

LETTERS

Folowing my article about the cross in West End I have received the following two communications.Ed.

The Cross

Obviously it's origins are "Lost in the mists", but pilgrims to Walsingham would not have come here from Mount Ephraim in the forest – they would need Swaffham and Fakenham. Since Hockwold, Methwold and Didlington all have crosses, was it a case of keeping up with the Jones'. Which came first, The Market or the Cross?

The shaft of our cross is not stone but a form of concrete. I wonder who made it!

Jim Booty

I thought it was a fascinating article on the front of Village Life concerning the old Cross at West End.

At the time of the Jubilee I was talking to Mrs Eyles at the farm up by the old chalk pit and she thought it was a religious cross but her husband said not and recalled the Cock which was replaced by the Cross.

My elderly mother, who has always been interested in the history of Church buildings says that these crosses pre-dated church building in ancient times and a visiting preacher would gather people around for some kind of service.

Another theory is that it might have been the place where a small market was regularly held – this would allow for it being in a dip in the land. Centres of population and

Thoroughfares have changed particularly since the Plague and there may have been a route leading directly to the Cross from Methwold – isn't there a footpath from the bend in Pinfold Lane?

Keep up the good work – I always enjoy the articles and local news.

Regards,

Frank Eglington

Dear Editor, I would like to say a very sincere thank you to the kind person who cut the grass on the path used by many dog-walkers, at the crossover between Ingams Lane & Common Drove. It was getting really quite dangerous as we got perilously close to the river edge & it became a hazard for anyone slightly off balance, as I am just now!

Thanks, on behalf of all who use the path.

Rosemary Crisp

Dear Ed,
I would like to thank Alan, DANNY's dad for cutting back the grass by the river, Ingams lane. it makes it easier to get round, and get in and out of the water for my daily paddle ,(much to mums pleasure!!!!). and for every one else getting round that bit. Whoever does it officially doesn't do that part. many thanks again. OZZIE&MUM. Jackie.

I think the person being praised is Alan Botwright. Ed.

Village Life

NORTHWOLD & WHITTINGTON

Issue: July 2005

Copy date for the next issue is;

23rd July 2005

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IT'S CARNIVAL TIME AGAIN!

Report by Jim Booty

The weather was dull and overcast for Northwold's annual Carnival organised by the Northwold School P T F A. The procession started at the Chalk Pit led by the Norwich Samba Band,(So everyone knew they were coming). The floats were judged by Mick Parfitt, the winner being the W.I. Calendar Girls, followed by the Tennis Club Movies.The Childrens section was won by the Tots and Co, (Willie Wonka and the Chocolate factory) with The Little Normans second, (Mary Poppins) and the carnival Queen third. Other floats were from the School and Produce Show.

At the Fendick Field there was the usual good collection of stalls and sideshows, including for the first time a Hog Roast, (Delicious) and a display of old bicycles. Displays by the Samba Band, and the bicycles in the grand ring were followed by the Methwold Fire Brigade taking the roof off a "Crashed" car and rescuing the driver. Unfortunately the rain arrived at 4 O'Clock bringing the fete to an early end. About £2000 was raised for School funds. Congratulations to the PFTA for another very good show.

Tots and Co.

Well its nearly time for the summer holidays, again!!! (Where does the time go?)

What a great run of Tot's we have had. Very busy, but great fun. Tot's has been running for a number of years now and its still going strong with new members joining us all the time, and its not just the mum's but we also have a few Dad's join us which is great for the group.

I will be stepping down from Chairperson in July, as I will no longer have any children at Tots. I will be handing over to two of the other mums who are going to be Chair and Vice Chair. I have enjoyed my time at Tots and it's been a pleasure seeing all the babies growing up, also being part of this wonderful group. I have to say a big, big thank you to my wonderful committee, who have been great giving their help and hard work. I will miss the group and hope that it continues for many years to come.

Little Normans Northwold

Pre-School

June was a very busy month for everyone at Little Normans. Great excitement filled the air on the day of Carnival. The children and staff enjoyed dressing up for our float, Mary Poppins, and we came a very proud 2nd place. A thank you goes to all the parents, children and staff that helped paint and create the float and a very BIG thank you goes to Claire Cater, our very own designer!! We must also thank everyone that supported our stalls/ buckets on the day, we raised approx £100.00. Our final thank you goes to Brian Cater and family for the use of their vehicle and yard for the weekend, very much appreciated – Thank you.

Winners for our Bean Bag throwing competition were:- 5 & Under – Kayla Aspin, 6-10 years – Rob Butler & 11-Adult – Jasper Fields. Well done to your all.

On Friday 17th June, The Tot's & Co joined us for our annual outing. Two coaches left Northwold to visit Melsop Fam Park, Scoulton. It was a lovely sunny day and the children enjoyed seeing all the farm animals, a picnic and a play on the



wonderful equipment.

Friday 24th June 2005, the Pre-School and Tot's & Co children took part in the Banardo's National Toddle. We all walked twice around the Fendick Field, proudly wearing our Banardo's hats and stickers. 75% of the Sponsors raised goes to Banardo's & 25% to the Pre-School/Tots & Co. We will inform you of the amounts raised next month.

The older children that are due to leave us at the end of term to start at the Norman School have been enjoying their induction visits and story time a on a Friday afternoon.

We have spaces available for the Autumn Term starting 5th September 2005. If you wish to register your child please contact the Pre-School. Telephone 01366 728804.

Opening hours:- Mon & Fri 9am-12 noon & Wed, Thurs, Fri 9am – 3pm. Term time only.

Tina

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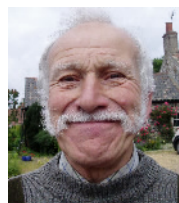
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The views expressed in submitted items are not necessarily endorsed by Northwold & Whittington Village Life. Whilst we endeavour to ensure that all information contained in the newsletter is correct, we cannot be held responsible for errors. The Editor reserves the right to refuse or omit items without explanation.

Editorial

So that's one half of the year gone. Funny old world. A few years ago I went on holiday to Cork in Southern Ireland and found that the Hotel owners came from Thetford. Then last week we went to Derbyshire and found the cottage owners come from Sheringham and Fakenham.

Well the Carnival is over and now the open Village Sunday is upon us. **So lets get stuck in and make it worth the while.**

I have two ideas in mind for the Village Life.

1. A personal column where people can report Birthdays, Anniversaries, Bereavements, etc. We haven't had any acknowledgments of people passing on since Nigel Tuffnell left. There is no charge for these items in fact I would be pleased to have them.

2. I would like to have a "Humour" column. You can send in your "Clean" jokes for publication.

Lastly. Again, Please let me have your E mail address so that I can send out the warning messages from the Police. This is so important. Not only can it prevent things happening without our being aware of the existing threat, but these people tend to fight shy of places where they know we are on the ball. I had a breakdown with my computer and lost a lot of addresses so could you send them again. Please. **Mick**

Don't forget to meet the Village Life deadline (always printed on the front cover). If you're providing copy by email, please use Microsoft Word format

Church Diary for July and August 2005

July 3rd. 9. 30am Holy Communion, All Saints Wretton.

11am. Holy Communion, St Andrew's, Northwold.

July 10th 9. 30 am. Holy Communion, Christ Church, Whittington

11am. Matins, St Andrew's Northwold

July 17th 9.30am. Service of the word, All Saints, Wretton

8am. Holy Communion, St Andrew's, Northwold

July 24th 9.30 am. Service of the word, Christ Church, Whittington

11am. Holy Communion, St. Andrew's, Northwold

July 31st 9. 30am. Holy Communion, All saints, Wretton

August 7th 9.30am. Holy Communion, All Saints, Wretton

11am. Holy Communion, St. Andrew's, Northwold

August 14th 9.30am. Holy Communion, Christ Church, Whittington

11am. Matins, St. Andrew's, Northwold

August 21st. 9.30am. Service of the word, All Saints, Wretton

8am. Holy Communion, St. Andrew's, Northwold

August 28th 9. 30am. Service of the word, Christ Church, Whittington

11am. Holy Communion, St Andrew's, Northwold..

Derek Johnson

PROPERTY & LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE

Interior & exterior painting, wood or UPVC fascia boards
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Trees & conifers trimmed or removed
Hedges, bushes and ivy trimmed
Fencing & decking, landscape maintenance

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Tots And Co.

Coffee Afternoon - 2nd June 2005

Our coffee afternoon went really well and we had a lovely afternoon.

We raised a total of £137.78, which will be split between the two charities we chose to raise money for, (the Meningitis Trust and The EDP Breast Cancer Appeal).

Thank you to everyone who helped! Especially the three wonderful Tea ladies! I would like to say big thanks to all of you who spent time making cakes for us to sell to raise money. The Afternoon was a success, and many thanks once again.

Theresa Ramshaw (Tots & Co)

Bowls Club 100 Club Draw for June 2005

1st. R. Thornhill £20
2nd. B Ayres £15
3rd S. Freemantle £10

Sylvia.

Northwold Tennis Club

It's that Wimbledon time of year again and Northwold Tennis Club is thriving. Last year we had a total of 80 members, which included 35 juniors, and we are looking forward to welcoming new members this year.

At our AGM in March, our Chairperson and founding member, Carol Sharp, stepped down and Veronica Hutchby took over as our new Chairperson. Our grateful thanks to Carol for all the amazing hard work she put in to get the Tennis court and Club up and running. To add and build on her success we are having floodlights installed this year with the kind help of the Sports and Social Club and assistance of the Bowls Club, and also a windbreak, (It can get a bit draughty on court sometimes!).

For more information or if you would like to join the Club please telephone Karen Rickard on 01366 728721. Annual membership fees are, Adults £25, Junior £5, and Family £50.

Karen

Northwold Sports & Social Club

The committee would like to apologise to those families that left early from the Carnival Evening on Saturday 11th June 2005.

“We do not approve of the actions of some of the people present and we are taking actions to solve these matters. We would be pleased to welcome every member back in future”

Cleaner Wanted

The Sports & Social Club has a position open for a cleaner. Flexible hours and rates of pay negotiable
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Neighbourhood Watch

Since the 1st May there have been 2 Domestic Burglaries, 4 Burglaries of shed/outbuildings and 2 thefts from motor vehicles in the Beat 24 area.

Whilst these are very heartening figures and we need to ensure that we maintain them, unfortunately, the Post Office in Wereham suffered a night raid in May, so please warn your friends, neighbours and home watch members about the need to ensure that their homes and shed/outbuildings are secure at all times and the advantages to be gained by fitting an alarm to them.

The police are looking for information regarding two vehicles that have been spotted in your area. They are a Red Metro Reg No N 216 WKR and white Renault 19 Reg No L 683 KBL, if you see either of these vehicles please call 0845 4564567 and give the call taker the following information. The time you spotted the vehicle, its location or direction of travel and the driver's description and those of any passengers. Ensure that the call taker knows that you are calling response to a Ringmaster message. **Thank You**

Good news today. Mr Michael Carroll (of Lottery Winning fame) has been charged with 3 counts of criminal damage.He also asked for 27 other offences to be taken into c o n s i d e r a t i o n . He appears at King's Lynn Court on T u e s 2 1 s t J u n e . Currently on bail with Conditions as f o l l o w s . Not to enter the parishes of Magdelen, Stowbridge or W i m b o t s h a m . To be indoors between 9pm and 6am daily. Breaking either of these conditions means he can be ARRESTED. If seen contact Police on 0845 456 4567

I am still getting a poor response to my request for my e mail early warning. Please send me your e mail address. It's your property I'm Trying to protect. **Mick**

A Sequel from The Allotments. By

Ivor Carrot

I was dejected and so sad that I can't grow a thing But I had a dream and now it's changed- starting from next Spring.

The Bank Manager is rather worried and others seem to fear But the allotment will prosper – I have this great idea.

For on my plot I'll have a shop in a little hut We'll be open night and day – it will never shut.

I shall sell garden tools, compost and some seeds Serve tea and coffee with a bun – even stuff for weeds.

Others with allotments will come and browse a while Everyone will envy me as I will make a pile.

You will think I'm stupid but there is a secret plan In fact it's very cunning- almost quite a scam.

I shall need a water main – the cost I will not lose As I will charge a fortune just renting out my hose.

Ivor Carrot

Animal Charities and Cats Protection From Maureen Maynard

We had a good day at the carnival apart from being a bit cold, and I would like to thank you all for your generous support and donations. The raffle prizes have all been claimed and delivered. Also a big thank you to Jane and Jean, and our spouses for their help and contribution to the day which is thoroughly appreciated. I couldn't do it without them.

Maureen

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Northwold News Jim Booty

Reports on activities, news and events in and around Northwold

Parish Council

At the annual meeting of Northwold Parish Council Mr J. Booty was re-elected Chairman. Mrs R. Crisp was elected Vice Chairman, and Mrs V. Lynch Village hall representative. Mr Day was elected Charities representative, Mr B. Jenkinson Highways representative. Declarations of acceptance of office were signed.

Constable's Charity has provided gravel to repair Little London Lane. Dog owners are reminded that any mess should be cleared and TAKEN HOME NOT put in

Council's litter bins. The bins are cleared by the litter warden and she should not be faced with stinking plastic bags. The Council is considering providing a doggy bin, but these are very expensive.

Some gravestones in the cemetery are broken. Repair of these is the responsibility of the families, not the Council.

Glass and tins are being thrown about on the Recreation Ground where there are plenty of bins.

Jim Booty

The Late Mrs Barbara Kimber

Thanks.

I Would like to express my thanks to all who attended my sister Barbara's funeral service. It was nice to know she was so well thought of. Thank you again.
From her sister, Gladys.

The family of the late Mrs Barbara Kimber would like to express their thanks to all family members and friends for their kind words, cards and letters. She will be greatly missed by us all.

Also to say thank you for the kind donations given at her funeral. A total of £ 269. 2p was collected for the S C B U at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, King's Lynn.

Newcomer to the Village.
Born to Claire and Barry a Son, "Fenn".
Congratulations from The Editor and Pam

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Methwold Hythe
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Humour Page

Sent in by Chris Darlow
these are apparently
Genuine

In a restroom:
Toilet out of order, please use floor below

In a Laundromat:
Automatic washing machines ;
Please remove all your clothes when the light goes out

In a London department store:
Bargain basement upstairs

In an office:
Would the person who took the step ladder yesterday please bring it back or further steps will be taken

In another office:
After tea break staff should empty the teapot and stand upside down on the draining board

Outside a second-hand shop :
We exchange anything – bicycles, washing machines,etc. Why not bring your wife along and get a wonderful bargain

Notice in health food shop window:
Closed due to illness

Spotted in a safari park:
Elephants, please stay in your car
Seen during a conference:

In a shop
For anyone who has children and doesn’t know it, there is a day care on the 1st floor
Notice in a farmer's field:
The farmer allows walkers to cross the field for free but the bull charges

Message on a leaflet:
If you cannot read, this leaflet will tell you how to get lessons

On a repair shop door:
We can repair anything, (please knock hard on the door – the bell doesn’t work)

Puzzle Solution

The solution to the “ Ears” competition in last months edition is :-

- A. Trudi Fendick
- B. Fiona Eyles
- C. Roger Eyles
- D. Jim Booty
- E. Roger Preston
- F. Mandy Lavender
- G. Harry Everett
- H. Mick Parfitt

The Odd ear out is proudly owned by Jim and the reason is it has never been in the Gunge Tank on carnival day. All the others have.

Carnival

Congratulations to everyone involved in any way with Northwold Carnival - a great day was had by all!

Thanks for everyone’s help!



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Reader: Keith MacLeod, West Barn, Ryston Road, West Dereham. Tel. (01366) 500960 or 07766766137 email: keith.macleod@virgin.net

Keith MacLeod’s Monthly Report

July 2005 Anglican Church Letter

I recently preached on God moving in mysterious ways – quoting that well known line from such a famous hymn that I cannot remember which one it is! – *God moves in mysterious ways his wonders to perform.*

It is a fact that we cannot know what is going to happen next – even the weather forecasters with all their sophisticated techniques and technology cannot always get it right. Things take most unexpected twists and turns and consequences arise which are quite unforeseen. It is of course this that provides the basis for both unreasonable optimism and desperate pessimism. Throughout history some people have taken the view that they probably did not believe in God, but that if there is no God, what harm is done in believing in him, whereas if there IS a God, then who knows what harm will follow upon not believing in him. The proper precautionary thing to do then is clearly to believe in God and hope for the best. If only it were so easy!

I thought I might pass on a story told at the 1994 annual Forensic Science awards ceremony in the USA by the then President of the American Association of Forensic Science. I understand that this is a true story. It is a marvellous illustration of the dangers of taking anything for granted or of making assumptions, even based upon much evidence.

On 23 March 1994, a medical examiner was called to see the body of a man who had jumped from the top of a 10-storey building – presumably a suicide. He had, in fact, left a note indicating his despondency. However, when the body was examined the only damage it had suffered was a shotgun blast to the head, which was clearly the cause of death. There was none of the trauma one would expect for a body hitting the pavement after a long fall.

It emerged that he had been shot by a shotgun blast from a ninth floor window as he fell past it. The examiner concluded that the intention to commit suicide followed by death would still be defined as suicide, even though the nature of the death was not the intended one. However, it also emerged that a safety net had been installed just below the eighth floor of the building by building workers, so the intended suicide could not have succeeded. The examiner wondered if the death was then going to be a homicide or an accidental death.

Investigation showed that the shot had come from a room on the ninth floor where an elderly couple had been engaged in a vigorous argument, during which the man threatened his wife with a shotgun. He was so upset that when he pulled the trigger he missed her and the shot went out of the window just as the young man was passing. When someone intends to kill ‘A’, but inadvertently kills ‘B’ instead, this would normally be classed as homicide, even though the victim was not the intended one.

When confronted with the murder charge, the old man and his wife both protested. It was a long standing habit of his to threaten his wife during arguments, but the shotgun was never loaded. There was no intention to kill her – it was just a terrible accident.

The investigation continued and turned up a witness who had seen the old couple’s son loading the shotgun about 6 weeks prior to the shooting. It transpired that the old lady had cut off his financial support and he was furious. It seemed that he knew of his parent’s bizarre arguments and he loaded the gun in the expectation that his father would then shoot his mother. Since the son, the loader of the gun, knew what would happen this was homicide. The examiner and the police had now been through suicide, homicide, accidental death and were now back to homicide.

When they tried to identify and find the son, they discovered that he was the young man who had thrown himself off the roof in despair at the apparent failure of his plan to murder his mother! So, as he died as a direct consequence of his trying to murder another, the medical examiner closed the case as one of suicide.

I have not tried very hard to find a moral in this story, which as a true story is actually very sad. As none of us knows any of the persons involved we can also allow ourselves to be amused by the way it all worked out. But I wonder how long the examiner kept the case open before he closed it, in case there was yet another twist in the tale/tail. The significance, rather than the moral, of the tale is in teaching us not to accept the obvious, not to accept anything as given, until we know as many of the facts as we can muster. Many people both in the USA and throughout the world were shocked by the acquittal of Michael Jackson (current news as I write) of all the terrible charges against him. UK news coverage of the trial was sensational rather than informative, so we know little of the actual evidence that was presented. Evenso it became more and more apparent that much of the prosecution evidence was tainted in one way or another. Even it was true it could not simply be accepted at face value.

When we try to decide whether we believe in God, we fall back on faith, which for many means belief or acceptance without evidence. In fact there is much evidence and as we grow in faith and investigate more deeply into the evidence, so our view of God changes and deepens. It is a difficult process – it is easy to become partial and narrow minded in our review of evidence and not to consider all of it and of all the arguments and discussions about it - but the process is exciting and for those who follow through, the time does come when doubts and confusions fall away and the real truth becomes apparent.

Keith MacLeod
Licensed Lay Minister



June

By Marion Dawe

The end of term is fast approaching but there are still may events planned for the children before the summer holiday.

I would like to express my thanks to all members of the school community and beyond who worked very hard to make this year's carnival a success.

A special thank you to members of the PTFA who work throughout the year to prepare for this day.

The weather was not as kind to us as it usually is but still the magnificent sum of £2000 plus was raised. This will be extremely useful to us as we are buying lots of new ICT equipment (computers, interactive whiteboards) and it is all very expensive!

The floats all looked wonderful and a good time was had by all!

The children who will be joining us have started to make regular visits to school and already they look very 'at home'.

This month we have been pleased to welcome staff from Methwold High School to work with our Year four and five children and to give them a taste of the High School curriculum.

As part of the Healthy Schools Initiative the children all had the opportunity to work with the Health Visitor to learn how to wash their hands properly. After washing them they then used a light box to see how clean they really were with some remarkable results. This supported our work in Science on bacteria and is an important life skill for all the children.

Next week is our first attempt at Sports Day. If all goes according to plan it will run smoothly but after last year's washout we have decided to attempt to run it at the end of June in the hope we get a fine day, if not then before the end

of July!

I am delighted to say many of our parents have visited the school to observe a Literacy Lesson. This was the first of several lessons to introduce parents to the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy and to help us to work together to support the children.

Marion

Northwold Spiritualist Group

Meetings in Northwold Village Hall for the month of July and early August

Alternate Fridays at 7.30pm.
8th Rachel Finbow
22nd Billy McClean
5th August. Carol Webster

For more information call Peter on 01440 702791 or Eileen on 01366 728289.

Rita's Ramblings

RITA'S RAMBLINGS

As I write this the longest day is past for another year. The pessimist would say it is now downhill all the way to Christmas; the optimist would say the best of the summer is yet to come! Which are you – an optimist or a pessimist? In our house, Nigel is definitely the optimist and he would say that I am the pessimist!!! The Carnival is also over for another year: it is always great fun being involved in getting the WI float ready. This year's film theme only presented a single option for the WI – but when I first heard I wasn't quite sure what we would all end up wearing (or not!) Many an hour in the evenings preceding the big day were spent making all the sunflowers to adorn Frank's trailer. I wonder what a major supermarket chain made of the sudden increase in sales of paper plates. Just as well they don't sell poster paint as well! Jo Ann could surely rank amongst Blue Peter's finest with her first demonstration of one she had prepared earlier. Without her input we would not have been so successful – so she certainly deserves our thanks. As always, Frank well and truly entered into the spirit of the day as the photographer – and allowed us to paint his tractor wheels a rather vibrant yellow, I'm not sure they will ever be the same again. Watching the birds outside the window I never cease to marvel at their determination as this years fledglings learn as much as possible in a remarkably short time. We have

been extremely fortunate to have had a number of blackbirds nesting close by and the parents have been frequent visitors to the bird-table. Even the builders have made little impact on the frequency of their visits; however, when startled the birds leave the table and fly off to the nearest perch. This has, until very recently, been the scaffolding bracing poles – the smooth texture and angle have afforded little grip for the birds and we have often watched them settle and then gently slide downwards! At this point they have generally decided that it is an unsatisfactory perch and flown off to somewhere more suitable. The other week I heard a thud against the kitchen window and went outside expecting to find a young bird in a crumpled heap. There, underneath the window, on a pile of bricks was a somewhat dazed blackbird. I carried on watching him/her for a couple of minutes to make sure that all was well; my vigilance was rewarded when the bird stretched it's wings and made to fly away – straight into the window again! Back onto the pile of bricks for a minute, looking rather puzzled, and then airborne again – guess where? I think that the third bump managed to get the message home as the next time it flew away in the opposite direction and successfully negotiated any obstacles. I'm just hoping that they don't discover my 'secret hoard' of blackcurrants that are beginning to ripen nicely. I have been trying to keep on the right side of them though. A couple of days ago while I was working in the garden a blackbird sat

on the fence watching me; however, as soon as I lifted some weed suppressant paper from underneath a cold frame and discovered some of the fattest and biggest slugs that I have seen (no wonder I lost a few choice seedlings) it decided to go elsewhere. I moved away to the shed to see if it came back before the slugs headed for cover but it was nowhere to be seen. There's gratitude for you! Oh yes, at least the builders seem to have scared the rabbits away!

Until next month, take care

Rita

Message of Thanks from Len Lavender

All your kind wishes and wonderful cards proved to be just the tonic I needed to get me through my operation and back on my feet again. My sincerest thanks to everyone who showed me so clearly that they care.

Len Lavender

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Our Past According To POG Aka Mike Coley



I enjoyed attending the village carnival again this year and want to offer my congratulation to all concerned for the amount of work that obviously had to be put in to make it the success it was. It gladdens me to see that the village as a whole is supportive of such events and that ultimately the school benefits as a result. Of course the old school has been transformed out of all recognition since my day and so naturally it triggered off a good many memories (*most of which are happy ones*)

When I started on the 3’Rs, pupils attended the infant school (*the Little School down Hall Lane*) from the tender age of Five, in the property now called ‘The Old School House’, (*‘The Old School’, or even ‘Old School House’ would have been better as I don’t believe it had ever been residential before*)

The Little School was pretty well self sufficient in its day, complete with wireless from which we were treated to daily doses of ‘**Listen With Mother**’ (*I remember Stories being read by Daphne Oxenford*). We also enjoyed an early version of aerobics by strutting our stuff to ‘**Music and Movement**’. These programs were transmitted on the B.B.C Home Service (*Radio 4 now, still my favourite channel*)

Our toilet facilities comprised a neat row of little buckets (*no flush loo’s then of course*). I didn’t mind them at all because that was what I was used to at home. The bit that I didn’t like very much however was when the teacher, Mrs Robinson (*who I did like*) used to count out the sheets of toilet paper from the roll of ‘IZAL medicated’ that she kept in the spare chalk cupboard. Paper on a roll was something of a novelty to most of us and she insisted on following this most humiliating of rituals in front of the whole class. Namely the distribution of bum fodder to all individuals needing to ‘GO’.

When our elementary education was finished we moved up to the ‘Big School’ around the age of Seven and stayed there until we sat the 11+ exam which decided whether we would go on to either a Secondary or a Grammar school education. Prior to that however, pupils in Northwold remained here until they left formal education altogether at the age of about Fifteen.

The Head Master at the Big School in those days was Edwin Hardy, a thoroughly nice man who always gave us the choice of paying for our misdemeanours by either writing words (*50 or 100*) or accepting 1or 2 strokes of the cane (*I chose the cane every time*) I remember that I was taking the stick one day when one of the school governors came for a visit. Mr Hardy did his stuff regardless and laid it on with a flourish. It looked good but he always held back at the last second so it didn’t really hurt much at all.

He also took us to the school gardens just down the lane until he became too ill to do so. He was replaced eventually by Mrs Dodd (Vera) who had previously lived in Ceylon (now Sri-Lanka). One of the things that she liked to teach us about was growing Cotton, she did this with the aid of a glass fronted cabinet filled with examples of the plant at various stages of its development.

We danced round the Maypole and participated in playground sports like the Potato Race, all to the music of a wind up Gramophone and an old 78 rpm record. I was in the yellow team, named after the WW1 nurse ‘Edith Cavell’.

We went out on field trips too, well actually they were nature walks round the lanes where amongst other things we spotted and recognised birds’ nests in the hedgerows. Later in the woodland area of Didlington (*Dilton*) that we know as the ‘Drifts’, the school was given permission to take groups there and erect a number of bird boxes. This is another activity that has apparently fallen by the wayside, probably because of the insurance that would be required in today’s over-cautious world. (poor kids)

I was amongst the first group to move on to the new Secondary Modern school at Methwold, (now called a

High School I think) when it had only been open for a couple of years. Back then everyone had to either bike or walk to school, no doting parents to cart us about in those days. I made the trip to Methwold on my Grandfather’s big old bike to start with.

Amongst the subjects that we were taught at that time was ‘Rural Science’ which is a glorified way of saying ‘Gardening’. Our gardening lessons did however include ‘Pig Keeping’ and the school pig was a Saddle Back by the name of ‘**Methwold Grand Sally**’. She got in the local paper when she produced a champion litter, so we must have been doing something right I suppose, but then again almost everyone that had room kept a pig anyway.

The infant school in Northwold finally closed in 1964/5 when the big school was extended to accommodate the little ones. One tragic result of erecting that new classroom was the demise of the big old Lime tree which grew in the middle of the playground, they removed it to make room for the new building. I have always loved trees and to see this one ripped up was something of a heart wrencher for me. It shaded us from the hot Sun and provided us with shelter from the rain so that we never had to miss playtime whatever the weather. That dear old tree was a real friend and I’m deeply sorry that it is no more.

Another peculiarity that arose at that time(*when the little ones came to stay in the place where adolescents had been previously*) was that for a while the school furniture that existed on site, included seats and desks to fit a range of bottoms, from 5 to 15 years olds. All of which were equipped with Ink Wells as the use of ball point pens at that time was prohibited for school work.

I must just tell you that one of the things that surprised me when I came back home to live (*just a year ago*) was the sound of the old school bell. This is something that I’d never heard before as a hand bell was used in my day. I think that the original sounds just great, Well done the bell fixers.

Needless to say, I could go on and on (*don’t I always*) about those days, however space will not allow I’m afraid. None the less, as always I shall be “**Looking Forward**” to “**Looking Back**” with you again next month. Till then,

River Watch By Ivor Hook

Hot days have arrived. Early mornings and evenings are again the favourite time with more sensible temperatures. A soft breeze is welcome but will soon disappear when the full strength of the sun inevitably returns. The river looks majestic – it’s pace has slowed down. All the banks are prolific with growth. Everything is tall and fresh with accompanying buttercups and endless wild flowers. The red poppies provide the prevalent colour as expected. The hover flies seem everywhere – forming a moving mist on top of the water. Water lilies are easily spotted with most in flower. Their perfect white-cupped shapes seem almost artificial. A mass of saucer leaves form a floating platform and surprisingly support the weight of a moorhen who has found a new vantage point.

During weeks to come the heat will slow down nature’s activity. Growth away from the river will soon reach critical point and will be in danger of wilting. Rain is needed but is unlikely. Conversely everything immediately alongside and within the river is fortunate. For them life is good and growth un-containable. The river is abound with weed from top to bottom. Any navigation would be difficult. The breathless and arid days both benefit and hinder according to circumstance.

Such weather is reminiscent of school holidays long ago and then seemed more agreeable. Endless

weeks were spent alongside any water with a precious net on a cane and a jam jar with a string handle. All rivers, ponds and dykes were continuously searched and dredged by an army of little boys. With knitted swimming trunks, the important white plastic belt and black plimsolls we would seek out water snails and anything else that resembled life. On a lucky day we could become an instant hero if a minnow or stickleback was captured! Such times in the 1950’s were undoubtedly the making of numerous lifelong anglers.

For the fisherman the summer is unquestionably the time of the roach. Whilst they are faithfully present throughout the year during the summer they are the most common and versatile of all our fish friends. However they are not common by appearance. Their red fins, classic silver shape and forked tail make them highly attractive. The larger specimens. Can be somewhat solitary but to catch one roach usually means other will soon follow. Little effort is required to tempt them to feed.

Back on the river a pair of elegant swans patrol up and down. Their nest is rather obvious but few would dare approach it. A long string of grey cygnets will be seen soon. Other wildlife seems lethargic. At midday nothing is moving – the heat has prompted a siesta. The peace and silence is uncanny but will be short lived.

Regardless of weather and time the ageless River Wissey continues it’s path through the countryside. The

river is it’s own unique world – it is virtually self sufficient. Our world is more complicated but as close neighbours so we can easily escape and share its feeling of well being.

Ivor

Thanks.

Bryan Cater and Family would like to say a big thank you for the beautiful fruit parcel that they received in appreciation for their help in running floats for the carnival. They would like to say that it is a pleasure to help the children.

From Dorothy Raven, in West End..

I would like to thank all friends and neighbours for all they have done for me when I had an accident. Especially Sandra and Alan who took me to hospital. Thanks.

Dorothy Raven.

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