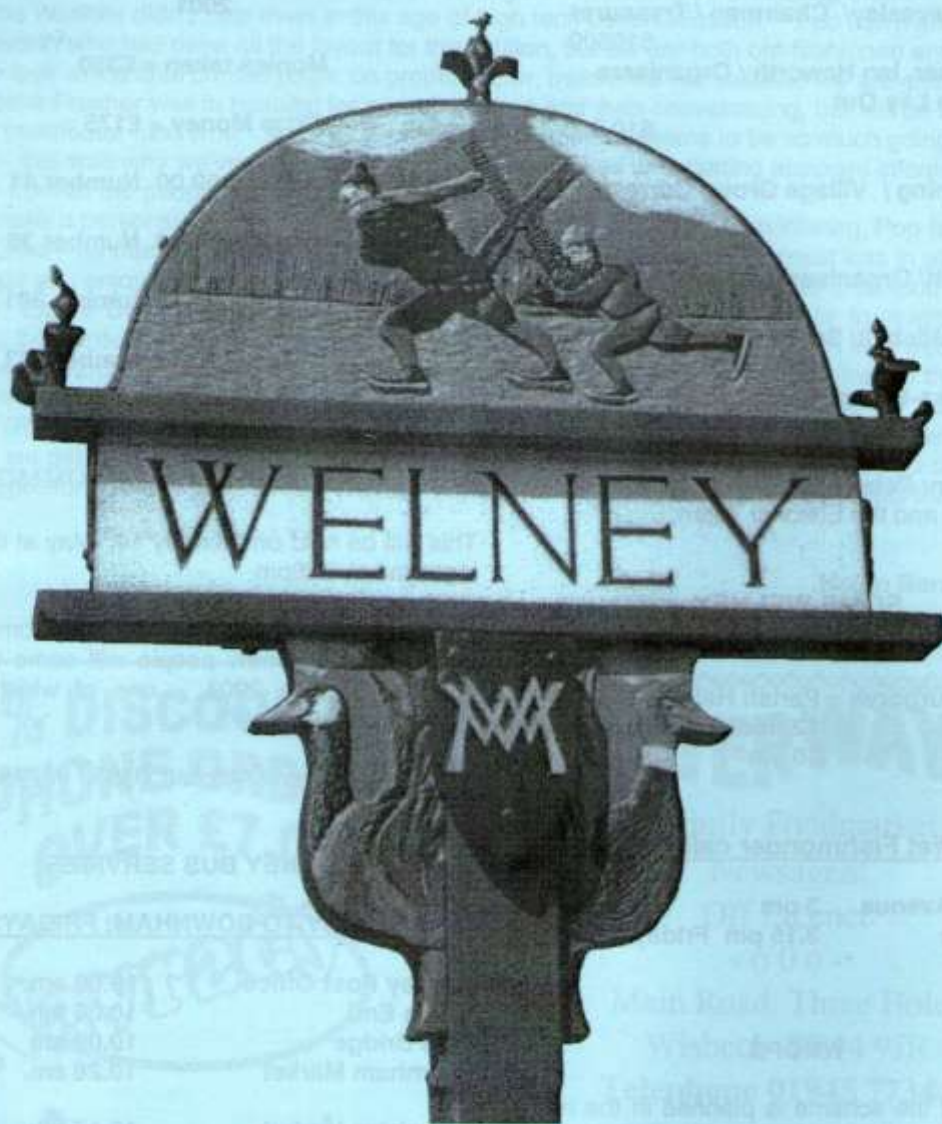


Issue N° 21

April June 01

25p



WELNEY NEWS

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SOME WELNEY SERVICES

Doctor's Surgery: Parish Hall
Monday 12 noon
Thursday 10 am

Wet Fishmonger calls at

Chestnut Avenue 3 pm
Post office 3.15 pm Friday

WHOPS

A restart of the scheme is planned in the near future which will incorporate some changes so that the administration is easier.

There will be set dates for people to put their heating oil orders in: June 1st, August 1st then every two months.

People should email the village website webmaster@welney.org.uk) or put a note through my letterbox on or before the dates set out.

When sufficient volume has been reached a price will be obtained and this relayed to the people who have made the requests, who will then confirm their order.

Derek Levesley Mowbray March Road Welney

WELNEY LOTTERY

Lottery Returns For March
2001

Monies taken = £350

Prize Money = £175

1st Prize = £ 69.00 Number 41

2nd Prize = £ 51.00 Number 35

3rd Prize = £ 34.00 Number 361

4th Prize = £ 21.00 Number 343

AGM OF THE MAP PROJECT COMMITTEE

This will be held on Monday 14th May at the Village Hall at 8.00pm

This is an open meeting and the Committee hope that many new people will come to discuss projects in 2001 – one of which is a stained glass window.

Queries to Philippa Mitchell: 01353 862481

WELNEY BUS SERVICES

WELNEY TO DOWNHAM: FRIDAYS

Welney Post Office	10.00 am.
Lakes End	10.06 am.
Lots Bridge	10.08 am
Downham Market	10.26 am.

Downham Market	12.15 pm
Lots Bridge	12.33 pm.
Lakes End	12.35 pm.
Welney Post Office	12.40 pm.

(Fare: £1.70 single, £2.20 return)

ELY

Every Thursday (Market Day)

Cavalier Coaches (01406 362518)

This service no longer starts in Welney Village. The nearest pick-up point is at Gold Hill.

EDITORIAL

Well, we have a bumper 24 page edition of Welney News for you this time. I'm sorry it is late but with the changeover of Committee and the sad loss of Richard and Carol (see p 8) there have been a number of deadline problems with people learning new skills and co-ordinating them. The flooding of the Washes didn't help even in this age of high tech communication. I do use it and so do Ian Haworth who has done all the layout for this edition, but we are both old-fashioned enough to want to look at the final printed page, on proper paper, before we are satisfied we are giving you the best. Jane Frusher was in hospital for part of the time and then convalescing, but will be an active lay-out contributor next time. Another problem was that there seems to be so much going on in the village - this was why we've run to 24 pages, but it also takes time getting accurate information and articles from all the people involved, who also have busy lives.

May I make a personal addition to the obituaries on pp 13/14. I knew John Waring, Pop Bedford and Frank Giles - as many of you will have done: true, caring gentlemen and a great loss in all our lives. I do hope you enjoy this issue - Mary Dockerty has a fascinating article on her childhood on the 100 ft Bank, Elaine Sweetman has done a super cartoon drawing illustrating our frustration with the flooding this winter. I've made a special page of the flooding and the Millennium Map because there is a new BBC2 daytime programme highlighting local news such as ours. I've talked to the producer who seems anxious to have some of our stories. The programme is called "The RDA" (Recommended Daily Allowance) and Nick Oakley, the producer, has promised to let me know if we get in, so I'll put up a notice in Wendy's if we are successful. Meanwhile do call me with any suggestions or any criticisms. It is the village newsletter and we can only reflect that with your help.

Helen Barry Editor

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CHILDHOOD IN THE FENS IN THE 1940'S AND 1950'S

I was born in the Fens during World War II. My father, one of the last Fenmen, also worked as a shepherd on the washes during the summer looking after cattle for various farmers. My mother worked on the land when needed.

My brother, Roger, who was two years older than me, and myself went to Pymore school which had just two classes. We cycled the two miles to school on our hard tyred bikes which did not get punctures or need pumping up but were not very comfortable to ride. Sometimes Mum and Dad had to take us to school, Mum had a basket seat on the back of her bike and Dad sat us on the front of his tradesman's bike. The only thing I didn't like at school was the cocoa we had to drink at lunch times. When I was seven, we were allowed to go on the bus to Littleport school which had several classes for each age group.



Mum, Dad, Roger and me sitting in our home made barrows.

Our house was on the side of the river bank, we had no running water or electricity and the toilet was at the bottom of the garden (not very hospitable on cold wintry nights) and had to be emptied weekly. We had an oil light which stood on our living room table and a black-leaded cooking range with open fire and oven on the side, polished weekly with black lead polish. Our winter evenings were spent playing cards, ludo

or dominos, reading or drawing. We had a radio which was powered by an accumulator which was charged weekly by Mr. Abbs from Ely, who came round in his van. We listened to "Dick Barton, Special Agent" every evening and on Saturdays "In Town Tonight" was a favourite. My Mum did lots of knitting especially fair isle berets which were fashionable at the time. My Dad spent his time knitting string nets which were used to catch eels and plover, which were sent from Black Bank Station to Billingsgate market in London. In 1947 the catching of plover was banned.

We lived next door to the Harrisons. We used to cycle to Ely or Littleport Agricultural Shows, where we enjoyed watching cycling, running and walking races as well as looking at the animals and farming equipment. Saturdays were spent at my granny's in Three Holes. We caught the bus in Welney, leaving our bikes at 'Granny James' who lived on the river bank between the two rivers.

On Sundays we attended the Skan Engineer Methodist Sunday School. Each year we had our anniversary when each of us had to say a recitation. I remember one year I had a nose-bleed on the stage and a lady in the congregation handed me a 'Persil white hanky to stem the flow. We mostly had new clothes for the anniversary but otherwise most of my clothes were 'hand me downs' from my Mum's friend whose daughter was a bit older than me.

Our groceries were delivered weekly from Mr. Baker's shop in Pymore, the baker came about three times a week in a horse and cart; he always left me some bread dough to play with. Although this became rather grey looking it was cooked and Dad ate it with his tea. We drank soft water collected from the roof from a large tank outside the back door. During dry spells Dad fetched water from the 100 foot river using a yolk and large aluminium buckets. This was left to allow the silt to settle on the bottom before drinking.

In 1947 we had a lot of snow and, with Dad's help cutting blocks of snow, we built an igloo in the garden. After the snow came the floods, Dad was on flood watch and walked along the bank of the river during the night making sure the bank did not breach. One year when the wash was frozen and snow fell on top, several enthusiasts swept a wide circuit on the ice so we could enjoy the skating. Mr. Jack Taylor from Pymore Siding arrived with a wooden box

full of 'patters'. Most of us found a pair that could be strapped on our wellies and, with the help of chairs and stools to support us, we had a good time.

During the summer we spent time riding our bikes, swimming in the local rivers and riding in Dad's punt, helping him empty his catch of eels and resetting the hives. His punt was home made out of wood and when leaks appeared he used our plastercine to fill in small cracks which were then painted with tar.



Dad sorting out his eel nets

Dad had a jut on the wash near the railway bridge where he had lived before he was married, it was very small with a stove and bunk bed and woe betide my brother or myself if we moved anything. I also enjoyed sitting in the sun with my 'nose in a book' often hidden from sight especially if washing up of bedroom needed tidying.

We helped Mum to single sugar beet, a thing of the past now sugar beet seed is pelleted. We also helped with potato picking in wicker baskets during our Autumn half term. My brother spent several weeks of his summer holidays with My Aunt and Uncle in Three Holes, he regularly drove the tractors from the age of eight or nine. My uncle used to fetch my Mum to work on the strawberry fields. One very hot day when he brought Mum home, he asked Dad what he had been doing. Dad said he had sat under a tree for two hours watching a spider spin its web! I don't think this went down too well.

Each year as a birthday treat we were taken to Hunstanton for the day, we also went on Sunday School trips usually to Skegness, Clacton Great Yarmouth or Hunstanton, hoping for a sunny day.

At Easter our family spent a week in London with friends who had been evacuated to the Fens during the war. They lived on top of a

block of flats in SW1, close to the hub of the city. We visited Kew Gardens, London Zoo, where Brumas the polar bear was born and were taken to a show in the West End. We regularly went to St. James' Park and my brother and myself were allowed the find our own way home. We felt privileged as not many of our friends had holidays just after the war.

In summer we were allowed to stay up on a Sunday evening to buy ice cream from Mr. Pocklington from March, who toured the villages each week. Our food was quite plain; we had wild duck, rabbit, fried or stewed eels as well as meat from the butcher. Quite a lot of bartering went on and Dad would trade a brace of wild duck for 1lb of dairy butter or other commodities.

We had 'Ducky' every weekday in the morning, a snack of cold meat or cheese with bread and then our main meal when we came from school. We most had a lovely suit pudding cooked in a cloth. This could be eaten with butter and jam or Golden Syrup or gravy or sometimes onions were added which filled up before we had our meat and vegetables.

One of our favourite puddings was 'Bislings' which was made from cow's milk just after they had calved. Sweets were on ration during and after the war and bananas were a rarity. I was promised a doll when Tojo was defeated and had to make do with wooden ones which Dad made and Mum dressed. My brother collected dinky toys, mostly lorries and tractors which we play with in the silt on the river bank. We mostly had a cat and dad had a dog to help him with the shepherding, we had one called Nellie, a border collie.

As children we had few material things compared with most children today, but we had a happy carefree childhood, able to go out and about on our own not only here but even in the centre of London. (We always had lots of visitors, Dad came from a large family and our Aunt and Uncle from Three Holes visited us every Sunday. They had to cycle and usually brought their dog 'Tip' with them. They did have a car after the war. It looked a bit like a box on wheels and had not such luxuries as windscreen wipers or a heater. I think it was a Ford 8)

Mary Dockerty

ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
13th March. 2001 at 7 p.m.

Mr. Graham Simpson, Area Maintenance Engineer for the Norfolk County Council Highways and Mr. Mike Young from the Norfolk County Council at Norwich attended the Annual Parish Meeting to speak on highway strategy matters affecting our area.

Mr. Simpson explained that inspections were carried out on average every four weeks on major roads and minor road problems were inspected approximately every 13 weeks.

They both spoke on the Wash Road problems, and explain that the proposal which had been put forward by the Parish Council Chairman, for 340 metres of curbing on the low spots of the road, in an effort to keep the water off the road for longer, had been considered at length and it had been agreed that this work should go ahead. The estimated cost would be £7,000. A feasibility study had been carried out and it was considered that this would be a considerable help, but would of course not stop the flooding altogether.

Mr. Young also gave details of a report that will go to the strategic planning committee later in the year suggesting a complete change to the signs that indicate the Wash Road is flooded. The wording will be changed to make the signs much clearer and more informative.

Members of the public present also requested:

1. The School Sign on Main street should be lit. Wires were attached but it had never been connected.
2. Hundred Foot Bank Road through to Ten Mile Bank. No work had been done on the stretch for a number of years and it is now in a bad state. Mr. Simpson advised that a contractor is employed to attend to this and he would check to find out what work had been done and what is proposed for the near future.
3. The question of gritting the roads in bad weather was raised. The meeting was advised that if they purchased a bin for the grit then the County Council would keep it filled.
4. Footpath around Sandgate Corner on Wisbech Road. Mr. Simpson advised that the work would start on the footpath and the surface would be scraped away, surface dressed then a hard surface would be put down to maintain a good walking surface. The path would then be maintained regularly.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday 13th March. 2001

Despite representations to the Upwell Health

Centre, no reply or contact had been received and it was agreed to ring and ask for a reply to our letters.

Proposed Boundary Review - Letters objecting to the proposed review had been received from residents in the area affected, and these comments had been passed to the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk. Apologies were expressed to these residents for not contacting them before submitting the Parish Councils own comments. Several points were discussed and the position relating to Marshalls Charity land was also raised. It was agreed to inform the Charity of these proposals in case they were not aware of them. District Cllr. Barnard confirmed that he had been appointed to the Committee dealing with the proposed changes, and he would keep us informed of all developments.

Proposed new Lights - March Road. No reply had yet been received from Eastern Energy regarding our request for a quotation for three new lights. It was also agreed to contact the Borough Council to see if there were any grants available towards the cost of this project.

Cllr. Cox informed the meeting that she would be attending a public meeting at the end of March in connection with Primary Care Trust.

A letter was received from the Community Development Worker for Welney in connection with the Single Regeneration Bid for the Fens. It was agreed to ask Jackie Squires to attend the next meeting and talk to the Parish Council regarding this, and to explain what grants are available.

A Notice was received from the Norfolk County Council regarding the closure of footpaths in view of the Foot and Mouth crisis, and the Clerk confirmed that the notice is displayed in the Notice Board.

A letter was also received from the Foolhardy Circus Folk asking to come to the Village to bring their circus. It was agreed that this would be a good idea and we are now waiting to hear from them if they will be able to come and if so when.

The Drainage problems behind the properties on the Post Office side of New Road was discussed. The chairman of the Manea and Welney Drainage Board had visited the site and confirmed that if the Parish could get the water to their main drain which runs across the fen from the corner opposite the playing field then it was their responsibility to get it away. After much discussion it was agreed to put this matter on the Agenda for the next meeting, and see if there is anything further we can do.

Wash Road Flooding - Cllr. Warrington handed Councillors copies of a letter he had drafted to

John Prescott, Transport Secretary, expressing the Villages grave concern regarding the continued flooding of the Wash Road, and requesting that something be done as a matter of grave urgency. It was agreed that this was an excellent letter but needed one or two points extra included. Councillors were to add any extra items, and then the Chairman would approve the letter and send it off.

A fax had been received from the Welney Cricket Club with a Fixture List for the forthcoming season. It also included one or two problems which needed to be sorted out, but Councillors felt that it would be in everyone's interest to encourage the Cricket Club to continue to use the Field. It was also agreed to make enquiries regarding the provision of a Shed, which was nearly a year overdue, and this could then be used for storage of all the equipment that was currently kept in the pavilion and the changing rooms.

It was reported that the Environment Agency had now prepared a Flood Plan which identified Welney as an area liable to flooding. Councillors commented that the Village had never been flooded, and it was agreed to try and obtain a copy of the Map in time for the next meeting, so that we could then endeavour to get the Village removed from this Plan.

Pat Copeman
Clerk to the Parish Council

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SO LONG FOR NOW

From Richard and Carol

Both Carol and I have been closely involved in the Welney News since it produced it's first edition. I was looking back on those early issues just a few days ago and realising that it has got better with age. Early lessons learnt on layout and production have improved the visual appearance, and as all the regular contributors gained experience the content has also improved.

We started sometime in August? 1997 and have produced 21 issues in all. I suppose that it has taken up almost a year's worth of weekends in total. We have both enjoyed our contribution to Village Life and it has helped us to get to know a lot of people that we wouldn't otherwise have met so fast. We would like to think that our contribution in terms of articles has been interesting and informative. The one thing we do know is the Welney News has probably the highest percentage readership of any Village Magazine, so we know that anything we have written will be read by almost all of the population. When we made a mistake on the diary page I was surprised how many people noticed and told us how they relied on it as their prime source of information on "What's On" in the Village.

Our skills have been honed by our involvement, which has benefited us with work projects and has helped Carol with her Open University degree course. I have learnt a huge amount about managing images, storing and archiving over 300 pictures from Welney's present and past, and about document layout. However, as with most things, there have been some personal drawbacks. We both work full time and our jobs are quite demanding, so we are often late home in the evening. What is worse, the nature of our jobs means that we often have work to do at weekends and evenings as well. All this has meant that I made free time for the magazine and didn't do enough on the house, and the "garden" looks like a tip.

We decided that, with increasing work pressures, we would have to call it a day and sadly bow out. We know that there are capable hands to take up the reigns and we wish the team the very best in the future.

Richard & Carol Green

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WELNEY MILLENNIUM ARTS PROJECT 2001

Looking back on the year 2000, and thinking of the Welney Millennium Arts project, it will be for me personally a good way to remember the year. I met many more people in Welney, and I have made some good friends through the project. Although the whole idea snowballed into a much greater project in the end, and I ask myself (Others probably are doing the same) "if I had known from the outset what I was letting myself in for - would I still have done it?" My answer is yes, because I have learnt a lot about Welney, and the organising of such an activity, and above all I enjoyed it very much. I think others might have enjoyed it too - I certainly hope so because such a lot of effort was put in! It showed that people are interested in their village and in helping to create something together, and that traditional craft skills are still alive but perhaps they need to be encouraged. Hopefully some participants will have discovered a new craft and some may even go on to make other things. The Exhibition itself was very well visited and thank you to all those people who came along and made very encouraging and appreciative comments. I would like to repeat a big thank you to all those who joined me, Karen, Martin, Ian W., Richard, Charlotte, Ian H. and Helen and to see this project through. Those who were unable to see the Exhibition due to the Flooded Wash Road, there will be another chance to see it on their side of the Village in a few months time - we will advertise here in the Welney News. Apologies for the last report in the Welney News - it was a copy of our "press release" meant for general press and radio and not really meant for the Welney News! (with invented quotes etc! - still it found the project mentioned on BBC Radio Cambridgeshire and in the local papers). Postcards and prints of the map will be made in the near future, and these will be available to all who would like a memento of the Map. The Map is currently in the Church whilst we approach various organisations to see if we can exhibit further afield. Well, M.A.P. activities are not over. We are still in the process of taking portraits to add to the exhibition, and we are producing more copies of the Book of Archive Photographs, so if you are waiting for your copy, it will be with you soon I have even had an order via the internet for this, that came from the Welney Website. The CD Rom is being finalised, and will be available soon. The Website is going from strength to strength, with more and more "visitors". Also there have been some ideas for a (smaller!) project this year, and during the Exhibition there

seemed to be a lot of support for a Stained Glass Window Theme, so we are planning to buy some equipment and arrange some more classes. Please let us know if you might be interested. Perhaps you would like to come along and make something you can keep this time? As well as making a joint piece for a window. The Welney M.A.P. Committee will be holding its AGM sometime in May - date to be arranged and posters will be up advertising it - so please get in touch or come along if you would like to join us on future projects. There have also been a few rumours about a Welney Calendar for 2002 - can these be true? Were the WI, or The Archers the inspiration behind this?

Philippa Mitchell

(See Map Making Page 12)

PLAYING FIELD EVENTS

Carpet Bowls is played in the Pavilion on Thursday evenings. It runs from 7.00-9.00pm and the fee is £1

(See back page diary for dates)

It is easy to play as the mat is only thirty feet long and 6 feet wide. There is no expensive outlay as all the equipment is provided, and as you don't actually step on the mat, you don't need special shoes either.

Why not come along and have a go? New members are always welcome and we stop for refreshments halfway through the evening, so you can chat and get to know one another.

It's fun and not too strenuous. We have a team playing in the **Dairy Crest Winter League** once a month at Downham Market. It isn't doing too well at the moment but it is all extra experience. We have also decided to play in the **West Norfolk Summer League**.

Line Dancing and Western Partner Dancing are also held in the Pavilion on most Fridays 7.30-9.39pm (see Diary on back page for dates) The fee is £3 for both sections and £2 for one section. The Western Partner Dancing usually takes the first session and there are refreshments half way through the evening. An experienced teacher is in charge.

For more details please phone me.

Pat Rix (610 292)

CHURCH NEWS

There was a man who spent his life longing to go to Heaven

He spent hours everyday in deep meditation, contemplating Heaven.

When he died an angel took him on a conducted tour.

The angel showed him majestic snow-capped mountains.

He gazed transfixed at the sheer beauty of the evening mists rising above tranquil lakes.

He walked across lush green water meadows covered with king-cups and stood on the banks of crystal clear streams.

He skirted deep green woods and walked across miles of golden sandy beaches, and listened to the gentle music of the waves.

One beautiful sight after another was revealed to him.

The man was so overcome by the loveliness of it all that he turned to the angel and whispered breathlessly:

"How wonderful! So this is Heaven!"

"No", came the reply, "this is the world in which you lived and never saw"

Some time ago I was driving home from a conference and the weather was not at its best. It was raining, not a downpour but enough to make the roads wet and slippery.

I was suddenly aware of the most bright and beautiful rainbow ahead of me. Its colours were sharp and clear touching the earth and bathing it in its light and beauty. Even with my visibility marred by the mist, the rainbow was clear and stood out on this dull day.

Alongside or arching over this brightest of rainbows was another one, much paler, difficult to see. The colours were exactly the same, in the same sequence, and yet it was only a poor reflection, a shadow, arching way above its brighter counterpart.

A lorry pulled out in front of me to overtake a slower one. The rainbow was deflected onto the back of the lorry and down onto the road directly in front of me. I found myself driving along in this beautiful arrangement of colour and light. It was absolutely breathtaking and wonderful.

One of the truths that was brought home to me was that even in the most annoying situation/person/thing is just what God uses in His grace and mercy to reflect, to lead, to hold us in the light, truth and beauty of all that God is. We don't have to struggle, or compete, we simply have to be and even in the depressing times open ourselves to the beauty and wonder that God has for us if only we take our eyes from ourselves and allow him to surround us with all that He is.

How many people are content to remain in the pale shadow, the imitation, and never see the total, breathtaking beauty of the real thing?

My paternal grandmother often declared that alcoholic drink tasted vile and disgusting and she would never touch the stuff. I was at a complete loss as to how she knew what it was like, as she had never tried it for herself. All I can think is that she had seen the effects on a minority of folks or listened to others who held similar views and formed her opinions from this. Perhaps this is how many people feel about the Risen Christ. They will not taste and see for themselves. Perhaps they look at some of us Christians and don't like what they see. Perhaps we are turning them against God by the way we live our lives. Oh, there is no doubt that we can only ever be a pale reflection of all that God is, but the question has to be are we even that?

If not, then we have to offer an apology to God and to those around us. We then have to get ourselves 'Right with God'. It's not a question of being able to answer all the questions it is simply a matter of admitting that we do wrong and then turning to Jesus as our Saviour and Lord. We can then offer a challenge – if you like to put it that way.

When we go to buy a new car, do we judge it by the way other folks drive it. I guess not – we take it for a test-drive to see for ourselves whether or not to accept the offer or to refuse it and go elsewhere.

So it should be with God – don't judge God before you at least give him the opportunity of a test-drive, as it were. Try God and see what a difference it will make in your life. You may think that you have a good life now, but God gives so much more and it lasts for all eternity.

Sheila Tooke – Rector

CHURCH SERVICES

May

- 6th 9.30am Morning Prayer
 13th 11.00am All Age Worship
 20th 9.30am Holy Communion
 27th 9.30am Morning Prayer

June

- 3rd 9.30am Morning Prayer
 10th 11.00am All Age Worship
 (Trinity Sunday)
 17th 9.30am Holy Communion
 24th 9.30am Morning Prayer



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 SWEDISH BODY MASSAGE,
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POETRY PLEASE

When June Saunders came to see the Welney Millennium Map on Exhibition last December, she was so amazed, she was moved to write this poem.

Crafted by folk

We stared at a map of many hues
 Others came and some formed queues;
 A map made up from peoples' dreams
 Showing houses, roads and drainage schemes.
 Place made to live and work,
 Busy fields where you just can't shirk,
 Cleverly crafted by folk who care
 From Welney, and from everywhere.
 Stained glass panels, carved wood and knitting,
 Work in clay that's so befitting.
 Needlecraft of every sort;
 Such bold ideas, such inspired thought.
 Rivers of rope that meander by,
 Photos of houses with bits of sky,
 A dog that pulls; horses to ride;
 River and floods are side by side.
 Pottery plaques and swans that glimmer
 Metal in relief to shimmer.
 We arrived by chance, but then stood gazing;
 The comment we made was –
 "just amazing!"

June Saunders

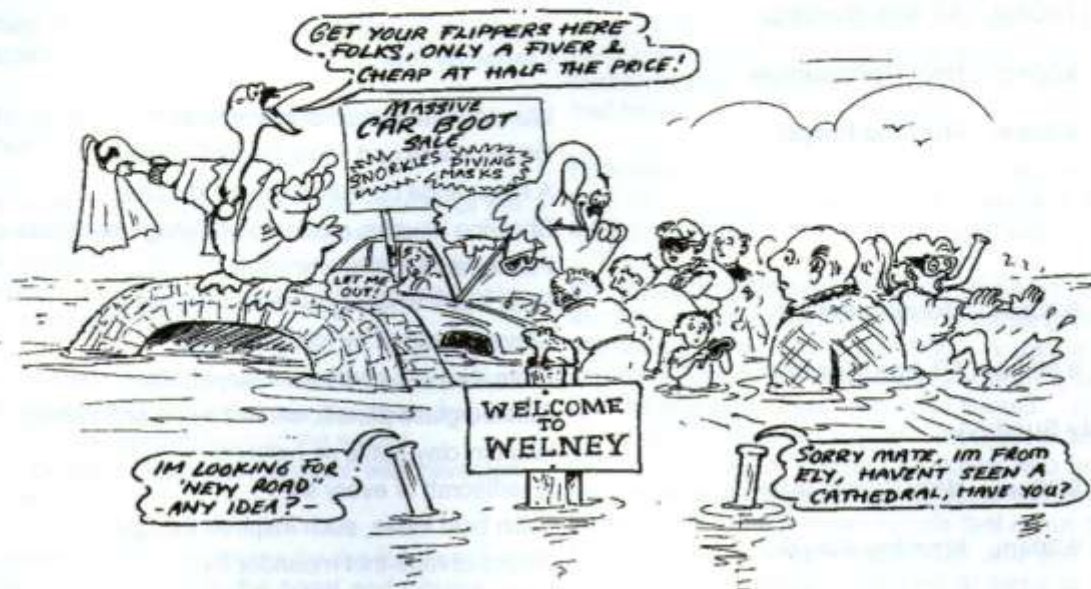
We want to keep 'Poetry Please' going as a regular spot so don't be bashful, send us in your own efforts – whether it is on Welney or your summer holiday or your joy in a new child or grandchild.

And we are also looking for articles reflecting the lives of those in the village. Please ring with any ideas you have. They can be memory pieces, such as Mary Dockerty's article on pp 4/5 or anything which you think will interest your neighbours and friends. Everyone has a wealth of experiences and it would be great to share them in our own Newsletter.

Please ring me Helen Barry on
 610 585

THE WASH ROAD FLOODED FOR NEARLY HALF A YEAR

The A 1011 – one of the main roads into Welney was flooded up to and over two feet between October and March



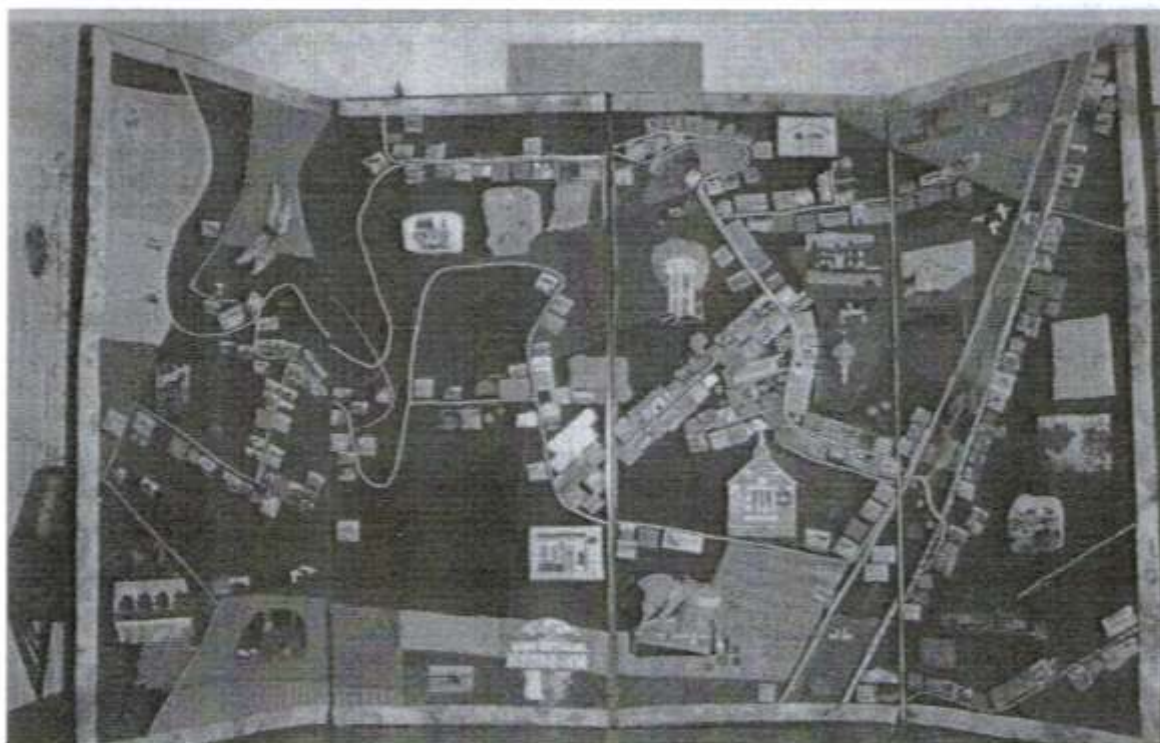
Elaine Sweetman

Elaine Sweetman illustrates clearly the problems caused by the Wash flooding. This winter an eighty- year- couple had to be rescued by helicopter after two hours of attempts by police and ambulance crews to reach them. They were taken to hospital suffering from hypothermia. Not only do the floods divide the village, causing parents of children at the primary school to detour 50 miles twice a day to deliver and pick up their children, but is also prevents commercial traffic from getting through, prevents delivery from shops and stores without a 50 mile detour and – very importantly, it shuts out passing trade for our shop and the pub, both of which have had severe shortfalls in takings during the flooding.

We know the washes are a reservoir area for the East Midlands drainage, but our A 1011 road into the village must go through the washes and the flooding is ruining our commercial as well as our social life. Twelve year ago, when I moved to Welney, Ken Sorensen (a qualified engineer) with a small committee planned out a new road with culverts to take the water underneath it. The County Council – after the inevitable delays – declared the plan good and it was costed at £800,500. But the Council said they didn't have the money. Since then – with EC money the bridges at either end of the flooded road have been strengthened to the tune of millions of pounds to accommodate the 40 tonne lorries. The lorries however cannot breast the two-foot floods, so have to divert. Now, see Parish Council Notes, we are offered a **two inch** curbing on part of the road at the cost of £7,000. Where is common sense in all this? The A 1011 is a through route from Stansted airport for commercial traffic, for villagers it has been an impenetrable barrier for nearly six months this winter, for our own commercial outlets it can cut income by a third. If the raised road with culverts had been built 12 years ago the problem could have been solved for once and for all.

Helen Barry





THE MAKINGS OF WELNEY'S MILLENNIUM MAP

Welney's Millennium Map showing every road and house and pub and business – everything that happened here was created by villagers learning new crafts and adding to those they already knew. Craft courses were organised – the first was Stained Glass Windows; David Warren taught us and on the first night we were snipping a piece of glass like it was paper. We learned how to make a picture glass, and how to cut, grind, apply copper tape and solder the intricate pieces together. None of us had any previous experience and we were all quite pleased with our results.

Tapestry and Feltmaking classes were run by artist Jane Frost. Much of the weaving was completed in our own time, and I think this was a new skill for us. The feltmaking weekend was a tremendous success in term of number of people attending although we only made one panel, and when it was processed it had shrunk in the wash! (a little bit of a technical hitch) so we later decided to make the map out of a crazy patchwork of materials including the felt we had made. We also had clay sessions with the help of Philippa Lee a ceramic artist and potter from Snettisham. Finally there were woodcarving sessions, and we also used the pyrograph to cut and decorate yet more houses. Everyone was encouraged to depict their own house in whichever craft they chose, and the response was really impressive. We had dough houses, glass ones, a house made of beads, beautiful embroideries and cross-stitches. In fact the response by all who must have spent hours on their own houses was outstanding.

The four panels of the map were laid out, following the original drawing, and sewn up and embroidered by Karen Fleming, Pauline Ware, Rosi Beckford, Jane Carter, Elisabeth Deckker, Mandy Revett and myself. This was happening at the same time as our frequent 'House Making Evenings' when many of us came together and produced more houses out of punched metal, pyrography on wood and leather, fabric and clay. (see photo)

The panels all came together when they were stretched on frames – made by Martin Kyne-Lilly. The Exhibition was a great success and the Map is now in the Church.

One visitor was so much impressed that she wrote a poem, which you can read on page 11.

During March and April three true gentlemen of Welney died. Their loss will change the village for ever. They had been part of our lives and we will miss them sorely.

JOHN WARING 1915-2001

John Waring was born in the year 1915 in Sheffield, South Yorkshire. The early years are not well known to us, as my grandfather was a very private man.

We do know that he joined the armed forces just before the war had begun. He was in the 51st Scots Battalion, which my Grandfather told us, was wiped out in Arnhem. After the war he was decorated with an M.B.E medal. This we have been told vaguely was received for the building of the bridges over the river Rhine. Little else is known about his time in the Army except that he was ranked as a Sergeant major when he left the forces.

He met my grandmother Elisabeth Mabelle and they married in 1946. After he left the forces he began work with the BP Oil Company. This work took him first to Aden and then on to Persia (Saudi Arabia). They stayed out there for many years before retiring. My Grandmother returned a year before Grandfather and decided to surprise him by taking on the tenancy at the Three Tuns Inn. When Grandfather returned to England he found that he still had to work in the pub.

A lot of people I have spoken to say that he would sit with the customers more than serve them. In fact some people have said that if Nan was not around he would tell people to help themselves to a drink. This did not amuse my Grandmother. Fish caught in the river would sometimes be cooked and put on the bar for people to eat. In 34 years I have never known any trouble in the pub but I have known that there was a lot of lighthearted arguing and banter thrown around.

I have spoken to a lot of people recently and I have discovered that nearly everyone of them have told me that they always had trouble buying Grandfather a drink as he would have one ready for them as they became empty. Also people have said that he was "a true gentleman and one of a kind" and I have not heard anyone who had met him say anything against him. Grandfather had traveled the world and met hundreds of people who we are still trying to contact and they all seem to say the same

thing, "It's the end of an era and a great shame that its all come to an end."

John Waring (Grandson)

FRANK GILES 1910-2001

My Father, Frank Giles, came to live in Welney some twenty-five years ago. He had visited Welney over a period of time going back to 1959 when I first arrived in this village. For several years until he retired at sixty five years old, once a month he and my Mother would carry out a three hundred mile round trip. They would arrive at 7.30am to 8am having got up at unearthly hours and they would spend part of the day in Welney setting off back about midday to visit my Sister at Southend. Often Ron Padgett would have to doctor their car to get them back! Having been born at Barnet, my Father was brought up on the whole by (his own words) a wonderful couple who fostered some twenty-five boys at one time through their teenage years. This home he had was at Eastbourne. When he left them he headed to London to try and get a roof over his head. He registered with an employment agency dealing with domestic appointments. They sent him round to several clients whom he duly visited and they asked him where he had come from, he said Eastbourne. They then asked if he came by train, he replied no, by pushbike. He began to like the big city and eventually got a job as a Pageboy with a family called 'Lamerts'. He was to stay with them for several years graduating to Footman and eventually to Butler over a household that included some ten to twelve domestic staff, Cooks, Kitchen Maids, Lady's Maids, etc. If you had seen the program on television 'Upstairs and Downstairs' you would understand! He then met my Mother who was a Cook in similar circumstances next door, having worked her way up like my Father, her Mother having died when she was very young in Sheffield. He eventually married my Mother. The Lamert family very generously gave them the run of their house and the use of their limousine for the wedding. His guardian from his original home was his Best Man. He worked for many years for a Colonel Bulkley who was a Patron of Guys Hospital. He had a house in London and a house built off the cliffs overlooking the bay at Coverack in Cornwall with an ocean going yacht in bay where he entertained his friends and business associates. His most famous employer was RAB Butler who was a Chancellor, Foreign Secretary and Minister of Education during the

period he worked for him. For my Father, this meant functions at Number Eleven, Downing Street, Stanstead Hall, Essex and also Gatcombe Park. He organised dinner parties for visitors including Heads of State, Presidents, Prime Ministers, King and Queen, etc. Once when delivering RAB's briefcase with very important notes for a speech in the Houses of Parliament, he was mistaken for a Spy by a new security guard and was locked up in the basement for several hours! He was always happy with his life and he never had much money but both him and my Mother were determined to give myself and my Sister a better start than they had and they certainly did that. They had a tremendous influence on my Son, which has stood him in good stead in shaping his education and life career. My Father enjoyed listening to Radio Norfolk where he heard about the 'Best News Letter' competition, which resulted in Welney winning easily ahead of the other two hundred entrants. One of his mottoes was "Most things are okay in moderation". My Father, Frank Giles, came to live in Welney some twenty five years ago.

Rodger Giles

PETER (POP) BEDFORD 1947 – 2001

Peter was born in 1947 and went to the William Marshall. He had the ability to pass the 11+ but didn't fancy having to catch the 8.am. bus service to Wisbech. Mr. Horace Kimmons, who lived at the Old Post House, suggest to Peter that if he didn't try too hard, he could go to Upwell Secondary Modern, which Peter did. He went to Sunday School at the Methodist Chapel from three years old to fifteen years of age and was always involved with nature and animals, eventually working with his father (Joe Bedford) and grandfather (George) on their farm, which he took control of in 1981. As well as farming he has always been responsible for the rearing of pigs and cattle.

Interested in Darts and Cricket, Peter followed the fortunes of his favourite County Cricket Club – which was Yorks with Boycott and Trueman, visiting many county grounds and going to Test Matches.

But Football was his favourite Sport; as a teenager Sheffield Wednesday was his team, but he switched to Chelsea in the mid 1960's and Peter Osgood was one of his idols, so much so that he nearly always named his dog 'Ossie'. He travelled N.S.E and West to follow Chelsea and of the current team Zola was a great favourite of his.

His father introduced him to the 'Amber Nectar' in the Eagle Tavern at the early age of 16, but he had to wait till he was 18 to get his Full Union Card.

Pop was a Character – both loved and respected throughout the village – and he will be missed with a true sadness and regret not only here but over the wide circle of his friends. Someone special has gone.

Denis Booth



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NEW COMMUNITY HELP AND FUNDS FOR WELNEY

Jackie Squires introduces herself

The Working Together Team located at King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council offices have been successful in securing funding from the Single Regeneration Bid (SRB6) to develop a range of initiatives across the West Norfolk Fens. This has enabled the Working Together Group project to expand its workforce, and further the Borough Councils Community Development Strategy into reality on the ground, encompassing the key areas of the north and south fens.

I shall be working as Community Development Worker in the south fens area covering the parishes of St. Germans, Magdalen, Marshland St. James, Emneth, Outwell, Nordelph, Welney, Stow Bardolph, Downham West and Upwell.

My role is to **work with communities** to identify local needs and develop community based projects. These could include improvements to village halls and playgrounds, assisting with village surveys, establishing community car schemes, identifying training needs and education opportunities, improving childcare provision and pre-school facilities/opportunities.

I will be able to offer support, give advice and information on the development of local projects and make the necessary links with other organisations and agencies as well as investigating potential sources of funding.

I moved back to Norfolk three years ago from Hertfordshire, where I was working in the field of countryside management and recreation. I have

experience of working with volunteers and project management and am particularly interested in youth issues, especially the problems faced by young people in isolated areas.

I am looking forward to meeting members of the community and would be interested in hearing from anyone who may want support and advice in developing a local project.

Jackie Squires

Community Development Worker

I can be contacted on the following numbers:-

Tel: 01553 616657

Email: jackie.squires@west-norfolk.gov.uk

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NATURE NOTES

I often find it difficult to know how to begin this item but an unusual sighting on 1st March immediately struck me as an appropriate subject even though it was dead. Lying just out of reach in the Old Bedford some 100m south of the bridge the bird looked superficially like a gull, but was obviously rather more heavily built and of a subtly different shade of grey.

Recovery with the aid of a stick confirmed its suspected identity as a FULMAR, which had obviously died the previous night.

Related to the Albatrosses and Shearwaters, fulmars are very much birds of the open sea. They rarely venture inland at all unless forced by bad weather or poor health.

The nearest colony is at Hunstation, where a walk along the cliff tops during the next few weeks will provide the opportunity to get some excellent close-up views of them flying stiff winged back and forth. I subsequently learnt that this rare appearance in Welney coincided with a number of inland sightings for no obvious reason.

A few days later I also heard about a female BLACKCAP that had visited a local bird table and then continued to do so for a few more days. Essentially a summer visitor to Britain a small proportion do manage to over winter, but more typically in large, mature suburban gardens rather than small open villages like Welney.

Another species which has recently been noted feeding at the bird table in Welney for the first time is the Long-tailed tit. Indeed I have even seen several members of a passing flock briefly feeding on peanuts in my own garden. This behaviour is very new but appears to be spreading quickly around the country. What is particularly interesting is how this change of behaviour happens at all in a bird that does not usually travel widely from its birth place.

Kingfishers are always a welcome sight, especially when they are on the doorstep. With two separate pairs in and around the village at present it's actually quite difficult to avoid seeing or hearing them at present. A few minutes watching and listening from Welney bridge should be rewarding. Even if you are not successful the presence of so many Great Crested Grebes in their full summer plumage diving and displaying

two weeks later than normal.

The mass movement of frogs and toads from their hibernation to their spawning grounds also took place rather later this year. Judging by the number of flattened corpses on the roads, most drivers either don't see them or can not be bothered to avoid them, when they are on the move. On mild wet nights the numbers involved can be quite large to the extent that I have even wandered about helping them across the road. The lack of a particularly concentrated crossing place has thus far spared me the temptation to make myself appear dafter to others than I probably do already.

Tim Bennett

NEW RESIDENTS

I'm afraid we didn't have time to get round all the new residents for this edition – there have been quite a number. But if you are new to the village one of the committee will be calling on you with this magazine and hoping to make your acquaintance and talk about you and where you have come from and why you chose our village.



J.D.L.

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VIEW FROM A TRACTOR

"The outlook for 1997 harvest and beyond is looking decidedly dodgy"so I wrote in the pilot issue of Welney News, not realising quite was in store for our farming community. 1997 harvest proved better than anticipated, but the full impact of the strong pound and Labour government policies were yet to bite.

Without turning this article into political comment I'll skip the detail and simply say that four years on, farmers are barely making any profit at all. Indeed 'survival of the fittest' applies in every meaning of the phrase as farm incomes have fallen 67% since 1995.

What has caused this situation? In essence the same problem mentioned in my article in 1997 – strength of the pound relative to our EC contemporaries, making home grown products more expensive to export and overseas produce cheaper to import. But it is never that simple and EC influences as well as current government policies also play a significant part in the demise of farming.

Is demise too strong a word? I think not. Agriculture has lost 44,000 people from the industry in the last two years – substantially more than the car and steel industry combined and yet no-one outside agriculture seems to care. Indeed the public sentiment seems hell bent in killing of the countryside altogether, but such comment perhaps is not relevant here!

To add insult to the beleaguered situation the very wet climate conditions experienced since September have tested the farmer's patience and in some cases driven home the final nail. Rainfall totals in 2000 exceeded all previous records nationally and 2001 to date has not improved.

The 2000 harvest proved both difficult and expensive as most crops harvested with a combine required at least a degree of drying to ensure safe storage. Most grain dryers are diesel or oil powered and the fuel blockade ensured last minute purchases were at maximum price. As the rain continued so drilling of the subsequent crop became more difficult – simply ploughing the remaining stubble proved impossible as tractor wheels smeared the soil surface, compacting and ruining any decent structure left. Farmers in some cases resorted to emergency measures and by December it was not an unusual sight to see tractors pulling one

plough

Harvesting of the root crops potatoes and sugar beet, proved just as demanding as the rain continued to fall. Farmers have increased machinery size over the last ten years in their constant battle to reduce production costs. On exceptionally wet soils such machines simply cannot work without causing significant structural damage.

However, as the market price for potatoes started to climb in the light of the difficult lifting conditions, so the more desperate farmers became and drastic measures were employed to lift the crop. One grower at Holbeach used two tractors to pull his harvester and a third to push from behind. Similarly there was a report from Suffolk of a Chinook helicopter being 'borrowed' from the RAF to help to lift a bogged down harvester out of the quagmire. Despite these efforts there still remain fields of potatoes unlifted. It is likely that these will now be of no use for human consumption as the combination of slug damage, frost and water-logging will place the cost of lifting the crop greater than their value.

As the rain has continued into 2001, large lakes of water have formed over both drilled and barren fields. This is evidence of the extent of the structural damage sustained during the harvesting campaign. There are even ploughed fields on the road to Ten Mile Bank that have water lying on the surface. It is unlikely these fields will dry out this Spring and thus they will most likely remain uncropped until next autumn.

I have not mentioned foot and mouth because you will all have read of that in the newspapers and, so far, Norfolk has escaped, but is it a bad time for farmers everywhere.

I'm sorry that my first farming update should be so pessimistic and I hope to bring you good news next issue. If the rain continues, however, perhaps I will rename the column 'View from an amphibious craft!'

Stuart Cree



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WELNEY SCHOOL WELNEY SCHOOL

One of the highlights of the spring term was the visit to the school of P.C. Holt and his dog 'Chad' on the 19th March. Chad is one of two specially – trained Community Safety dogs in the area; the two dogs are the front men of a community safety project run by Norfolk Partners Against Crime Taskforce in conjunction with Norfolk Constabulary. PC Holt and Chad talked to children from both the infant and junior classes about stranger danger and saying no to strangers.

On 3rd April the Friends of the School held an Easter Fair, which was open to all. There were stalls, competitions and a raffle and an Easter Egg competition. This competition included entries from the Cygnets (both playgroup and toddlers) and the schoolchildren for the best decorated Easter Egg. The standard of entries was magnificent and the judges had a hard time deciding the winners.

The staff and children of the school said goodbye to Mrs Christine Thompson at the Easter half term; she was retiring after more than ten years working as school secretary and classroom assistant. Mrs Thompson said she would miss the children very much but was looking forward to having some free time. No doubt her two dogs, Toby and Aster, will appreciate some extra long walks now! After the half term break the school welcomed Mrs Karen Garcia, from Hilgay, who took on both the secretarial and classroom assistant roles.

Don't forget! The school is constantly saving aluminium cans, used postage stamps, and postcards. Please help by collecting any of these items and handing them in at the school. Thank you!

Mrs Jasmin Golson, Headteacher

PLAYGROUP.

'The Chinese Dragon went to School!'

The playgroup has completed its first term of existence. The comfortable, bright and freshly-decorated schoolhouse, and range of new toys and equipment, make a wonderful environment for both children and staff. Speaking personally, we find it a pleasure to be there! The children have quickly got used to the format of the playgroup sessions. Compared with the toddler group, there is more structure for some of the session and more is expected of the children in terms of joining in with some activities. More independence is encouraged; for example getting the children to help serve out drinks and biscuits. There are plenty of opportunities during the sessions for free play and a choice of activities is al-

ways offered. Art and craft activities follow themes in the same way as the toddler group, in fact where possible the same theme is used in both groups. As part of Chinese New Year the playgroup children constructed their own Chinese paper dragon, which went on a visit to the school, dancing through the school hall and classrooms.

The children particularly enjoy role play, using dressing-up clothes to help things along though their imaginations rarely need much assistance! Anything to do with water, paint, or dough seems to meet with approval too ...

The playgroup has already been able to purchase some additional equipment. In the near future we will be applying for funding to join the voucher scheme, where four- year-olds and some three-year-olds will be able to use vouchers to pay for their places in the group.

There were several social events for the Cygnets during the holidays, including a visit to 'Jumping Jacz', a large indoor adventure play centre in Whittlesey, and a fundraising soup kitchen at the Mitchell residence. And please, don't forget the group 'sponsored slim' being undertaken by several of the cygnets' Mums – we need lots of sponsors, so please sign up and support us! Sponsor forms are held by Holly Goodwin and Karen Fleming.

Karen Fleming and Holly Goodwin



Jackie Rolfe

Hobby Cottage · Hundred Foot Bank
Welney · Wisbech · PE14 9TW
Tel/Fax: 01353 863597
Mobile: 077 18162917
E-mail: jackierolfe@fsmail.net

WELNEY CYGNETS

Parent and Toddler Group. The Toddlers are meeting as usual in the village hall on Tuesday and Friday mornings. Some of last year's new faces have become this year's regulars, and the group is benefiting from the willingness of all the parents to help in setting up and running the sessions. Between 6 and 10 children are coming to the group on a regular basis.

Though the playgroup is now running, the toddler group is still open to all children from birth to school age, and indeed some children are attending both playgroup and toddler sessions.

Toddler funds have been accumulating quite well, partly due to our annual grant from the Parish Council and a very successful Karaoke Night at the Lamb and Flag in early spring. Both of these provided a welcome boost to our own fundraising efforts.

Special thanks go to Gina and Dennis at the Lamb and Flag for putting on the Karaoke Night. As a result we have been able to purchase a range of new toys for the toddlers. These include a kitchen activity centre, Thomas the Tank Engine play tent, a 'road and rail' set and some tumbling mats; also a number of smaller toys and a large rug for the baby area.

Craft activities are still popular. For Valentine's Day some of the children made decorated biscuits, and Valentine cards using a heart shaped printing block. Then for Easter, there were Easter cards, eggs, and baskets to make and decorate.

Fancy a break?

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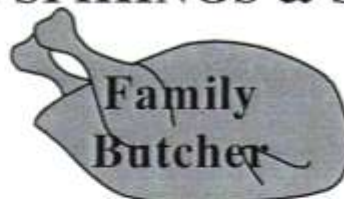
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UPWELL CUBS AND SCOUTS

The cubs and scouts continue with their regular meetings during May and June. The Cubs are now meeting in Upwell Village Hall instead of Upwell School (still on Mondays from 6pm to 7-30pm) – the village hall is larger and better for indoor games. The Scouts are as before, in Upwell Methodist Hall on Mondays from 6-30pm to 8-30pm.

On the 16th May the cubs and scouts will be holding their AGM in the Methodist Hall; the meeting itself begins at 7-30pm, but is preceded at 6-30pm by an Entertainers Evening, during which all of the cubs and scouts will be doing a piece to entertain their parents. The whole event is open to the public.

For more details on either the Cubs or Scouts, you can contact Amanda King on 01945 772716. And for younger children, there is the Beaver Colony in Outwell, which meets once a month and is open to 6-8 year - olds. For more information about the Beavers, please ring Beryl Boyce on 01945 773357.

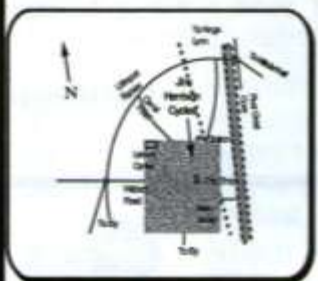
FRIENDSHIP CLUB

The Friendship Club recently heard a fascinating talk given by a Mr Evans of Manea who was Batman to Lord Mountbatten. Mr Evans spent many years in the Navy and also came to meet many members of the Royal Family. Regular meetings are continuing as usual with dominoes, Bingo, other games and raffles.

The Friendship Club wish to express their condolences to the family of Mrs Connie Pennick who passed away on Christmas Eve. Connie will be much missed by the Club; she was a very active member who put in a lot of time and effort for the Friendship Club.

Best wishes are sent to Mrs Dalton, a club member who is currently in Wisbech Hospital awaiting a move into a residential home.

Jim Harrison (Cycles)



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WOMENS' INSTITUTE

The WI's guest speaker in March was Debbie McKenzie of the WWT. The WI had one of their twice - yearly Council meetings in March; also this year in the town of March, at the Community College. These meetings are attended by WI members from all of the Isle of Ely groups - there can easily be 200 or more people present. The calendar of events for the year is discussed, then there is a speaker as well as the opportunity to browse among produce and craft stalls. A smaller twice - yearly gathering is the Group meeting which brings together the local groups of Upwell/Outwell, Christchurch, March St Mary, and Welney. These meetings always include a speaker and entertainment. Other meetings during the year follow a particular pattern; the June meeting is always a night out, and the October meeting is a Harvest celebration, with a supper and entertainment, to which 2 or 3 other local groups are usually invited. The

'normal' monthly meetings include a guest speaker, refreshments, and a game or quiz in addition to the business part of the meeting. The June meeting this year is at the home of Mrs Arnold, formerly of Welney but now living in Upwell, who has a display of doll's houses.

In spite of a full schedule of meetings, speakers, and competitions, the WI is currently at a low ebb in terms of membership - there are now only 14 members in the Welney group. One of the major causes of the decline in membership seems to be the change in lifestyle of village residents - once most women would work locally, usually on the land, and their day's work would finish at 3 or 4pm. Organisations such as the WI would then provide their social life. Now, most jobs are outside the village and people often arrive home later, eat later, and then choose to stay in; or perhaps become involved in evening pursuits outside the village - sports, adult education, etc.

There is serious concern about the survival of the WI with membership at this level. New members, or those wishing to just come along and have a look at what the WI does, have always been very welcome at any meeting; now it is becoming vital that the group finds some new faces. If you are looking for something that brings social contact and introduces you to a wide range of interests, then please consider the WI. Membership costs little over a pound a month - very good value these days. For more information please contact Amy Markham, 610340.



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Tel: 01945-773328



So much for the expression "fine weather for the ducks". The wettest autumn on record provided very deep water along the entire length of the Ouse Washes, and consequently rather poor conditions for winter wildfowl. Wet weather persisted into late winter and the numbers of dabbling ducks, in particular Pintail, Shoveler, Gadwall, Wigeon and Teal, were welldown on normal years. Despite the flooding, winter swan numbers peaked at over 3000 Bewick's and 1500 Whooper Swans in January, although the bulk of the Bewick's Swans left for the Netherlands, on the first leg of their spring migration, in the first week of February, a week or two earlier than normal.

Amongst the wintering Whooper Swans was 'William', a cygnet hatched in northern Iceland in 1999. Last winter the children of Welney School 'adopted' William and we promised to keep the school notified of his movements. In autumn 2000 William, together with his two siblings, turned up in south west Norway (a long way from Welney), but in February, all three swans arrived safely on the Washes and the school children were able to see him feeding close to the Observatory at the end of the month.

Evening floodlit feeds continued until the end of February and, despite very deep water, over 3000 visitors enjoyed the spectacle of hundreds of wild swans feeding a few yards from the heated Observatory.

Most folk in Welney will know that the centre and reserve were closed on 2nd March as a precaution against the Foot and Mouth Disease crisis. At the time of writing (23rd March) we still have no date for opening. Please bear with us during this difficult time and rest assured that just as soon as it is possible to open we will do.

Hopefully when we get back to some sort of normal opening routine, our attentions will turn to some major maintenance tasks to be carried on the reserve. Some of these are to support the annual grazing regime - clearing ditches, building cattle pens and repairing banks and fences.

Looking towards our summer events, we are all looking forward to some dry weather and some long, hot summer days in which to explore the reserve for migrant birds, wetland flowers and insects. If you are having problems telling a Garganey from a Gawall - there is a course just for you. Or, if you need to brush up your dragonfly identification skills, we have a warden who is an expert. Take advantage of these wild workshops and appreciate the wonders of the natural world around us.

STOP PRESS: WWT Welney re-opened on 17th April after an elected closure of 7 weeks. At the time of the first outbreaks no-one knew where the foot & mouth disease might spread. Cattle are an integral part of the management of the Ouse Washes and to be on the safe side, we decided to close the reserve and visitor centre. The visitor centre, shop, tea-room and Observatory are now fully open, although visitors will, not for now be able to visit the other bird-watching hides and paths - this is because much of the reserve remains under water.

Carl Mitchell



The Widgeon Tea Room

Open 10 am - 4:30 pm

Feel free to visit our charming tea room and gift shop at one of the most important nature reserves in the area

(all profits go towards our conservation work)

Enjoy a variety of hot & cold light lunches/snacks (served from 12 - 3 pm)

Call in for afternoon tea and try our delicious home-made cakes!

(Booked groups catered for)

Visitor Centre & Reserve 10 am - 5 pm
Disabled Access/Baby changing facility

WELNEY CROFT CRICKET CLUB Fixture List 2001

This years cricket season starts with a home fixture on Saturday April 28th against Northants side Ecton Hall.

There are matches arranged most week-ends, so if any one is interested in a game please contact one of the following to declare your availability:

Spectators/Supporters are always welcome.

John Loveday (Chairman) Tel. 01354-610353 or 610492

Dennis Birch Tel. 01354-610242

Tony Smart (Secretary) Tel. 01223-312373

Date Fixtures 2001 Location/Day/Time

April 28	ECTON HALL (h) Saturday
May 6	ELY TOWN HOUSE (a)
13	FELTWELL (h)
27	PRICKWILLOW (a)
31	MARKET HARBOROUGH (h) Thursday 2.30
June 10	OLD WILHADS (h)
17	DENVER (a)
24	MARCH TOWN III (h)
July 1	FELTWELL (a)
8	HILTON (h)
15	BRENTWOOD & HAVERING LP - St.Catherines College
21	CASTLE BYTHAM (h) Saturday
29	OLD WILHADS (a)
August 5	PRICKWILLOW (h)
12	HILTON (a)
19	Blows Brothers Trophy
Sept 1	STAMFORD GREY BEARDS
(a) Saturday 1.30	
9	DENVER (h)
16	LITTLEPORT (a)

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	Bank Holiday May 2001 7	1  	2 WI 	3 	4 	5
6		8  	9 WI	10 	11 	12
13 Cricket Home Pavilion	14	15  	16	17 	18   	19
20	21	22 	23	24 	25   	26
27	28	29  	30 	31 Cricket Home Pavilion	1  	2
3	4	5 	6 	7 	8 June 2001  	9
10	11	12  	13	14 	15   	16
17	18	19 	20	21 	22  	23
24	25	26  	27	28 	29   	30



Carpet Bowls
Youth 6-7 pm
Adult 7-9 pm Pavilion



Line Dancing 7.30 pm
Pavilion

WI

Women's Institute -
7.00 pm, Village Hall



Parish Council
Meeting
7.30 pm Village Hall



Bingo & Lottery Draw
7.30 pm



Welney Cygnets 9.30 to
11.30 am, Village Hall



Friendship Club
2 00 pm Village Hall



Teddy Church
10.30 am Church



Mobile Library
9.30 Hale Drove End,
10.30 Village Car Park
11.15 Post Office