485 540728. e-mail. [mival.smith2@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:mival.smith2@tiscali.co.uk)

## Carer of the Year

Ebony Abraham received the Carer of the Year award at the recent Young Hero Awards in King's Lynn's town hall. KL.FM and the Borough Council have combined to create this annual occasion and after a substantial afternoon tea with live music, video presentations of the candidates and speeches from the Mayor and representatives of KL.FM, six young heroes were each awarded an attractive glass trophy.

Ebony was presented with hers by Henry Cator, Norfolk's High Sheriff, for looking after her mother who has physical problems needing help with dressing, bathing and mobility. A pupil at Lynn's KES., she is described as a credit to the school. □



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## Old Picture Corner

Valerie Anckorn has found this picture, taken by her father Gordon, of the southern part of Manor Road. Dating from about 30 years ago it still shows open, ground now largely built upon.



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## What's happening in the Churchyard?

Some time ago (before I was co-opted onto the Parish Council) the Council decided that the Churchyard should reflect way our meadows used to be - a rich mixture of wild flowers that we have all but lost over most of the wider countryside. I have volunteered to coordinate the project in consultation with the vicar Michael Brock.

The loss of lowland wildflower meadows in Britain has been dramatic. Since the 1930s we have lost about 98 per cent of these beautiful and diverse areas. We have a responsibility to preserve and enhance what remains. Churchyards have long been recognised as oases of diversity in an increasingly impoverished landscape - Francesca Greenoak wrote a book entitled "God's Acre" back in the 1980's that prompted many to look afresh at the way churchyards could be used for conservation. The aesthetic arguments are a matter of personal taste but what is not in dispute is that ecosystems in the wider countryside are becoming less diverse and that this makes them less resilient. For example, a major crisis has been developing over bees. The loss of habitat and suitable nectar sources is threatening both wild and hive bees. Last year (2012) has seen a significant loss of fruit in many areas of the country, due to the inability of bees to pollinate in the very wet spring. This must be seen as a warning. This year it was the weather but there is an underlying decline in bee numbers, which could eventually make this year typical even when the weather is good. And it's not just bees. Butterflies, farmland birds and many other less charismatic groups are suffering. Wild flowering plants are at the base of many food chains. If we look after them we protect a vast web of relationships, whether it be the actual flowers, the seeds or the leaves that provide sustenance.

The plan is close mow a narrow strip adjacent to the wall, starting at the Tithe Barn gate and running right round to the wall of the other barn on Church Lane. Thin squares of turf will be removed every so often to provide a seed bed. Seeding will be done next spring and some plants raised by volunteers will be planted out.

We have selected plants that will provide nectar and seeds but will also be attractive - Knapweed, Wild Carrot, Cowslip, Yellow Rattle, Bird's-foot Trefoil, Meadow Crane's-bill and Field Scabious are examples.

We will survey the plants about twice a year to see if we are successfully increasing the diversity. □

*Brian Anderson*

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## News from Ingoldisthorpe C of E Primary School

We have just launched this year's Readathon project. Our theme for the year is the books by Roald Dahl. They are always very popular with both the staff and children. Our aim is for the children to complete 125 reads between the launch, towards the end of November and the project's end in June. As they complete their reads the children will earn a range of prizes. The project will start with the children coming to school dressed as one of their favourite book characters. That day will also involve them working with a local author who will run a series of workshops where the children can make their own pop up books.

Our children continue to enjoy a wide range of after school clubs which include: sports club, dance club, netball club, football club, art club, and board games club. We also have a very popular breakfast club from 7:30 each morning as well as after school club until 6 pm every day.

For our younger children Little Owls our pre school group continues to be very popular with the children meeting every morning and having lots of fun. Meanwhile our Wednesday morning pre school dance group with Music and Movement continues to go from strength to strength. □

*Keith Twaites, Head teacher.*

## THE DERSINGHAM ART & CRAFTS TRAIL

The weekend of the 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> December saw artists around the village open their studios. The idea of the Trail came from the annual Norfolk Open Studios scheme, where art-workers across the whole county invite the public to visit their studios and see first hand how artists make their work. There's an opportunity to chat with the artists, discuss what inspires them and how they go about creating a piece of artwork. Maybe you'll even be tempted to buy something, even if it's only a small print or greetings card.

Dersingham artist Stephen Martyn had taken part in Open Studios in the past but felt that one lone studio in a large village such as Dersingham would not be an attraction to visitors from outside the local area. So, he set about enlisting other village artists and craft-workers to form a cluster of studios with a Trail linking them. The idea worked well during the summer run of the event, and it seemed natural to expand the Trail and to open it at another time of the year. And what better time than Christmas, of course!

The Christmas opening brought new artists into the scheme, and was combined with an exhibition of artwork by the children of the two village schools. In total, ten local artists participated at seven different venues. Over the three days there were plenty of visitors about, particularly at those studios located in the centre of the village. It certainly provided an opportunity for people to experience the surprising amount of art and creativity which goes on in the village.

There will be further Art Trail events in the coming year with the next scheduled Trail opening beginning on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> May and running for three full weekends as part of Norfolk Open Studios 2013. Any artist or craft-worker who might be interested in joining the Trail in the future is welcome to contact the coordinator Stephen Martyn on 01485 541333 or email [stephenmartyn@gmail.com](mailto:stephenmartyn@gmail.com). The only requirement is that you must live in the village or its immediate surroundings and be prepared to welcome visitors to your studio.

If you missed the Christmas Trail, all the artists who participated are happy for visitors to call for a chat and to view their artwork, but please contact them first to make an appointment. You can find lots of information about the artists, images of their work, and contact details on the Trail website [DersinghamArtTrail.org](http://DersinghamArtTrail.org) so why not have a look and get to know your local artists today. □

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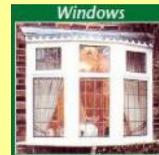
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## The Sandringham Newsletter

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

Sandringham House, Gardens and Museum closed to the public for the winter on Sunday 4th November, although the Visitor Centre is open every day over the winter, even when the House and Gardens are closed, and parking is free, so it's always worth a look. The Visitor Centre was very busy in November and December, with people taking advantage of the free car parking to do Christmas shopping – made-to-order hampers have been very popular this year – and have a relaxed cup of coffee or treat themselves to lunch; roast turkey (the turkeys come from a local farmer) has of course been very popular.

In addition, the Norfolk Hospice, Tapping House, held their annual Light Up A Life service of prayers and carols at the Visitor Centre in early December. West Norfolk Befriending also held a lunch there for their clients and volunteers; they are a small local charity who try to reduce older people's social isolation by matching them with trained volunteers who will visit and support them, and try to make sure they are not left alone and forgotten.

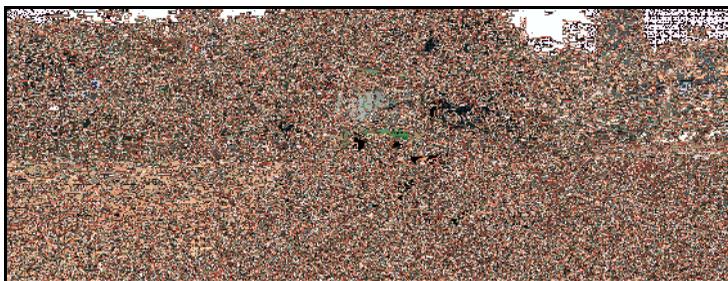
The autumn of 2011 was one of the warmest and driest on record, which made ploughing easy and gave a good start to the crops of winter wheat and oil seed rape. This year, continued wet weather is causing difficulties for Farm staff. Lifting of sugar beet is going slowly as on some days it has been too wet for the harvester to get onto the fields, and sowing winter wheat has been just as difficult.

On the Fruit Farm, the Jubilee Orchard produced a good crop of cider apples which have now been picked and pressed. The orchard consists of over 80 varieties of apples from Devon, and the trees were presented to Her Majesty The Queen by the people of Devon to mark Her Majesty's Golden Jubilee year in 2002.

In the gardens, fallen leaves have been keeping the Head Gardener and his team busy – the leaves are collected and piled up to be transformed into leaf mould, which is always useful in the garden. They have also been doing some thinning work on lower branches of cedar trees to reduce their weight; the wet conditions in the first half of this year induced more growth than normal in many of the trees in the gardens, which now need managing to ensure that the sudden extra weight does not cause problems next year.

Gardeners lifted dahlia tubers from the Walled Garden to store over winter and trimmed many yards of yew hedges, and work has been carried out tidying the composting area and turning the compost heaps; the usual winter jobs of repairing and resurfacing the most heavily-used paths and drives in the Gardens have also been completed.

Finally, members of the Estate's staff who are also volunteer organisers of the Sandringham Flower Show have been busy making the arrangements for next year's Show, booking all the tents and other equipment needed, selecting the arena entertainments and contacting the many exhibitors and standholders – generally trying to get everything in place by Christmas. The Show took place in glorious sunshine in 2012, and of course the organisers are hoping for the same again next year. □



## VILLAGE TASK FORCE



Do you recall the tale of the American who came over to study English customs? Sitting in his car, he noticed two men coming along the grass verge, the first one digging holes and the second one filling them in. When they reached him, he asked what they were doing to which one replied "Ah well - Fred is the one who plants the trees but he is not with us today!"

You could be forgiven for thinking of this when, on a cold December morning, pairs of us (both male and female) from the village Task Force were to be seen digging up the grass verge near each of the three 'DERSINGHAM' signs by the roads into the village and then filling them in! However, even though 'Fred' was not with us, we were in fact planting daffodil bulbs (provided by the Parish Council) to help brighten up the approaches to the village when spring arrives.

A couple of weeks before this, a group of us was to be found on the Warren (do you know where that is?\*) Here, we started taking down the wire fence which surrounded the trees planted in front of the bank by the by-pass - a job which, at the time of writing, we still have to complete.

After a 'winter break', we begin our regular work on Wednesday, 20th March when we intend to work on the rose bed in Post Office Road. From then on, we meet for an hour or two at 10.00am on the first and third Wednesdays of each month to carry out work around the village such as keeping the footpaths clear, weeding and litter-picking.

We are always pleased to welcome new members so, if you would like to help keep the village tidy (and you have a sense of humour!), either join us on the day (details of where we should be are displayed on the notice board at the Parish Council office in Post Office Road) or 'phone Sue on 543870.

\* The Warren is the stretch of open ground between Philip Nurse Road and the by-pass: it is now the responsibility of the Parish Council. Unfortunately, its whereabouts seem to be too well known to a number of dog-walkers who are too lazy to clear up the mess their dogs leave!□

*Keith Starkes*

### **Nar Valley Ornithological Society (NarVOS)**

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2013, 7.30pm at the Barn Theatre, Sacred Heart Convent School, Swaffham. Access & parking from Sporle Road.

#### **Farmland Bird Conservation in Norfolk**

Please come along to this illustrated talk by Simon Tonkin

Simon Tonkin is a Norfolk-based Senior Farmland Conservation Officer for the RSPB. Farmers are the guardians of much of our countryside and wildlife. So, this should be a fascinating talk, probably covering such topics as how farmers, working with conservation groups, can help arrest the decline of such species as Skylark and Turtle Dove.

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## Village Voice Live The Gardens at Sandringham

The audience in a surprisingly well packed hall for a cold dismal 4th of December evening, were rewarded with an illustrated talk in two halves by Martin Woods, the Head Gardener at Sandringham, and Christmas fare of mulled wine and warm mince pies at half-time.

The first half of the talk was about the gardens through the seasons - with photographs of the garden for each month of the year starting, unsurprisingly, in January. Martin described the flowers and foliage which could be viewed by the public and also some views only normally available to the privileged (of course I'm referring to the gardeners here - who else!). A recurring theme through the seasons was the avenues of pleached lime trees in the north garden and the considerable time and effort that has been spent pruning them early each year for the past 50 years to produce the desired result - truly a labour of love.

The second half described the gardens over the years - with photographs of the gardens from earlier years compared with more recent photographs showing how the garden has developed in some areas, allowed to go into controlled decline in others and how certain features, and buildings, have disappeared altogether. The central theme here was the walled garden which can normally only be viewed on guided walks.

I suspect that the gardens are very well known by all who attended, but an insight of Martin's inside knowledge of the them over many years was well appreciated - as were the mince pies and mulled wine!



*Whiffler*

### Revealing the History of a Norfolk Village

At a well attended meeting in the village hall on January 8th, two members of the Docking Heritage Group gave an interesting account of the formation and work of their association. It all started several years ago with a survey of the church. This sparked the desire to find out more of the history of the village and to record it all for posterity. Thus in 2007 the group was formed and has now a very large enthusiastic membership. They have researched various projects one of which was the history of the Playford family. There were five families of that name in the village but all insisted they were not related. However many months later after extensive research, endless questioning of family members, scouring of records far and wide, family connections were found and the family tree so far compiled was unrolled and unrolled and unrolled before our eyes. The account given of the Union Workhouse was detailed and fascinating.

The group have also begun to dig test pits all over the village in true Time Team style and have uncovered Roman pottery, and Anglo Saxon evidence. Even modern finds are valued for the picture they help to build of the development of the village. After a break for refreshments we saw some of the thousands of photographs that have been collected, and recorded in digital form. The hours of work involved in this were indeed a labour of love but well worth the effort. However they have the same problem that plagues historians in our village that some areas either just do not seem to have been photographed or the pictures have been lost or are languishing in someone's attic. I think particularly here of the Alexandra Hotel in Station Road or the old Manor House that stood in our village school playground until 1935. Surely someone has a photo of them somewhere even if they only feature in the background of a family group. Come on dig out that box of photographs in the Attic and have a look. The Docking Group have put together a most impressive Heritage Room in their village hall where all this material may be viewed. The annual exhibition is to be held soon and would be well worth a visit.

*CLIO*

## Bog News from Tom Bolderstone

Winter is still with us on the site as I write this article. The reserve has a totally different feel when it is covered in snow and looks very pretty.

Before the snow arrived the reserve was almost spring like with many birds singing and probably thinking of setting up territories. This cold snap of snow will have put paid to the singing but there are still lots of birds around. Recently on the reserve Snipe and Woodcock have been quite prevalent feeding in the areas that have remained unfrozen or roosting in the woodland and heather. If you are lucky sometimes woodcock can be seen on the edges of the road into the village of Wolferton feeding in the unfrozen puddles next to the sides of the road and they can often be quite calm and offer very close views. Snipe are normally seen on the wetter areas of the bog but recently there have been Snipe on the heather areas. This is a combination of the snow and wet weather which has allowed small puddles to form on areas which are normally dry which in turn allow the Snipe to feed.

Other birds seen on the reserve recently include winter thrushes. Birds such as Redwing and Fieldfare have been seen regularly flying over the reserve and the office base. These birds feed particularly on berries from plants such as hawthorn and Cotoneaster. In snowy weather it is particularly difficult for these birds to find food so many will appear in gardens looking for food. I have been feeding them in my garden with apples which they and the Blackbirds seem to love. There have also been a few Redpolls on site with a large flock of c200 roosting in a small patch of rhododendron on the reserve. Siskins have also been a regular feature flying over the site but these in cold weather can also be seen in gardens.

I mentioned in a previous article about a colour ringing project for Stonechat we set up on Dersingham Bog. In total this year nine birds were fitted with colour rings. We have been monitoring their movements on the site and are hoping that some will return to breed this spring.

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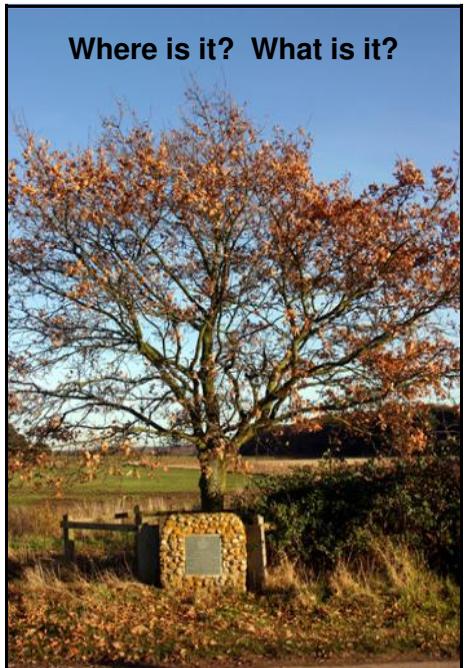
We also had a good sighting of another colour ringed Stonechat on site that wasn't one of ours. This bird is the third in as many years to have been rung in North Norfolk around the Kelling area that has then subsequently turned up at Dersingham. This bird was also fitted with colour rings so we were able to ascertain through



contact with the original ringer where and when it had been ringed. Our project is now linked with this project so we can better monitor movements of Stonechats between heathland sites and other sites they might frequent. This will allow us to build a picture of the bird's movements in the county and allow us to effectively conserve these birds. If anyone sees a colour ringed Stonechat at Dersingham or anywhere else other than Dersingham Bog please let me know. My email address is [Thomas.bolderstone@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:Thomas.bolderstone@naturalengland.org.uk) and I can get back with details of the bird or pass on the details to the right people. The more data we get the more knowledge will we have about these birds.

Once the Snow has melted we will be into the Bird Breeding season, February sees the return of breeding Woodlark to the site. Visitors to the reserve are reminded that dogs should be on leads at all times due to the presence of cattle on the site but also particular care should be taken between the 1st February to 30<sup>th</sup> September as breeding birds will be present on the site and they can be particularly vulnerable to disturbance.

If anyone would like to know more about the Stonechat project or would just like to know a bit more about what volunteering on site then please get in contact and I look forward to seeing some of you on site in the coming months. □



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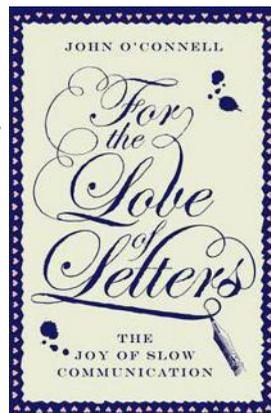


## MAGGIE'S MISCELLANY

Snippets from a Norfolk Broad's blogspot by Maggie Grey

### TAKING IT S-L-O-W

I was given a book for Christmas – 'For the Love of Letters – The Joy of Slow Communication' and as you might have gathered from the title, it is a book in praise of letter-writing. There is some history of the subject in there, as well as examples of famous letter



writers from Roman times to modern day scribes.

The book is in praise of SLOW communications, as opposed to emails and texts and so on. I have just in the past year mastered texting, though have no earthly use for it and so you might gather I am a bit of a technophobe, and whilst I love the immediacy of emails, much prefer the pleasure of opening a letter from a friend. It's good to be able to send a quick message to someone, something you need a quick response to perhaps, or just a thought that occurred and had to be passed on. Better yet to sit by the fireside on a cold winter's day writing a letter on pretty stationery with a favourite pen, or sitting in the garden on a fine day with birdsong for background. Surely there is still a place for letters in this 'must have it/do it now' world we live in?

I have to say I am in praise of the SLOW Movement as a whole.

This began as a protest against the opening of a MacDonalds in Rome in 1986, and was the beginning of the SLOW FOOD Movement. This in turn spawned other such organisations, perhaps not as well known – Slow Living, Slow Travel, Slow Design for example.

The idea of taking life slowly may well be one that is sneered at by many, especially those frazzled mums rushing about in the morning, trying to organise breakfasts, packed lunches, school runs before maybe heading off to work themselves. 'Chance would be a fine thing' they would comment, when told to slow down a bit. There are many people who would perhaps like to jump off the fast-moving express train that is life, and onto a slow-moving old tramcar, but who can't. Or won't? Some get addicted to the fast pace of life or simply can't afford to do anything about it. 'If only....' they sigh when reading a magazine article about the benefits of slowing down.

I take life slowly these days, not always out of choice but from necessity. At first I balked against it, having always been a bit antsy, never one to sit still for long, easily bored if life was too quiet or slow. But as you get older, the days seem to fly past and it makes sense to slow things down, to get the most out of each day, and live in the moment. These days I relish taking life slow, love the slowness. I prefer slow cooking to fast food. Having an afternoon nap is a must. I read a lot. Meditate.

In this household for most of the week there are no timetables, our time is our own and we are able to lead a somewhat hedonistic lifestyle I suppose you would call it. The older I get, the more I want to get out of each day, but by taking time doing things I enjoy slowly, rather than trying to cram as much in as I can. This way I appreciate the days more, the changing of the seasons too, and more importantly my husband and surroundings.

So if you can, just take some time out... not just to smell the coffee, but to make one and sit down to savour and enjoy it, and appreciate where you are.□

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## Cheque Presentation

Winner of the lucky dip draw for returning the Dersingham Centre questionnaire was Louise Rice of Saxon Way, seen here receiving her £50 cheque from committee chairman Chris Davey.



## Methodist Church

In every year there are always significant dates that will mean something to somebody. Of course, 2012 will be remembered for several significant dates and were celebrated in many different ways and 2013 will be very similar. At Dersingham Methodist Church we like to celebrate special birthdays and anniversaries and have been delighted to share in the 90<sup>th</sup> birthdays of two members – Maisie Spoor in December and Harry Thompson in January. Our Church too will celebrate a special birthday in May when it will be 123! For a building of this age it's looking good and has plenty of life in it to go on for several more years yet. Our flower festival and church anniversary will be from Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> – Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> May, make a note in your diary and join us to wish the church happy birthday!

More significant dates:

**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> February** – coffee morning from 10.00 a.m. proceeds for flower festival funds.

**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March** – coffee mornings from 10.00 a.m. proceeds divided equally between church funds and Methodist Homes for the Aged.

May I wish you every blessing if you are celebrating a special birthday or anniversary in 2013.

*Elizabeth Batstone, Dersingham Methodist Church*

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## Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal

Once again we would like to thank everyone who helped us this year with the Poppy Appeal, in Dersingham, Sandringham, West Newton and Wolferton. The first weekend of the campaign was very wet and cold, and this is the time most house to house collectors like to get out. We thank them for braving the weather and the collectors outside the stores on November 3<sup>rd</sup>. when it was also very cold. We are very grateful to the businesses who allow us space in their stores and on counters for the Poppy boxes and tins, because it is becoming increasingly more difficult to get collectors for the house to house rounds. It was disappointing for us to find our collection was down this year and our final figure was £5752, although we had the same number of tins out, this is £800 less than last year.

On speaking to other organizers, and other charities it seems everyone is collecting less than last year, which seems to be a sign of the times unfortunately. Once again a huge thank you to all who helped us, and if anyone feels they can spare us about two hours of their time next November we should be very pleased to hear from you.

Pamela Kendal Tel. 01485 544404 and Karen Bushell Tel. 01485 540236.

---

## Dersingham Cricket Club 1<sup>st</sup> XI fixtures 2013

Norfolk Cricket Alliance Division 3.

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11 <sup>th</sup> May	Sprowston A	Away	13 <sup>th</sup> JULY	SPROWSTON	HOME
18 <sup>th</sup> MAY	HALES & LODDON	HOME	20 <sup>th</sup> July	Hales & Loddon	Away
25 <sup>th</sup> MAY	Gt WITCHINGHAM A	HOME	27 <sup>th</sup> July	Gt Witchingham	Away
Followed by a HOG ROAST					
1 <sup>st</sup> June	Acle A	Away	3 <sup>rd</sup> AUG	ACLE A	HOME
8 <sup>th</sup> JUNE	BUNGAY	HOME	10 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Bungay	Away
15 <sup>th</sup> June	Old Buckenham A	Away	17 <sup>th</sup> AUG	OLD BUCKENHAM A	HOME
22 <sup>nd</sup> JUNE	NORTH RUNCTON A	HOME	24 <sup>th</sup> Aug	North Runcton	Away
29 <sup>th</sup> June	Thetford	Away	31 <sup>st</sup> AUG	THETFORD	HOME

## Dersingham Open Gardens

**Sunday 26th and Monday 27th May 2.00 to 6.00pm**

This local event increases in popularity each year and, after a break of a year, is back again in 2013. Please note dates and bring along friends and family.

The gardens that are open are all inspiring and unique in their own way. Added to this Cream Teas and a variety of other refreshments will be served in the Church Hall from 2.00 to 5.00pm.

We are always interested in including new gardens for viewing, as well as the several old favourites. Do you have a special garden feature that you would like to show others: If you would like to discuss the possibility of opening your garden please give me, Judy Collingham, a call on 01485 540271. □



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## Steve Davis Well sealed!

Here's a quiz question: where do *bulls* and *cows* raise *pups* in a *rookery*?

Before going into that, may I say a big thank you to those who sponsored my particular *Movember* campaign enabling us to contribute £400 towards the millions raised worldwide in support of men's health charities. Actually the UK total of over £20m was second only to Canada's £24m, but way above the USA and even Australia where the campaign originated! (Details from *movember.com*). To be honest, it was something of a relief to my wife and me, come 1<sup>st</sup> December to mow back to a clean-shaven top-lip!

A week or so earlier, with my *walrus* accessory still at its peak, Lindsey and I set off on the 85 mile journey around the Wash and on up the Lincolnshire coast to visit the grey seal colony at *Donna Nook* just a few miles short of the Humber estuary. Strangely since the Second World War to the present day the remote flats of Donna Nook have been and still are used as a bombing range by the RAF and the bright *day-glo* targets are much in evidence out there. However, nestled closer to shore the salt-marshes form a sanctuary (or more correctly *rookery*!) where, come late October through to December, hundreds of female grey seals (or *cows*) haul themselves out to give birth to and raise their comparatively fluffy white *pups*. Quite a few *bull* seals hang about too, hopeful as ever to do what bulls do best, making their sole contribution to the next years proceedings!



Now of course, *grey seals* can be seen around the North Norfolk coastline as well, especially at



places like Blakeney Point and Horsey Beach though, as you may have seen in the local news recently, the public are discouraged from over visiting Horsey Beach particularly during the pupping season when unsupervised access causes the seals undue stress and is a serious threat to their well-being. You may have watched the fairly recent edition of the BBC's *Countryfile* that brought hosts Matt Baker and Julia Bradbury to Norfolk primarily to see and follow our migrant *pink-footed geese*, but also to pay a visit to the Blakeney seal colony which, although having quite a large gathering of grey

seals giving birth to pups, is just not particularly accessible or visitor friendly for viewing other than by boat. Here in Norfolk, as well as grey seals (distinguished by their roman-nosed snouts) we also see the somewhat smaller, arguably cuter, teddy-bear faced *common (or harbour) seals*. On several occasions I have even seen the odd common seal pop its head out of the high-tide at Hunstanton and Snettisham. In contrast to the *greys*, *common seals* give birth to their pups in June and July, and you may well have been lucky enough to see them if you have been on one of the many seal ferry trips that operate from *Morston Quay*. (Google "*seal trips norfolk*").

It is however the sheer scale and ease of access to Donna Nook that makes a visit so worthwhile. Opened by the RAF as a reserve in 2002 under the very capable management and supervision of the *Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust* (Google "*donna nook*"), it has become a very popular place to be during the brief pupping season, coping remarkably well with high visitor numbers often by the coach load, and not without reason. Ever since catching a glimpse on a TV programme some while back, I had wanted to visit, but never quite imagined just how many seals I



was going to see there! Although the whole reserve covers more than six miles of coastline from Grainthorpe Haven in the north to Saltfleet in the south, the main visiting area is reached via a two mile drive out along a largely single car-width road from the village of North Somercotes. We were advised by friends to get there early to get a parking space although the wet weather that we have endured so much of

lately might have eased visitor numbers during our visit. In any case there was a nearby overflow car park that made a charge of just £1 including the luxury use of Portacabin toilets! From our car in the main car park however it was just a few paces past the tea, coffee and burger van, through a gap in the sea defence bank then down and along the footpath to behold the vast expanse of salt marsh behind a half-mile of low fencing with laid-back grey seals and pups lounging around everywhere, many right up against the fence. As we walked along the path behind the fencing we heard the mournful cries of the cow seals calling to their pups, the junior cries of the pups responding, the more aggressive growls of the cows warning off any others that get too close to their pups and the even more aggressive snaps toward any bull seal attempting a premature amorous approach. Some pups were suckling their mother's rich milk. Others looked as if they were being lovingly stroked or caressed by mum using her flipper as she encouraged them to feed. Meanwhile bull seals noisily sparred with one another, biting at each other's necks, often drawing blood in the process! The whole place was just an arena of life in its amazing wonder yet rawness. Although we did not actually witness the birth of any of the excess of 1500 pups born at Donna Nook this season, plenty of them still had the remains of umbilical cords attached or stains of birth fluid on their otherwise fluffy white fur, indicating that they had been born only within the last day or so. The odd afterbirth littered the scene too, though gulls and even foxes make the most of these nutritious treats as well as clearing up



any of the 1 in 20 seal pups that don't make it through. Such is nature! The well clued up team of volunteer staff there told us that a cow seal will stay and suckle its pup for up to three weeks. During this time the cow loses half its body weight whilst their pup puts on 35 to 40 kilos as its white non-waterproof fluff wears off to reveal its developing bespeckled adult fur. The pup is then simply abandoned as the emaciated Mum goes back off to sea to feed, gets intercepted by one of the sturdier alpha males awaiting its chance, though any internal development is suspended for the next three months whilst she rebuilds her strength and the next maternal cycle begins! Meanwhile, the abandoned, over stuffed seal pup lounges around for another couple of weeks on its own before hunger spurs it to lollop off on the arduous journey out across the salt marsh to the sea where it has a 50% chance of making it through the next year and is ready to breed after another two or three.



We actually stayed for a couple of nights just three miles south of North Somercotes at the very friendly *Crown Inn* in the village of Saltfleet ([crowninmsaltfleet.co.uk](http://crowninmsaltfleet.co.uk)), though I have since discovered two closer B&Bs actually in North Somercotes: [pigeoncottage.com](http://pigeoncottage.com) and [wickham-house.co.uk](http://wickham-house.co.uk) and we can certainly recommend the *Zara Indian Restaurant* there too. Although keen drivers may choose to make Donna Nook a day trip from here,

we found that one visit simply wasn't enough and having stayed until the light was failing on our first day, our second day visit was cut short by driving rain and so we switched to a swift visit of the pretty local market town of Louth followed by an afternoon back at our B&B catching up with all the afternoon TV quiz shows! On our final visit we were prevented from entering the reserve for the first hour whilst the staff, armed with buckets and brooms, laboriously coerced a large, powerful and stubborn bull seal, that had decided to come round and through the car park during the night, back and through a gate to the right side of the fence, whilst we just walked and admired the scenery in the other direction! For such a heavyweight, legless animal, they certainly know how to move when they want to!



I know I shall want to make the pilgrimage to Donna Nook again in November of this year, hopefully with a drier weather prospect. For the immediate future however, Lindsey and I are off to sunnier climes as we visit my brother and sister-in-law who live on the Mexican Caribbean Island of *Cozumel*. Its a tough life: all that sun, snorkelling, Mexican cuisine and a host of interesting nature and wildlife to see but someone has to do it and it will no doubt give me something to write about for the next Village Voice issue. Actually delivery of this issue is scheduled to start the day after our return flight from Mexico, so if you do see me out on my round looking a little more frazzled than usual, you'll know why!

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## DERSINGHAM EVENING WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

As always, our WI has continued to flourish and provide many interesting events. Best wishes to you all for a Happy New Year.

We donated money to buy a Christmas tree for St Nicholas Church Christmas Tree Festival then decorated it under guidance by Rohda after a morning of wrapping presents at a member's house. A Sherry, Mince pies and Sausage Rolls coffee morning with Shirley and a Wine and Cheese Evening with Maggie proved to be popular fund raising events. A group of members spent an evening class at Potter and Dibble making 'robins' from felt material which was a new experience for all with varied results!!

The main outing was a 2-day trip to Germany to visit German Christmas markets organised by Antje, a visit much enjoyed by those who went on this interesting shopping trip made special because of Antje's knowledge of the German language! Back to more local events and a group treated themselves to afternoon tea at Congham Hall, another group met at Thaxter's for a Christmas lunch, and special lunch was enjoyed by many members at the Riverside, the Sunday Lunch group dined at The Feathers. Our December meeting took the form of a well attended, jolly party with food and games.

The New Calendar of topics by monthly speakers is as follows:

January –	Fire Safety	June	Wedding Dresses through the ages
February -	Church Towers in Norfolk	July-	My Year as Lady Mayor
March-	Members explorations	September	Travel for the single person
April-	Meeting the Queen	October	Wildlife talk and images of Norfolk
May-	Moving your Home	November	Food labelling
		December	Growing up in East Germany

Visits to Tutbury Castle and The Royal Norfolk Show are in hand.

The Craft Group continues to thrive and the 'Walking Group' will resume in March as will the 'Theatre Group' ( now organised by Diann Southgate) with a trip to see Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat at the Corn Exchange. The Sunday Lunch and Evening Dining Groups have a full list of proposed restaurants or pubs to visit each month which include a variety of venues not too far from Dersingham.

Our WI have decided to adopt 'Make a Difference' for 2013 - to be known as MAD - and are busy knitting squares to turn into blankets for needy people.

Meetings continue to be held at St Cecilia's Catholic Church Hall on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month. The year 2012 saw several new members join and anyone interested in coming along is welcome with no commitment for a few months. □

*Maggie Guest*

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### Pill Box History

Not many people know that we have a very well preserved pill box to be found in Broadlands Close. The Parish Council have asked me to investigate whether English Heritage would be prepared to schedule this. English Heritage require a great deal of information, a lot of which I don't have. So this is a request. If anyone has any information about the pill box (photographs will be especially useful) I will be very grateful if they can let me know.

Any information appreciated!

My contact details are:- 6 Chapel Road, Dersingham PE31 6PN. 01485 543125, 07779 389419, brian.anderson@dersingham.org.uk

*Brian Anderson*

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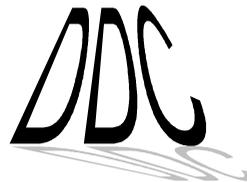
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## **Dersingham Day Centre for the Elderly** by Alice Worth



We started our Winter session on the 9th January and it was nice to see everyone again after a three week break. By the time this edition of Village Voice goes to press in February we will be thinking ahead to Easter rather than recalling all the events we held at Christmas. Let it suffice to say that the Day Centre saw 2012 out with our usual Christmas party and high jinks!

It was with great sadness that we learnt of the sudden death on the 3<sup>rd</sup> January of Victoria Valentine, one of our much loved volunteers. She had been at all the December events and, as always, made herself useful. Whenever we needed help we could always rely on Victoria to be there for us. The first time we had the Village Fryer come to serve our lunch Victoria turned up with a huge pan of mushy peas. They proved so popular that they became part of all our fish and chip lunches, and Victoria always supplied them. Her ready smile and cheerfulness will be greatly missed at the Day Centre. Our thoughts at this sad time are with Chris and the family. Victoria, you will not be forgotten.

Unfortunately, due to the snow, we had to cancel our meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> January and our AGM. We only do this when we feel it is an unnecessary risk for our members. Hopefully this will prove to be the exception rather than the rule through this winter. The Committee are already thinking ahead to the Spring and the better weather, when we hope to be able to organize some days out for lunch.

We were able to take on two new Members in January but, even so, we still have a small waiting list. However, if you, or someone you know, could benefit from a day out each week, don't let this put you off. Contact the Surgery or Alice Worth on 01485 544673.□

### **Carole Brown Health Centre Patients Participation Group Meeting**

**Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2013 at 7.00 pm**

in the

**Carole Brown Health Centre  
Guest Speaker: Gwyneth Wilson**

Director Patient Experience and Lead for Nursing and Non-Medical  
Professionals

Queen Elizabeth Hospital Foundation Trust

+

**Standard Agenda Items and Any Other Business  
CBHC Patients and Staff are invited to attend**

**DISABLED PARKING.** Visitors to the Carole Brown Health Centre should note that the disabled parking spaces should not be used by those without relevant disabled parking badges. Of late, these spaces have frequently been misused and as a consequence, those with a real need have been denied the facility. Your cooperation and consideration is sought.



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## Route 66 Road Trip - part 2

by Stephen Martyn

We're driving Route 66, the American Highway that linked Chicago to Los Angeles in the days before the Interstate. Over 2400 miles through eight states and a myriad of out of the way places, where you can feel the pulse of small-town America in a way that you would never experience in the major tourist centres.

In the last edition of Village Voice we travelled as far as Tulsa, Oklahoma where you find us having checked in to the first accommodation that we did not pre-book from the UK. Welcome to the all American motel, the roadside refuge of a million travellers whose heads grew weary and they had to stop for the night. But no, we're not in the Hotel California being serenaded by the Eagles, we are in the Super 8, Tulsa, and at four-thirty am someone is knocking at the room next door. "Bobby, are you in there?" calls a strident voice. "C'mon boy, it's time to go!" Then follows much shuffling, slamming of assorted doors and the sound of a large truck departing with much grumbling of heavy diesel and grinding of gears. And that's just the first one.

Resolving to stay at a better class of joint the next night we soon abandon any hope of sleep, pack up and are on the road shortly after seven. The weather has changed, it's wet and a few rumbles of thunder announce our departure. Wipers sloshing we hit the road and cruise through a deserted downtown Tulsa which is rather like a miniature version of Chicago. Tulsa was a big oil town at one time and it still has some fine buildings erected with the profits of the black gold. The rain stops and passing under a steel bridge with a huge Route 66 sign on it we come across an oil derrick right at the side of the road. Even more strangely there is a gigantic steam locomotive sitting just next to it. It seems that

this is a new Route 66 museum, dedicated to all things Tulsa, but mostly at the moment to the oil derrick and to The Meteor. The Meteor was an overnight train between Oklahoma City and St Louis, pulled by the locomotive we now see before us. It's been beautifully restored but it seems rather sad that it's doomed to be gawked at by a few Route 66



tourists and is not in use on some heritage railroad line. What a sight it must have been when in service, smoke and steam billowing, whistle howling, headlight blazing as it carved a path through the night, a long line of cars behind it with glowing windows hinting at the passengers within. Puffing their cigars, chomping their steak and fries, this was true luxury travel in the 1940's when this engine was constructed. Within a decade steam had been swept away by diesel and The Meteor had fallen victim to the burgeoning rise in Interstate motor traffic.

There's always something fascinating to see on the Old Road, but it's time to move on to an urgent item on our agenda – breakfast! If there's one thing that makes an American road trip a great trip it's calling in at a good old fashioned family diner for ham and eggs and a bottomless cup of coffee. We find such an establishment in Chandler, a small town on the route a couple of hours drive from Tulsa and pull up on the forecourt. "Good morning, how are you today?" enquires the motherly waitress, although whether anyone ever actually dares to tell her is quite another matter. We consult the menu, but it's mainly a decision about how many eggs, how should they be cooked (over easy, sunny-side up and many more incomprehensible variations) and whether to have bacon (small crispy rashers) or ham (bacon but a larger more succulent slice). Then there's sausage, which usually come as small patties of sausage meat, unless you specify links which is what we would call sausages. It goes on, through breakfast potatoes, toast (whole-wheat, rye, regular etc.),

but coffee is mercifully just coffee. You're never asked if you'd like a latté in a diner. Coffee comes black from a glass jug that your waitress brings round with alarming regularity, anxious to top you up if you so much as move your cup in the direction of your lips. Sugar can be added from a pot with a spout which invariably delivers either one grain or a veritable avalanche into your cup. Cream is provided in those little containers that you find in hotel rooms with a sell-by date somewhere in the next millennium, while milk is something that foreigners drink with tea and obviously doesn't possess enough calories to be offered with coffee. If all this is too much trouble to order, just ask for the World's Largest breakfast – I'm sure they'll know what you mean.

It all tastes good and costs a very reasonable amount. We pay up and with "y'all come back and see us soon now!" ringing in our ears, climb into the Chevy and lumber off towards the West. The small towns on the route arrive, entertain us with the odd mural or some other quirky sight, and they go, some in the blink of an eye, others more substantial. Oklahoma City, which is certainly not a small town, maybe mighty pretty as the song has it but we hardly give it a look. We need to press on and the miles must tick by, because in just a few days we have to be a thousand miles further West, at Tusayan, Arizona where our next accommodation is booked.



A few more hours of the winding black ribbon and we pass from Oklahoma into the Texas panhandle where, much to our disappointment we see neither the Lone Ranger nor Champion the Wonder-Horse, but more green fields with a few trees and cows scattered around. The big prairies are further to the south so our guide book tells us, that's where the real cowboys are. Out here you may see the occasional Stetson hat atop a check shirt and blue jeans, but the guy certainly won't be riding a horse. No, he'll be in a pickup

truck with a huge V8 engine, guzzling gas as if it's going out of style. Who can blame him at around 65p a litre.

Pausing to admire the columns of the U Drop Café, a Route 66 landmark, we are soon in Amarillo and select the rather better quality Days Inn. We sleep well and set off next morning to explore the nearby Palo Duro Canyon, which promises to offer the first really spectacular landscape we've seen on the trip. They're funny things canyons, not like mountains that you can see for miles. They creep up on you – one moment you're driving through some scrubby flat landscape and the next you round a bend and there's a huge hole in the ground right beside you. A hole that goes on and on into the distance and at the bottom there might be a river. At Palo Duro the river is usually dry, except when it's not, such as after a sudden thunderstorm. There are stern warning notices about flash flooding, including one that tells you that if the water is one foot deep and you and your pickup truck venture into it you'll probably be swept away never to be seen again. Fortunately it's a blue sky day, so we and our Chevy may survive. It's warm, over thirty degrees in the canyon but one or two local



hikers that we meet on the trail tell us that this is just pleasantly mild, temperatures can reach 120 Fahrenheit for days on end in the summer months.

Rejoining Route 66 just West of Amarillo our first port of call is Cadillac Ranch. There are so many things to see along the Route, but some of them count as ‘must-do’s’ and this is one of them. In 1974 a local art group planted ten junk Cadillacs nose down in a field beside Route 66, the angle of each car corresponding exactly to that of the Great Pyramid of Giza in Egypt(!) Since then the cars have been subjected to the wildest excesses of the world’s graffiti artists and even today the air is heavy with the whiff of paint thinners and the ground littered with spent aerosol cans. It’s all totally surreal, or as they would undoubtedly say in these parts – just awesome! Visitors can pull up on the side of the road and walk the hundred yards or so to inspect the vehicles and have the obligatory photograph taken with them. It’s a fascinating ‘only in America’ place, but there’s a lot of litter and the Caddys have definitely seen better days due to the ravages of souvenir hunters who have stolen anything not actually welded to the car. Ah well, maybe America isn’t so different from Britain after all.

Cadillac Ranch is a favourite stopping place for those travelling the Route and we chat to several fellow pilgrims who are all fascinated to know why people from England would be out here on the Mother Road. The principal answer is one Billy Connolly, whose ITV series chronicling his own journey on Route 66 sparked a good deal of UK interest, including ours. The sort of interest that changes “we must do that one day” into “come on, let’s book it now!” Billy of course did the road the ‘proper’ way, on a huge motorcycle, wearing blue sunglasses and his hair flying in the wind. Not that that stopped him falling off and breaking his ribs, even if the bike did have three wheels, so this is why, despite Margaret’s protestations to the contrary, we are in a Chevy Malibu rather than astride a Harley-Davidson.



Later that afternoon we meet a number of our new friends from Cadillac Ranch at the Halfway Café in Adrian Texas. A charming little outpost in the middle of nowhere that not only marks the exact halfway point between Chicago and Los Angeles but also serves the most delicious apple pie and ice-cream. From the half-way point it isn’t long before we spot another Route 66 icon, a giant roadside sign that commands us to keep motoring and make our night’s lodgings at “Tucumcari Tonite!” At one time these signs littered the verges of the Old Road up to three hundred miles East of the New Mexican town, but now there seems to be only one left still standing. Tucumcari was a great railroad town once, and has a good collection of museums and murals, but it’s too early to stop for the night so we press on to Santa Rosa and find a decent Travelodge.

We’ve learnt the ways of motels a little now. If there are lots of trucks in the parking lot, avoid unless you are planning a very early start. If the name of the motel includes words like Comfortable, Deluxe, America’s Best etc. prepare for the place to be a dump. Most of the motels we stayed in were actually pretty decent and run by friendly people, but that doesn’t stop them doubling their prices at the drop of a hat if they are down to their last few vacant rooms. Of course you can always drive on to the next town, but that might be a hundred weary miles further down the road and who’s to say that those motels might be even fuller than the ones that are now receding in your rear-view mirror.

Still, we always find somewhere and after all this is what life on Route 66 is all about. Relaxing in a comfy room before a beer and a fine meal in a friendly local diner. Alternatively, paying over the odds for a box with thin walls and even thinner towels, before realising that it’s going to have to be Mexican chow again because that’s the only place in town. And no you can’t have a beer because we’re not licensed, or even worse than that you’ve left your passport in the room and they



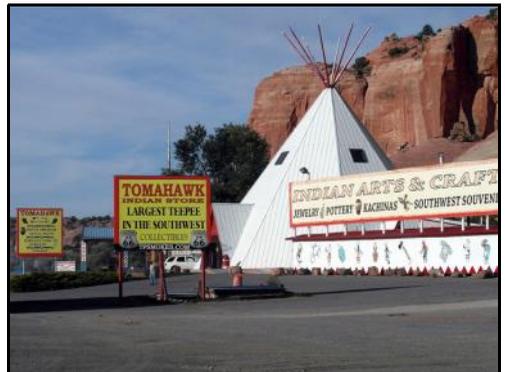
won't serve you without ID even if you look every one of your sixty-four years. Yes really! Ah, the joys of the road.

New Mexico is Indian territory in a big way, so we resolve to sample a little of their lifestyle. The main tribe here is the Navajo who have been generously allotted a huge area of nothing by the US Government in which to live and carry on their business. The reservation consists of hundreds of square miles of scrubby desert landscape, unfit for agriculture of any sort, onto which the native people were shunted when the early settlers decided that the lands that the Navajo had

been living on contained oil or gold or something else useful. Amazingly it was only in the 1970's that these people were finally recognised as American citizens and given the vote. The other side of this coin is that the Navajo would have you believe that their only way of making a living now is to sell jewellery, artwork and trinkets to tourists, whereas in actual fact, due to tax breaks given to them to ease the government's conscience, many of them make their money by running casinos or selling cheap duty-free cigarettes and booze in huge 'trading posts' set up beside the Interstate. In truth they are a fascinating and enigmatic people and we learn a lot about their history on a tour of Sky City, a Navajo settlement perched on the top of a huge rock plateau. Nobody actually lives up here anymore, even the Navajo admit that, but you can tour their traditional mud and stone houses which are accessed by ladders leading to a hole in the roof. If the Spanish Conquistadores arrive just pull up the ladder. Naturally you can have your fill of jewellery and other artefacts, all hand-made in the Native Americans' current abode – a trailer park.

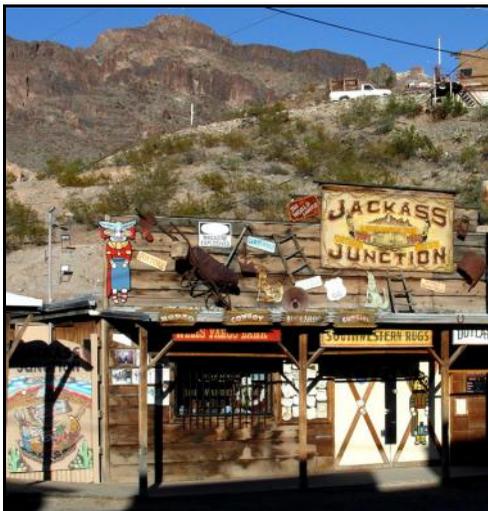
In New Mexico we see the first real change in the landscape since leaving Chicago. There are mountains constantly on the horizon, and the terrain takes on the pink and brown hues of the desert. To see even more spectacular landscape we take another 'must do' diversion up to the Grand Canyon, which we visited last year and are determined to see again just in case it was all a dream or someone has filled it in during our absence. Luckily it is still there in all its majesty, a huge hole in the ground so wide and deep that only occasionally can you glimpse the Colorado River running fast and cold in its depths. Last time we hiked from the South Rim to the North, staying at the quaint Phantom Ranch on the floor of the canyon, but this time we content ourselves with walking a trail partway down from the South Rim. It's enough to experience the spiritual feel of the place and to soak up the silence, watch the turkey vultures and condors soaring overhead on thermals and peer over the edge of an abyss of cliffs that plunge five thousand feet or more towards the canyon floor. On the rim of the canyon it's a teeming mass of tourists, but down here on the trail there's nothing, no mobile phone signal, very little water, just us and nature. People die here every year, not usually by falling over the edge, but through dehydration. It's very warm and once you've gone down the only way back up is on your own two feet plodding one in front of the other, all the way out of the World's Largest hole in the ground.

We've left the Grand Canyon behind and are into Arizona, the seventh State on our journey. Almost without realising it, we are nearing the end of the road, we can almost smell the Pacific Ocean and yearn to dangle our toes in it, two



more days and we'll be there. But first, just five hundred miles of desert to cross.

The mountains draw nearer and after Kingman old Route 66 reluctantly climbs up into them for the first time in nearly three weeks. The road switchbacks up through the foothills and then climbs steeply to the summit. In the old days this would have been the straw to break the back of many a camel or Model T Ford, but our Chevy cruises smoothly along despite an outside air temperature showing 104 Fahrenheit. Over the crest and we start to descend, but the mountains have one last surprise – the ghost town of Oatman. Well, not strictly a ghost town because around a hundred people still live here, but in the heyday of the Gold Rush there were four thousand hopefuls, digging and panning for the precious metal. Now the place looks just like the set of a John



Wayne movie, with burros wandering in the streets and the odd mock gunfight to keep the tourists coming. However, it's five on a hot afternoon when we pass through, so the gunslingers have all retired for a beer and some Mexican fajitas, and after a few photos it's time to move on.

We stop for the night at Lake Havasu, which plays host to the old London Bridge, moved stone by stone from the City and re-erected on the shore of the lake with the Colorado River diverted underneath it. Almost as surreal as Cadillac Ranch and surely it must be the World's Largest something? World's Largest mistake if you believe the folklore – they thought they were buying Tower Bridge, but when it arrived . . . Well they couldn't really send it back could they?

From Lake Havasu it really is good honest desert all the way to the San Gabriel mountains which form the gateway to Los Angeles. Diehard Route 66ers to the last we take the old road which runs parallel with the Santa Fe railroad for much of the distance. In fact the railroad has never been far away from our route and sometimes in our motel in the night we'll hear the grumble of diesels, the rumble of box-cars and the howling banshee of the horn, the loneliest sound in the world, and



think that in a few days we'll be home, safe in Dersingham. America is the land of the big travel adventure, and we've drunk fully from the cup, seen amazing places, met some lovely people. There's nothing quite like that 'on the road' feeling, so why not plan your own adventure. Just remember (cue music) "if you ever plan to motor West, take the highway, that's my way and best. Get your kicks . . . oh yeah . . . on Route 66!" □



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## From the Parish Office



I hope everyone had an enjoyable Christmas and New Year. A lot of people seem to have been ill. As I am writing this it is minus one outside, snowy and icy. I hope people have been careful and no broken bones!

I have received a lot of calls regarding gritting and grit bins. Norfolk County Council plan their gritting routes a year in advance, so if the Parish

Council wants to ask for another area to be covered it needs to be done now for next year. Bus routes are not automatically gritted, especially if the bus company does not have a problem. The Parish Council has had several calls for grit bins, Norfolk County Council have to give permission for these to be purchased and placed by the Parish Council. This is because Norfolk County Council will fill them up. The Parish Council were not able to place any new grit bins because either Norfolk County Council did not see the need, were unable to service or when the Parish Council asked residents if they minded the bin outside their property everyone bar one objected.

We are working to get Christmas 2013 in Dersingham more looking more festive. Ideas on the table so far are to light up the trees on the road side of the Recreation Ground, and a Christmas Market. It was a shame that the lights were damaged on the Christmas tree. The tree was kindly donated by the Sandringham Estate and the lights by Thaxter's Garden Centre. If you would like to see something in your area or have any ideas, please drop me an email or note through the office door or better still come and say hello, we do not bite!

The Recreation Committee are also looking into organising some summer holiday activities for the children. If you are interested in having a taster session at a sport or hobby please let us know and the PC may be able to put it in the programme. The Coffee Club held at the Social Club on a Tuesday evening seems to be very well attended. I hear that the Pizza Party at Christmas went down well.

We will soon be sending out advertising forms for Village Voice for the new financial year. The PC have decided not to increase the prices, so do take advance of signing up early and getting six adverts for the price of five. If you do not currently advertise with us but would like to please get in touch and we will be pleased to send you the advertising form and any other details you might require.

One of our councillors is now updating our Facebook page on a regular basis. Any posters that come into the office for the public noticeboard at Budgens are now being scanned and put on Facebook for you. Hopefully this will give you greater advertising coverage for your events. Cllr Davis our chief IT expert is also looking at Twitter and how this can be used, especially with Village Voice.

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

*Sarah*



**Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> February – 7.30pm**

The West Norfolk members group invites you to an illustrated talk by Paul Waring, co-author of the field guide *Moths of Great Britain & Ireland*

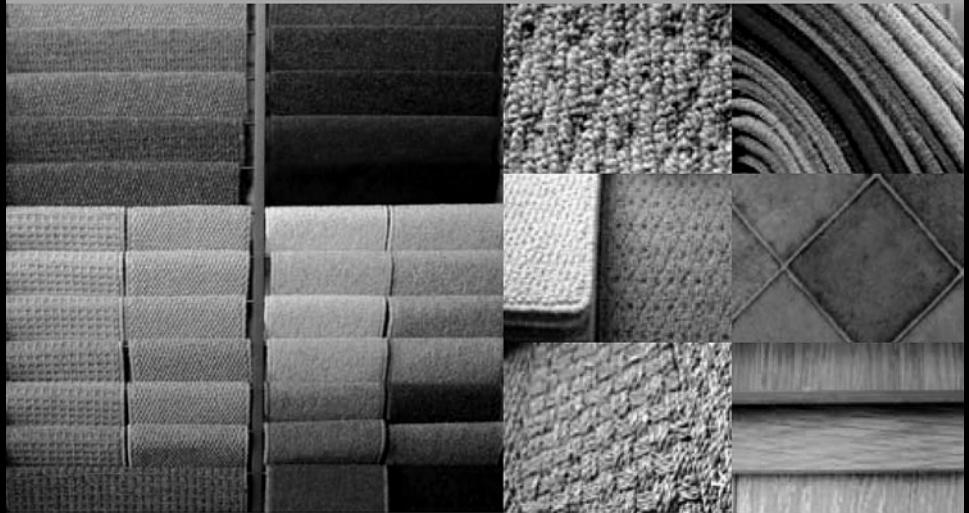
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## News from St Cecilia's Church Mountbatten Road, Dersingham

Our former Priest Father James Fyfe left the Parish just over a year ago to join the Benedictine Community at Downside Abbey, Somerset. He is now known as Fr Robert Fyfe. He was in our prayers again on the Feast of the Epiphany, Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> January, when the Abbot and Community welcomed Fr Robert more fully into the Monastic Community as he made his First Profession to the Abbot. Some of the Parishioners were able to go along to Downside Abbey and had a very enjoyable visit with him. We all wish him well.

Our thanks also go to the many volunteers and helpers who made both of the Churches look so beautiful over the Christmas and New Year period.

Our first Parish social occasion of the year is a pancake supper on Shrove Tuesday, which this year is on 12<sup>th</sup> February. It is held at St Cecilia's Church in Dersingham and is very popular and well attended. Pancakes are made and kindly donated by our band of volunteers.

Look out for details of all of our social occasions on the Parish bulletin, or on the website.

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



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

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

month at Dersingham. Please come along, you will be most welcome.

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

**Website:** [www.hunstantoncatholicparish.org](http://www.hunstantoncatholicparish.org) **Email:** [parish@hunstantoncatholicparish.org](mailto:parish@hunstantoncatholicparish.org)



## Sandringham Squirrels by Alan Coleby



### Girl squirrels

Ella  
Eve  
Cassie  
Thora

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

### Boy squirrels

Scoot  
Chip  
Barney  
Gus

### A Place to Feed



‘You don’t tell Gus,’ shouted Thora. ‘Have you got that?’ She sounded threatening. ‘You don’t tell Gus,’ she repeated. Not only did she shout. She waved her front feet at Ella and Eve in a fierce and terrible way.

Thora was a very big and forceful girl. She used to shout and threaten people to get her way, and Cassie said she had once seen her attack and bite some young squirrels who wouldn’t do as she said.

She had been born in the spring of the previous year, and that made her even older than Barney. But she always seemed just a girl because she used to go around with the young ones and show them how to do things. She had not had any young ones of her own this summer, and so that also made her one of the girls. Because she was older, she expected the young ones to do as she said. She was loud and would stand no nonsense.

She was shouting at Ella and Eve now, and Eve especially was terrified, but she had just promised to help them find food when they complained they were hungry. That would be why

Ella and Eve’s mum said that she had a good heart and could be trusted. Their mum would also like the fact that she was bossy and forceful but would not be silly and would only do things that were right. Ella and Eve knew Mum approved of her.

‘Why don’t you want him to know?’ asked Ella. Ella would not do anything to offend to upset or offend Thora, but she would not be frightened into silence.

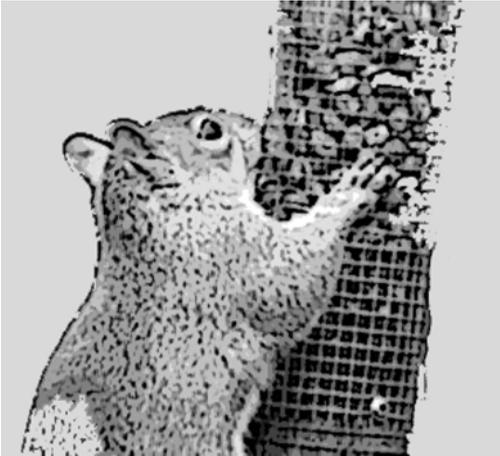
‘You know him,’ said Thora, thrusting her face forward with glaring eyes. ‘If we were to tell him where to find a good food supply, he would waste it. He would annoy people at the place where the food is. He would end up getting attacked and chased away, and also getting all squirrels a bad name.’

‘Yes. He would,’ agreed Ella, and Eve nodded. ‘Well, all the fruit from the orchard has been eaten or has died and rotted. We have only hidden nuts to see us through the winter, and we don’t know where most of them are hidden.’

‘OK then,’ said Thora. ‘I will tell you. You go to the edge of the wood and across the path into the gorse bushes and then turn right. Go the whole length of the bushes and then you come to some heath, a sort of waste land in sandy soil. There is a ditch running across it, but it will give you no trouble because it is narrow and you can jump it. Stay as close to the wood as you can, so that if there is any danger, you can beat it back to the trees and climb to safety.’

‘After a while, you come to a line of fences. They are not very strong, and you can get through gaps at the bottom or easily climb over. Then you will see a row of houses. They are not very high and the humans call them bungalows. So you can go up and down the row of bungalows across each of their gardens. I’m not sure if there are any dogs, but be on the watch for cats.’

‘Now, the humans mostly like wild, free things like us, but what they like much more than us are birds. They think they are pretty, with their different colours and their songs, and there are so



many different sorts. So they put food out for them, especially in the winter. They put it either on the ground or on little tables on the end of poles. Some of them even give the birds a place to bath, though they usually just drink the water. It's good for us to drink, too.'

'What sort of food is it?' asked Eve.

'Broken up bread, cakes, cheese, bits of fruit, even nuts in a bag hung on a tree.'

'Sounds good,' said Ella, 'but we can't eat much of those soft things.'

'No. I would keep to the fruit and nuts,' said Thora, 'but the rest won't do you any harm. They'll go a bit gooey in your mouth but they're better than nothing and they'll fill you up if you're hungry in the winter.'

'Let's go and look,' said Ella, 'and let's

hope the others don't see us go. What about Scoot, our brother, though? Can we take him along if we see him?'

'As long as you swear him to secrecy,' said Thora, 'and tell him what I'll do to him if he tells anyone else.'

They met Scoot while they were still with Thora, and took him with them. He was frightened of Thora, too, and promised to keep it secret.

Quite quickly, they came to the garden fences and were soon in the gardens.

'You can see the bird tables and the nut feeders,' said Thora, 'but be careful not to break the nut feeders. Some are very strong, but others aren't, and if we break them, the humans will find ways to drive us away. The fruit is better for you than the bread and other soft stuff. Don't eat any peel. It is too oily and waxy to be any good.'

'Look at that plastic bin thing,' called Scoot. 'It's got old bananas, bits of apples and pears, carrots and Swedes.'

'Yes. All good stuff,' said Thora. 'It's what humans call a compost heap. They won't mind if we feed from there. It will be better than the garden near the house. Don't eat anything that's gone off, though. You can tell if it's gone off by how much it smells.'

'So we eat just a little,' said Scoot, 'so that we can always come back for more. Thank you for telling us about this, Thora. It's too good to tell the others about. They'll spoil it.'

'That's right,' said Thora. 'Remember, all three of you, there's plenty here if we behave properly. I've told you about it because I like you, but if you spoil it, I'll punish you. What I'll do doesn't bear thinking about.' □

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15 March 2013  
at 7.30 pm

in  
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Dersingham

6 members per team - (maximum)

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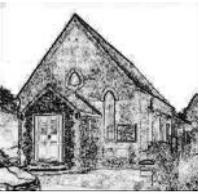
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## Greetings from the manse

Rev. Kim Nally



What are you doing for Lent? Can't think of anything? Shall we pause, sigh and look bored. For many of us time on our hands with nothing much to do can be a bit of a problem. People today some say lack structure and discipline to fill their time productively or pleasurably in simple and satisfying ways. We have become, say the psychologists, passive recipients of stimulation. We say, "I'm bored, so I'll put on the TV or radio." But boredom is like quicksand: the more we thrash around, the quicker we'll sink. We can't imagine ourselves in the example of Jesus going out to embrace the solitude for 40 days in a desolate place. The readings for the first Sunday in Lent (Luke 4:1-13) relate the temptations Jesus faced. Should he go for the short cut to power, glory and mega stimulation or the long way round of service, sacrifice and trust in God, the more ordinary even boring route as it might appear at first glance. You can read for yourselves which Jesus chose and how Jesus got on!

Fleeting moments of boredom are universal, and are often what drives us to stop what we are doing and shift to something that we hope will be more stimulating and satisfying. But although boredom is common, it is neither trivial nor benign. Boredom, has been associated with increased drug and alcohol abuse, overeating, depression and anxiety, and an increased risk of making mistakes. Mistakes at work might not be a matter of life and death for most of us, but if you are an air traffic controller, pilot or nuclear power plant operator, they most certainly can be. Nervous flyers should look away now because in a study of co-pilots who woke up after a nap, 30% reported seeing the other pilot asleep too!"

Despite having attracted the attention of philosophers, psychologists, neuroscientists and educationalists, there is no precise definition of boredom and no consensus as to how we counter it, especially for children who complain that they have nothing to do on rainy half-term breaks! But, as many weary parents of school aged children will testify, given time their young ones may well find other things to focus on if left to their own devices, it can be a spur to creativity and development. We can't avoid boredom; it's an inevitable human emotion. We have to accept it as legitimate and find ways it can be harnessed. We all need downtime, away from the constant bombardment of stimulation. Being in a frenzy of activity at all times is not good for us. The artist Grayson Perry relates how long periods of boredom in childhood may have enhanced his creativity. We all need vacant time to mull things over, time and space to look for direction, to ask questions about life and living and to discover the gift of who we are.

But if boredom can enhance our creativity and be a signal for change, why is it such a corrosive problem for some individuals? People who have suffered extreme trauma in one way or another are more likely to report boredom than those who have had a less eventful time. The theory is that they shut down emotionally and find it harder to work out what they need. They may be left with free-floating desire, without knowing what to pin it on. This lack of emotional awareness is known as alexithymia and can affect anyone. Frustrated dreamers who haven't realised their goals can expend all their emotional energy on hating themselves or the world, and find they have no attention left for anything else. Bungee jumpers and thrill-seekers may also be particularly susceptible to boredom, as they feel the world isn't moving fast enough for them. They constantly need to top up their high levels of arousal and are always searching for stimulation from their environment. Boredom isn't a nice feeling, so we have an urge to eradicate it and cope with it in a counterproductive ways. This may be what drives people to destructive behaviours such as gambling, overeating, alcohol and drug abuse, all problems that blight our society and waste and destroy human life and wellbeing.

In the Gospels Jesus returns to society strengthened by his 40 days in the wilderness, neither alone because his heavenly Father was always with him, nor bored because he was testing, as well as being tested, how best to serve God and humanity. During Lent if you are at a loose end why not tune in to Jesus and get yourself to a Lent group as advertised. You'd be very welcome.

With every blessing during Lent. ☐

# GRAND SALE

at Dersingham Church Hall, Manor Road,  
Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup> April 2013, 9.00a.m. - 12.00noon  
Admission Free. Light Refreshments available.  
In aid of St. Nicholas Church

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

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

Books and clothing can be received at any time during the coming weeks, and can also be delivered to the monthly Coffee Mornings at the Church Hall.

Alternatively you can contact one of the people listed below.

Clothing contact: Mary Sharp, Tel: (01485) 540350.

Bric-a-Brac and general enquiries contact: Neil Adams (01485) 540857

Books contact: Roger Leedham (01485) 544764

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13th February at St. Nicholas Church Hall.

Other class dates are 27th February and 13th and  
27th March. As from April the class dates will be  
on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month.

Each class will cost £10 and will include all crafting materials.  
\*\*\* booking is necessary as spaces are limited \*\*\*

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[craftingalison@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:craftingalison@hotmail.co.uk) (email)   
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**Dersingham Pride**  
© Hugh Mullarkey Jan. 2013



*Let's take a pride in Dersingham  
Our village and our home  
Let's foster a community  
Where care and support are shown  
Support for those who need it  
Let's walk that extra mile  
Whenever we can give  
A helping hand and a friendly smile  
Let's support the village folk  
Who organize events  
And those who give their energy  
Their time and their common sense  
To help our village live and breathe  
So we all can play our part  
To make Dersingham a special place  
With a spirit and a heart  
Let's look at our surroundings  
And appreciate all we see  
Of our Tithe Barn and our Parish Church  
And their place in our history  
Of the hills and the sea and the countryside  
And as we stop to rest  
Let us reflect on the things we have  
If we are to make the best  
Of all that is around us  
Of our village and our friends  
For if we take a pride in Dersingham  
That pride need never end.*

*Please note that anyone wishing to contact Hugh Mullarkey (poet) should do so using only his personal address or telephone number :- 33 Queen Elizabeth Drive, Dersingham PE316JQ  
Tel 01485 543507*

## David Bingham The Dark Ages

“Perhaps in time the so-called Dark Ages will be thought of as our own”

*Georg Christoph Lichtenberg*

I once cycled around the coast of East Anglia from Dersingham to Sutton Hoo. I can't recall whether Sutton Hoo was a planned destination or just where I happened to end up. There wasn't much to see there at the time - I believe they now have an excellent visitor centre. Sutton Hoo is famous as the site of an ancient ship burial, which is believed to be the last resting place of Raedwald – a Dark Age king of East Anglia who died c. 624 AD. I recall walking the probable route along which this ship would have been dragged from the river to its last port of call under a burial mound on some high ground. But that was about all there was to do so I got back on my bicycle and pedalled home. The ornate grave goods that were interred with the king are on display in The British Museum. They are well worth seeing and include both pagan and Christian iconography.

We don't have a very clear understanding of the events that happened in this country after the Romans left in 410 AD. We have names – Authur, Merlin, Horsa, Hengest, Vortegen - but these are probably myths and legends or come from exaggerated tales about the lives of real people. The generally accepted story, backed up by the writings of later historians such as Gildas and Bede, is that large numbers of pagan Angles, Saxons and Jutes arrived from the continent and forced the Christianised Romano British population out of what is now England (land of the Angles) into the rugged lands of Wales and Cornwall. This view of events is supported by the language we speak, which is very different to the languages spoken on the Celtic fringe of these islands, and in the Anglo-Saxon place names found all over England. East Anglia (land of the eastern Angles) is particularly rich in these names and Dersingham is a typical example, probably deriving from something like ‘homestead belonging to Deorsige's people’. Analysis of the DNA of people from eastern England also shows a strong link to populations in north-western Europe.

In recent years this standard explanation has been questioned. For a start, we seem to have a distinct lack of bodies showing signs of having been killed in warfare from this period. The supposed conflicts between the Anglo-Saxons and the Romano British should have left evidence in battle sites and human remains but these haven't been found. Secondly, when archaeologists have looked in detail at how sites changed over time in the centuries after the Romans left they find continuity rather than sudden and dramatic change. Thirdly, the DNA results have been questioned because of the confounding variable of Viking DNA (they did arrive in large numbers). Finally, even our language appears to some experts to look like it was acquired by non-native speakers. So not a clear cut picture and perhaps the truth lies somewhere between the two extremes. There are a few place names in Norfolk that kept their original form. For example, Eccles comes from ecclesia and was originally a Romano British Christian settlement. Norfolk place names beginning with Wal (Walpole, Walcott, Walsingham) may also hold a clue as to how these early English people got along. The Anglo-Saxons used ‘wealas’ to mean foreign and hence Wales. Perhaps these Norfolk villages were where ancient Britons lived and rubbed along tolerably well with their new pagan neighbours.

Whatever the truth may be, we have some excellent places to visit locally where you can get an insight into early Anglo-Saxon England. If you haven't been yet, I recommend a visit to the long running Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project (SHARP) that takes place every summer. It is open to the public and the friendly archaeologists pop up from their holes like sweaty Whac-a-Moles to wave their geo phys at you. They also have the skeleton of a Saxon fighter showing defensive wounds to his arms and a neat sword slash in his skull – the children always enjoy this bit of the tour.

Another good day out is the open air museum at West Stow just over the border in Suffolk. Here experimental archaeologists have built an Anglo – Saxon village based on the field evidence of post holes and pits to see which designs work best and are therefore likely to be the way these



**Sedgeford**

buildings actually looked. A typical Anglo-Saxon house (grubenhause) was rectangular and had a rectangular pit in the middle of the floor that was probably boarded over but the archaeologists are unsure of its purpose. Smoke from the open fire would have escaped the building through the thatching in the roof. The best time to visit West Stow is when they are running an event with craftsmen, archers, cooks, weavers and farmers dressed in typical Anglo-Saxon costumes.

We have much better historical evidence about the arrival of the Vikings. They did arrive in large numbers, particularly when the ‘Great Heathen Army’ invaded in 866 AD under the command of the interestingly named Ivar the Boneless. The Vikings originally came after treasure and exerted pressure on the Anglo-Saxon nobility to pay them money – raised by a tax known as the Danegeld – in exchange for being left alone. However, they eventually settled in urban centres such as Nottingham, Derby, Stamford, Lincoln and, of course, York (Jorvik). England was split in two and Norfolk was part of the Danelaw and we have lots of villages that had Viking origins including our near neighbour Ingoldisthorpe. This was probably an Anglo-Danish region at the time and as such the two communities would have gotten along pretty well – Dersingham residents wouldn’t have responded to Ethelred’s order to massacre all the Danes on St Brice’s day in 1002 by attacking Ingoldisthorpe! The adoption of Viking words into the English language is also telling of the close relationship between the communities. Old Norse personal pronouns ‘they’, ‘them’ and ‘their’ replacing the Old English ‘hie’, ‘him’ and ‘hierra’. Other Viking words in everyday use include sky, skill, skin, anger, husband, wing, thrive, egg, bread and die. We also have a reminder of the Norse gods throughout the week – Tiw’s day, Odin’s day, Thor’s day and Freyja’s day. Odin was the chief of these gods and had a great thirst for knowledge. He traded one of his eyes for a drink from the well of knowledge guarded by the giant Mimir. Odin’s admittance of ignorance may have led to the downfall of the pagan gods when a shiny new religion came along claiming to have all the answers in one book.

The Vikings were great boat builders, fighters, sailors and traders but they haven’t left us much to look at. The Jorvik exhibition in York is good but I was most fascinated by an exhibit of a piece of moss that a Viking had used to wipe his backside with (I’m very easily pleased). The Vikings and the English came together after the rule of Cnut and for a time in the Dark Ages this side of The Wash was included in the kingdom of Mercia rather than East Anglia. This is an excuse, if any were needed, to go to Birmingham to see the newly discovered Anglo-Saxon treasure known as the Staffordshire Hoard.

Norfolk is particularly rich in fine Saxon churches dating from before the Norman Conquest. The footing of one of these churches has been uncovered in the defensive ramparts at Castle Rising. This takes us to 1066 and that is where I will leave my historical ramblings. Things get more complicated after this with lots more facts than I can cope with! □



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# Dersingham Library



What's on in the library in February/March

**Dersingham Library Crime Book Club** 11 February 2013 18:00 - 19:00

Monthly crime book club which meets on the 2nd Monday of the month.

Details of the books being read are available in the library or by calling 01485 540181

**Dersingham Library Scrabble Club** 11,18, 25 February, 4, 11, March 2013 13:30 - 15:30

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

**Dersingham Weekly Knit and Knatter Group** 14, 21, 28 February, 7 March 2013 10:30 - 12:00

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

**Toddler Time at Dersingham Library** 14 February 2013 14:00 - 14:30

Stories, rhymes, songs and colouring for under 5s and their parents and carers.

**Dersingham Library Book Club** 18 February 2013 18:00 - 19:00

Monthly book club which meets on the 3rd Monday of the month. Details of the books being read are available in the library or by calling 01485 540181

**Adult Education advice desks** 20 February 2013 14:00 - 17:00

Are you aged 16- 116? Then why not drop-in to one of our regular sessions, and find out how Norfolk Adult Education can help you? From January 2013 3rd Wednesday at Dersingham Library 2 - 5 For more information contact your local library or Laura White Basic Skills Community Development Worker on 07825114272

Plus we have spaces on our 2-hour internet tasters in March. They are aimed at beginners and will cover mouse and keyboard skills, looking at websites and using Google. Please call us on 01485 540181 for more information.

Don't forget our new Village read is starting in March to tie-in with our Big Read promotion. The books we have chosen are:

One shot by Lee Child ( 'The thing about Lee Child's books is that you can't put the damn things down.' - Independent on Sunday )

We bought a zoo by Benjamin Mee ( 'Mee writes most movingly about his wife's fatal illness, his children coming to terms with this, his sprightly old mum and, of course, his 200 wild animals in all their diverse glory.' - Daily Mail)

How can you take part? Pick up the books at the library, read them and then share your views on the Village read via our website at <http://norfolklibrarybookreviewblog.wordpress.com> or on the Village Read noticeboard at the library.

New books coming our way in February/March... You can request books via our online catalogue

<http://norlink.norfolk.gov.uk> <<http://norlink.norfolk.gov.uk>> for 55p, or for 80p a title if you ask library staff

James Patterson - 11th hour  
Mark Billingham - Rush of blood  
Danielle Steel -Betrayal  
Hilary Mantel - Bring up the bodies  
Chris Carter - Death sculptor  
Minette Walters - A dreadful murder

Susan Lewis - No child of mine  
Barbara Erskine - Rivers of Destiny  
Katie Fforde - Recipe for love  
Deborah Harkness - Shadow of night  
Lyn Andrews - Queen's promise  
Kate Rhodes -Crossbones Yard



New in Paperback:-

- Dilly Court - The best of daughters
- Katie Flynn - Someone special
- Margaret Dickinson - The clippie girls
- Val Wood - the Inn-keeper's daughter
- Lilian Harry - Snowfall in Burracombe
- June Hampson - a mother's journey
- Maggie Hope - Molly's war
- Annie Wilkinson - Sing me home
- Harlan Coben - Stay close
- Philippa Gregory - The kingmaker's daughter
- Joanne Harris - Peaches for Monsieur Le Cure
- Clive Cussler - The thief
- Tana French - Broken Harbour
- Alexander McCall Smith - The limpopo academy of private detection
- Lesley Lokko - An absolute deception

- Donna Leon - Beastly things
- Anna Jacobs - The trader's dream

New in hardback

- James Patterson - 12th of never
- Linwood Barclay - Never saw it coming
- Katie Fforde - A French affair
- Lesley Pearse - Forgive me
- Barbara Taylor Bradford - Secrets from the past
- Erica James - the hidden cottage
- Jodi Picoult - The storyteller
- Clive Cussler - The striker
- Kate Atkinson - Life after life
- Mo Hayder - Poppet
- Dean Koontz - Deeply Odd

Happy reading,

*Alison*

**The Companions of Park House will be holding a Quiz Night**

**at Park House Hotel, Sandringham on Thursday 28 February 2013 at 7.30 pm**

**Entry fee £5 per person to include sandwiches & chips**

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**Maximum team size of six**

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**Sudoku No 27 solution**

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

**Where is it?**

**What is it?**

The oak tree and memorial are in Steer Road, Wolferton.  
The inscription reads -



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planted in memory of  
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Royal Air Force  
who died when his Tornado  
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Tuesday 27th September 1983



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## Dersingham Community Christmas Dinner

As hoped for, following the roaring success of the 2011 Dersingham Community Christmas Dinner, a second Community Dinner was held once again at Le Strange Arms Hotel in Hunstanton. Organiser of both, Bob Tipling, pulled out all the stops as usual to create a quality top notch evening.

Great food, ambience and delightful entertainment featured throughout the evening starting with a relaxed drinks reception. Following the reception we were invited to go into dinner by Bob who led us all in saying "grace". During dinner we enjoyed the sounds of "Gentle Jazz" and then Santa made his customary visit with presents for the ladies – I have to say Santa was especially thoughtful about what ladies might enjoy as a pressie this year – even if he forgot his beard!



There was a twist on last year's gift for the gentlemen in that Bob had organised a syndicated lottery for them all to participate in as well as their own personal lottery ticket. In all there were 23 lines on the Euro Lottery for the gentlemen which resulted in winnings of £17.50. This gave a return of only 75p approximately to each person. It was therefore decided to re-invest £17 in the Lotto draw (with the odd 50p being added to the evening's charity donation) the following night which proved to be a loser!

The charity to benefit from the surplus created by the evening's fundraising efforts including the raffle was announced as 'Campaign Care 94', a local charity founded by builder Simon Massen and Chaired by Carl Godfrey (Food and Beverage Manager at the Le Strange Arms Hotel), which is dedicated to raising funds for Cancer projects, specifically Norfolk Hospice at Tapping House. The total sum raised for this worthwhile charity totalled £138.50.

Once dinner was over, a live and very funny cabaret was the order of the day courtesy of "The Strolling Players" who were formed over 30 years ago as the "New Dersingham Players" but became "The Strolling Players" 10 years ago. The troupe regularly perform for charity and their entertainment generally has a specific theme. Naturally the evening's theme was "Christmas". They kicked off singing up in support of turkeys and performed a hilarious ditty about the office Christmas party. During their repertoire they managed re-write The Twelve Days of Christmas which included:

*1 partridge in an old sack! 2 moor hens! 3 lame ducks! 4 bald coots! 5 poached eggs! 6 bootiful turkeys! 7 pleasant pheasants! 8 stoned crows! 9 breeding rabbits! 10 hairs receding! 11 salmon smoking! 12 stags a rutting!*

Then "Good King Wenceslas" was turned into a comical letter followed by instructions on how to cook a Christmas pudding. All in all their style of poetry, rhyme and song kept us enthralled for a good part of the evening.

Well done to everyone involved and a big thank you to all the businesses who sponsored the evening (Dersingham Post Office, Coastal Veterinary Group, Rounce & Evans Property Management, Rounce & Evans Estate Agents, Hayes & Storr Solicitors, Thaxters Garden Centre & Coffee Shop, E H Prior & Sons Family Butchers) and especially for Bob. Without these people such an evening would not be possible. □

*Stella Gooch*



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## The Old Biddie and her Cottage Garden

Valerie Anckorn

Well, here's hoping that you had good Christmas and New Year's festivities and are now counting the days to Spring and sunshine!

I'm going to start off with herbal goodies, which is probably not of much help at this time of the year, but who knows there might be a few hawthorn berries for you to make a nice tisane that will do you the world of good.

According to Herbs Hands Healing at Pulham Market (excellent herbalists by the way) hawthorne is an excellent heart food/tonic and it also helps circulation. Its useful to balance high or low blood pressure, aids heart palpitations and is a powerful antioxidant. Its pectin content equally aids detox processes.

Hawthorn can be used short or long term but it works quickly from the outset. It's ideal for those over fifty. Hawthorn is ripe for picking October/November before the frosts and snow. Once cooked, be sure to sieve the pulp and remove the stone inside. You can make jam, hawthorn drinks, hawthorn syrups – in fact, whatever takes your fancy. There is so much free food in our gardens and hedgerows that we just don't realise we can use. I always feel it is such a shame that farmers hack the hedges back before the birds have had a chance to eat the berries. It's good that everything is kept neat and tidy, but I do wish that the wild life were considered too.

\*\*\*

In the untidy garden area outside my office there's been lots of tits whizzing around entertaining me. As a touch typist I don't need to look at the keys so am always looking through the window at the garden while typing. Great tits have been snatching and grabbing on the wing with the occasional landing on dried plants left standing – not to pluck at seeds or berries, but taking something off the dried leaves, maybe small insects over-wintering there. It's made me pleased that I wasn't able to tidy up for the winter – but hey, it doesn't look *that* bad – just nature in the raw. Come Spring I'll be feeling more like sorting it all out and by that time the birds will have got through winter, and we will all be feeling better for blue skies and sunshine again – well, we hope!

I mentioned having a skin cancer op last October. I have been surprised at how long it took me to get over it. I had Mohs surgery at Norwich. I was surprised I had the cancer as I have worn a sunhat for about 25 years since having vitiligo. When I was younger, I was a sensible sun-bather too, only doing twenty minutes at a time. The surgeon told me that the damage is done *in our childhood running around in the sun!* I immediately thought of my babies whom I, with all maternal love, had to admit were the ugliest babies in the hospital. (Sorry kids.) It was true. People looked in the pram ready to praise, then said, after a short embarrassing pause, 'Oh, what a pretty bonnet'... So, to try and make them more attractive, I put them out in the sun to tan. I hasten to add not for long – I wasn't that silly, but nevertheless, I did bake them. What have I done to them I wonder – will they soon show evidence of skin cancer too? I'm relating this story as it is so important to protect your children from the sun rays, especially now that the ozone layer is thinner. We do need the vitamins sourced from sunlight, but moderation is the key, and a cover up to avoid skin cancer (which *can* kill) in later life. I've been left with a strange bump on my nose which is most unattractive and will surely end my modelling days for ever, though I might get a job in the circus! Last note on tanning. In my day we didn't have suntan lotion but made our own up with *vinegar and olive oil!!!* Talk about frying tonight... and I'm wondering how I got the cancer???

I also mentioned in a previous Old Biddie that I had planted an almond tree which had grown one nut. I was very excited about this, but forgot to harvest it and it dropped off to oblivion. No doubt it won't be wasted though. The apples on another new tree didn't grow, but maybe all that rain made them give up the ghost – it's a wonder more plants didn't just drown.

The jackdaws over the road are flying up to the high branches of the sickly conker tree. It's a wonderful perch for them to survey the lie of the land and their kingdom as well as watch out for

food sources. The owners had the dangerous branches lopped last year, and I'm thinking when the old tree does finally die, then it will still make a wonderful habitat for the birds and insects. Some of the conkers have taken root in my flower bed, so hopefully I'll get a tree out of one of them.

There are so many tree diseases aren't there? First the elm, then the conker trees, and now the ash. So many diseases come in from abroad – for us as well as the flora and fauna. Everything is so topsy turvy now.

I was talking to the project director, Gary Rossin, at the dig at Sedgeford who told me that the skeletons found on site showed that the people who lived there aeons ago were very tall – well over six foot - and well fed. Clearly hunting, gathering and food grown without artificial aids makes for better living – as well as the exercise from their daily lives.

There is not a lot that we can do at the moment to change what we eat – other than have a cow, a pig and chickens in the back garden – but when I look at the pallid faces around me now, the obese adults (I'm one of them) and podgy children, it worries me that our life style is doing us no favours at all. I don't know what the answer is, but maybe getting back to *real* cooking instead of buying pre-packed stuff would be the answer. I don't think schools teach cooking anymore, but instead of buying say, a tin of soup, it is really easy to make a gorgeous soup out of a few vegetables, throw in a few lentils for protein and rice for carbs and you have a quick balanced meal that cooks in twenty minutes. Our editor was asking for recipes, so here is a simple winter soup:

*Half a turnip, slice of swede, couple or three carrots, 4 dried apricots, half a red pepper, good sprinkling of dried dill, an onion, garlic to taste, three sticks of celery, about a dessertspoon of washed lentils, about the same amount of washed brown rice & one or two stock cubes to taste.*

Slice or dice the vegetables, then chuck the lot in a saucepan, cover in water, bring to the boil and simmer for about 20 minutes until the veg are cooked. Do check water levels as lentils and rice swell, so you might need to add more water. Stir every now and again. This soup is nice as is, all chunky, or blended in liquidiser.

The key to any soup is ONION – I always feel they are the vital ingredient. I use dill a lot as it is a subtle flavour and therefore there is no need to be sparing with it. Sometimes I throw in some caraway seeds for extra flavour. Do wash lentils, rice and any other dried pulses as you don't know where it has been at source – maybe lying around in open Indian granaries buzzing with flies and occupied by rats. You will be surprised how foamy and dirty the water is when you wash the pulses. If you don't do this you will get a lot of scum on top of your soup. Don't let my graphic description put you off – a good boil will kill anything nasty off!

You can make soup with whatever is handy – you don't need a recipe at all – and it always tastes nice. I add apricots or other fruit to give it a bit of sweetness and those additions *make* the soup.

All this extra information this month while the garden is dormant. It will be time soon for me to reap the harvest of the village youth – all those beer cans and tights lobbed over the hedge during the chilly months – I suppose I could look at it as occupational therapy and good exercise?

Not long now for us to watch out for all the tips of bulbs growing out of the winter soil – the old cliché 'the harbingers of spring'. So far the weather hasn't been too bad, other than rain, rain and more rain, but no real cold so far. I'm looking forward to the Spring and another year of pretty garden, whether it gets weeded or not□

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## PAULINE DREWERY: MARATHON RUNNER



Let me introduce myself, my name's Pauline and I'm assistant manager of the best supermarket in the village. In fact I've worked for Budgens for 21 years - I know - I don't look old enough - hee hee, and here at the Dersingham store for the last 10 years, during which time I have become very close friends with Odette Wood, my counter part in Budgens.

I'm also a runner too. I have been running for seven years now. It all started, as many things do, by a conversation in a pub. Martin Doy challenged me to run the Cancer Research Sandringham 10K with him. I've always been keen on keep fit, so Martin and I trained together for the race and I haven't looked back.

Like in many things that you do, you continue to need greater challenges and in road running it's by increasing the distance you can run. So this is where the marathon comes in, the ultimate challenge for many road runners.

I ran my first marathon in Brighton, the inaugural marathon there in 2010. I managed to achieve a time which gave me good for age entry into the London marathon the following year, unfortunately due to illness I was unable to compete and for several months my running was put on hold. Subsequently, after an operation to remove my thyroid gland, I was ready to return, but at a much slower pace, initially, than before. This is where my new training partner, Maureen Wolfe comes in, we ran together through the summer of 2011, and gradually my fitness returned. We both had places for London 2012 (Virgin Marathon not Olympics!!) and trained together for that, I managed to achieve a personal best time and was thrilled.

I am back to my former fitness and can't wait to run again in London in 2013, it's only 26.2 miles after all!!

So to the purpose of this piece. Well, previously I mentioned my friend and colleague Odette. Tragedy hit Odette and her partner Steve's life, this is an extract from our just giving pages which explains why Maureen and I have committed to raise at least £1000 for the East Anglian Children's Hospice:-

In October 2012 Pauline's friend and colleague, Odette Eldridge, left work to have her baby, he was born a few days later, it was discovered almost immediately that he was very poorly. After several days being cared for in hospital he was transferred to Quidenham Childrens Hospice where he sadly died at the age of 12 days.

I don't think many of us can even begin to imagine what these people have been through. Immense support and kindness was shown to him and his family, and this invaluable support for his family continues now and for the foreseeable future.

The least we could do was use something we enjoy doing to raise funds for the Hospice, so that they are able to continue to provide this support for this and other families in East Anglia in the future.

In memory of baby Callum, and for his parents Odette and Steve Eldridge

So please dig deep and sponsor us, either at [www.justgiving.com/Maureen-Wolfe](http://www.justgiving.com/Maureen-Wolfe), At Wolfy's shops in Hunstanton and King's Lynn, or at Budgens in Dersingham,

Or just shove some dosh in our hands as we run past, anything no matter how small will help us reach our target, and will be genuinely appreciated. Look out for our funding raising stalls too. □



## Old Girls Patch by Meetze

We had a great time the past months and also a BIG loss.

When the Christmas tree went up, Johnnie and Vladimir went straight up and the whole thing fell over. Our humans put it back up and Vladimir jumped back up it and tried to climb from branch to branch. He was making a lot of noise. It seemed like he did not understand that last year when he was 3 months old he fitted well on every branch and this year at 15 months, every branch bends and he slides off. Johnnie, now his best friend (she ditched Sidney), tried to catch Vlad in the tree. And after they both figured out how to be in the tree without the tree falling over, it was great fun to watch. All you could see was a grey or cream head popping out between the Christmas bulbs every then and when. After their play session, the tree looked very ragged. All the branches were hanging down or on the floor. Our 2-legged ones put the tree back to its beauty and it looked fantastic until the next time those two played. This became a daily routine until the humans took the Christmas tree down.

Christmas Day came and we all got pressies. Toys! Johnnie got a food hunting toy, but she is more interested in the box it came in. Sid and Vlad got a new cat activity centre. It has loads of holes and being boys, they damaged it within the hour. But, no worries, the male human fixed it. Sir Lancelot got his very own food bowl, because he does not like to eat out of one that we have been eating out already. I got a new bed. One that goes over the radiator with a roof on. Beauty got the same and we both love them. Armani got a similar toy to Johnnie, just a bit bigger.

Sir Lancelot still tries to impress Johnnie whenever he can, but so far he is not very lucky. Johnnie just hisses at him. In fact, the only one playing with Lanci is Vlad. Vlad is getting on with everybody. In the kitchen he is rolling around with Armani in his paws or him in Armani's paws. Hard to tell who is rolli-polli-ing around with whom.

Beauty got braver over the last few weeks, she now goes into the hallway and shouts at everybody going through. Loud and demanding. Not really sure what she is demanding, because she sleeps every night at the best place in the house. The bed.

And the best bit: Johnnie is now tolerating me on her shelf in the lounge. It is just big enough for the both of us. Sidney has moved into my bed that hangs below that shelf and when Johnnie is on it, she whacks him on his head when he sleeps. I love watching this. When Sid wakes up because of that, Johnnie pretends she had nothing to do with it.

And the sad News: Nelly left us. Just like that. She just went to sleep and did not wake up again one morning. Now I am the Oldie in the house again. Nelly left a big gap. She was such a character. Everything had to go her way and everybody had to do what she wanted. Our 2-legged friends were devastated.

By the way, the box which Johnnie's toy came in at Christmas in is still in the living room, because she still plays with the box rather than with the toy. □

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No	Copy deadline	Publication date
No 81	Wednesday 6th March	Monday 25th March
No 82	Wednesday 1st May	Monday 20th May
No 83	Wednesday 10th July	Monday 29th July

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

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**Advertisements for inclusion** in the next magazine should be in the hands of Anita Moore, Dersingham Parish Council, 4a Post Office Rd, Dersingham PE31 6HP **by Wednesday 6th March 2013**

Enquiries regarding advertisements may be made by calling 01485 541465.

E-mail — [villagevoice@dersingham.org.uk](mailto:villagevoice@dersingham.org.uk)

**Articles for publication in the next edition of Village Voice** must reach The Editor c/o Dersingham Parish Council, 4a Post Office Rd, Dersingham PE31 6HP or e-mail: [villagevoice@dersingham.org.uk](mailto:villagevoice@dersingham.org.uk) before the **deadline date of mid-day on Wednesday 6th March 2013 for publication on Monday 25th February 2013**. (Contributors who are promoting events should take note of this earliest date of publication). Should you be providing graphics to accompany advertisements or articles, it would be appreciated if these could be in JPEG format.

It must be pointed out that the editor encourages contributions but reserves the right to amend and edit as necessary. Any contributions received will be accepted on the understanding that, unless a specific request is made that names, addresses, etc are not used, these may be included in the publication and may be maintained on the Parish Council's database.

Due to limitations on space it is possible that some items received may not be published, or may be held for publication at a later date. Contributors should also be aware that published material will appear on the Parish Council's Internet web site. The copyright of all articles remains with the author. The editor does not necessarily agree with opinions that are expressed, or the accuracy of statements made, by contributors to the Village Voice.

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

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

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

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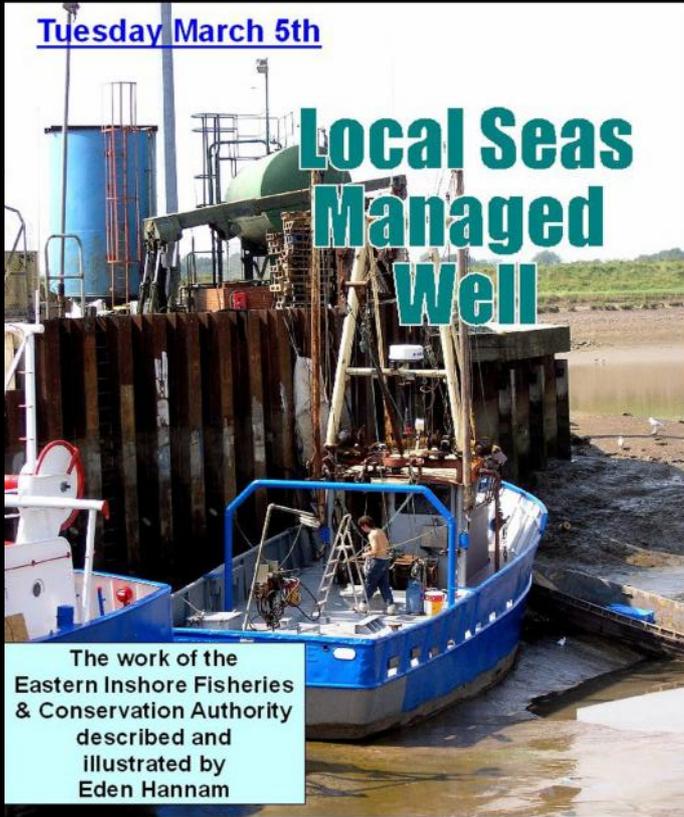
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# VILLAGE VOICE LIVE

Tuesday March 5th

## Local Seas Managed Well



The work of the Eastern Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority described and illustrated by Eden Hannam

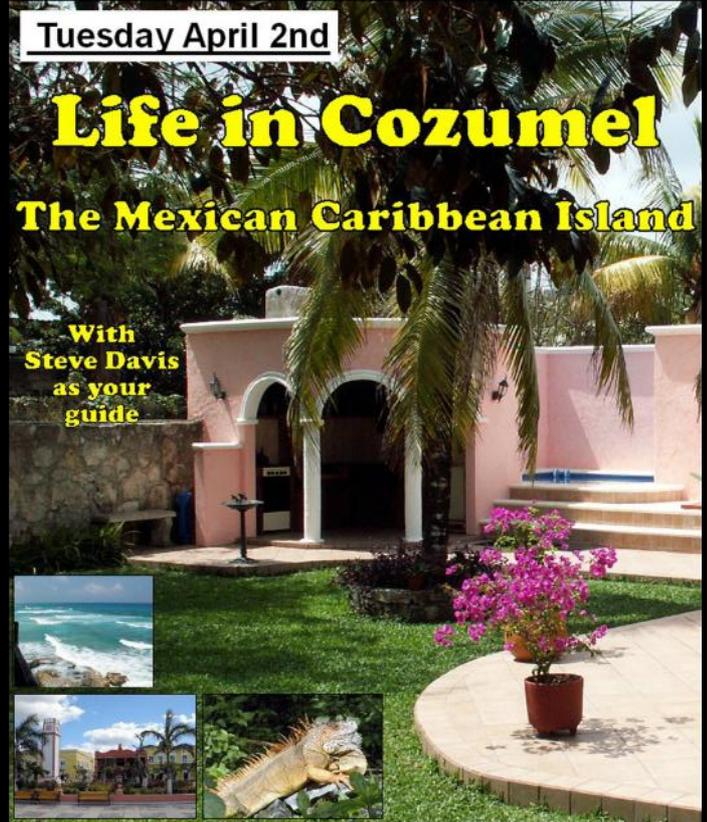
St Nicholas Church Hall, Manor Road, Dersingham.  
7.30 pm Admission £3.50 including refreshments & raffle

# VILLAGE VOICE LIVE

Tuesday April 2nd

## Life in Cozumel The Mexican Caribbean Island

With  
Steve Davis  
as your  
guide



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