

Number 85

Online Extra-Colour Edition

December 2013

# Village Voice

## The Dersingham Magazine



one of your seasonal creature comforts



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## Editor's Notes

Well, Christmas is nearly upon us again. How is it for you? Such an array of competing things enticing us to get involved. Are you attracted by our wealth of Church-based activity for the season of Advent, Carols and Nativity, not to mention the odd Christmas Tree Festival, or do you prefer the more secular side of Yuletide celebration and revelry? Perhaps you warm to the Dickensian image of Christmas or have things become more dominated by the commercial push towards securing the latest must-haves, overseen by what has become the “definitive” red and white clad Santa, inspired by Coca Cola back in the 1920s?

Well actually, I am a big fan of the season of Advent and especially of the music that goes with it. I am always amazed and encouraged that when our clock radio wakes us on 1st December, it is Classic FM that seems to lead the way over other radio channels, with the odd soothing Christmas carol or two creeping into their playlists, the frequency of which intensifies throughout the month. Now I also enjoy the secular Christmas songs pumped out by the rest of the media, though I have to say that my all-time un-favourite has always been “*I wish it could be Christmas every day!*” first released in 1973 by the glam-rock band *Wizzard*. Just the very concept of it makes me wince!

There is no better time I think to take stock of and to express gratitude to those we have been involved with, who have served us throughout the year. So, looking to those involved with Village Voice since I took over as Editor, let me start by thanking Jeanne Ockenden, who has provided us with the splendid watercolour for the front cover of this issue as well as illustrating the last four of Allan Coleby's tales about the Sandringham Squirrels. Indeed thank you to all our Contributors who provide regular or one-off pieces and cater for the differing tastes of our readers. It has been a great pleasure getting to know you even though there are still some I've yet to meet face-to-face.

Someone who works behind the scenes, is our proof-reader Rob, who upon receipt of a draft print-out of what I consider to be a nearly finished masterpiece, scrutinises it mercilessly whilst I wait out the next 24 hours or so in trepidation for it to be marked! Few pages will have escaped the mighty red pen! So, then it's back to the PC for me for another heavy session of editing! If you do find mistakes, they are more likely down to my last minute, post-proof alterations than to anything that Rob has missed. Thank you Rob; someone has to do it, and you really are the best at the job!

Next, we would simply have no funds to print our magazine without our advertisers. Thank you for your custom and please keep coming! Thank you to Tony who continues to help producing adverts for customers ready to slot into place as well as seeking out other items of interest to include. Our printers ClanPress (who advertise within) are a pleasure to do business with and have offered me helpful guidance when submitting work for printing our regular order of 3,100 copies.

I have before mentioned our team of distributors who pace the streets of Dersingham throughout the seasons to get Village Voice out to you within two or three days of delivery, but thank you again. They take it as a personal challenge to reach every home and premise within the village.

When I first started editing Village Voice, I hadn't appreciated how much administrative work was involved dealing with our advertisers and I was very grateful to Anita in the Parish Office up until she left at the end of May, and subsequently to Sarah our Parish Clerk who had to take on this work in addition to everything else she already has to do. Thank you. I couldn't manage without!

Now it is of course the Parish Council who sponsor Village Voice. Having spent just over two years on the council myself until I left to become Editor, I know that being a councillor can be a rewarding yet thankless job at times. So often members of the Council, who volunteer their time freely, are made to feel *dammned if they do and dammed if they don't*, often by those whose overall interests they try to represent! I really admire and appreciate those councillors who hang in there despite being misinterpreted and enduring unrelenting onslaught from a disenchanted few. Our Village would be so much the poorer without a Parish Council. Let's endeavour to support them!

Overall, Christmas is I believe a time for being generous—not necessarily just with our money and gifts, but with our praise and affection, our neighbourliness and my often repeated plea to let go of any grudges that we may have accumulated throughout the year. If more could do that, then even I might just take one step closer to being able to *wish it could be Christmas every day!*

Y'all have a good one!

Steve Davis – [editor@dersingham.org.uk](mailto:editor@dersingham.org.uk) □

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## Dear Village Voice

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



With regard to the “Where is it ? What is it?” picture puzzle in the last issue, it brought back memories of when I was an apprentice electrician at Wells (it wasn't known as “Wells next the Sea” in the 40s and 50s as we knew it was near the sea!) and the firm I worked for had the contract to maintain the granary electrics which entailed climbing around the structure seen in the photo. We also maintained the maltings and every year we had to take down six large fans for service which were in housings at the top of the building. We climbed into one housing and then walked to the others along the roof with not a hint of “health and safety” and for which I received the princely sum of £3.4s.6d extra in “height money” for two weeks work! The gantry

was also used as a diving platform when the Wells Regatta was held in the late 40s and “brave” men used to dive from it into the harbour.

Also as this is a Christmas issue I thought you might like to see a photo of my dad (Ted Beales) on duty at the Norwich gates sometime in the late 50s. This must have been around Christmas as the gates were open and he used to be on “Royal Duty” then. People may have known my father as he used to direct traffic on Sundays in the summer at Lynford's Corner before the by-pass and the traffic lights. When he retired he was part of security at Sandringham House.



**Barry Beales**



The above photo was taken in June 1952 outside the Church Hall. The gentleman seated in the centre is Mark Dyble (my Great Grandfather) then aged 89 years. I believe the occasion was because he had been Chairman of the Dersingham Branch of the National Union of Agricultural Workers for 40 years, having been a founder member for 72 years. Mark lived in Centre Vale for 60 years having had 9 children with his wife Annie-Maria. Perhaps some readers will recognise others in the photo.

**Joy Kelly** □



## Parish Council Report by Cllr Suzy Daniels



It was again very pleasing to see a high turnout of parishioners at the previous two meetings.....it is after all your support that enables the Parish Councillors to make improvements and changes within Dersingham. We still have vacancies so if you would like to sit the other side of the table please contact the office for an application to become a Parish Councillor on 01485 541465

**WELCOME BACK...** On behalf of the Parish Council I would like to welcome back Cllr Robert Tipling. Bob resigned a couple of years ago due to ill health, but is now fighting fit and has re joined us. His knowledge of public office and community spirit (for which he is renowned) is sure to be an asset. Welcome back Bob!!

**CRIME.....**is low in our village, but it would be better to have nothing on the crime report!!!! There were 9 reported crimes during the period of 28th July-28th September: 3 incidents of theft, 3 anti social behaviour, one of arson, one of assault and one of causing harassment, alarm or distress. The ASB have been dealt with and the harassment and assaults have been charged to court.

### **RECREATION GROUND RE VAMP...a recreational haven**



Phase one of the re vamp has been completed after just a couple of weeks. I am extremely pleased with the outcome and trust that many of our young parishioners will spend many hours investigating and playing on the new equipment. The Playdale team said that as soon as they removed the security fencing there were children arriving. They overheard a deluge of positive comments which pleased them no end. A lot of hard work in a short space of time, made worthwhile. Our intention is to continue with phase two during spring/summer next year. **Contrary to rumours phase one was paid for with monies that had been earmarked in the Council reserves for at least four years. Phase two and any future projects will be paid for by successful grant applications.** This leads me on to:

**CHRISTMAS LIGHTS...** At the time of writing, we have gratefully received sponsorships from:

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**Collings Estate Agents**

**and The Dersingham Day Centre**

**Budgens**

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**Dersingham Institute Bowls Club**

for lighting along the Recreation Ground and Hunstanton Road. The Parish Council has a Budget (precept) which is agreed at the beginning of each financial year. The committees set their own budget within this to cover their requirements, individual plans and projects. The cost of Christmas lighting was higher than initially anticipated and hence the Recreation Committee had insufficient funds to achieve it unaided. Our intention now with sponsorship received is to light up 3 to 4 of the 13 trees this year and increase the amount annually. I hope this explains any confusion amongst parishioners that questioned how we could afford the re-vamp, but not the lights.

### **BOROUGH COUNCIL...regeneration, planning and recycling!!**

Cllr Collingham reported that the regeneration of the Tuesday Market Place was going extremely well. The cobbles would be used in a decorative manner and not removed completely. A zebra crossing from the Corn Exchange to the market place had been proposed. There is now a boat on the pontoon in King's Lynn, it is hoped the number of boats will increase and encourage tourism into the Town. The Heritage Group are investigating ways to improve Railway Road as it is an unwelcoming entrance into the town especially for visitors. The Borough Council will contact all business and households with in the area regarding improvements. Cllr Bubb said that he had read

the Local Government Framework and did not feel that the proposed housing development in Doddshill would get planning permission due to access problems. He advised parishioners of Doddshill, who were against the proposal, to ensure the Borough Council were made aware of their feelings now, but the time to strongly object would be if they sought planning permission. If this occurred Cllr Bubb said he would strongly object. Recycling has increased from 38% to 53%. From April 2014 (literature will be sent to each household prior to the scheme) most plastics, polystyrene foam and most waste that currently goes in the Black bin will be suitable for the green bin (recycling). Please continue to use the food bins as these contain contaminants. A list of recycling symbols and their meanings will be included in this edition of the village voice.

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

### **PLANNING APPLICATIONS:**

*67 Manor Road...*Application to infill front of integrated carport to create new utility room....*recommend approval.*

**FESTIVITIES...** It was wonderful to see the streets busy at Hallowe'en and so full of people enjoying themselves. A group of us (9 children with 5 adults) trick or treated around Gelham Manor and most of the Mountbatten estate, the children, quite a scary bunch of zombie bridesmaids, witches, ghosts, vampires, Uncle Fester, Chucky's Bride and skeletons were greeted with smiles and plenty of treats!!! The array of costumes and decorated houses made for a very spooky atmosphere. I trust you all had a safe and enjoyable Bonfire Night whether at a local or home display or maybe you just stayed inside in the warm. Our Christmas Market scheduled for Sunday 8th December, 1pm-4:30pm in St Nicholas Court is taking bookings at £8 per pitch or £15 for an undercover stall. Please contact the office on 01485 541465 if you are interested or send a message on our Facebook page. Or just come along and enjoy a hot mince pie and mulled wine!!!

I wish you all a *Very Merry Christmas and a Very Happy and Prosperous New Year!!!!* □

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## **It's a Dog's Life**

*Cllr Kate Hathaway of the Dersingham Parish Council Environment Committee shares a few doggy facts and figures for us to contemplate whilst exercising our canine companions.*



- We are a nation of dog-lovers.
- There are some 10.5 million dogs in the UK and 39% of households own at least one dog, which produce on average 8ozs or 227grms of faeces a day. The cost of clearing up this mess is significant and often falls to the taxpayer. (i.e. you and me)
- If Dersingham is average then there are around 975 dogs in the village producing approximately 487lbs or 220kgs of faeces a day. Astonishing isn't it?
- Fortunately not all of it lands on the streets, responsible owners clear up after their dogs.
- Dog fouling was rated as the most problematic local environmental quality issue in England.
- Dog faeces can take up to 2 months to break down,
- However, dogs contribute towards a healthier, more inclusive society by encouraging more active lifestyles and reducing stress through taking regular walks.
- From sales of their food alone, dogs are worth around £1 billion to the UK economy.
- There are 31 dog bins in Dersingham that are emptied weekly.
- The cost of emptying and disposal falls to the parish and comes out of the precept. (You and me pay for this as part of our council tax)
- Last year the cost of emptying dog bins in Dersingham was £1905.00
- The weekly cost this year is £37.20 annual cost £1934.40. Quite a lot of money for a load of ....!

Dog fouling is not only unpleasant it is dangerous. The biggest threat to public health from dog faeces is toxocariasis. Toxocariasis is an infection of the roundworm *toxocara canis*. The eggs of the parasite can be found in soil or sand contaminated with faeces and if swallowed, results in infection that lasts between six and 24 months. Symptoms include eye disorders, vague ache, dizziness, nausea, asthma and, in extremely rare cases, seizures/fits. Often the eggs are ingested when passed to the mouth by the hands, but this can also occur through contact with dogs or other inanimate objects including the wheels of toys and the soles of shoes. Infected soil samples are often found in play areas and as a result toxocariasis most commonly affects children between 18 months and five years. It is therefore important for dog owners to worm their dog regularly so that the risk of toxocariasis is diminished.

At the monthly parish council meetings the topic of dog faeces (let's call it poo) is frequently raised. Parishioners are concerned about the amount left on footpaths, pavements, the Heath, sport amenity and playing fields. It is most unpleasant to tread in the stuff and there is nothing worse than getting home and treading it indoors. Mums on their way to school with their children ahead of them and a pushchair have difficulty avoiding it and those who are poorly sighted are particularly at risk. Needless to say dog poo doesn't glow in the dark so the gentle folk of Dersingham out after dark also run the risk of getting poo on their shoes.

Dersingham is covered by the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act. The dog owner or any person in charge of a dog is guilty of an offence if they fail to clean up after their dog on the Recreation Ground, the Sports Field or any area alongside a highway within a speed limit of 40 mph or less. If you fail to clean up after your dog an authorised officer of an authority may issue you with a Fixed Penalty Notice, or if the case goes to court a fine of up to £1,000. The regulations state specifically, that being unaware that the dog has fouled, or not having a suitable means of removing the fouling is not a reasonable excuse for failing to clean up after your dog.

When the local dog bin emptier was asked which was his busiest season he replied that the summer was. I guess that dog walkers are more visible during the long hours of summer. So does this mean that now the winter is here some dog walkers won't be poop scooping? Mmmmmm.

I am sure most of our dog owners are responsible and clear up after their dog. However to those who don't here is my special plea, when you are out with your dog please clear up after the dog when it defecates. Take advantage of the facilities provided by your parish council that you pay for and bag it and bin it. And don't forget, bagged dog poo may be deposited in any public waste bin or take it home and put it in your own household grey bin.

Dersingham is a lovely village; let's all try to keep it a clean and healthy place to live. Remember, There is no such thing as the dog poo fairy and bag that poo, any bin will do! Love where you live.

Do you know of a particular black spot? □



## From the Parish Office

When you next come into the office you may see a new face. We welcome Kelly Stevenson to the office team as the new Administrative Assistant.

The Caddy bin-liners have sold well. Unfortunately the Borough Council ran out of stock a few weeks ago. I tried to source them elsewhere but could not match the price, but we'll have them as soon as the Borough gets them.

I too would like to welcome back Bob Tipling to the Parish Council. He will be a great asset. We still have seven vacancies at present though. A few have made enquiries about joining the council but have yet to come back to us. Do give it a try. Your village really does NEED you.

Well I think Suzy has mentioned everything else in her report I will have to get in first for the next issue! If there is something happening in the village that you wish to know more about, or not happy about, please do not hesitate to contact me at the office, and I will do my best to help.

I too wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

*Sarah.*  
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## The Dersingham Christmas Art Trail

Dersingham is a large village and it's perhaps not surprising that it contains quite a thriving arts community. There are plenty of painters of course, but also photographers, potters, textile workers and all manner of other arts and crafts practitioners. Some of these artists have banded together to form the Dersingham Art Trail which is now in its second year and aims to promote village artists and give visitors and locals alike the opportunity to visit them in their studios.

During Art Trail open events you can follow the Trail round local studios, see artists at work, have a chat, and yes you may find something to take home with you too, even if it's only a small print or a greetings card. After all, Christmas is coming. You'll be visiting artists in their homes, where they'll be pleased to welcome you and probably have the kettle on!

The Christmas opening of the Art Trail is over the weekend of Friday 29th November to Sunday 1st December, when you will find all of the participating studios open from 10am until 4pm each day. You can find a map of all the studios on the back of the Trail leaflet, which is available free from Dersingham Pottery and other public places, or you can view the map and more comprehensive information about each Trail member's work at [DersinghamArtTrail.org](http://DersinghamArtTrail.org)

Below is the location of each studio and a brief description. So put the dates 29th November to 1st December in your diaries and do take this great opportunity to support your local artists. We all look forward to seeing you!

### **Jo Halpin Jones, 14 Post Office Rd. Dersingham, PE31 6HP**

Photographs from Jo's travels both locally and around the world. Photo restoration and tuition in Photoshop. Photographic prints and cards.



### **Stephen Martyn. The Birches, 2 Alexandra Close, Station Rd. Dersingham, PE31 6YU**

From his garden studio Steve produces atmospheric landscape paintings of Norfolk and beyond. Watercolour, ink, and oils, plus prints and cards. Commissions welcomed. Tuition available in watercolour and drawing.



### **June Mullarkey. Dersingham Pottery, 48 Chapel Rd. Dersingham, PE31 6PN**

Celebrating over forty years of pottery in Dersingham, June produces domestic pots and larger one-off exhibition pieces. June Mullarkey potter, Ben Mullarkey paintings, Siobhán Williams

photography. The pottery is regularly open on most days.



### **Michael Smith. 17 Old Hall Drive, Dersingham, PE31 6JT**

After a long career in art tuition Mike moved from Leicester to Dersingham in 2003 and has been painting scenes of the North Norfolk coast ever since. Original paintings and cards.



### **Marty Griffin. Hollydrive, The Drift, Ingoldisthorpe, PE31 6NW**

Marty's paintings are loaded with detail and accurately observed and rendered, in watercolour, ink, and acrylic. Landscapes and a variety of unusual subjects. Original paintings and cards. Commissions welcomed.

*Other village artists interested in participating in future Art Trail events should contact the Trail coordinator Stephen Martyn on 01485 541333. Outside the dates mentioned above*

*visitors are welcome at artists' studios but please contact them first. □*

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## The Dersingham Weather recorded by John F. Murray

I think that most of you will agree that we seemed to have a really good September. We certainly had plenty of sunshine and this made people retain their summer clothing well into the month. In fact the figures show that it was simply an average month. The mean temperature was 14.3°C and the highest recorded was 28.1°C. Both of these and the lowest temperature of 4.9°C were right in the middle of previous Septembers. Perhaps the fact that the summer seemed to find it difficult to get out of the starting blocks and the September sun gave the impression that it was better than it was. After all sunshine and warmth are among the most basic of human needs.

The September rainfall was 33.2mm which was below the average of 43.4mm.

October was however a warm month. The mean temperature was 12.9°C which makes it equal top with October 2011. The highest recorded temperature of 21.1°C put it in second place to October 2011 which had a high of 28.8°C. The lowest recorded temperature put October this year in first place by a large margin. At 4.3° it was way ahead of the 1.7° of 2009. In 2008 I recorded a low of -2.8°.

The difference in September and October was that September was sunny whereas October was mainly overcast. This kept the October warmth from escaping but prevented the sun from getting in and giving us a record breaking high. You can't have it all ways. Not in Britain.

An event of note was the storm of 27<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> October. The south coast had wind speeds of up to 99mph but, once again we got away lightly. On 27<sup>th</sup> we had a maximum of 32mph and on the 28<sup>th</sup> it was 25mph. Neither of these speeds are particularly high. The barometer fell to 975.2 millibars which shows that it was quite a severe depression.

The month of October produced 95.8mm of rain with 28.2mm falling on the 28<sup>th</sup> as a result of the depression. That is something over an inch. I have noticed that when we get an inch of rain in a 24 hour period that the car park drains at Budgens just can't cope. That was again the case on the 28<sup>th</sup>. I suspect that our drainage system has not been enlarged to reflect the increase in the village's population over the years and one inch of rain is the point at which it simply can't cope any more.

Either way the rain was welcome from a reservoir level point of view but unfortunately it was all too late for us gardeners.

My next report will be a summary of the year. It seems that there are different patterns to the weather every year and it will be interesting, for me at least, to compare. □

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## Old Picture Corner from Tony Bubb



Both pictures below would be impossible to take now!



The cricket club dinner in the church hall in 1963; are any of them still around and who were they?



Hawthorn Cottages taken long before the housing complex was put up - how rural we were then! □

## Where is it? What is it?

from Tony Bubb

To make it a more rewarding challenge this time, we'll hold back the answer until next issue and offer a bottle of wine to the provider of the first correct answer to be drawn from a hat on

*Tuesday 31st December 2013.*

Answers should be submitted in writing to the Parish Office or emailed to

*editor@dersingham.org.uk*

by noon of the same day. □



## Sudoku No 33

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

### Solution to Sudoku No 32 (in issue 84)

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

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## Oil be Alright in the End

by Jack Neale



In my previous article, I described how 'The Dartford Eight' came to live in Dersingham, a place of which we had never heard. My wife Pat and I moved in in October 1986. Full of excitement and favoured by an extraordinary spell of fine warm weather we were soon able to accomplish all the primary tasks that moving in required.

After about six weeks we decided to make our first trip back to Dartford to pick up the house deeds from the Conveyancing Solicitors and stay with our daughter for a week. Armed with a number of photos of our new dream house we set off on a fine November morning. Bowling along at about 40 to 50 miles an hour on the A10 at Tottenhill, I suddenly saw a large red station wagon hurtling out of a field on my right. It shot on to the carriageway and hit us full amidships. It all happened in a flash and we finished up on our side in a ditch on the other side of the road, but being knocked unconscious I was unaware of this. I vaguely remember being taken by ambulance to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Kings Lynn where we were both kept in overnight. Although badly bruised and concussed, our seat belts had saved us from any broken bones or serious injuries. Our friends Betty and Alex took us home next day, our daughter arrived and over the next few days between them they nursed, fed and generally cosseted us until we were stabilised. I did however suffer a badly torn right shoulder and realised that I wouldn't be needing my golf clubs and bowling woods any more. Of course the car was a write off and for the next few weeks our friends took us shopping and out and about in the area, so by Christmas we were functioning as normal.

Tragedy had not completely left us, as early in the New Year, Jack Mynard our other great friend and British Legion stalwart succumbed to the prostate cancer he was diagnosed with around the time of their move but mistakenly thought he could live with for a couple of years. His wife Hilda very bravely decided to carry on in their new home and we, Betty and Alex supported her as much as possible with meals and company etc. Just after arriving here Jack had bought a new car – a Mazda 1300 Automatic but Hilda did not drive, so after a couple of months we, still car-less, bought it from her, and took her around with us for many years until she too passed away.

Two years later, having settled in completely, on another November morning we again went South for a week with our daughter. No mishaps – very enjoyable. We arrived home the following Sunday night to be assailed with the most horrendous smell as soon as we entered the front door. On entering the kitchen we found the floor awash with heating oil leaking from a fractured feed pipe to the boiler – hence the smell. Immediately I turned the tap off at the storage tank outside (which I should have done before leaving). It was later estimated that about 300 gallons had leaked out. Somehow we organised a brief supper, got unpacked and went to bed. Fortunately the oil had not spread to the bedrooms, toilet or bathroom which were at the rear of the bungalow.

Next day, appalled at the magnitude of the damage but completely nonplussed at what steps to take I went to the Citizens Advice Bureau in Lynn. They were absolutely marvellous and gave me the name of a Surveyor who came and carried out a preliminary survey of the problem and set about finding a suitable builder. He also liaised with our Insurance Agent, the Borough Council and everything connected with the problem. Of course all of this took time and it was two or three weeks before works could be planned. During this time the oil had been spreading under the floor although all carpeting etc was taken up. Most affected were the kitchen, lounge and adjoining dining area and hallway. It had even spread from the floor up the walls; the plaster acting like blotting paper, having saturated the screed, the soft cement and sand layer over the concrete base.

The work involved removing the kitchen fittings, sink unit, cooker, fridge, washing machine, doors, skirting boards and all lounge furniture stored in the garage. All the plaster was hacked off the walls up to about 3 feet high and finally the screed exposing the oil soaked concrete base. After removing the screed, the oil was then burned off using Propane torches to set light to the floor! Believe me it's really something to see – a concrete floor burning with a steady blue flame! Bare surfaces were then coated twice with a plastic sealant before re-plastering and re-screeding. Finally all doors, fittings and appliances were replaced. Meanwhile all clothing, curtains and soft furnishings had to be cleaned and in some cases replaced. Amid all the doom and despair of the

early days, one very funny comment was made. A Council worker, collecting all the discarded carpet asked what had happened. When I told him, thinking we had wooden floors, he said, “Well you won’t be getting woodworm in your floorboards mate!”, then went off laughing.

While all this was going on, Pat and I relocated to the West Dene Hotel by the traffic lights (now Ashdene) and were lucky enough to get their one en-suite room. The accommodation was very good and we were there for four months including the Christmas and New Year period, during which time we almost became part of the owners’ family.

Approaching mid March all the remedial work was completed apart from the redecoration. Anxious to show the Insurers my gratitude for their very generous and supportive treatment I volunteered to do the decorating myself, and also to work off my frustrations! The offer was accepted; they paying for all materials. This work took about three weeks, and finally the new carpets were laid and furniture replaced.

We moved back in for Easter and resumed our normal life. For some little time one could occasionally catch a faint whiff of oil but even that eventually dissipated. I had already been involved in helping to set up the Mountbatten Residents Association and later its offshoot the Home-watch or Neighbourhood Watch Scheme and held several offices including Chief Co-ordinator. Sadly after about 15 or 20 years they both ceased to exist due to lack of Volunteer Officers. We had justified our existence, people gradually felt more secure and I was glad to have played a part in that.

So on to the present day. On 11<sup>th</sup> September I was due to move into The Gables Care Home in Post Office Road and decided to give up driving. Taking the 27 year old Mazda I went for a last “Hurrah drink” at The Coach & Horses in Manor Road. Coming away I quite unaccountably drove straight across the road and into a brick wall! The 27 year old car was a write-off! Fortunately I escaped injury this time as well and hopefully can now live out my days in peace and security at the Gables, and that’s all anybody could ask for. I’ve been extremely fortunate in having such a wonderful and satisfying life. □

*A great place to be Jack—God bless you! - Ed.*



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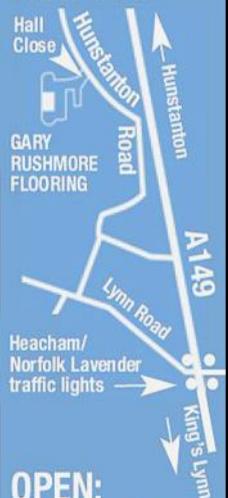
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# St Nicholas Church News

by Pauline Martin



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

## Christmas Tree Festival – Friday 6<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December 10am to 4pm Friday & Saturday & 12noon to 4pm Sunday

- 20 + trees decorated by local Clubs & Societies in the Church.
- Friday in the Church Hall where the Coffee Morning will continue all day with lunches being served and teas in the afternoon.
- Saturday in the Church Hall is the **St Nicholas Christmas Fayre** and



- **Father Christmas** will be in his Grotto in the Church, please bring your children to meet him, there will also be craft activities for the children.
- **The Dersingham Descanters** – our handbell group will be playing on Saturday between 2.30pm and 4pm.
- Sunday Church 12noon to 4pm - with refreshments available at the back of the Church.
- The Church will also be open the weekends of Saturday & Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> & Saturday & Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> from 12noon to 4pm to see the trees if you missed them during the Festival.

**All our Services during December below will be held among the wonderfully decorated Christmas trees so another chance to see them, so please come and join us if you can.**

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Sunday 1st     | 6:30pm – Advent Carol Service                                   |
| Sunday 15th    | 3:00pm – Tea & Carols, a light informal time for all the family |
| Wednesday 18th | 2:00pm – Carol Service with the Mothers' Union                  |
| Thursday 19th  | 6:00pm – Christingle Service                                    |
| Sunday 22nd    | 6:30pm – Traditional Lessons & Carols                           |
| Tuesday 24th   | 4:00pm – Crib Service<br>11:30pm – Midnight Communion           |
| Wednesday 25th | 8:00am – Holy Communion<br>10:00am – Family Service             |

□

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Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2013 at 7.30pm

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## It's Christmas Day, All is Secure

*In line with recent Remembrance Day observances and the season now upon us, Ted Overall particularly wanted to share this poem he'd been passed: a sombre play on the words of Clement Clark Moore's: "Twas the night before Christmas". In looking it up online to try and establish the originator, I was inundated by links to a variety of sources and indeed variations tailored to British Soldiers, U.S. Soldiers and Marines, so the true originator remains a mystery although all agree it was written by someone stationed overseas. Whatever your thoughts about this piece, it seems quite clear that the sentiments expressed are shared by a great many around the world! Ed.*

It was the night before Christmas, he lived all alone  
In a one bedroom house made of plaster and stone.  
I had come down the chimney with presents to give  
And to see just who, in this home did live.

I looked all about, a strange sight I did see:  
No tinsel, no presents, not even a tree,  
No stocking by the mantle, just boots filled with sand.  
On the wall hung pictures of far distant lands,  
With medals and badges, awards of all kinds  
A sober thought came through my mind

For this house was different it was dark and dreary  
I found the home of a soldier once I could see clearly  
The soldier lay sleeping silent, alone  
Curled up on the floor in this one bedroom home

The face was so gentle, the room in such disorder  
Not how I pictured a lone British soldier  
Was this the hero of whom I'd just read  
Curled up on a poncho the floor for a bed

I realised the families that I saw this night  
Owed their lives to these soldiers who were willing to fight  
Soon round the world the children would play  
And grown-ups would celebrate a bright Christmas day



They all enjoy freedom each month of the year  
Because of the soldiers like the one lying here  
I couldn't help wonder how many alone  
On a cold Christmas eve in a land far from home

The very thought brought a tear to my eye  
I dropped to my knees and started to cry  
The soldier awakened and I heard a rough voice  
'Santa don't cry this life is my choice  
I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more  
My life is my God, my country, my corps'

The soldier rolled over and drifted to sleep  
I couldn't control it, I continued to weep

I kept watch for hours so silent and still  
And we both sat and shivered from the cold nights chill  
I didn't want to leave on that cold dark night  
This guardian of honour so willing to fight

Then the soldier rolled over with a voice soft and pure  
Whispered 'carry on Santa its Christmas day all is secure'  
One look at my watch and I knew he was right  
'Merry Christmas my friend and to all a good night' □



## The Sandringham Newsletter

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



In the main the weather stayed dry throughout the cereal harvest, which is always helpful. With the combination of this year's very late spring, when the cold weather extended well into April, and a very dry summer, lower yields than normal were expected and this seems to be what happened.

As always, having completed the harvest, the Farm team went straight into autumn cultivations to prepare the fields for sowing autumn cereals. The organic fields need extra effort at this time to try to remove as many perennial weeds as possible. Then mustard will be sown in these fields to act as a green manure – a fast-growing, nitrogen-fixing crop which will prevent annual weeds from having light and space to thrive, and which will be ploughed straight back into the ground to help improve soil structure and fertility.

In the Gardens, the fine weather in August and September meant that gardeners were able to complete the annual yew hedge-cutting and to keep up with mowing and weeding, but it also meant they had to irrigate shrubs in the dryer areas of the garden. The water for this comes from the lakes within the gardens, which are fed partly by natural springs and partly by rainwater draining off the roof of Sandringham House and piped down the slope. Once the yew hedges were finished, gardeners continued trimming box, holly and pyracantha hedges, and cutting short the grass areas which had been left unmown through the summer to allow space for wild flowers to grow. These in turn attract insects and provide a food source for young birds and small mammals.

At the Sawmill, staff stocks of firewood were built up over the summer in preparation for the winter, as they will be busy over the next few months keeping up with demand from people stocking up with logs for fireplaces and wood-burning stoves.

The fine weather in summer and early autumn also meant people were out and about, visiting Sandringham House and Gardens, or just spending time with friends, family and dogs in the Country Park and at the Visitor Centre. One visitor was Tony (now Sir Anthony) Robinson, who was at Sandringham in August to film part of a forthcoming episode of the "Walking Through History" series which will be looking at the development of tourism in North-West Norfolk since the Victorian period with the coming of the railway from King's Lynn to Hunstanton.

The apple orchards seemed to have a really good crop this year of good-sized apples of all varieties. The Pick Your Own season lasted for about two weeks, during which the orchards will be full of people stocking up with Bramleys and Cox's Orange Pippin, and enjoying a couple of hours in one of the most beautiful parts of the Estate.

In September two particularly special sets of visitors were welcomed to Sandringham. A group from the Norfolk Sister Cities Association, based in Norfolk, Virginia, came to Sandringham during their stay in Norfolk. Sandringham's Head Gardener had visited Virginia in 2011 with a delegation from the county of Norfolk here in the UK, so he was pleased to have the opportunity to show some of his American hosts around the Gardens here at Sandringham.

There was also a visit by children from inner-city schools arranged by the Country Trust. This is a charity which helps primary school children living in urban areas to experience and understand the working countryside, and each year the Estate makes arrangements to show the children around the Forestry, Farm and Gardens departments.

At the Visitor Centre, pumpkins and squash started arriving in October for use in the kitchens. They are used in soups and risottos, and in the chutneys which are made there for sale in the Restaurant and the Visitor Centre shops. The pumpkins and squash are grown on the Gardens compost heaps; they thrive on the warmth and richness of the compost and also help to keep the compost tied together as they grow and spread, and prevent it from blowing or rolling away.

Finally, sugar beet lifting has begun, and sowing winter wheat and winter barley has been completed, with some fields already showing green as the cereals germinate. The sugar beet fields are now attracting the attentions of pink-footed geese returning to the UK for the winter. The geese roost on the coast overnight and fly inland in the mornings to feed on sugar beet tops. They fly in massive V-shaped skeins threaded across the sky, and the sight and sound of them overhead is an essential part of Sandringham in autumn and winter. □

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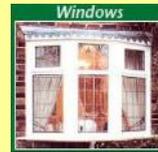
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**CAROLE BROWN HEALTH CENTRE (CBHC)**  
**Patients' Participation Group (PPG) News**  
**From: Tom Morris, PPG Committee**

**MAKING SENSE OF DEMENTIA**

At the September meeting of the PPG, the Chairman introduced the speaker for the evening, **Penny Bussey**. Penny, who has an academic and psychology background, has specialised in the subject of dementia and on how to deal with the condition. She continues to seek further understanding of dementia. She covered the condition known as Vascular Dementia which is caused by problems in the supply of blood to the brain and Alzheimer's Disease which

is a progressive, degenerative disease of the brain that results in dementia. The terms *Alzheimer's* and *dementia* are often used interchangeably, but there's a distinct difference between them. Dementia is a broader term than Alzheimer's and refers to any brain syndrome resulting in problems with memory, orientation, judgment, executive functioning, and communication. Penny's aim is to provide an understanding of dementia and to bring her experience and understanding of how to best deal with the condition.

The talk was both interesting and informative. There are some 820,000 dementia sufferers in the UK, most of those affected are in the older (over 60) age group and more than 50% of these are Alzheimer's Disease sufferers. Penny touched on many aspects of dementia ranging from the many ways in which the condition may present through to the various methods of care that can be given to a patient during their illness both at home and in specialist care homes. There was a question and answer session as, understandably, the talk had given rise to many queries. Those seeking further information or advice can contact Penny on e-mail at [pennybussey@btinternet.com](mailto:pennybussey@btinternet.com)



**STAFF CHANGES.** Dr Uni is unfortunately leaving at the end of the year but **Dr Kamal De** will be taking her place and also becoming a partner in the practice. Dr De qualified as a doctor in 1988, has been practising at the Gayton Road Health Centre for some time and brings a wealth of experience to the Carole Brown Health Centre. Patients registered with Dr Uni will be transferred to Dr De.

**MERGER OF PRACTICES.** In line with the current NHS encouragement for 'super partnerships', Vida Healthcare and Fairstead Health Centre will shortly merge and consequently give a greater scope for extended patient facilities. It was stressed that CBHC patients would not notice any change or be adversely affected. On the contrary, it could result in additional services for patients.

**URGENT.** The Chairman, Secretary/Treasurer and some members of the PPG Committee will be resigning after many years of hard but rewarding work at the next AGM in July 2014. Volunteers will be required to take up these posts and to become members of the PPG Committee. Should none be forthcoming, there will be no alternative to dissolving the PPG and disposing of its assets. To avoid this action, willing members of the Dersingham community should contact the chairman or the secretary if they wish to express an interest in any of these interesting and rewarding positions. □



Photo: Lynn News

## The Lavender Lace-Makers of Dersingham

meet every Tuesday at Dersingham Social Club from 10am to 3pm. We are a friendly group who make everyone welcome. You may well have seen us at local events when we usually wear our distinctive purple fleece tops.

Here you see us pictured back in August with our two French lacemaking visitors:

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## Hunstanton Rotary Club Meeting Smithdon Nepal School

Chris Holt came to our lunchtime meeting to update us on the progress of a school in the Dhading area not far from Kathmandu in which he, together with Smithdon High School, has been involved in since the year 2000. It is called the Smithdon Nepal School. Originally some pupils from Smithdon School visited the school in Dhading which fascinated them as the location is very rural. Chris gave a presentation including photos showing us how much progress had been made with refurbishment and additions to classrooms, buildings and water pipes. The school now has sports equipment and much appreciated showers have been installed.

The pupils themselves looked very smart in their school uniforms which even extended to the teaching staff. Fitness is important to them and classes start with exercises each morning. Books and pencils have been sent and even computers are now installed. It has been difficult to take up offers of further equipment as the road is very poor and terrain both hilly and stony. Chris has a trusted agent living locally, who with funds passed across can overcome this problem by buying equipment available from Kathmandu. □

*Rene Roothie*

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## WHAT TIME IS IT?

a short story by Daniel D. Lyon



"What time is it?" A gentle blow followed....."None o'clock!"

"Don't be silly" says my brother, "there's no such time as none o'clock".

"Well....that's what it says."

"No it doesn't, you silly billy...flowers don't say anything. They haven't got mouths!"

Hmph, my brother thinks he knows everything cos he's older than me....one year and eight months older actually...which isn't much. Any case, I know these flowers CAN tell the time. Anyone knows you just blow their clocks.....one o'clock, two o'clock, three o'clock.....It does work cos I KNOW!

"Mum, I'm hungry. Is it dinnertime yet?" shouts my brother.

"I'll tell you the time" says Mum, picking up a dandelion clock. She gently blows at the beautiful puffy circle and I count and watch the tiny delicate parachutes float upwards towards the bright sky. "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve" and then the flower head is empty.

"So it IS dinnertime and the clock has worked!" said I to my brother, who is now trying to catch the parachutes.....

Ah, that was me 60 years back in my childhood....when everything was simple, black and white, cut and dried and I believed in....fairies at the bottom of the garden, witches behind my wardrobe and time telling dandelion clocks. I loved everything outdoors (apart from the slugs)...the school walks through the allotments, the building of dens with mounds of grass with my brother, scrumping apples from the neighbours' trees, making scent in jam jars with rose petals, collecting baby frogs, searching for ladybirds and counting their spots and collecting wild flowers. I was particularly drawn to the outrageously bright dandelions and often got my hands covered with their milky sap. But it was their clocks which held a deep fascination for me. I loved to blow fiercely or gently at their magical spheres and gaze at the almost weightless seeds spiralling upwards and away.....I remember once painstakingly counting how many tiny parachutes clung to one flower head.....two hundred and thirty, I seem to remember!

Little did I realise how my attitude towards this fearsome flower would change. Being retired and at last having time to rescue my garden plot from death, destruction and weeds, the tenacious dandelion has become my number one enemy. I now despise it with a passion! Every time I spy a yellow head on my lawn I remove it immediately. It reminds me of an old neighbour of ours, who, many years ago, paid my children handsomely to remove all the dandelion heads from his vast lawn. They jumped at the chance, only to realise what they had taken on, hours later! If my eagle eyes miss one of the flowers and it dares to go to seed, I carefully grab it before it sheds its loaded clock of 230 seeds on to my far from pristine lawn. Despite my ongoing daily battle with the pesky plant, it appears in all manner of nooks and crannies, sending its powerful and lengthy root out of my reach. Whenever I try to dig up the whole plant I only succeed in drawing up half the root and, needless to say, a new vigorous plant takes its place. I am so vehemently trying to eradicate the vengeful weed that I have been seen to sneak the flowers and seed heads from the grass verge in front of my home in the hope that the seeds won't be blown into my front garden. And although I am dead against purchasing weed killers, I am forced into it in my ongoing war.

I suspect that I will never win this war against the dandelion as it must be one of the most successful plants on the planet for its propagating skills. Companies who produce weed killers by the millions would go out of business if the dandelion were suddenly exterminated once and for all....a possibility which is impossible to imagine.

What time is it? □

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## THE MUGS' TALE

by Gilly Spencer

We are a set of mugs nestling in a box,  
Which protects us efficiently from getting any knocks.  
We've lived in Frank's cupboard for many a long year  
When suddenly into daylight we were forced to appear.



"Let's give these to the raffle," I heard Frank loudly say,  
"These were from Aunt Enid and now she's passed away.  
So we can get rid of them, they really are quite naff  
They're like something you'd find in a greasy spoon-type caff."

And so to the raffle where somebody did win  
And said, "These are awful! Let's put them in the bin."  
"No, they'll do for the tombola, they're really useful sizes."  
So with a ticket stuck upon us, we stood among the prizes.



We were won and scorned again, so low our self esteem.  
Then, "We've got a Secret Santa at work, just for our team.  
I'll give them to my boss, who deserves a real good slapping!"  
And so we found ourselves bedecked in tasteful Christmas wrapping.

Now of course you've guessed it, we have come back home!  
"So what," I know you're asking, "is the purpose of this pome?"  
It is quite simply, that if you're a decent boss -  
You'd deserve lovely presents, instead of passed round dross!! □



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## Sandringham Squirrels

written by Allan Coleby, illustrated by Jeanne Ockenden

### 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



## Show time

‘That row of bungalows with their gardens will be a great source of food in the hard winter months,’ said Ella. ‘I wake up at least a dozen times from our sleeps in the winter and have to go searching for food because I’m hungry. If we can go straight to those gardens and be sure that there is food of some kind it will save a lot of time and energy. Then we can get straight back to the drey and go to sleep again.’

‘Yes,’ Scoot agreed. ‘What can we do to make sure the food is there regularly? What we don’t want to do is to offend the people. That is why Thora said that we should not break those nut-feeders that they hang from the branches of their apple trees. They put them there for small birds like greenfinches and blue tits and great tits. They like to see them climbing on them and pecking bits of nut out.’

‘That’s it!’ exclaimed Ella. ‘You say they like to see the birds climbing on them and pecking at them and so they keep the feeders filled. Well, let us do something they like to watch and maybe they’ll give us food.’

But though they thought a lot and puzzled hard, Scoot and Ella could not think of things to do that the people might like to see. So they decided to go to the gardens, with Eve, to see if they could use anything that was there.



Once they had got there, they went to the third house along. In the gardens, the people always had tables for holding food, trying to keep the cats away, though that didn’t work. They also had long nut-feeders like tubes, so that many birds could use them at once. There was also bread on the lawn and slices of apple or pear on the ground or on the feeding table. There were perches by the nut-feeders, about six feet from the ground, so that the birds could rest on them after clinging to the feeders.

‘I’ll go on the nut-feeders first,’ said Scoot. ‘I think I’ll go on the top and reach down, so that will seem a bit clever, and the people will like watching that.’

Scoot fed on some pieces of nut as he hung upside down on the feeder. Sure enough, they could hear a cackle of laughter from inside one of the houses.

‘Let’s all just go and do that on the apple tree,’ suggested Ella. ‘We can turn our front and back feet round so that we can come down a tree upside down. Let’s just do that and stay in position while we examine the trunk of the tree. They’ll think it’s better if three do it together.’

Off they went and spent some time in

weird upside down positions whispering the strangest things to each other while they hoped to be noticed.

‘I’ve had another idea,’ said Eve. ‘I expect the people like squirrels to behave like they do. They’ll think it’s cute. So let’s give each other things. I’ll get a slice of apple from the table and give it to you to eat, Ella. Then you do the same to me.’

As soon as they had done that, they heard even more laughter from the house. More people seemed to have gathered at the window.

Eve’s mention of people’s behaviour led them on to further ideas. They decided to play the game the people call ‘tag’. The three of them chased each other round the rose bushes, the dustbin and the compost heap. Then they went round the back of the shed, over a pile of logs and round some old flower pots.

The noise from inside the house grew louder. They had just set off on another game of ‘tag’, when they all stopped in their tracks. A man and a woman had come round the side of the house and stood at the edge of the lawn watching them.

Scout knew immediately what would be the best thing to do. These people always wanted to relate to animals. You had to be careful near them, though, because they could do anything they wanted to do. They could kick you unless you got out of the way, throw things at you, send dogs after you, even shoot you. But this was only the nasty ones. The nice ones wanted to get near to animals, even feed them.

Ella and Eve stood still and watched while Scout slowly walked towards the man and woman. His heart was beating hard. He was afraid. His brain told him to run away. But he could sense that they didn’t mean him any harm and they were very still and quiet. Step after careful step, he approached them. He had to force himself on. Then he noticed a banana in the man’s hand. He reached forward.

This was the limit of Scout’s courage. He knew he couldn’t go and take it from the man’s hand. Suddenly, the man threw it two yards towards Scout. It landed on the ground.

Glad to be able to take some action, Scout dashed forward, grabbed the banana and ran back to Ella. Pretending to be calm, he gave it to her.

‘Thank you, Scout,’

she said, trying to be dignified, but really as relieved as Scout was. ‘You have made sure of a steady supply of bananas – as long as we perform for them. But now let’s beat it and go home.’ □



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## Dersingham Evening WI by Maggie Guest and Stephanie Coulson

Your village WI is a long way from the 'Jam and Jerusalem' image that some older WIs have. We are a much more modern group with a wide variety of interests. We don't just have monthly meetings but interact with the wider community.

Although a charity ourselves helping less fortunate women, we too offer charity to others. After a talk by a representative of the Purfleet Trust a couple of years ago, we now make regular donations to the trust of food items and other useful products for the homeless and very needy. We hear of 'Food Banks' in the press but your Dersingham WI haven't just read or heard about it, we are doing something to help. If any readers of this article feel they too would like to help, do contact Maggie on 01485 542424 or any committee member. We will make sure any unwanted non -perishable food etc. is delivered to the Purfleet Trust.



The Dersingham Evening Women's Institute 'Make a Difference group' have made 36 blankets over the last 9 months which will be going to local charities. Thanks to all that have donated wool, we are continuing next year making blankets plus hats, scarves and children's clothes. Any donations of wool greatly appreciated, please contact Stephanie on 01485 544819.

A more recent way we have helped people in our village is by having a very well supported Fashion Show in the Church Hall. Nearly a hundred ladies came for coffee and to see the new fashions by Artichoke. Not only was this a most sociable and enjoyable event, but we raised enough money to provide a lunch for the village **Day Centre** -which will have been eaten before this goes to print! Thank you to all who came to support us. The fund raising was boosted by the generous donation of lovely Raffle Prizes by some of our village businesses. Our thanks in particular to **Time Out, The Barn** and **HAVE Training** our thanks for their kindness. The flowers



to brighten the room were supplied by **Yvonne** and some were used for raffle prizes.

A few months ago, Christine Adams came to tell us the story of May Savidge who had moved her entire house from Ware in Hertfordshire and rebuilt it in Wells next the Sea. A daunting task for an aging, single lady. Many of us had seen about the house on TV and read a fascinating book written by Christine, so we were thrilled to have the opportunity to visit such a remarkable property and went in two groups over to Wells.

The Theatre Group went to the Princess Theatre to be entertained by Ann Breen and, a few weeks later, by Syd Lawrence. A ‘young at heart’ group of us went to see ‘Buddy’ at the Corn Exchange. A trip is planned to see The Nutcracker live from The Royal Opera House streamed to the Majestic Cinema.

The dining and lunch groups have enjoyed meals at The Lodge, Heacham Manor, The Dabbling Duck and The Riverside and The George at Swaffham. A group went to Thornham to partake of a Russian Tea which gave them a reason to be drinking from saucers!! What would their Mothers say? Several members went to a Sixties Night at The Sandringham Group meeting most wearing 60s outfits, eating 60s food and naturally dancing to the wonderful 60s music. Interestingly our youngest member had a great time. A history lesson for her!!

Maggie and Diann have had successful coffee mornings which are perfect for getting to know other members in a smaller group and always convivial, and they raise money too!

The Lunch and Activity Group had tea in the Mayor’s Parlour at the Kings Lynn Town Hall followed by a tour of the buildings. This was quite a thrill for those that went. Next was an interesting historic walk in Kings Lynn ably guided by Wendy who then took the group to Marriott’s Warehouse for lunch.

The monthly meetings have had a speaker from a travel firm in Swaffham that specializes in travel for the mature single person. Appropriately named **ONE TRAVELLER**. They really look after their customers and have the most interesting holidays available. Another speaker gave a slide illustrated talk of a tour round Norfolk. Stunning photographs of nature and wildlife were appreciated by us all. Our good wishes go to all in the Festive Season. □



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## Random Jottings

by Tony Bubb



It seems ages ago that we were sweltering on the French Riviera, dealing with the eccentricities of the French. If you think there is a lot of traffic round here try Cannes on a Sunday afternoon when there are a couple of weddings and a boat show in town. One of their kilometres takes over an hour, noisy too with all that hooting, but you do eventually break free. The French will take a car anywhere they can. Passages little wider than a car and a fag paper have vehicles parked at the end.

One oddity we found in France - they don't use a Qwerty keyboard on their computers which makes using the ones provided in hotels rather awkward for touch typists and those of us who adopt the seek and peck method.

Ah well, back to nice, normal, England.

I went to a very interesting conference recently entitled "From the coast to the sea". There we were told of all the effects that you might not think about to do with our river systems and their bearing on the coast. If you straighten a stream the water runs quicker, carrying down silt that settles on gravel beds favoured by trout so they do not thrive. More silt goes out into the Wash affecting the mussel beds. The windfarms that now spoil our sea views mean that fishermen will not fish near them for fear of snagging their nets but this does mean that fish treat them as havens. It is all interlinked but fortunately the various agencies are talking to one another to protect the environment and our interests, we are told.

Children's names come in and out of fashion so I wonder when there was an Ethel last registered? Apparently it was an old English name meaning noble. Doris is another one we seem to have gone off.

By the time you read this the revamp of TheTuesday Market Place in Lynn should be complete. Some critics have asked what effect this will have on "The Mart". The answer is none. The Mart will still occupy the same footprint that it has in recent years. The street furniture - tubs, lamps, parking machines, etc., are all removable. The showmen will be putting down sheeting covered by boards to protect the new paving which is something they already do for other locations. For the other 50 weeks of the year we will be able to enjoy a much improved area. The "Café Culture" will be down to the various pubs, hotels and restaurants to organise. There is already a bit of this in other parts of the town. Hopefully these new areas will not be the exclusive preserve of the smoker but come to be enjoyed by all, always assuming the weather is suitable.

And so the festive season comes round again. These later, warmer autumns mean that Christmas sneaks up on me and, unless I watch commercial television, I can remain in an almost unaffected state until the middle of December, about a week before the event is as soon as I want to get really involved. Then there is the dilemma - Goose or Turkey this year? It's all a question of leftovers. Not many with the goose, 3 months supply with the turkey. Goose then, sorted! Decorations? When I was young we had a running battle with the Potters opposite. A string of fairy lights round our window brought an instant response - 2 strings. Their return offensive of an illuminated Father Christmas required a response of a set of flashing lights on our tree, now pushed right into the front of the bay window. I think a floodlit nativity was the final answer but as it was based on a shoebox this was less than effective. Just a tree or two this year will suffice.

I rashly offered to lead a walk on Boxing morning for the walking group, so if you feel the need, do join us (see the group's entry for details).

And finally let me wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. □



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## Leisure time in Dersingham by Rita Duffey

The recent very successful Arts and Crafts Festival at St Nicholas Church gave us a good insight into some of the leisure activities of local people and it would be interesting to know the full scope of what we all do.

In my childhood, my dolls' house – typical of the architecture of outer London suburbia, where we lived in the 1940s – was my most important possession, but I have no recollection of what happened to it. Its memory lingered and after leaving home I joined a woodwork class with the aim of recreating a miniature of our new house. The tutor evidently did not have much idea of dolls' house construction

and my effort proved to be far too heavy and cumbersome. However, I kept my dream alive and when years later we moved to France the partly built house came too, eventually to be recycled.

Now I had the luck to meet another expert who was very involved in miniatures and initiated me in the art of Fimo modelling. My first effort was a meal of breast of lamb, beans (French, of course!), carrots and baked potato. Pleased with its success I tackled a mini-person – rather ugly, who I thought was only fit to be a hippy artist. So my art gallery, with studio, café, living quarters, roof garden (to avoid having to make double the amount of tiles) and conservatory, was born. Rather like Topsy, it grew and grew, virtually all made by (my) hand to the traditional 1:12 dolls' house scale and now measures 1.25m x 1m x 0.5m, with 29 opening sash windows, 10 rooms, and garage. A town house, it also has planning permission for several market stalls! Sadly my artistic talents do not extend to painting, but my art gallery is full of original pictures, in oil, water colour or acrylic done for me by friends, none of whom had ever before tackled miniatures of this kind.

A dolls' house may seem child's play but it makes use of a great variety of crafts – mini-furniture making, either from kits or made from scratch from stripwood; fine embroidery to stitch carpets and rugs and upholster chairs; sewing curtains, bed covers and mini-clothes; knitting on needles as fine as dressmaking pins; modelling the inhabitants, food to eat, gardens to sit in full of flowers and vegetables. And of course adequate woodworking skills, particularly if the house is





not in kit form, not to mention lighting.... Many enthusiasts decide to concentrate on one period of history, the most popular being Victorian, and in the process become experts in their particular field. Others have fantasy houses, perhaps for fairies, but being more practical in nature, mine is set in the present day. In this case any style or whim of fancy can be catered for. An alternative to a full-scale dolls' house is the room box, a good way to start out if you haven't a particular type in mind, and more manageable. Quick to complete and an ideal gift, I've attempted a wool shop and stables for friends, and a 'Grannie's sitting room' for my small granddaughter.



Of course you don't need to be a craftsperson to enjoy a dolls' house. The earliest ones date from as far back as the 16<sup>th</sup> century in Europe, in the form of elaborate room boxes as playthings for the wives of the very rich. In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries they became more widespread, when they were used to instruct the young ladies of the house on the skills of housekeeping. The more wealthy may choose to fill their houses with perfect miniatures created by renowned craftsmen – Queen Mary's dolls' house on show at Windsor Castle is a well-known example, and older houses have considerable value as antiques. But to build and furnish your own is so much more rewarding.

It's always good to share an interest, and if there are like-minded dolls' house lovers in Dersingham, I'd love to meet you. □

*Anyone else with a leisure time interest to share? Ed.*



## David Bingham

### Talking Turkey



I'm sure there will be a few households in Dersingham that will 'do different' this Christmas and pop a peacock stuffed with wood pigeons into the Aga – but for the majority it will be roast turkey. Some will have ordered a free range Norfolk Black from the local butcher in May, while others will be staring bleary eyed at a bootiful deep frozen bird on Christmas Day morning. Ours will probably be a fresh turkey from Sainsbury's (other supermarkets are available). Our turkey will not have led a completely fulfilled life but would just about have had the room to 'moon walk' across its living quarters if it ever felt the urge. There was a time when goose was the bird of choice at Christmas. Tastes change but it is probably no coincidence that geese and ducks do not take well to mass production, whereas turkeys and chickens tolerate living close to each other.

Wild turkeys come from North America where turkey is traditionally eaten at Thanksgiving, which takes place in November in the USA and October in Canada. The roots of Thanksgiving celebrations go back to the time of Pilgrim Fathers when feasts took place after the first harvests. The local Native Americans were invited to these feasts and the plentiful wild turkeys were on the menu along with the produce of the harvest. Wild turkeys are slightly smaller and lighter than the farmed varieties but they are still massive birds. They live in the deciduous open woodlands of North America, from the Canadian border to southern Mexico. Their protection as a game bird ensures their survival and even their introduction into areas they have never lived before.

When you pull your roast turkey out of the oven try to imagine how such a creature would ever be able to fly. If it is a particularly large bird the answer would be with great difficulty. The brown meat in the legs and wings indicates where the muscles are that do the most work. Male turkeys emphasise their size during their courtship displays by fluffing out their feathers and fanning their tails. Their small bald heads are coloured blue and red and are adorned with various fleshy outgrowths. All this and a loud gobbling call make them irresistible to the lady turkeys.

I've never seen a wild turkey – I can't actually recall seeing a live turkey of any type because access to turkey farms is restricted to prevent diseases from spreading. I've walked through a few suitable looking woods in South Carolina and Georgia in the hope of seeing wild turkeys but with no success. They are obviously more intelligent than they look judging from the evidence left by the local hunters in the form of discarded cartridge cases and bullet holes riddling all the trees and signs. Turkeys would be silly to raise their little bald heads in places like this.

It is hardly surprising that I failed to see wild turkeys on the few half hearted attempts I've made because seeing Scotland's equivalent of the turkey – the magnificent capercaillie – took a lot of doing. I'd lived in Speyside for more than a year and made many attempts to find a capercaillie before eventually tracking one down to a clearing in a pinewood near the Grantown-on-Spey golf course. I'd spent so long searching that the memory of this encounter has taken on an almost mythic quality as if I'd met a unicorn in a wood.

Capercaillies are not very closely related to turkeys but neither are they too far away from them on the tree of life. They also fluff up their feathers during courtship displays and fan their tails. Their mating call is very distinctive and sounds like loud cork popping noises. The calls of both turkeys and capercaillies carry well in their woodland homes and serve the same purpose of advertising the presence of the males and calling birds in to take part in spectacular communal displays.

I once met someone who said they had eaten capercaillie and it tasted like pine disinfectant. This is probably because their



home is in the conifer forests rather than the deciduous forests favoured by turkeys - so hunting for food is unlikely to be a major problem for capercaillies. The biggest threat to their home range in the fantastic Caledonian Pinewoods on the flanks of the Cairngorms is overgrazing by red deer. We have lost the wolves that once controlled the deer population and there is a commercial reason to keep deer numbers high. Posh people pay a lot of money to dress up as Sherlock Holmes and crawl around the tick infested heather for a chance to take a pot shot at a stationary target that is as big as a family car. The capercaillie photo was taken in the RSPB Abernethy reserve. This is one of the best places to see capercaillie in the wild and the reserve staff arrange trips to take visitors to a hide where they get a reasonable chance of seeing a capercaillie mating display, or lek as they are called, in the early spring. Details are on the RSPB Abernethy website at [www.rspb.org.uk/advice/watchingbirds/grouse/capercaillie.aspx](http://www.rspb.org.uk/advice/watchingbirds/grouse/capercaillie.aspx) but you will have to be prepared to get up very early and even then, like everything else in nature, there is no guarantee that you will see anything.

Enjoy your turkey this Christmas and I hope you get the biggest piece of wishbone – I never do and refuse to play anymore! □



## Giving Nature a Home

Daylight hours are becoming very much shorter now that British summer time has passed and probably very soon we can expect the first frosts. Now also thoughts of Christmas are growing stronger and however we may celebrate it, it will be a happy and pleasant time.

However, in the natural world life will continue to live in the normal way aided by ourselves if conditions become very hard and food is difficult to find.

Many species (mammals and insects) ‘shut down’ as the temperature falls and they seek out a suitable place to hibernate until the spring. Birds do not do this and many species such as ducks, geese and waders that breed much further North than the UK come and spend the winter with us especially on areas such as Titchwell Marsh which offer them a home for the hard times.

But there are many species that continue to live through the winter as far as they can in the normal way and this includes many of our familiar garden birds. If the weather turns severe, with hard frosts and heavy snow, these birds can have great difficulties in finding food and that is where we come in and play a great part in helping them with a continuing supply of food at the feeders - don't forget water too, very important to change it often especially if it freezes over.

All the necessary advice that you require to keep your garden wildlife happy (food and equipment) throughout the winter is available at RSPB Titchwell Marsh from our friendly staff. Why not create a hedgehog or bug hotel for the hibernating species, put up a bat box so you can enjoy these nocturnal creatures, and spoil your garden birds with energy rich fatballs.

Make your garden a home for wildlife this winter. □

*Mike Barrett*



## Norfolk Wildlife Trust West Norfolk Members Group

invites you to

**Hunstanton Methodist Church Hall  
Austin Street**

**on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2013 – 7.30pm for**

West Norfolk members' group Christmas meeting with short presentations, seasonal nibbles and a quiz.

Then again on **Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2014 – 7.30pm for**  
an illustrated talk by Nick Acheson:

**Good old Gondwana: How People & Wildlife came to Madagascar**

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



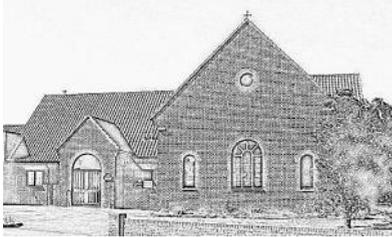
## The Dersingham Task Force

We were pleased to help with some of the unskilled labouring duties connected with the Flower Festival at St Nicholas Church in July whilst October found us raking up cut grass around the churchyard perimeter where we expect to see wild flowers blooming next summer.

Our regular jobs of keeping the rose-bed tidy and the footpaths clear presented some problems in the summer and autumn. The cold spring followed by the summer weather resulted in the weeds in the rose-bed and general vegetation on the footpaths growing at such a rate that we had difficulty in keeping them under control. Indeed, on occasions, because of limited resources, we had to admit that not everything was kept to the standard we would have liked.

We have lost several members of the group ( due to health problems, moving from the village, etc) recently so will need more volunteers for next year if we are to continue as we would wish. We will have a 'Recruitment Campaign' in the spring but, in the meanwhile, you will be welcome to join us on our litter-pick on the Common on Wednesday, 4th December (meet in the Heath Road car park at 10.00am) or you can 'phone Sue Eastmure (543870) if you would like more information. □

*Keith Starks*



## News from St Cecilia's Church

Father Henry MacCarthy will be residing at the Priest's house in Dersingham from mid-November, following his retirement from his former parish in Gorleston on sea. Father Henry, who is originally from County Wicklow, near Dublin, had been Parish Priest at Gorleston since 2003. He was

also Catholic Chaplain for James Paget University Hospital. Although Father Peter Rollings will still be responsible for the administration of the parish, it is expected that Fr Henry will want to play an active part in the life of the parish.

As a closing event for the Year of Faith the Bishop of East Anglia, Revd Alan Hopes invited all parishes in the Diocese, on Friday 22nd November, to participate in a great act of witness through the streets of Norwich, followed by an all-night vigil at St John's Cathedral. Our last parish event for the year will be the Christmas lunch at the Lifeboat Inn, Thornham on Wednesday 4th December. Please see notices for details.

The Convent daily masses will be slightly changed, so please check for dates and times on Church notice boards, website or phone (please note new phone number). Our daily Masses are held at St Theresa's Convent, 27 Sandringham Road, Hunstanton and at 10.15am at St Cecilia's, Dersingham on Wednesday. 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.

The Parish telephone number is 01485 534675. If you require a Priest please telephone Fr Peter Rollings on 01553 772220.



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

suzie@googlemail.com

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# SUZIES FITNESS

west norfolk

MONDAY	9.15 - 10.15 am	<b>Body Sculpt</b> (an all over workout using weights)	Ingoldisthorpe Village Hall PE31 6NZ
MONDAY	10.30 - 11.30 am	<b>Stretch &amp; Relaxation</b> (gentle stretch & relaxation) <i>suitable for all levels</i>	Ingoldisthorpe Village Hall PE31 6NZ
MONDAY	12.15 - 1.00 pm	<b>Fitness Pilates</b> <i>suitable for all levels</i>	Heacham Public Hall PE31 7HG
MONDAY	1.05 - 2.05 pm	<b>Zumba Gold</b> (gentle Zumba workout) <i>suitable for all levels</i>	Heacham Public Hall PE31 7HG
TUESDAY	10.00 - 11.00am	<b>Active Seniors</b> (gentle aerobics) <i>suitable for all levels</i>	Ingoldisthorpe Village Hall PE31 6NZ
TUESDAY	6.00 - 7.00 pm	● <b>Zumba</b> <i>shimmi shake and have fun an all over body workout</i>	Ingoldisthorpe Village Hall PE31 6NZ
TUESDAY	7.05 - 8.05 pm	● <b>Body Sculpt</b> (an all over workout using weights)	Ingoldisthorpe Village Hall PE31 6NZ
WEDNESDAY	9.00 - 10.00 am	● On the Ball with Fitness Pilates <i>find different ways to work your core with the stability ball and small balls</i>	Ingoldisthorpe Village Hall PE31 6NZ
WEDNESDAY	10.15 - 11.15 am	● <b>Zumba</b> <i>shimmi shake and have fun an all over body workout</i>	Ingoldisthorpe Village Hall PE31 6NZ
WEDNESDAY	11.30 - 12.30 pm	● <b>Fitness Pilates</b> <i>suitable for all levels</i>	Ingoldisthorpe Village Hall PE31 6NZ
WEDNESDAY	6.00 - 7.00 pm	● <b>Fitness Pilates</b>	St Georges School Hall PE31 6LR
WEDNESDAY	7.05 - 8.05 pm	● <b>Freestyle Fitness Yoga</b> a fitness inspired Yoga class	St Georges School Hall PE31 6LR
THURSDAY	1.30 - 2.30 pm	● <b>Zumba Gold</b> (gentle Zumba workout) <i>suitable for all levels</i>	Smeltisham Memorial Hall
THURSDAY	6.30 - 7.30 pm	<b>Total Body Blitz</b> 6 ten minute sessions working on different areas of the body	Dersingham Methodist Hall
FRIDAY	6.15 - 7.00 pm	● <b>HIIT</b> (always call first) <i>high intensity interval training</i>	St Georges School Gym PE31 6LR
SATURDAY	9.30 - 10.20 pm	● <b>KETTLECISE</b> <b>A complete body workout using the Kettle Bell</b>	St Georges School Gym PE31 6LR

● **PLEASE BOOK**

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Fitness Professional Member and British Wheel of Yoga member.



Suzie Povey | All Rights Reserved © 2012.



## Library News

Thanks to everyone who came along to our fabulous evening with Anna Mudeka. This was arranged in partnership with the lovely people at Creative Arts East who wanted to bring live music to unusual locations - namely libraries and pubs! Anna was born in Zimbabwe and has been living in Norfolk for the over 10 years. Her band played a fusion of Afro beats and did their very best to get everyone dancing.

For those of you who missed the event - Steve has added clips of the performance to YouTube.com . Just search online for '*Anna Mudeka Dersingham*' to view them.

Anna is the founder of the Mudeka Foundation, a charity set up in 2011 to provide education for HIV orphans and disadvantaged children in Zimbabwe. You can find out more about the charity at [www.mudekafoundation.com](http://www.mudekafoundation.com) .

The refreshments we sold at the event raised £53 for the foundation.

Our book clubs will soon be celebrating another year of trying new authors. At our meeting in December we'll be looking back at what we've read and I'll make sure to send the Village Voice our recommended reads. A few group members - Penny, Irene, Irene (yes we have two but they are pronounced differently!) and myself have been working with Norwich Writer's Centre to help select their Summer Reads for 2014. For the last 3 years, Dersingham and 5 other libraries in Norfolk have been given multiple copies of each of the chosen six titles so that readers in the village can read and share their views.

This summer readers were encouraged to try:

**Behind the Beautiful Forevers** by Katherine Boo

**The Polish Boxer** by Eduardo Halfon

**Beside the Sea** by Veronique Olmi

**The Beautiful Indifference** by Sarah Hall

**This Isn't the Sort of Thing that Happens to Someone Like You** by Jon McGregor

**A Light Song of Light** by Kei Miller

The most borrowed book was Veronique Olmi, with Jon McGregor a close second.

This is the first year that the book group has been involved in helping choose the final 6 titles, from a long list of almost 100 titles. It has been an interesting few months and we already have titles we like and hope will make the shortlist. I'm liking *The Fault in our Stars* by John Green, and others liked have included Pierre Lemaitre's *Alex* and Deborah Moggach's *Heartbreak Hotel*. We have until early 2014 to read as many of the long list as we can and give our views.

Don't forget our regular events:

Monday 1.30-3.30 **Scrabble Club**

Thursday 10.30 - 12.30 **Knit and Natter**

Thursday 2-2.30pm **Baby Bounce and Rhyme**

2nd Monday of the month 6pm **Crime Book Club**

3rd Monday of the month 6pm **Book Club**



Happy Christmas reading!

Alison Thorne

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## Dick Melton

In the Village Voice over the years myself and others have often written articles about village pubs. The following is a letter that was sent by Bullard and Sons Ltd from the Anchor Brewery at St Miles Bridge Norwich to a gentleman in Earlsfield, London who was interested in taking over the tenancy of The Bell public house at Marham in Norfolk. The letter is dated 17<sup>th</sup> December 1943.

*Dear Sir,*

*We are in receipt of your letter of the 16<sup>th</sup> instant and note you are interested in the tenancy of The Bell inn at Marham. We would, therefore, inform you that this is a fully licensed house standing in a good position in the village. There are the usual trade rooms, living accommodation and several outbuildings, the ingoing would be by a valuation which in our opinion should not exceed £100. And possession can be given in January. The expenses of the property are as follows:*

*Rent ...£40 a year, licence...£21 a year, rates...(about) £38 a year.*

*The trade for the last twelve months was as follows:*

*293 barrels of beer (in 9 gallon barrels), 34 gallons of spirits, 16 bottles of wine, 33 gallons of cider, 1,880 dozen pints of bottled beer (22,560 bottles).*

*We are enclosing you herewith a permit to view and if after viewing you are desirous of applying for the tenancy will you kindly let you know and we shall then be pleased to place your application before our directors for their consideration.*

*Yours faithfully*

*Bullard and Sons Ltd*

*L A O Baker*

When you read this letter and realise that The Bell was situated in a small Norfolk village and the country was in the middle of the second world war and every thing was on ration, it must have been a very busy pub, though I suppose the fact that it was very near to one of Norfolk's largest airfields could have been a help.

### **Dersingham Fen (aka Bog)**

In the press and on the radio there was reports of H.R.H Prince Philip making a tour of Dersingham Bog. As I have said in the Village Voice many times before, this area of land is not and never has been a bog. It has only been called a bog since Natural England took over the management of this land after the Dersingham Bypass was constructed in 1990.

This 400 acres of land, 300 acres of which is in the parishes of Wolferton and Sandringham and called Wolferton Warren and the other 100 acres of fen are in the parish of Dersingham, were many years ago all part of a 1,000 acre warren that covered the three parishes. There has never been a bog on this area of land. So why call it so? There is an area of mud there, which is now covered in water, but this was hard mud and I and many others walked across it to pick the cotton flowers. There is also a large area of cranberry beds, but no bog.

There is a lot of history attached the fen and warren. The Duck Decoy was made from the bomb crater of a bomb that was dropped from a Zeppelin in 1914. There was a thousand yard long rifle range on the fen that was used to train solders for the first world war; there was a community sand pit on the fen; and the parishioners of Dersingham had many rights on the fen, like the taking of wins, pea sticks, bean poles, fire wood and more -- they still have these rights. Therefore, the name of bog should be dropped for these two areas of land and they should revert back to being once again called their old and proper names, Wolferton Warren and Dersingham Fen.

### **Allotments**

When I was a boy and growing up in Dersingham nearly everybody had a garden where they grew their vegetables in the back garden. In the front garden would be flowers, shrubs and, maybe, a small tree or two and most gardens were surrounded by hedges not fences, like they are today. Also, a lot of people had allotments.

In Dersingham there were many allotments: there were some behind the police station, on Sandringham Hill, Dodds Hill and Station Road, where there are still some to this very day. There were also some allotments up the top of Fern Hill; these allotments were set-aside for men from

the village who had been prisoners of war with the Germans or the Japanese during the Second World War

Many people kept animals on their allotments like pigs, chickens, goats and even horses. People would walk around the allotments to have a look at what other people were growing and how good the crops were some people grew. So much that they would sell some of their crops.

A lot of men would go over the fen or Shut-Up-Common and cut down the small silver birch trees to use as pea sticks or beanpoles. They would also use birch poles to make trelliswork to train their roses up. Men would also cut the brakes (bracken) with scythes to use as pig litter or to put on their potato clamps to protect the potatoes from the frost. They would put the brakes over the potatoes, then cover the clamp with soil, then put a small drain pipe in the top of the clamp to let some air in so the potatoes did not sweat and rot.

Also, nearly every allotment holder had a small shed on his plot. A lot of men would have a stove, a chair and a kettle in his shed so he can have a sit down and a cup of tea. Some men painted their sheds inside and had curtains up the widows. Also many people had small green houses on their plots.

Many men grew tobacco plants. These would grow to a height of five to six feet, then the leaves would turn brown and would then be taken off the stork and laid in a wooden box. Then a bottle of dark rum would be poured over them and some bricks or a heavy weight put on top to make it into a press. After a month or two the tobacco leaves would be taken out of the press, chopped up very fine and then used to smoke in their pipes, not as cigarettes.

In the late seventies vegetables became a lot cheaper to buy in the shops, so many people gave up their allotments. Then the councils moved in and built on a lot of them but since the late nineties vegetables have been very costly, so people have gone back to their allotments and most councils have waiting lists for tenants.

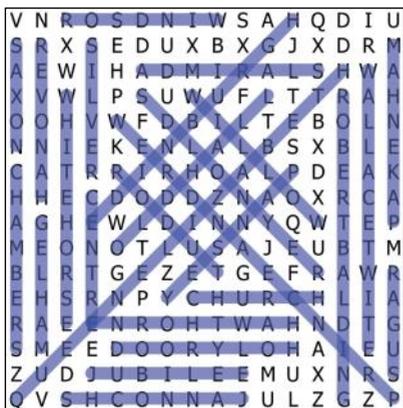
### A Christmas recipe

Well by the time you read this it will be nearly Christmas and it will be a lot colder, so I thought I would finish off my article for this issue of Village Voice with one of my favourite recipes for a nice hot breakfast on a cold morning.

Here we go. Half a pound of fresh cooked cockles, two eggs, one sliced large tomato, four mushrooms (chopped up), one round of thick unsliced bread, four rashers of bacon and two large knobs of butter. Chuck the butter in a large deep frying pan and, when melted, put all the ingredients in the pan except for the cockles. When all of the ingredients are fried put them on a large plate, keep the frying pan on the heat and chuck the cockles in the pan. After one minute they will have gone crisp and brown. Take them out of the pan and spread them over the rest of the food. This lot will keep you nice and warm till tea time. Have a good Christmas, I will be back with some more articles and squit next year. □

## Dersingham Courts, Drives, Lanes, Vales & Ways Wordsearch

### Solution from issue 84 (October 2013)



- |           |                |
|-----------|----------------|
| ADMIRALS  | PANSEY         |
| CENTRE    | PRINCEANDREW   |
| CHAMBERS  | QUEENELIZABETH |
| CHURCH    | REYNOLDS       |
| EDINBURGH | ROBERTBALDING  |
| GELHAM    | SAXON          |
| HANOVER   | SILVER         |
| HAWTHORNE | SUGAR          |
| HOLYROOD  | TUDOR          |
| JANNOCHS  | WALLACETWITE   |
| JUBILEE   | WHITEHORSE     |
| OLDHALL   | WILLOW         |
| PAKENHAM  | WINDSOR        |

Well done if you found all 26 of Dersingham's Courts, Drives, Lanes, Vales and Ways. □

## Dersingham Scouts, Cubs, Beavers, Guides, Brownies & Rainbows

by Lynne and Elizabeth Wheeler

Members of Dersingham Scouts & Guides attended Service to commemorate the 98th anniversary of the Gallipoli campaign of 1915 at St Nicholas Church with a Scout & Guide each laying a wreath in the Memorial chapel.



### 1st Dersingham Guides at WolfJam 2013

15 members of 1st Dersingham Guides attended WolfJam 2013 at Wolferton campsite with Scouts from Dersingham & Heacham, Heacham Cubs and Sandringham Guides with a day visit by 1st & 2nd Dersingham Brownies for a weekend camp - 14th/15th September - organised by Sandringham Explorer Leaders. Following a wet start to the day, the girls were soon busy enjoying themselves with activities ranging from making crafts and cooking camp doughnuts to air rifle shooting, climbing and bungee runs. There was also a walk around the nearby Dersingham Bog before returning to the campsite to pitch the tents before tea. They then enjoyed a BBQ before the campfire was lit and there were marshmallows and hot chocolate. The next morning, after a bacon and eggs breakfast and a scavenger hunt, the tents were taken down just before the rain came. Everyone including seven brownies who joined in just for the Saturday had a very enjoyable time.

### 2nd Dersingham Brownies

During the summer holidays all the Brownies were given a Holiday Challenge: to complete their Culture Badge. They had four challenges: create a poster to reflect their daily life, draw a family tree in an interesting way, visit a castle, stately home or museum and tell us about their visit and find out about either a famous Norfolk song, poem, person or place. Many of the Brownies brought their completed challenges back to the Brownie meeting and have been presented with their badges. One of the Brownie Leaders has also been presented with a badge, Emma Harrison was awarded her 10 year service badge by our District Commissioner Carla Andrews.

### 1st Dersingham Rainbows Celebrate 20 years

This September, it was 20 years since the 1st Dersingham Rainbows held its first meeting on Thursday 16th September 1993. Since then around 300 girls aged 5-7 years from Dersingham and nearby villages have been members with several returning as Guide helpers, Young Leaders and adult leaders. Lynne Wheeler, one of the original three leaders who started the unit is still their leader. The Party was organised by five former Rainbows, who are now members of 1st Dersingham Guides, as part of their Baden-Powell Challenge. The Rainbows enjoyed lots of party games, including pass-the-parcel, musical statues, musical bumps and pin the tail on the donkey. They also enjoyed a sumptuous party tea with a special birthday cake, which everyone had a slice of to take home in their party bag along with other goodies. They were also each presented with a celebration badge, which had been specially designed for the Birthday.

If anyone is interested in joining Rainbows, please call (01485) 544753 for more information. □



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## Village Voice Live

### The Gamekeeper's Year—Tuesday 1st October

Gerald Gray, who is the head gamekeeper on the Hilborough Estate, gave a fascinating insight into the work of the modern gamekeeper in his illustrated talk. He explained that his father and grandfather had both been gamekeepers as indeed had another relative recorded at Felbrigg Hall in 1847. Perhaps shooting birds for sport arouses uncomfortable feelings in some, as it does indeed for this writer, but there can be no denying the immense amount of conservation work that Gamekeepers like Gerald carry out. Modern farming methods and chemicals can have a devastating effect on wildlife so a great deal of the gamekeeper's work is concerned with creating an environment that will sustain it. Wide field borders that are not ploughed or sprayed are left around crops where grasses and plants can flourish and provide a habitat for a large variety of insects. These are essential food not only for the game birds but also benefit song birds in general. At one point in his year Gerald takes a large net to sweep through these areas and record the type and number of insects he finds. Hedges containing a wide variety of bushes are managed to provide a habitat where wildlife can flourish. I had not realised how important insects were until Gerald pointed out that a Grey Partridge can raise up to 22 young and each young chick will need 2000 insects a day. Gerald explained how areas are left unused in crop fields so that the Skylark and the Stone Curlew can make their nests and raise their young undisturbed. Another important part of his work is vermin control. Foxes, stoats, rats, crows, rooks, jackdaws and even the colourful Jay are expert egg thieves and need to be kept in control. As Gerald says they all have their place in the countryside but when their numbers are too great they are detrimental to all wildlife not just the game birds. The Gamekeeper's year begins on February 2<sup>nd</sup> when the work already mentioned is carried out. Eventually the number of Grey Partridges is counted to see if there are sufficient to allow for them to be part of the shooting season. If the numbers are low none will be shot that year. December is a particularly busy time and shooting continues until February 1<sup>st</sup> when the season ends. Then the next day the cycle starts all over again. This fascinating talk was accompanied by some stunning photographs of birds and countryside, several taken by photographer Chris Knights who is coming to Village Voice Live in December and I would recommend everyone to come to see his amazing work.



*Clio*

### Rebuilding the Welsh Highland Railway— Tuesday 5th November



Michael Schumann spoke, at length, about the 25-mile long narrow gauge heritage railway in the Welsh county of Gwynedd, operating from Caernarfon to Porthmadog. He spoke about the long history of the route from 1863 when tramways were constructed to serve slate quarries, through a confusing series of failures of companies trying to establish a passenger service and on to his personal experience from the 1990's (and indeed significant achievement) when the Ffestiniog Railway Company took control of the Welsh Highland Railway and succeeded in restoring the complete line by 2011.

Rather sadly though, a promising subject was ruined for many, I suspect, by such an inexperienced speaker. The presentation itself was far too detailed, poorly illustrated (the map shown for most of the first half of the talk was unreadable to even those sitting close to the screen) and went on for far, far, too long. Some of the audience started to leave after the normal finishing time for these events of 9:30pm and many left, including myself, at 10:15pm when an opportunity arose, although the speaker announced that there was more to follow.

*Whiffler*

*See the back cover for what's next at Village Voice Live. Ed. □*



## Dersingham Bog News

from Tom Bolderstone, Reserve Warden

Doesn't time fly it only seems a few months ago that we were welcoming 2013 on the reserve and thinking about the year ahead, planning works and beginning to think about surveys and breeding birds. Now November is here and the end of the year is not far away.

This time of year sees the winter scrub management programme continuing on the reserve but it is not just about practical works. It is also a time for pulling together the year's survey data and writing reports. This can be quite a tough task with numerous species being surveyed and high volumes of data to enter into biological recording software. There is also the matter of writing up the year's bird survey data. With four separate survey routes on the reserve, pulling together the data can take quite a while but is vital in helping us to manage the reserve. Dragonfly data is received from various volunteer surveyors, which again have to be entered into our biological recording software. Other insects also get a look in with records collated for Butterflies, Moths and Bees and Wasps. This data has been collected in various forms on the site since being managed as a nature reserve together with some that was collected beforehand.

Why do we collect this data? Without collecting data on the reserve over the last 22 or so years we wouldn't be able to monitor the change in species on the site. More importantly the data that we collect is also very necessary on a county, regional and national scale as there are many scarce species to be found on Dersingham Bog NNR. This data is either sent to National schemes or County recorders which then allows the data to be used for Local, Regional and National reports.

It's not just sightings or surveys done by staff and volunteers that we have to collate. Many of you, the visitors, provide us with sightings and records either when we see you out on site or via email. These sightings are just as important as the sightings that we as staff or volunteers collect as often many visit the reserve at times different from those who normally work there. If you do have any sightings for Dersingham Bog NNR that you would like to share with us please email at the address below.

Dersingham Bog NNR doesn't just have volunteers during the week. Not everyone is able to volunteer then, so we run weekend work parties throughout the year. They run normally at least once a month on Saturdays or Sundays and we are looking to recruit more volunteers to these teams. There is no obligation to come along to every single day, just to as many as you can fit in.

On these days the tasks include scrub and habitat management, path and infrastructure repairs, occasional surveys as well as a wide variety of other tasks. The days start at 10am and finish around 2.30 pm. Tools, gloves and equipment are provided but volunteers bring their own lunch. If any of you are interested in joining us or would like to find out more about the weekend work parties please get in contact with me using the email address below.

Over the next few

weeks I shall be keeping a look out for many of the winter visitors to the reserve such as fly over pink footed geese, redwings and fieldfares. Hopefully I shall see some of you out on the reserve too.

*thomas.bolderstone@naturalengland.org.uk* □



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## Dersingham Day Centre for the Elderly

by Alice Worth

# DDC

On Saturday 12th October the Day Centre held its annual Autumn Fair at the Methodist Church in Post Office Road. Volunteers had set up their tables the night before and were back in the Church Hall early the next morning to get everything ready for 10.00am. There were a few light showers when we opened but it didn't seem to put people off coming, in fact we had quite a queue by the time we opened. It was a busy morning and we were very encouraged by the number of people who turned out to support us. The volunteers doing the refreshments were kept busy and the really beautiful cakes for sale, literally flew off the plates. At the end of the morning, as we packed up and put all the tables and chairs away, we all agreed it had been fun and when we found out that we had raised the grand sum of £460.97p we couldn't wait to let all the Members know the following Wednesday. A very big thank you to all those people, including our own Members, who supported us in so many ways both before and on the day, and to the Members of the Methodist Church for their help and support. On behalf of the Day Centre Committee, a big thank you to our volunteers who worked so hard and so cheerfully to make the day a success. What a great team they are.

On Wednesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> October, the Dersingham Evening Womens' Institute came to the Church Hall to cook lunch for our Members and Volunteers. They arrived in force and soon the kitchen was buzzing with activity. The tables were set up with cheerful green gingham table cloths and everyone was seated by noon. Roast beef with Yorkshire Puddings and a variety of vegetables were served followed by apple pie and custard. Coffees and teas then followed with individual chocolates for those who could just about find room for them after such a superb lunch.

When lunch was finished, and just before everyone returned to their activity tables, there was another surprise for the Members. Everyone of them was presented with a handmade woollen blanket, handknitted by the WI ladies, and all of different colours and designs. What a very thoughtful and practical present they made and from the comments heard round the room it was obvious that all our Members were delighted with their blankets. I might add that the Volunteers looked on with envy! The WI ladies had made it a very special day and their hard work and thoughtfulness was very much appreciated by the Day Centre. Thank you ladies.

We now look forward to our 32<sup>nd</sup> birthday party at the end of November, then to decorating our tree for the Church Christmas Tree Festival and, finally, to our Annual Christmas Party, which I will report on in the January edition of Village Voice.

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



### Who made all the pies?

It's not often that a new bakery opens in Dersingham so to hear that Priors the butchers, who moved to the village a few years ago, were transferring their bakery unit to St Nicholas Court was pleasant surprise. Making use of the unused portion of their premises made sense and enabled the operation to be moved from King's Lynn.

It is a family affair still. Overseen by Carol Prior, son Trevor together with Fiona Adams and Damien

Lusher are all involved in making the pies, quiches and sweet pastries that are sold in the shop and at Knight's Hill and there is also an element of wholesale supply undertaken.

The approaching festive season means that they will be flat out keeping up with demand for luxury game and meat pies, Christmas puddings and all the other goodies that get snapped up at this time still, with over 20 years experience, Carol takes this in her stride.

*Tony Bubbs*





## Elizabeth Fiddick

### The Old Dun Cow – She’s Done For Now

On August 4<sup>th</sup> next year it will one hundred years since the start of World War 1, the war to end wars, or so they thought. We have only to look at the War Memorial to see how many young men of this village made the supreme sacrifice in the mud and hell that was the battleground. In 1915 many Norfolk men served at Gallipoli against the Turks. Sir Ian Hamilton sent a report back concerning one attack which involved the 5th Norfolk regiment. He reported that they were on the right of the line and found themselves less strongly opposed than the rest. Colonel Sir H. Beauchamp led the men forward as the fighting grew hotter and the ground became wooded and broken. Many men were wounded or exhausted with thirst in the intense heat but with sixteen officers and 250 men the Colonel pushed on driving the enemy before them. Sir Ian records, *“Nothing more was ever seen or heard of any of them. They charged into the forest and were lost to sight and sound. Not one ever came back.”*

These men included Captain Frank Beck the Land Agent at Sandringham and a company made up of men from this area who worked on the estate with him. In Sept 1919 one hundred and eighty of their bodies were located 800 yards behind the Turkish lines. I have no doubt that in the days before these attacks all the men found comradeship and humour despite the harrowing conditions. We have all heard the songs popular at the time that lifted the men’s spirits. Just off shore from the landing area the steamer River Clyde that had been used to ferry troops and supplies ashore had run aground and was beached on a sandbank. The troops nicknamed her *The Old Dun Cow* a reference to a song popular at the time that contained the words *The Old Dun Cow/ She’s done for now*” The Old Dun Cow in question being a Public House that had run dry. This would have had particular significance for any soldiers from Dersingham and would have brought back fond memories of home. Perhaps they were the ones who initiated the nickname for newcomers to this village may not know when they shop at Budgen’s Supermarket that the whole area where they shop and park their cars was the site of The Dun Cow Public House and Farm. Originally there was a long two storey carstone cottage adjoining a much larger Barn and cattle yards with a low stone wall to the right, part of which still remains today. On the opposite side of the narrow road were two farm cottages that still stand today.



In the 18<sup>th</sup> century many Turnpike roads were constructed

and an Act of Parliament was passed in 1768 for *“widening the roads from East Gate to Gayton, Grimston and to the north end of Babingley Lane”*. The Act directed that the road should run *“from the said Wootton Gaps through the parish of Castle Rising to the South end of a certain other bridge called Babingley Bridge in Babingley and from the North End of the same bridge to the North End of Babingley Lane in Babingley.”*

Some years later in 1811 in the reign of George III a further act was passed for repairing the road from the East Gate of King’s Lynn to Babingley Lane and then *“to extend the road thence to Darsingham in the County of Norfolk.”* The Act went on to note that the road through Babingley, Wolferton and Sandringham to the **sign of The Dun Cow Darsingham** was *much out of repair, incommodious, and dangerous for travellers*. It argued the case for the *amending, widening, improving, and keeping in repair through the parishes of Babingley, Wolferton and Sandringham to the sign of The Dun Cow Darsingham*. However there were to be no tolls charged on the road from Babingley to the sign of The Dun Cow Darsingham. However £950 was subscribed to pay for the expenses incurred. Bryant’s Map of Norfolk in 1826 plots this road with the end of the

Turnpike at The Dun Cow clearly noted.

A Commercial Directory of 1830 records Robert West as the Proprietor of The Dun Cow Inn and in 1836 he is recorded as Victualler and Farmer of The Dun Cow with one John Wells as manager. The Tithe Map of 1839 shows the Inn clearly and the land on the right down to Manor Road is named Cow Close and so the road we think of as Lynn Road was known as Cow Lane well into the last century. From the census of 1851 we know that John Waters was farming six acres there and employing three labourers. He lived with his wife Ann, 3 daughters Mary Anne, Maria and Margaret aged six, and 3 sons Robert, George and Samuel. Emily Denny from Congham was employed as a House Servant.

So already this was a well-established farm and Inn of many years but how did it get its name?

It is linked to an English hero of legend and romance Guy of Warwick. His exploits were first written down by an Anglo-Norman poet of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Guy was the son of Siward, steward of Roland Earl of Warwick and the story tells of the exploits he undertakes to win the hand of the Earl's daughter Phelis. He performs great deeds abroad, rescues the daughter of the Emperor of Germany, fights the Saracens and slays the Sultan. He returns to England and marries Phelis but after fifty days he sets off on pilgrimage to the Holy Land. I don't quite know what that tells us of the marriage but no matter Guy is after all a hero who must go on to other deeds of prowess. It is when he returns to England that the Dun Cow enters the picture. The Dun Cow was a savage beast that the fable says belonged to a giant and was kept on Mitchell Fold Shropshire. The cow's milk was inexhaustible but one day an old woman who had filled her pail with milk wanted to fill her sieve as well. This so enraged the cow that she broke loose from the fold and went on the rampage over Dunmore Heath. Enter our hero Guy of Warwick. Ta-Ra! After a fierce duel he slays the savage beast and saves the local people from death and disaster. I have read that a huge tusk, probably of an elephant, is still shown at Warwick Castle as one of the horns of the cow. Has anyone seen this? As for Guy after this he became a hermit near Warwick and regularly begged for bread from his wife at his own castle gate. On his death bed he sent her a ring by which she recognized him and went to close his dying eyes!

After Henry Tudor defeated Richard III at Bosworth Field in 1485 and became King Henry VII he returned to London in triumph. Four hundred and thirty five worthy citizens of the city rode to meet him and Henry led the procession through the city to St. Paul's. There he offered up the three ragged standards that he had carried during the battle as a statement of his divine right to rule. The standards were The Arms of St. George, a red fiery dragon painted upon green and white sarcenet and a banner of Tarteron beaten with an image of The Dun Cow. He probably used the Dun Cow

banner as an assertion of his claim to the Beaufort line and thus his right to the throne. The Beauforts claimed descent from our hero Guy of Warwick and Lady Margaret Beaufort was descended from John of Gaunt son of Edward III.

By 1864 after her husband

John died his wife Anne Waters ran the pub and the farm for some years until John Smith is recorded in 1874 as the proprietor and farmer. He and his wife Catherine were host and hostess until sometime in the 1890s. I always enjoy finding a reference that brings these villagers of times gone by to life. In early 1899 Catherine Smith died and the Parish Magazine recorded that John and Catherine could talk of the years before The Prince of Wales came to Sandringham and that to



them the names of Henley, Motteux and Cowper previous owners of the estate were as familiar as household words. The obituary continues, “*Kate, as many friends and admirers of the **goodhearted and voluble hostess** liked to call her, was with her husband lovingly cared for in their later years at the house of their daughter.*”



After John and Catherine retired one of the longest serving landlords took over, Thomas Augustus Magness. By 1896 the village businesses were beginning to realize the benefits they could gain from the railway and particularly the proximity of the Royal Family. William Henry Mann at The Feathers was already advertising “*good*

*stabling for hunters, and first class accommodation for visitors in the neighbourhood; conveyances to meet any train at Wolferton or Dersingham*” Theodor Jannoch was advertising his nursery at The Old Hall as the largest grower of Lily of the Valley in England with a special warrant to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales. So Thomas Magness not to be outdone states in his adverts “*Seaside visitors can have good accommodation close to Sandringham.*”

Thomas ran the Dun Cow throughout the early traumatic years of the Twentieth Century. He was there when Victoria died and he contributed 2s 6d towards the cost of the medals presented to the children as part of the celebrations for the coronation of Edward VII. He would have taken part in the celebrations for the coronation of George V and no doubt joined his regulars in the discussions over the First World War, and the awful events of 1916 when the zeppelin dropped bombs on Doddshill and the marshes. He was there throughout the twenties and was certainly still the host in 1933. It was in 1937 that John Brett Billing is recorded as the proprietor. It was also at this time that a massive change was to take place.

I am grateful to Dick Melton for helping me narrow down the date for the upheaval. Dick’s father was posted overseas in 1936 but when he returned to the village in 1939 the old Dun Cow Pub that he had always known was gone and in its place stood new modern Dun Cow. So in about December 1938 the villagers watched as the new modern Dun Cow replaced the familiar old pub. Down came the long carstone cottage Inn, down came the cattle sheds and the farmyard pond disappeared beneath the rubble. I wonder what they thought of it all? I can imagine the furore if it happened now. I was told many years ago by a Dersingham resident that there had been a bad fire at the old Dun Cow which would explain the demolition. But at the time of writing I have been unable to verify this. Nevertheless this new modern Dun Cow successfully served the village for many years. During the Second World War it was recorded as a First Aid Station and was a close witness to the devastating floods of 1953 as it looked out over the marshes towards the Wash. Dick tells me that in the 1970s David Buck became the youngest ever Landlord at just 21 years of age. But it was in 1993 that it ceased trading and stood with its windows boarded up for some time. Rumours abounded as to what was planned. A Nursing Home? Flats? As we know the Pub was demolished and Budgens Supermarket was built.

The area is still a hub of activity for the village as the Supermarket provides a valuable if different service to that of the Pub. Many villagers will remember new modern Dun Cow but the numbers of those who remember the original old buildings and farm are small and becoming smaller every year. Soon we will just have the old photographs and a very small section of curving wall to remind us of what once was there.

Yes indeed! The Old Dun Cow she’s done for now. □





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## Dersingham Institute Bowls Club

by Bob Tipling  
with pictures from Richard Bridges

The 2013 playing season is over but the club doesn't come to a standstill because of it! It has been a very busy period for our Greenkeeper and his band of volunteer helpers (see picture) as they have put their backs into ensuring that the groundwork is done in preparation for contractors to come in and hollow tine, top dress and seed the green during the autumn period.



Friday 18th October saw a gathering of club members and guests for the annual Presentation Lunch at the Le Strange Arms Hotel in Old Hunstanton where a large number of awards were made, following an excellent meal provided by the banqueting team. You can imagine the time it took for the presentations to be made when you see the picture of the trophies as they were laid out in readiness for the President and Chairman to hand over to the individual or team recipients

It would be impossible in the space allowed to name ALL of the winners, but two, seen here with the Club President, Bob Meredith (centre), are worthy of mention,



as Ruth Ince and Albert Chamberlain did particularly well, with Albert being in receipt of more awards than any other member (he was heard to be discussing a home extension in order to accommodate them all!). The Chairman announced that Ruth had now qualified as a bowls coach, meaning that our club is now proud to have two people who are in a position to teach new and old members alike.

As for the winter period, the club will be holding its AGM on Tuesday 12th November at 2pm, it is certain that the regularly held Winter Warmers will be recommenced, and perhaps our brilliant Social Committee will find the opportunity to introduce other events for our pleasure.

Alterations are to take place within the clubhouse which will see the kitchen area being enhanced, and the last hedge to be cut down to size is to be tackled. In the meantime the club will be starting the new season with a satisfactory amount in its bank balance.

Well done to the Chairman, Committee, Social Committee, Club Captains, Green-keeper, Volunteers in the working parties and not forgetting those who did the necessary in order to provide tea and biscuits during matches. □



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## Dersingham Walking Group

Welcome to the Dersingham Walking Group, which provides a regular programme of guided walks round the local countryside. The weather may not quite as warm at this time of year, but there's the stark beauty of winter trees and maybe sparkling frosts to enjoy. The air is clean and crisp and ideal for walking, and we've got some good walks coming up, including a nice amble on Boxing Day morning, lead by the ex-editor of Village Voice, Tony Bubb. Our first walk in December will be lead by a new member of the leaders' team, Cliff Jordan, who will show us the varied landscape of the woods, warren, fen and heath that surround Dersingham.

The walks are free and there's no need to book, just turn up on the day wearing suitable clothing and sturdy footwear. Dogs are welcome, provided they're well behaved. The length is usually between 4 and 5 miles, taking around a couple of hours, so why not get some fresh air and exercise, you'll be in good company!



### Details of our next walks are:

#### **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December 1.30pm**

**Starting point:** Dersingham War Memorial, corner of Station Rd. Grid ref: TF 686 309  
Woods, warren, fen and heath. The varied landscape that is on our doorstep.

**Leader** Cliff Jordan 01485 541115

#### **Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> December 10.30am**

**Starting point:** Shenborne Village Hall/Club Grid ref: TF 715 324  
A Boxing Day morning walk around Shenborne and the Peddars Way.

**Leader** Tony Bubb 01485 542638

#### **Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> January 1.30pm**

**Starting Point:** layby on the A148 opposite the turning to Sandringham.  
Grid Ref: TF 711 253

A tour of the footpaths of Hillington and Grimston

**Leader** Elizabeth Fiddick 01485 540940

#### **Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2.00pm**

**Starting point:** St Mary's church car park Old Hunstanton. Grid ref: TF 688 420

An intriguing exploration of Old Hunstanton Park, which is only open one day each week.

**Leader** Steve and Lindsey Davis 01485 543138

You can always find the full walks programme on the parish council website:

[www.dersingham.org.uk/announcements](http://www.dersingham.org.uk/announcements)



*Quoted grid references are for the relevant Ordnance Survey map, usually Landranger sheet 132 or Explorer sheet 250. The leaders are happy to organize and lead these walks but stress that each participant must appreciate that there are hazards associated with walking and take responsibility for their own safety. As Alfred Wainwright said "watch where you put your feet"!*

*If you would like more information about an individual walk, such as the going underfoot, stiles etc. Please contact the walk leader. For general enquiries contact the group coordinator:*

**Stephen Martyn** Tel: 01485 541333

Email: [stephenmartyn@gmail.com](mailto:stephenmartyn@gmail.com) □



## Maggie's Miscellany

### A Charitable Christmas—by Maggie Gray

Like Valentine's cards, Christmas cards began life as a form of stationery. On special occasions the wealthy upper-classes sent little verses, elegantly engraved inside an ornate, usually embossed border. The verses were flowery and wordy, and although the term 'Christmas card' was unheard of in the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, these rather serious cards are considered to be the forerunners of the cards as we know them today.

By 1850, what has been called an 'authentic' Christmas card was published by Sumner's *Home Treasury* office, showing a family gathered together, drinking a toast, with the printed message "A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year To You". The designer of the card, a Mr J.C. Horsley, thereby proclaimed that he was the inventor of the Christmas card.



To some historians, this seems far-fetched, as there is no proof that this type of scene had not been drawn before, and they believe Mr Horsley got his idea for the wording from the custom of sending 'Christmas Letters' to family and friends.

By the end of the 1860s, new elaborate designs began to appear. Over-worked, over-decorated, highly ornate cards with sentimental verses, were to remain popular for many a decade, at which point designs became simpler, though the actual range of designs gradually increased.

It was some seventy years later before the first charity cards appeared for sale, and although no definite proof has been found as to who started this trend, certainly amongst the first to pioneer the idea was the Norfolk Wildlife Trust, which began life as the Norfolk Naturalists Trust in 1926, when it was founded by Dr. Sydney Long. It was from his home in Surrey Street in Norwich that Dr Long produced the first Christmas card for charity, in 1930. It featured a full-colour picture of a Bearded Tit, taken from a painting donated by the Norfolk artist, J.C. Harrison. There were 5,000 cards printed, raising some £60 for the charity.

The Trust recognised this as a good means of raising funds, much-needed then as now, and chose another of Mr. Harrison's designs – a Crossbill – for their 1931 Christmas card. Within a few years of that very first card, demand exceeded supply, and for the first time a reprint of the 'Goldfinch' Christmas card was needed. It is believed that this was the first of the Trust's cards to

be sent to Sandringham. Certainly it has been recorded that Dr. Long sent a copy of the Goldfinch card to King George V and certainly he also told him that the success of the sales of this card had meant they had been able to clear their debts, debts incurred following the purchase of Alderfen Broad, because there is a copy of a letter from His Majesty stating that he was “Gratified to learn... of the overdraft being extinguished”, as well as his admiration for the card. In fact, 20,000 copies of this were sold, raising £320.

At the time, the sales of these cards brought in more money than any other source of the Trust’s income, and proved to be a valuable money-maker and today form part of their extensive range of items for sale, still featuring work by Norfolk artists and photographers.

## A Good Christmas Read

also with Maggie Gray

For the children in your life aged 8+, ‘Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Hard Luck’ by Jeff Kinney looks like a great read. This is the 8<sup>th</sup> book in the popular series, written by Jeff Kinney who some critics reckon is as good a children’s author as J.K. Rowling. Every time the next one in the series is issued, it is rated as being ‘hotly anticipated’. Very funny books apparently.

For the smaller little darlings, David Walliams has produced his first picture book, illustrated by Tony Ross called ‘The Slightly Annoying Elephant’. Whilst for the teens – ‘JLS: Forever and a Day’ might be a treat to find under the tree.

For ladies who love a little romance, Cecilia Ahern has a new novel out in November, ‘How to Fall in Love’. Basically it’s the story of a woman who stops a man from throwing himself off a bridge and sets herself the challenge of making him love life again. Will she succeed?

Elizabeth Jane Howard’s Cazalet Chronicles have been a favourite with (mostly) female readers since the first one, ‘The Light Years’ was published in 1990. Now the fifth and final novel in the saga is released, ‘All Change’ - just in time for a Christmas treat to give yourself perhaps?

And for those ladies who love to cook, and look at a good-looking cook, ‘Paul Hollywood’s Pies and Puds’ is a must. But that’s just my opinion!

Interested in a good detective novel? Then the new Inspector Rebus novel from Ian Rankin will no doubt make its way onto your wish list this Christmas, due out in November ‘Saints of the Shadow Bible’ is the 19<sup>th</sup> Inspector Rebus book. Or maybe you prefer Patricia Cornwell? If so, ‘Dust’, the latest Kay Scarpetta novel released in November, will be the one for you.

Bletchley Park, the BBC series, proved very popular, and for those who want to know more about this fascinating place, ‘The Lost World of Bletchley Park – The Illustrated History of the Wartime Codebreaking Centre’ by Sinclair McKay, released in October, will no doubt interest you.

For the gardeners amongst you who like to read about gardens as much as work in your own, there are several new releases due out in time for Christmas present buying.

‘Virginia Woolf’s Garden: The Story of the Garden at Monk’s Wood’ is a beautifully photographed ‘coffee table’ type of book. As is ‘The Rose’ by David Austin. And definitely on my list will be ‘Beatrix Potter’s Gardening Life: The Plants and Places That Inspired the Classic Children’s Tales’ by Marta McDowell.

Perhaps you’d like to try a new craft? How about making things with felt? ‘Felt Fantastic’ by Sarah Tremelling and Morven Jones has some lovely projects from wreaths and lavender sachets to little toys for children. I’ve recently discovered working in felt, so this is another book to add to my wish list. And if you love to knit socks then ‘Op Art Socks – Creative Effects in Sock Knitting’ by Stephanie Van Der Linden could be for you. For the man in your life, how about ‘The Hornby Magazine Yearbook’, or David Beckham’s autobiography, Alex Ferguson’s autobiography or one of the many brilliant graphic novels available in time for Christmas... ‘Asterix and the Picts’ maybe, or ‘The Complete Peanuts: 1989-1990’ by Charles M Schultz and Lemony Snicket.

If interior design and decor is your interest, how about ‘Amazing Spaces’ by George Clarke and Jane Field, released in time to coincide with the 2nd series of his popular television programme? Or for something more practical there’s ‘Home: 25 Projects to Brighten Your Life’ by Beci Orpen.

So many books to choose from, I hope you find something of interest in this little selection. □





## Epic Cycle Rides from the 1950s

### Cambridge to Land's End and Back in 5 Days by John Lambert



There was a particular reason for doing this ride as myself and another member of the "Cambridgeshire Road Club" were training to ride a 24 Hour Time Trial. To complete these events you had to be mentally and physically fit and also have the right temperament, it's all in the mind or 'mind over matter' as they say.

The route we were going to take was Baldock, Luton, Dunstable, Oxford, Swindon, Chippenham, Bath, Wells, Yeovil, Honiton, Exeter, Okehampton, Launceston, Bodmin, Redruth, Camborne, Penzance, Land's End and we took a week's holiday to do it.

We couldn't have picked worse weather to ride over Bodmin Moor, not only was it desolate to the extreme, but there was a thick rainy mist all day, the consequence of this was we had to stop for a day to dry out.

When we got through Penzance the next day we found ourselves catching other cyclists up so we rode together, then other groups caught us so there was rather a lot of us reaching Land's End together. Once at Land's End we totalled the whole journey, it was 358 miles each way; we had set ourselves a target of five days there and back. We left Land's End and rode back towards Honiton where we stopped for the night. We started very early the next day and made it home that day. That last day's ride was just what we needed to give us a taste of what a 24 Hour Event felt like. Over the 716 miles we cycled, we averaged 143 miles a day.

Oh! To be young again, I wouldn't have missed a mile of any of it. Things will never be the same again, faster roads and much more traffic. There is no doubt about it; the 1950s decade was the best for cycling, but now gone forever. Sadly!□



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## The Daily Doings of Mrs Dolittle

Christmas is a-coming and the geese are getting fat, please put a penny in the old man's hat. How I used to love Christmas when I was a nipper. My grandfather had bought a farm on a whim when I was seven years old, and the best days of my life were spent there, especially at Christmas. Murder in the dark, dressing up, forming a 'band', where a comb and paper could be played if no prowess with an instrument, all the family singing around the old Joanna (piano – or pianna, as it was pronounced around the London area) and great fun was had by all. Once a TV was installed things were different and the fun and interaction disappeared.

When we moved to Norfolk we first lived behind the carr stone quarry at Snettisham at the end of a cart track – more-or-less isolated. It was like a magical fairyland up there. We had a horse, a goat, a sheep, dogs, cats and chickens and to us it was a rural idyll. One Christmas Eve the Salvation Army band had piled into the back of a van, driven up the bumpy track and descended in our large garden. We didn't know they were coming, but when we heard the Oomp-pah-pahs we rushed out and were mesmerized by the Christmas carols being played out in the dark under the twinkling night stars with the occasional shooting star. One by one our animals wandered over and seemed to be in awe as they too watched and listened – it looked like a manger scene, with the animals knowing what the occasion was all about – or so it seemed to me. It was a most magical and mystical occasion and one that I will never forget.

It's still October as I write and Christmas seems a long way off – I don't begin to get excited about it until a few days beforehand when I then rush around putting up the decorations and getting last minute presents wrapped up. It's not the same without the children of course, mine are all grown up and the grandchildren are not interested in anything but computer type gadgets I don't understand, so I just dish out a few notes, which in my mind are not exciting at all – but times have so changed, haven't they, and I suppose it is progress (?) I prefer the magic of my own Christmases long ago, but I guess magic comes in many forms.

Talking of magic, I recently visited my uncle in Kent who at ninety-three is the longest living member of the Magic Circle in London. He has been a magician since a young boy, and when he was taken as a Japanese POW it held him in good stead. He was commanded to perform to some Japanese bigwigs, and thinking quickly he asked for some eggs to practice with as he 'didn't want them to 'lose face' if his trick went wrong'. He only needed one egg and no practice, but with the large amount of eggs he managed to scrounge, he and his friends had the first decent meal – an omelette – since their capture. A small handful of mildewed rice was all they usually had – little sustenance when they were building the famous railway and the famed bridge. On one occasion my uncle had vertigo and could go neither up nor down the wood scaffolding. After screaming at him, the guard chucked a bucket of hot tar over him. This put him out of action for a long time and probably saved his life – by recovering instead of working in dreadful conditions.

My father (his brother) also did 'magic' so I was brought up with feather flowers appearing out of thin air, lighted cigarettes coming forth from my father's mouth, coins from out of my knee, and a host of other magic tricks – so as you can imagine, I really believed in magic.

Well, in my last column I moaned on about the pigeons, but now I have another problem. I have two parrots (more about those at a later date) and feed them with a variety of food, including lots of seeds, nuts, peanuts and so on. Their cages are next to the open doors in my sitting room. They are very messy eaters and I swear they have competitions to see how-far-they-can fling-the-chillipod. The areas around their cages are littered with food and of course is an open invitation to small mice and birds (including the ..... pigeons) I have seen Millicent Mouse, her daughter Mildred, and granddaughter Margery (tiny, tiny) popping out of their house on the patio opposite the dining room, and have also seen them nipping across the tiles to the food around the parrot cages. I was presuming they were nipping out again to Mouse House outside, but maybe it's their cousins who have clearly moved indoors now for the winter.

There is a trail of abandoned peanuts in their shells to various 'safe' places – one shell lodged in



a small hole where the radiator pipe disappears. By morning it had gone – I imagined a little Walt Disney mouse heaving and pulling until it was in. Goodness knows how many are breeding in the boxing around the pipes. You can't blame them for moving in to a centrally heated des-res, full of abandoned food on the floor, can you?

Well, I purchased a packet of poison a month ago to deal with the problem, but haven't even looked at the packaging yet. I like little mice. I like the thought of them all curled up in a nice little bed made from pretty satin material filched from my sewing box. I don't even mind the idea of a little colony running up and down the pipes – but of course, I don't like the idea of them running along my kitchen work surfaces either – no signs of them there yet, however (their saving grace) no doubt because they have a surfeit of food around the parrot cages.

I have one of those old harmoniums operated by a felted foot pedal. I've noticed a neat little square of discarded nut pods on one of the pedals. Nice, warm, furry little place to sit and eat your dinner while watching our TV with us. But, why the square? Is this an artistic mouse, keen on shapes - 'modern art'? Maybe I should leave out my paint box and see what happens. The lovely lady who helps Hoover my house keeps rolling her eyes and telling me off (about everything). I feel like a five year old. She says if I didn't have so much 'stuff' I wouldn't need her to do my hoovering. She says I must put down the poison. But what about the smell, I wail, when they are all dead behind the piping and the blow flies come in droves?.....Maybe Father Christmas will take them home with him when he comes down the chimney here, and take them back with him to his workshop. That artistic one will probably come in handy with his squares....

Have a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

*Mrs Dolittle aka Valerie Anckorn*



## The West Norfolk Singers

We meet on Wednesday evenings from 19.30 to 21.00 at Heacham Methodist Church and rehearsals for the next session will commence on 8<sup>th</sup> January. This will be our AGM and the business part of the meeting will start at 19.00, with the rehearsal following at 20.00.

We are a friendly choir and always welcome new members. If you are looking for something different to do, or if you have recently moved to the area and would like to make new friends, then this could be for you! There are quite a few members who live in Dersingham, so car sharing and lifts are easily arranged.

We are a mixed voice choir and sing both religious and secular music. No auditions are necessary but the ability to read music is helpful. Our Musical Director, Nigel Wickens, is an accomplished professional singer and also teaches singing at Peterhouse, Cambridge. William Moss is our accompanist and was Head of Music at City of Ely and Downham Market Colleges. He is currently organist at Long Sutton Parish Church.

During the last year, we performed Christmas Concerts at Heacham Methodist Church and Long Sutton Parish Church. We also entertained the Dersingham Horticultural Society at their Christmas Social. Our Spring Concerts took place at Docking Parish Church and St Nicholas Parish Church in Dersingham.

This Christmas we are performing concerts at Heacham Methodist Church on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December at 15.00 and at St Faith's Church, Gaywood on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December at 19.00.

Looking to the future, we already have the following concerts booked:

- Long Sutton Parish Church on Saturday May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2014 at 19.30
- Heacham St Mary's Church on Saturday November 8<sup>th</sup> 2014 at 19.00

However, if you are not a singer, perhaps you would like to support a local choir, by becoming a patron. For the sum of £20 per annum, you will be entitled to attend, free of charge, one of our Christmas concerts and one of our Spring concerts and your name will be included in our concert programmes. This support is invaluable in helping the choir to purchase new music to enhance its repertoire, giving variety to our concerts and also providing new challenges for the choir members.

Our concerts are usually performed in churches, as these venues are most appropriate for the choir. If you are aware of a local church that would be interested in a concert, please let me know.

If you would like any further information about the West Norfolk Singers, please contact me on 01485 542960.

*Heather Titcomb (Chair)*

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We don't have auditions, all are welcome. Come and see if you'd like it – we do!!

*Liz Rogers*



## Fakenham Christmas Tree Festival



Fakenham Parish Church holds its 13th Christmas Tree Festival from Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November to Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013 between 10am and 8pm daily. This ever popular occasion attracted 25,000 people last year and raised almost £22,000 for charities - mostly in small coins!

**This year 76 charities will be taking part and there will be 90 trees!**

Entrance to the Festival is free but please bring a bag of coins to place at the charity trees of your choice. Inside there will be a Christmas Bazaar selling a wide range of Christmas goods; also refreshments, a Tombola and a Grand Draw. Prayers will be said on the hour for the charities and there will be six Prayer Trees where you can write a prayer of your own.

More details the Festival Office 01328 862268

*Adrian Bell, Rector of Fakenham*

## Coasthopper Bus Service

As you may be aware the County Council is consulting now about the budget plans for 2014-17. One of the proposals is to "Reduce the subsidy for the Coasthopper bus service" by the sum of £150,000 over two years. The Council is holding 'Coasthopper' public meetings along the North Norfolk coast so they can give some explanation about why this is proposed, listen to views and answer questions and encourage people to respond to the consultation, which closes on 12 December. They would like to explain some details about the service: how many people use it, how much it costs to run, ideas for future operation.



The nearest meeting to Dersingham and indeed the only one left by the time you read this will be held on **Wednesday 27th November at Hunstanton Community Centre from 4pm to 5:50pm.**

*Grant Rundle*



## Nar Valley Ornithological Society (NarVOS)

**invite you to the Barn Theatre, Sacred Heart Convent School, Swaffham.  
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Sue Bryan and Paul Jeffery, well-known local birdwatchers and NarVOS members, took a year out from work in 2010 to fulfil a life's dream, to have a year-long birding adventure around the world. Wow! Sue's talk will include many of the ups and downs of this challenging experience.

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## Greetings from the Manse

by Rev. Kim Nally



“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never put it out.” This is a variant reading of John 1: v 5 in my Modern Greek New Testament. Most English translations, and it must be said every authoritative ancient Greek text go with the thought of the darkness not understanding the light, but it seems to me that a better way of understanding the sense of John’s prologue is to go with the darkness trying but failing to put out the light. I’m delighted to say that the Message, a very fine work of translation in contemporary language sees it this way too. At Christmas time the light of Christ will shine symbolically in many homes in the form of the Christmas tree and lights. There is a very special story behind this.

According to legend, it was Saint Boniface, missionary to the continental Saxons, who lit the first Christmas tree. Boniface was a West Saxon, born in Devon and was christened Wynfrith. He is better remembered in Germany than in his homeland. Boniface was forty when he set out on his missionary journey never to return home.

The story goes that on his travels in Germany he came to a village called Bortharia. Here the villagers had been suffering from storms and plague. They decided that they must try to appease the god Odin by offering him a human sacrifice. Led by their chief, they assembled in the forest clearing at midnight. The priest tied the boy, the chosen victim, to the sacred oak and prepared to slaughter him. At that moment, the breathless silence was broken by a shout. The dark clad figures of Christian monks loomed out of the darkness and their leader, Boniface, called out, “Stop, in the name of Jesus Christ!”

The villagers were terrified. What new punishments would their god inflict on them for such blasphemy? But Boniface told them, ‘If Odin is really god, he can defend himself and prove his power. Let the boy go!’ There was no sign from Odin, no thunderbolt hurled at the Christian monk. The boy was untied and Boniface began to tell the Bortharians the good news of God’s love made known in Jesus. Then he offered them a young fir tree in place of the oak, planting it and placing a candle on it. His companions added their candles and the fir tree shone out in the dark forest, a symbol of God’s ever-burning love and of the light that has come into the world through Jesus his Son.

As the scriptures remind us, “the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never put it out.” That’s good news indeed in a world of violence and terrorism, with unjust and dehumanizing societies and on a planet disfigured by greed and profit. Let that light shine!

With every Christmas blessing to you and yours. □

## Dersingham Methodist Church News

Many thanks for the excellent support and generous donations of tins, packets etc. for the King’s Lynn FoodBank over the Harvest weekend. Adam Whittle from the FoodBank joined us for the Sunday morning service and gave us an informative talk on how the FoodBank works, including monitoring and distributing the products. Our Christmas coffee morning is on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November 10.00 a.m. and will be in aid of Diabetes UK and church funds. You will be able to enjoy a cup of coffee, buy cake and perhaps purchase a Christmas card and present.

By the time you read this Christmas will be only a few days away and planning for the festive season in full swing. Decorations and lights will be brought down from the loft and hopefully, if still working, will be soon adorning trees and homes. The custom of bringing light into the winter darkness seems to have come from various cultures but as Christmas is a Christian festival the words of the prophet Isaiah spring to mind ‘The people walking in darkness have seen a great light’. The prophet goes on to write ‘For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. He will be called Prince of Peace’. May this light penetrate into our lives and hearts and enable us to live in peace not just at Christmas but always.

You are welcome to join us at our Christmas Services.

<b>Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> December</b>	10:30 am Morning service with Rev Kim Nally. 6:00 pm Carols by candlelight.
<b>Christmas Day Service</b>	10:30 a.m.

Wishing you all peace, joy and happiness. □

*Elizabeth Batstone*





## Shouty Boy's Patch by Dudley

I arrived one bright sunny morning with my mum and her sister. All good, and the banana was already waiting for me. And so was Johnnie. Gee, that girl is desperate. I have only just arrived and she is already after me. Well, she can't help it, I am attractive and she is only feline. But, first things first, the banana is more important. Where else can you go, I ask you, where you have drugs waiting for you? Legal ones!

I can see Sidney out of the corner of my eye. Surely he does not want me to give up on the banana? Yes he does. I can see him jumping towards me, but I have seen that coming (and that is an achievement, as I only have one eye) and turned round to face him standing on my hind legs and whoosh! I got him around his ears. That'll teach him. Or not! He is trying it again! Oh great! There I am, minding my own business with his banana and he won't leave me alone. What kind of hospitality is that? Has he never heard that visitors come first? Or is he jealous that he is losing Johnnie to me? And I am actually not that fussed about her. If I am honest, I rather have the tortie one, Meetze is her name, I think. Mind you, Armani is a looker as well. Round face, big eyes and big hips – prrrrr!

I had enough of that banana, it is all soggy and if Sidney wants it, he can have it now. I am hungry. If I remember correctly from the last time I was here, there is a cold buffet around that corner. Yes, still there. Let's see – tuna? No! Chicken? No! Beef? No! Liver Pate, now that's more like it. Hmmmm, purphastic! A little too much for me in the bowl, I will come back later to finish it off. Now I need a well-earned nap. The back of the settee looks good to me. Oh no, Johnnie is on the seat asleep! Maybe she will not notice me. I am tip-pawing, slowly, carefully— made it. Nighty night!

I can hear noises which are responsible for waking me up. What on earth is that noise? I never heard that in my life? I have to open my eye to see what is disturbing my catnap. The noise comes from behind me. Turning round, I can see Vladimir asleep behind me and he is making that noise. Is that snoring? My catness me! That is a weird sound. I hope I am not like that when I am asleep. I tap him with my paw to see if that makes the noise stop. But it doesn't. Maybe a tap on the head does the trick? No! Two taps? Nothing. Whack! Yep, that worked, Vladimir is awake and looks completely disorientated, which is of no concern to me, the noise has stopped and that is all that matters.

I have to remember that. Back to sleep for me. No, correction, first the buffet, then sleeping. What is that? I can see myself on the liver pate, but I am not there yet. No, that can't be me, I have all of my legs and one eye only. That is a bad imitation of me. How dare?... I can't have that. Jump! Whack! And with a loud squeak she is gone. High four is all I can say! The pâté tastes even better than earlier. Must be the triumph it is covered with this time.

A quick wash and off to that cave I have discovered. Eye closed and dosing. Now what? I can hear voices, and one of them sounds like my Mum's. What is she doing here already? I was supposed to be here for a whole weekend! I could not even finish my thought on that and shwoops! She got me out of my cave and I am in her arm. Prrrrr! She smells nice..... □



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# Christmas Cheats to Delight your Guests

from Caroline Bosworth

I love it at Christmas time when I have a house full of people, young and old, and have refined some of my favourite quick and easy nibbles with a difference.



## Marzipan Treats

This is not really a recipe – more a form of tasty recycling. With the leftover off cuts of marzipan from the Christmas cake, roll them out quite thinly on a caster sugar covered sheet of greaseproof paper. Use fancy Christmas cutters – I have a mini star and a holly leaf which are my favourite – but any shapes will do. Press out as many shapes as you can, re rolling the marzipan off cuts as you go.

Leave the shapes on the greaseproof paper to dry for a few days. Melt some good chocolate – I usually melt have both milk and dark chocolate and then part dip the dried marzipan shapes. Leave to dry and then keep in a plastic storage container until you are ready to use. These are popular with young and old and brighten up a plate of mince pies beautifully. They are so popular in my home, that I usually buy extra blocks of marzipan to make them too.

## Cheats Homemade Mince pies – with a difference

The difference part of this recipe is because I make cream cheese pastry – which is really easy and requires no rolling out. To make the pastry, you will need:

115 g (4 oz) butter or spread

1 pack of cream cheese (100g) – don't even think of using the low fat version...it won't work!

140g (5oz) plain flour

Mix all of the ingredients together. I then have a non stick mini muffin pan and place 1" dollops of the pastry into the muffin pan and gently press the dough to form shells – you can buy a shaping tool for this – or just gently use your thumb to press the pastry in.

### For the filling, you will need:

A jar of shop bought mince meat (any will do)

An apple – any type – roughly grated

A slosh of Brandy or Sherry or Orange juice – although my favourite is my home made Sloe Gin!

A handful of dried nuts from your cupboard – almonds, walnuts, hazelnuts – roughly chopped

Handful of dried fruit – any will do, but I like dried cranberries and chopped figs.

In a bowl containing half the jar of the mincemeat, add the above ingredients and mix well. You can do this using any quantities and it will make the mince meat taste homemade and amazing.

Using a teaspoon, carefully add this mixture to the pastry shells and then bake 20 – 25 mins at 180 degrees, Gas 4.

These mince pies look lovely – the open top allows people to see the beautiful “homemade” mince meat and the taste with the cream cheese pastry is sublime.



## Boozy Truffles

This is more a suggestion than a recipe and follows on from my Sloe Gin recipe in the last issue. When the Sloe Gin (or damson) has been either drunk or decanted, carefully remove the remaining berries from the bottle. Leave in a sieve over a jug to drain them really well.

Melt some really good quality dark chocolate and stir in the berries.

Spoon carefully into little piles in petit fours cases and leave to set. These will store for at least a month in a cool dry place in a plastic storage container.

I hope you enjoy making some of the above Christmas treats. None of them are hard or will take very long. In fact children would enjoy helping to make them all. They are all special and will give your Christmas a bit of homemade feel to show your guests that you really care.

Merry Christmas to you all. □

## Village Voice publication dates

We love getting your reports of events and meetings, advertisements and advance details of forthcoming attractions. To make sure you hit your targets please note the publication dates of this magazine:-

Issue	Copy deadline	Publication date
No 86	Wednesday 22nd January 2014	Monday 10th February 2014
No 87	Wednesday 5th March 2014 (TBC)	Monday 24th March (TBC)
No 88	Wednesday 30th April 2014 (TBC)	Monday 19th May (TBC)

The earlier you get your copy to us the more favourable position it is likely to get.

## Advertising in Village Voice

The Editorial Team would like to thank all of those who so generously support our magazine by placing advertisements in it, for without the income so generated there would be a possibility of the publication ceasing to exist. With this in mind it would be helpful if you were to support those who do advertise, and to then let them know that you used their services because you saw their promotion in our magazine. For those readers who perhaps provide a local service but who do not currently advertise with us, you may consider a fee of from £17.20 for an eighth of a page black and white or £26.00 for colour per issue, to be very cost effective. (Prices include VAT ).

**Advertisements for inclusion** in the next magazine should be in the hands of the Parish Clerk:  
Dersingham Parish Council, 4a Post Office Rd, Dersingham PE31 6HP  
by **Wednesday 22nd January 2014**

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: [editor@dersingham.org.uk](mailto:editor@dersingham.org.uk) before the **deadline date of mid-day on Wednesday 22nd January 2014 for publication on Monday 10th February 2014**. (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

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In the office: - Sarah Bristow, Distribution: - Steve Davis  
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# VILLAGE VOICE LIVE

Tuesday December 3rd

## An Evening With Chris Knights - Wildlife Photographer



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

# VILLAGE VOICE LIVE

Tuesday January 7th

## The Gaywood Valley Archaeological and History Project

### With Dr. Clive Bond



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