

# Dersingham Village Voice

Issue No 11

August 2001



## *Editorial*

Welcome to the August edition of Village Voice. The school holidays are in full swing and children in the village participating in Village Sports 2001 have been taking part in a lively programme of holiday activities organised by Jo Eames and May Davey. A full report will appear in the next edition of Village Voice.

July has been an eventful month in the village: a Summer Concert was held in Dr Brown's garden and St Nicholas Flower Festival was as successful as always. It was lovely to see the collages created by the Junior Flower Club on show in the church during the Festival. Reports of the Concert and the Flower Festival appear in this newsletter.

Dates for your diaries this month include: RSPB Moth Event at the Rose and Crown on 11<sup>th</sup> August, Dersingham Methodist Church Holiday Club from 29<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> August. Do let us have enough advance notice about any events which are taking place and we can include them in the newsletter.

The Parish Council does not meet in August but the next meeting is on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> September and all parishioners are welcome to attend. It is somewhere where anyone can voice his or her views and requests.

Do keep sending in your letters, articles, poems, old photographs for publication. We are also indebted to our advertisers who help support this newsletter.

The deadline date for copy for the October edition is 25<sup>th</sup> September. Publication date 10<sup>th</sup> October. All contributions are welcomed and should be addressed to the Editor, c/o Parish Council Office, Police Station, Manor Road (Tel:541465)

*Teresa Southam Editor*

## Parish Council News

*All meetings of the Parish Council are open to the public. The full meetings begin at 7.15 pm and are preceded and terminated by a 15-minute session for parishioners to raise any matters. The next meeting will take place on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> September at the First School, and thereafter on the last Monday of each month*

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### *Community Car Scheme*

It is a matter of concern that the Community Car Scheme is currently suspended due to the lack of a co-ordinator and sufficient drivers. Following from a PC meeting where Simon Phelan from BCKLWN addressed the meeting it was resolved that the Recreation Committee further investigate the Parish Transport Grants Scheme with a view to forming a partnership with other interested parties, ie surrounding parishes, surgery group practice, Help the Aged, Age Concern, and prepares a report containing proposals for the September Parish Council meeting. (There is an article by George Barton on p9 of this newsletter describing the scheme)

### *Casual Vacancy*

Mr Richard Stanton has been co-opted to serve on the Parish Council.

### *Late Delivery of Mail in Dersingham*

After receiving complaints of late delivery of mail the delivery times of mail in Dersingham have been monitored and it was found that times varied between 7 am and 2.20 pm with the majority of deliveries between 10 am and 12.30 pm. The Clerk has contacted Royal Mail Customer Services who confirm that they aim to have a first delivery in Dersingham by 9.30 am. The results of our survey are being forwarded to them requesting that they investigate and report back to us.

### *Speed Limit Reduction B1440*

Our request for the 30 mph speed limit to be extended along this road has again been refused. It was resolved to refer this matter to our County Councillor.

### *New Dog Bin*

A request to place a dog bin by the entrance to the large open space which is accessed via Stanton Road has been granted.

### *Co-Option of New Councillor*

Richard Stanton has been co-opted to serve on the Parish Council.

### *Seating round the Village*

Councillors have toured the village in order to identify sites for additional seating following a request from a parishioner. Further sites have been suggested and a budget has been agreed for this purpose. An article in this newsletter is asking for possible sponsors.

## Sensory Garden in Orchard Close

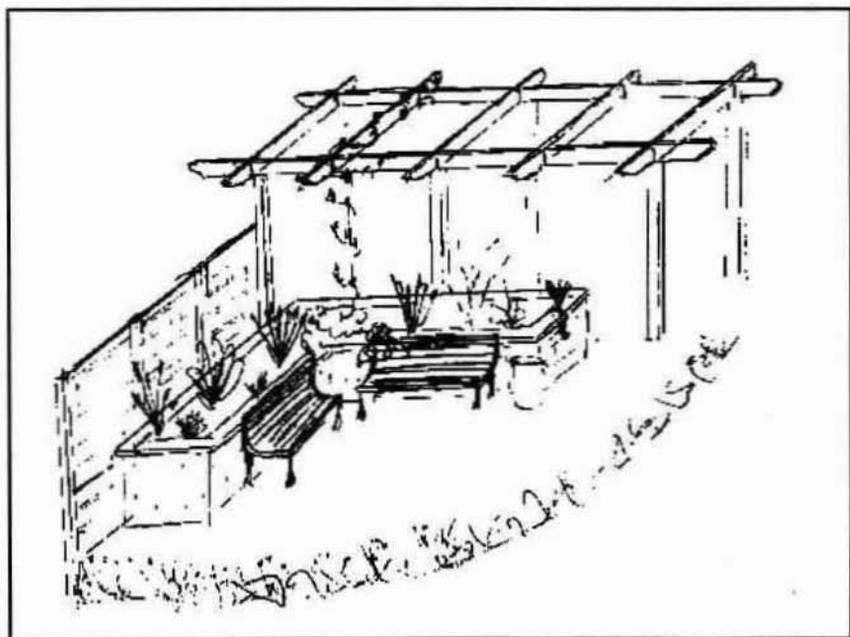
A small sensory garden is to be built in Orchard Close as a spin-off from the village's Millennium activities. Suggested during the *Greening the Village* project carried out by the Dersingham 2000 Association. The sensory garden will be a joint project by the Association and the Parish and Borough Councils.

The garden will include seats of different heights to suit people with disabilities and will be planted with roses, lavender and other plants. It will feature a pergola over the footpath going towards Clayton Close.

Construction should start by the end of the summer, with planting in the autumn.

The funding being provided by the Dersingham 2000 Association comes from generous donations made by villagers, often linked to a commemoration of someone who lived in the village.

Any individual, company or organisation interested in helping complete this project - perhaps by sponsoring one of the seats - is invited to contact the Parish Council.



## Dersingham Parish Councillors

**May Davey**



18 Chapel Road (Tel: 540737)

May has lived in Dersingham since 1990 and as well as serving on the Parish Council she is also a Trustee on Dersingham United Charities Board. She is an active WI member, helps with Meals on Wheels and with flower arranging at St Cecilia's. She serves on the Environment Committee and is actively involved with many aspects of village life.

**Donald Roy**



18 Sandringham Road (Tel: 540221)

Donald, a Scot, has been visiting the village since the early 50s (his wife comes from Dersingham). On retirement, in 1991, he came to Dersingham to live. He takes an active interest in local affairs and is a former governor of The First School, Dersingham.

He has been a Parish Councillor since 1995.

**Sue Payne**



21 Centre Vale (Tel: 540538)

Sue moved to Dersingham in 1974. She is currently employed by King's Lynn & District MIND, presently managing a long-term hostel in King's Lynn.

She is a member of the Special Constabulary and also serves on the Borough Council's focus group on Sports & Leisure for people with a disability.

**Tony Bubb**



7 Centre Vale (Tel: 544587)

Tony has lived in Dersingham for 23 years. He runs his own refrigeration business and assists his wife with their bed and breakfast operation. He has also been involved in catering, estate agency, publishing and tourism. He likes a rapid common sense approach to local issues, hates waste and inefficiency and hopes to assist local residents both as Parish Councillor and Tree Warden.

## Dersingham First and Nursery School

### *How Hill*

We are all working hard but have lots of interesting things happening both in and out of school. The highlight of the term was Rainbow class's visit to How Hill in the Norfolk Broads. Here they stayed 3 days in a beautiful thatched house, experimented with thatching, dyke dipping (and nobody fell in) and orienteering, made smelly cocktails (they were too!) and had a boat trip. I believe they all slept as well – at least on the second night!

The other classes planned and enjoyed day outings to various parts of Norfolk later in the term.

### *The Wildlife Club*

The Wildlife Club is a really thriving enterprise. The proud members showed people round on a special open day – visitors from the Horticultural Society (who had contributed to funds for the club) were impressed by the club's progress.

### *Friends of the School*

The Friends of the school are planning to improve our outside play areas. They have painted markings on the playgrounds so that children can invent games. We have just ordered some new climbing apparatus with all sorts of intriguing wobble boards and bridges. I don't know how we'll get children back inside when all this is up and running!

### *Fund Raising*

We've had an evening of bingo and a quiz night – both were equally well supported, and a number of discos, always popular with the children.

A Car Boot sale was held on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> June on the recreation ground.

### *School Governors*

We are short of school governors at the moment. A governor's role involves meetings to discuss aspects of education, finance, the school building and staffing. We also welcome governors in the school to meet staff and observe (even join in!) lessons.

If you feel you would like to join our school team, as a governor, please contact the school.

## Dersingham Community Centre

The centre is used by a number of user groups, diverse as could be reflected in a community the size of Dersingham. The age of the groups is also as varied, with the play group at one end of the spectrum and the Day Centre at the other end, which incorporates the more mature members of our village. The user groups comprise mainly voluntary youth and community groups, as well as some commercial/business groups. Over 400 people use the centre in a week. The centre is suitable for courses, meetings, hobby groups, clubs and social functions. There are 2 halls, the larger of which will seat over 100 people, the quiet room (comfortable seating – an ideal meeting room), craft room (including pottery wheels and kiln), a coffee bar and 2 fitted kitchens, plus a large car park/playground and raised grassed area.

New users are welcomed. For further enquiries or to view, please ring Andrew/Rhona Seal on 540234.

Rates are very competitive as the following scale of charges shows:

Classification	Rental Charges per room hour Monday – Friday	Weekend room rental per hour
Youth groups, Scouts, Guides, Brownies	£3.00	N/A
Community groups	£3.00	N/A
Commercial/Business, aerobics, line dancing etc	£6.00	N/A
Private parties, weddings etc	£4.00	£6.00

**The Community Centre is looking for a Secretary. If you feel you would be interested in applying for this position, please contact Andrew Seal on 540234**

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*Letter received from Tony Bubb, 7 Centre Vale*

Dear Editor

Our bungalow is built on ground used between the wars as an unofficial village tennis court on land loaned for the purpose by its owner, Mr Jackson. Has anyone got any pictures taken showing the court or surroundings or perhaps of themselves or their ancestors playing there? I would like to make copies if there are any.

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Dersingham Methodist Church - space for your details

### **The Puddleducks Parent and Toddler Group**

The Puddleducks Parent and Toddler Group meet between 9.15 am to 10.45 am on a Monday and 9.30 am to 11.00 am on a Friday during school term time at the Methodist Chapel Hall, Post Office Road, Dersingham.

We cater for newborns – 4 years old and their parents.

A subscription of 50p per family includes a drink and biscuit for all, good company and a warm welcome.

For more information call Claire Rushmore on 544436.



## **Dersingham Methodist Church**

**Holiday Club for all 5 - 10 year olds**

**Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> August - Friday 31<sup>st</sup> August**

**9.45am - 12.00 noon      only 50p per day**



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singing, drama and  
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Join in the fun at the  
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Office Road**

If you would like to join us, please complete this slip and bring it to church on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> August

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel No of person responsible for you (in emergency) \_\_\_\_\_

Please write details of any allergies or medication (eg inhalers) on back of this slip.

## Dersingham Community Car Scheme

For a number of years the parishioners of Dersingham have benefited from their own Community Car Scheme. This has provided transport for those in the Parish who are disabled, infirm or without their own means of transport. Passengers are taken to such places as the surgery, hospital, opticians and chiropodist and, in exceptional circumstances, other places such as the Post Office or shops.

Those using the service pay the driver 18p per mile (with a minimum charge of 50p) and the Parish Council and King's Lynn & W Norfolk Borough Council contribute another 18p per mile.

For a period, due to administrative difficulties, the scheme ceased to function, but about 3 years ago it was resurrected with a new co-ordinator and about 6 volunteer drivers. Towards the end of 2000 the co-ordinator retired due to ill health but the scheme continued under a temporary co-ordinator provided by the Parish Council. In about March 2001 a new full-time co-ordinator was appointed but, due to domestic difficulties and lack of volunteer drivers, the scheme has once again ceased to function.

Everyone who has been involved in any way with the Community Car Scheme will confirm that it has been of great benefit to many people who, without it, would have been in dire straits.

*It would be a tragedy if the Community Car Scheme were abandoned.*

There are about 5000 residents in Dersingham. Many are retired but, nevertheless, fit and well. If 20 of these would volunteer to act as drivers, using their own vehicles, it would provide a team of four on each weekday. This would be sufficient to cover holiday periods and sickness and allow the scheme to continue. Additionally, it would make the task of any new co-ordinator much easier. Such a system would ensure that the scheme continues without any fear of folding up again.

Volunteers would only have to cover one day per week. So come on – this is for the good of everyone in the village.

For further information please contact either: George Barton (tel 540088) or Tom Morris (tel 541450)

(NOTE: the first item in Parish Council News, p2, refers to the Scheme)

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*Letter received from Gp Capt JAV Short RAF retd containing another of his interesting stories*

Dear Editor

*Weekend Break 1944*

The rail visit to York had been pleasant and I had met my colleagues as arranged and enjoyed a memorable evening 'shooting a line' and exchanging operational experiences over a few pints or low gravity bitter!

Sitting in my first class compartment on the return journey I could hear the ticket collector making his way down the carriage and accordingly made ready my less than pristine RAF travel warrant to offer up for inspection. The rail official slid opened the door and first approached the other occupant of the compartment. After a quick look at the proffered ticket he turned to me and gave a speedy perusal of my document. He looked up and said "Guestwick?" My immediate response was "Yes, change at Peterborough". "Right", he said, and departed. He was unaware that when travelling north I had, when similarly challenged over the same document, 'helped' the rail official over the name Guestwick by saying "Yes, change at Selby". This information had evoked the same reaction. This Machiavellian technique had been successfully used on two other journeys!

This travel facility came about because in March 1944 I had expected a posting notice sending me to a Lancaster Heavy Conversion Unit. Instead the movement order read 'Foulsham' and the accompanying rail warrant gave the destination via Norwich Thorpe LNER. It was not long after arriving, however, that I learned about another railway line to the NE of the aerodrome which provided an alternative access route. It was the Midland & Great Northern Railway with its station at Guestwick linked to Norwich City and Melton Constable. It was this service that I used to advantage for pleasure! This was only made possible by the absence of professional rail staff who had been called up to serve the colours and replaced by stand-in personnel.

It was such a pity that Dr Beeching was later to uproot this village to village rail service covering Norfolk and beyond. I only hope that my wartime shenanigans did not contribute to the demise of the delightful M & GN!

Sincerely

John A V Short



## **Benches for the Village**

A resident at Hanover Court wrote to the Council asking for more benches to be put around the village, so that those who walk from Hanover Court to the shops at either end of the village could have more resting places to sit for a while and catch their breath. Walking is excellent exercise for everyone and good for the heart.

The Environment Committee felt this was a worthwhile suggestion and put it to the full Council. The Council voted for £400 to be allocated immediately to street furniture from the Recreation and Amenities budget. Next year the Environment Committee will submit a bid to include street furniture in its budget.

The Dersingham Evening Women's Institute has promised to replace a bench at the intersection of Shernborne Road and Chapel Road to mark their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2002.

The Dersingham Charities Board of Trustees is considering a request from the Council to provide a seat on Station Road beside the allotments so that people walking from Valley Rise have a chance to rest en route to the shops.

There are at least eight possible sites for benches. Perhaps some other organisations in Dersingham would like to commemorate a special person or anniversary with a bench? Or private individuals in memory of a loved one? Utility benches for long use outdoors are priced from about £200 to £400 each. They do need to be vandal-proof!

If your organisation or you as an individual would like to provide a bench in the village, please get in touch with the Chairman of the Environment Committee, May Davey (540737) or Kim Dunford at the Council Office

*Dersingham Parish Council: Village Environment Committee*

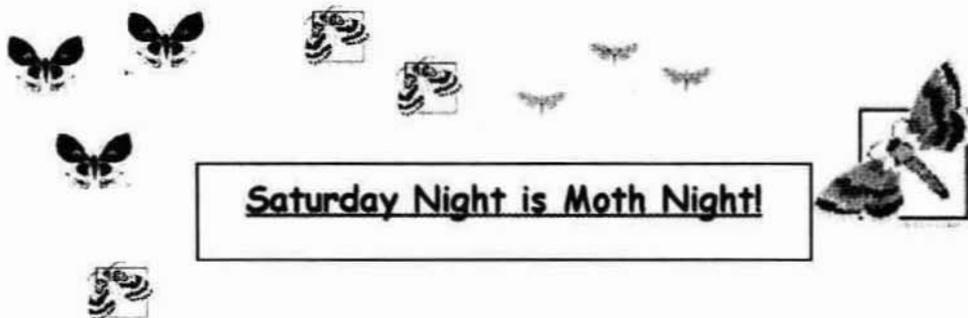
### **Do You Have**

Difficulties Worries Uncertainties  
**in your life and no-one to talk to?**

I am prepared to see you and listen to you to see if together we can work out the way ahead for you.

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## Saturday Night is Moth Night!

A special moth event is to be held in the garden of the Rose and Crown in Snettisham on Saturday the 11<sup>th</sup> of August. The evening is being organised by the RSPB as part of "National Moth Night" in order to raise the profile of these fascinating and often overlooked insects and admission is free.

Experts will be present with their ultra violet light moth traps. The moths will be trapped identified and released giving everyone a chance to see their shapes and colours that often rival their better known relatives the butterflies.

Moths were once far from popular in Dersingham when a special species looked likely to scupper the plans for the by-pass. The only known English colony of a small moth *Choristoneura lafauryana* had been discovered on Dersingham Bog where their food plant the bog myrtle grows. These moths are normally found much further north and the Dersingham population was probably left behind at the end of

the last ice age - like fish stranded in a rock pool when the tide goes out. Although in this case, the tide has been out for ten thousand years!

The "Dersingham Bog Moth" is one of the micro moths. This is a group of small, difficult to identify species that are normally only known by their scientific name. The growing band of people who enjoy catching and identifying moths concentrate on the macro moths. These are large distinctively, and often colourfully, patterned moths that can be identified using a well illustrated field guide.

Their English names are another attraction. These names often refer to an identification feature of the moth and it is surprising how this practical approach has resulted in some very exotic sounding names. Examples found locally include - heart and dart, vapourer, dwarf cream wave, Mother Shipton, blood vein, flame, setaceous Hebrew character, powdered Quaker, flounced rustic, the uncertain and

Blair's shoulder-knot. This is only a small sample; there are well over a hundred macro moth species flying around this area during the summer. Another attraction of the hobby is that it can be done in your own back garden on a warm night using a clever but simple piece of gadgetry the UV light trap.

My own knowledge of moths is limited but I was lucky enough to see a death's-head hawk moth on Titchwell beach last summer. Many people are familiar with this moth from the illustration on the cover of "The Silence of the Lambs" paperback. It was huge with a clear skull pattern on the upper body. On being touched, it opened its grey and brown outer wings to reveal bright orange under wings with a cobalt blue and black-stripped abdomen - letting out a loud mouse-like squeak at the same time. Death's head hawk moths were once seen as harbingers of war, pestilence and death to man and beast alike.

I don't think anyone has declared war on Titchwell this year, but the moth did arrive just before the foot and mouth outbreak! This moth came from North Africa or Southern Europe - where they feed on honey from bees' nests and sap from trees - and was resting on the

beach after its journey. I also saw a large influx of day flying silver Y moths in the cliff top gardens in Hunstanton last year. They seemed to be everywhere feeding up on the flower heads after their marathon flight across the North Sea from Europe. It is worth keeping an eye out for the dramatic day flying humming-bird hawk moth that occasionally visits gardens in Dersingham. They feed by hovering over a flower and inserting a retractable feeding tube to extract the nectar. They can look very much like little humming birds when they are doing this. I have seen them feeding on phlox in my garden but they also visit other nectar producing flowers.

There is a lot we do not know about moths and research is constantly coming up with new and unexpected behaviour. For example, it seems that moths and bats are engaged in something resembling the electronic warfare carried out by modern jet fighters. Bats use echolocation to detect and capture moths. Some moths produce sounds at the same frequency - sending messages to the bat that confuses their sense of direction and puts them off the trail. **Why not come along on Saturday night and learn more.**

*David Bingham  
August 2001*

## Chelsea or Bust!

By Kathy Jordan © 2001



From the coach I alighted dragging my rucksack on wheels  
With its own inbuilt cool box to accommodate meals,  
So avoiding the queues at crowded Catering Corner  
Which near reached to the Thames and with sunshine like a sauna  
Then struggling on through the masses to 'marquee encampment'!  
I glimpsed designer show gardens – one was there for the learning.  
And bright 'Blue Circles' from Cornwall sent all heads a turning.  
The Middle East one was tranquil – so was the 'Real Japanese'  
And the 'Minimal Meadow' had pollarded lime trees.  
Princes Trust 'Magic Carpet' with mosaic fountain so rare  
A Garden of Eden and one for Contemporary Man  
Where I saw gallons of water – but no watering can!  
Those notorious green fingers of Alan Titmarsh  
On my programme they scribbled his obscure autograph.  
Then at last in the midst of fine floristic formations  
Shading brilliant landscapes were grand collage creations.  
Dersingham's Junior Flower Club were the ones to excel  
For their Coat of Arms emblems cast a judicial spell.  
With dried plants, seeds and pulses they had worked to perfection.  
Twelve successful exhibits and not one rejection.  
With the oldest member aged twelve and the youngest just eight  
Achieving Silver Gilt to Bronze must be greater than great.  
And Doreen, their leader, should be awarded an Oscar  
For organising the trip and finding those on her roster!  
In the mad chaos departing – where was Coach Card Seven?  
I was stranded between parties from Brighton and Devon!  
A welcome cheer went up when each at last saw their bus  
As floribunda band folk spilled to the road in a rush.  
Motorways jammed to a halt with 'floral floats parading'  
For cars from their sun roofs had giant jungles cascading.  
Arriving home my memento followed close on my heels  
Tied securely to the top of my rucksack on wheels.  
Now centre stage in my garden – her face all aglow  
The concrete bust of a lady from the Chelsea Flower Show!

*My thanks to Doreen Asker and the Dersingham Flower Club for a lovely day out on  
25<sup>th</sup> May 2001*





**WHAT A TEAM!** Dersingham Junior Flower Club members with leader Doreen Asker back home with their exhibits after their success at the Chelsea Flower Show



**MILLENNIUM MUGS FOR SALE - £3**

There are a few left for sale. If you would like one of these specially commissioned mugs please apply to the Parish Council Office, Manor Road.

*This recipe has been sent in by June Stephenson, 22 Centre Vale*

### **Quick Picnic Cake**

This cake is for picnics in the garden, rather than the kind which you pack in the car early in the day. It is at its best when fresh and slightly warm and crumbly. It takes almost an hour to cook, and you need about ten minutes for the actual preparation and thirty minutes for the mixture to cool before adding the final ingredients and cooking it.

In a large saucepan place:

- ¼ pint/125 ml water
- 4 oz/125 g soft margarine (not butter)
- 6 to 8 oz/200 to 250 g dried fruit (sultanas or raisins)
- 1 tsp mixed spices
- Grated rind or ½ lemon or orange, and/or 1 tbsp marmalade

Bring these ingredients to the boil and simmer for 5 to 10 minutes, stirring once or twice. Leave to cool for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, weigh out 8 oz/250 g self-raising flour, and beat one egg in a separate bowl. When the fruit mixture seems fairly cool, stir in the flour and the egg alternately, in fairly small quantities at first, and then more quickly. Mix well. Turn into a greased 6 inch cake tin and cook in an oven preheated to 170 °C for about 55 minutes. Let the tin stand for about 10 minutes, then turn the cake onto a wire tray. Eat fairly promptly!

Notes:

- 1 If you use the metric measurements you may need a little extra water, say, 2 tbsp
- 2 If you use a small saucepan, the mixture just takes longer to cool.
- 3 Other good additions are grated carrot, or grated apple, slice banana, or a few sunflower seeds.
- 4 People with a sweet tooth might want to add an ounce or two of sugar at the simmering stage. I find the cake sweet enough without.

*Editor's Note: Tried and tested recipes for the newsletter are always welcomed and appreciated.*

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**My Tribute to Ann Heffer  
and her team of librarians at  
DERSINGHAM LIBRARY**

*by Hugh Mullarkey © 2001*

Is there somewhere in your neighbourhood  
Where you can freely go  
Whether looking for some fantasy  
Or a fact you need to know?

Is there somewhere that's inviting  
Where you're welcomed with a smile  
Whether you are into internet  
Or a favourite writer's style?

The home of inspiration  
In which everyone can share  
Conjured by a dedication  
That's really rather rare.

Is there still a local haven  
Where there's courtesy and peace  
Where you can meet Harry Potter  
Or borrow Jason's fleece?

So let us pay them tribute  
To the people in the team  
For their help and their devotion  
To fulfil the bookworm's dream.

That heaven is a library  
Where the God of Books will state:  
'Retired librarians never die  
'They simply change the date!'

✠ **St Nicholas Church Flower Festival** ✠

As the doors closed on another very successful Flower Festival it's time to look back to say 'thank you' to many people who helped in any way, also to the general public who came to see the work of many.

The tribute to Nancy Cable was very fitting and as she looks down on us she would say 'well done'.

We felt very sorry for the Craft Fair people who were flooded out with all the rain on Thursday afternoon.

I would like to thank the borough mayor, Mr George Pratt, and his team for taking time out from a very busy schedule and spending time in his village church.

It was nice to welcome friends old and new, and listening to people's comments as they were going round the church wondering who did this or that arrangement.

Many people took full advantage of the excellent refreshments and visited the various stalls in the church hall, which again was made possible by our helpers with their hard work.

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**AGE**  
*Concern*

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For Home Selection phone 8am - 8pm

Have you a forthcoming event you want to tell us about? Do you want to publish an appreciation or an account of an event that has taken place? Do you want publicity given to a concern you may have? Contributions for the October Issue of the Village Voice should be sent to the Editor by 25<sup>th</sup> September.

## ASHDENE HOUSE

*Guesthouse & Restaurant*

60 HUNSTANTON ROAD • DERSINGHAM • NORFOLK PE31 6HQ  
TELEPHONE: 01485 540395



### Ashdene Guesthouse

Welcoming B & B accommodation offering twin-double and family rooms - all en-suite with TV tea/coffee facilities, spacious lounge.

### Ashdene Restaurant

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*Letter received from Mrs Mollie Isaacson, Centre Vale*

Dear Editor

I enclose a short comment on the recent decease of my wheelie bin. It was swallowed whole by the bin men's machine at the beginning of July. The probability of this happening is a bit more than the improbability of winning the lottery! So I ask myself – why me? Or rather why it?

COMMENTS ON THE RECENT LOSS OF A WHEELIE BIN  
With initial apologies to G K Chesterton

I remember, I remember  
The day that we met.  
A day I shall not entirely forget.  
It was a cold, bitter, wet day in January  
He stood tall and strong and grey.  
How proud he stood my Wheelie Bin  
I gave him his number and address and kept him nice and clean.  
Then that fateful Friday 13<sup>th</sup> took my Binny away.  
"It just fell in" the bin man said.  
There was no answer to that.  
But wherever dust bins go to die  
I hope he is welcomed in, piece by piece,

*Has this happened to anyone else's wheelie bin, we wonder?*

*1<sup>st</sup> May* I piled a few small logs in a corner for the toad. A thrush bathed in one of the drinking bowls we've dotted round the garden. A family of thrushes is visiting regularly: we have lots of smashed snail shells to prove it! Toads seem to leave them whole, presumably sucking out the contents.

*5<sup>th</sup> May* Bank holiday weekend. Pulsatillas in full flower. Last night there was a ground frost, but I'd covered the first early potatoes with fleece and this morning watered the foliage before the sun could burn it. Young blackbirds flutter around, and a pair of collared doves is nesting in the twiggy end of the conifer hedge we've cut back.

*8<sup>th</sup> May* Bluebells, bluebells! But they have no scent: they are Spanish bluebells. The native English bluebell, *scilla non-scripta*, which we remember carpeting the woods in our childhood, is the fragrant one.

*11<sup>th</sup> May* 30°C! A second sowing of dwarf beans, the variety Contender is now well up in the pots and hardening off. Pear blossom has fallen. Only a few leaves show the presence of leaf blister mite (black pustules under the leaf surface) this year, perhaps because we carefully picked up all fallen leaves last autumn, as well as picking affected leaves off the tree where we could. Isn't apple blossom the prettiest of all, pink and white amongst fresh new leaves!

*31<sup>st</sup> May* The last two weeks of May are a hectic rush sowing, planting out, mowing and hedge-trimming. Twelve Braveheart Brussels sprouts, about 100 cm high, are now in their permanent positions, about six weeks after sowing. How will they compare with Evesham Special and Peer Gynt?

*4<sup>th</sup> June* June has begun windy and showery, with leaves and small twigs torn from the fruit trees. The collared doves have hatched their young. Great and blue tits visit, and the thrushes, four speckled chests in an out of the rockery, sharp beaks searching out snails. A seagull dropped a dead great tit fledgling at my feet.

*11<sup>th</sup> June* Everything's late. Only one poppy blooming. No campanulas, no escallonia blossom yet. The rampant climber that festooned our plum trees last year is white bryony, the only member of the cucurbit family native to Britain, I believe. Its large leaves, pea-like tendrils and small starry flowers smother all in their path. Ours will grow to 15 ft. Like many other plants in the garden it's poisonous. It grows in hedgerows, and there's one in a front garden in Chapel Road ...

*21<sup>st</sup> June* On the longest day I've sown Radicchio, an endive-like salad plant with reddish-green leaves. Autumn-planted onions are ripening, and we're picking Aquadulce broad beans, delicious small and cooked whole.

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## The Summer Garden Concert – 14<sup>th</sup> July 2001

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In spite of the weather forecasts which had predicted doom and gloom, and a pretty wet gloom at that, on the morning of Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> July the weather was mild and pleasant. Some of the 'construction' team were busy roping off an area in the recreation ground for car parking purposes when two young ladies stopped to ask one of the hard-working crew if this was where the Garden Concert was taking place. They were given directions to Dr Brown's garden. The garden at this time was a picture with the gentle bustle of preparation.

The aforementioned gloom didn't darken our gazebos until the summer Concert was well under way! And what a Concert! Dersingham had much to be proud of in such a combination of local talent and organisation. The musicians on show included young singers from Dersingham First School and St George's who were all terrific. Smithdon High School brought us some more fine music. There were the St Nicholas Church Choir and the Norfolk Reeds under the direction of Roger Lines. Gareth Barnett on keyboard and Eddie Charles in fine voice brought us some popular music.

The Gamebirds, a group of 4 ladies, Gillian, Amanda, Liz and Liz, singing in close harmony, and accompanied on this occasion by Monica on keyboard, were in the middle of a superb variety of jazzy numbers when they were joined on stage by 3 umbrella men, perhaps better known as the 'Brollies'. The wet gloom had arrived – no offence intended! Such was the gusto of the Gamebirds, however, that the downpour didn't seem to dampen anybody's spirits.

It was a wonderful afternoon of fine music, superb singing and tremendous variety. It had a real family atmosphere about it. A large audience of local people were given a concert to remember.

In addition to the music there were excellent refreshments, golf, books and bric-a-brac stalls and one run by Ron Saunders and the village Scouts. A raffle was held – all prizes generously donated by local people and businesses. The Sandringham Sawmill had kindly supplied us with stout wooden planks in order to create a pathway for wheelchair access.

The PA system was supplied by Steel Sounds of Walpole Highway and the operator, Ken, took great pains to adjust the volume to a suitable level for each of the artistes and groups. This brings me, of course, to our inimitable Master of Ceremonies, Terry Finbow, who kept us all smiling throughout the afternoon.

Tom Morris, as Chairman of the Dersingham Surgery Patients' Participation Group, had taken on the responsibility of organising everything which, no doubt, involved labyrinthine logistics. He did so superbly and all the helpers became a real team as a result. This teamwork was what made our efforts seem so rewarding – our sincere thanks to Tom. It was as some members of that team were becoming entangled with the WI bunting after the concert that the 2 young ladies mentioned at the beginning of this piece walked by once more saying 'When can we have another concert? That was great!' I think that says it all.

The Surgery Patients' Participation Group and the Friends of St Nicholas are each to receive £406 as a result of everyone's efforts.

A final thank you must go to Dr Carole Brown for inviting us into her garden for a truly memorable feast of music.

*Hugh Mullarkey*

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