#### **Great East Anglia Run**

From our very own Deputy Editor, Graeme:

"Yes, we know, it's that silly season when everyone has decided to take on some mad, dangerous, gruelling (or all three) challenge for charity - and at my company, Catalina Software we didn't want to be left out (well, we did start planning in December 2007)!

This year, we're taking part in the Great East Anglia Run on 4th May to raise money for the East Anglian Air Ambulance, and A River Blue (a project for children in Uganda) and we'd be really grateful for your support. We'll try our hardest to finish the run - and we hope you'll be able to give us some financial encouragement that'll make a real difference to someone in the UK or abroad."

Although the run will have taken place before this issue is circulated we are Inviting sponsorship just the same. Graeme will undoubtedly complete the course - Well he did last year although he is of course a year older now. But

seriously It does take a lot of effort and the charities are well worth supporting. You can leave sponsorship or pledge money with me or Graeme at any time, or visit www.justgiving.com/catalina2008

Remember when the Air Ambulance saved Hamish. Thanks in anticipation.



#### **Northwold Spiritualists** Meetings for May and early June 2008.

Friday 9th May Rachel Finbow Friday 23rd May Jackie Coman Friday 6th June Pamela Romero

For enquiries and further information call Eileen on (01366) 728289

#### **Foulden Summer** Fete

Foulden Summer Fete will be held this year on 12th July on the Recreation ground opposite the Village Hall.

Starting at 12 noon and finishing at 4 pm.

Attractions include:

Barbeque, Bouncy castle, Stalls, Displays, Dog Show, Car Boot Etc.

For further details contact Jackie Young on (01366)328276

#### Don't forget... **Northwold Carnival** Saturday 14th June

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## The Last Delivery



#### Heather and Harry and inset Uncle Pim

After 30 years we have finally called it a day, rolled home the bikes and on March 30th finished delivering to Northwold and Foulden the Sunday

We started doing the rounds when Heather's Uncle Pym gave up because of ill health. Her Dad, Horrie, had helped him for many years and was a familiar sight pushing his papers around in his barrow.

We took on the Sunday rounds as a means of helping to provide pocket money for our rapidly growing family of Wayne, Paula, Dale and Belinda. The children at the time were between 5 and 12 years of age and did a round appropriate to how far their legs could

Over the years there have been many events and happenings, some good, some funny and some best forgotten. We have been able to help when one of our customers walked straight through a glass door and needed a trip to hospital. When people have needed letters posting or messages delivered to friends down the other end of the village.

We have seen the papers get through in all types of weather, lovely summer mornings, piled on the family sleigh when there has been several inches of snow on the ground and carried in plastic bags under our coats to try and keep the wet out when it has been

pouring with rain.

Although we have done all the delivering ourselves for the past few years now, as none of the family live in the village any more, they have always rallied round and helped out when we have needed them.

It is perhaps another sign of a passing age that no one else has come forward to take on the task of ensuring that the local residents can enjoy their newspapers with their bacon and eggs on a Sunday morning.

We are very grateful to everyone who has expressed their thanks to us over the recent weeks, and to all those who have sent cards and gifts.

Thank you all for the many happy memories we have of our years of service to you. To be able to watch the village come to life as it wakes up on Sunday mornings is a very special feeling and we have enjoyed being able to be part of this for so many years. We will miss seeing you all each week, but rest assured, we will also enjoy a Sunday lay-in without having to worry about getting up at 5. 30 am.

Many thanks to you all for your past custom and friendship.

> **Heather and Harry** Everett.

#### Issue May 2008

Copy date for the next issue is; 25th May 2008 copy@northwold.net Tel. 01366 728233



#### A big thank you to Irish John (Breheny) and The Crown Pub for

raising and donating £311.50 to the Pre-School funds. The money donated is going towards updating our outdoor play area ready for the summer.

Congratulations to Claire Goate on completion of her NVQ level 3.

Welcome to all the new children that have joined the Pre-School recently. They have all settled in very well.

On Friday 18th April we held an open afternoon for parents to come and look at their child's learning story. This went very well and the parents enjoyed seeing the work their child has produced during their time at Pre-School.

The children have been very busy making lots of bits for our seaside theme. They have also been practising Maypole Dancing ready for the beginning of May.

If you have a child(ren) of Pre-School age and are interested in the Little Normans Pre-School. feel free to call in for a look around or call Angela Wortley on 728804.

#### Session Times:

Monday, Wednesday & Friday 9:00am - 12pm

Tuesday & Thursday 9:00am -12pm & 12pm – 3:00pm

Karen Muir

#### Inside this issue:

The Last Delivery Pre School	cover
Youth Club	2
St. Andrew's Church Cricket Club Theft warning	3
The Church clock	4
School Report	5
Our Past According to POG	6
River Watch Bingo	7
The Clothes Line The Art Group	8
The Doctor	9
Old Football Team Classified Ads Bowl Club 100 Club Church Cleaning	10
Nija Morgan health column Classifieds	11
Great East Anglia Run Foulden Fete	12

#### The Village Life Team

Editor Michael Parfitt copy@northwold.net Tel. 728233

#### **Deputy Editor**

Graeme Whiting Copy@northwold.net Tel 727425

#### **Advertising**

ads@northwold.net

#### **Circulation Manager**

Mark Elwes circulation@northwold.net Tel. 728795

#### **Committee**

#### Chair

Carol Sharp Tel. 728227

#### Secretary

Position vacant

#### Treasurer

Geoff Bartram Tel. 728673

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.

#### NORTHWOLD YOUTH CLUB

Due to the Easter holidays there has only been one Youth Club meeting to report on this month – but what a meeting! It was the Annual Bowls Competition and reputations were at stake for the winners of last year's competition.

It is only when last year's event is compared with this year that we realise just how far the Club has grown and developed. Due to sheer numbers, this year we had to split the event into a Senior and a Junior Competition. Fortunately, we had been able to buy a Junior bowls mat with funding received last year, so the events could run simultaneously.

Some of the Club Members who won medals and trophies last year can hold their heads high as they managed to gain places this year too – look out Jamie Chestney there's serious competition behind you!

#### Winners: Callum Adams and Aiden Bond

Cristina Fonken Runners Up: and Holly Vowles

#### **Junior Trophy**

Thomas Fonken Winners: and Emily Layender (runner up '07) Runners Up: Rebecca Bradford and Kitty Harris (winner '07)

A big "shout goes out" to Tony and Jill Cater who very kindly provided the trophies, officiated and presented the awards. Thank you for making the evening so successful.

Well done to everyone. It really was a good evening and great fun to

The next meeting will be a games evening when the members will be put through their paces with the pool table we have acquired with grant funding, as well as our new Space Hoppers (Mums and Dads, do you remember those????)

#### **Steve Freemantle**



Northwold Carnival

Saturday 14th June

2004

## Derek Johnson

#### **PROPERTY & LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE**

Interior & exterior painting, wood or UPVC facia boards Guttering repaired, cleaned, replaced Roofing repairs, damaged tiles replaced Chimney pots & cowlings fitted Chimney stacks and general re-pointing Blocked drains & sinks cleared General plumbing & drainage Roof, patio & driveway pressure washing Trees & conifers trimmed or removed Hedges, bushes and ivy trimmed Fencing & decking, landscape maintenance

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#### The Nija Morgan health Column

#### **Successful Opening**

I was really pleased with how so many people came along to the opening of the No Hands Massage Centre. We were busy constantly from 12 noon until 5pm with people having free massage and getting to watch and have Gerry, the founder of No Hands, explain what Karen and I were doing and how he developed No Hands Massage.

We had lots of people booking because they felt so different from a 10 minute taster session that they wanted to see what and hour session could do. I saw a lady a week later who had had such a big difference in her posture that everyone she saw the next few days commented on how different she looked and she said she felt the effects for three days, after just having a ten minute session. She lives about 40 miles away and has a very hectic work life where she has to put herself very much on the back burner

and carries a lot on her shoulders, after experiencing No Hands she is going to have this for herself so she can continue to feel lighter, taller and have more energy. Her husband has also booked too.

A lot of having a treatment is to take time out and by doing that you can achieve other outcomes like feeling looser in your body, lighter, happier, calmer, more energy, the list is endless and with No Hands the treatment is enjoyable because there is no pain even though it can be very deep, it can be very gentle too, it all depends on the outcome wanted.

The Centre is open from Tuesday through to Saturday from 10 am, do feel free to call in and have a look and if either Karen or myself are free we may even be able to give you a free taster session. We still have a 35% discount on treatments taken up to the 17<sup>th</sup> May.

If you'd like to know more you can also ring on 01842 814988.

Nija

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Page 2 Page 11

#### Cecil Gould sent in this photograph of Northwold Football team of the 1906 - 1907 season.

Now that is over 100 years ago! Cecil was surprised that we had a football team as long ago as that.

The names of the players and officials are reproduced below the picture. Some of them are familiar names in the village still. Some have disappeared.

Heavily moustached and ready for play they look quite an impressive outfit.



A prominent Swaffham resident in the group is seated in front on the left. He is Mr W. Cooper, former Superintendent of Police in the town, who at the time was a private constable for Lord Amherst of Hackney.

The others are: Back row - H. Chandler, R. Gould, A Dye, - Gray, A Smith, G Pryer, F. Dye, J. Crisp. Seated – A. Ormston, W. Dye, M. Pearson, G. Jolly, A. Chapman, A. Ward, with W. Cooper and W. Chapman seated in front.

Mr Chandler, the Referee, hailed from Bechamwell. Mr Gray was Schoolmaster at Foulden. Mr Ormiston was son of the head gamekeeper at Didlington and Mr Pearson was a schoolmaster at Northwold.

#### **Church Cleaning**

The Annual Church spring clean will take place this year from May 12th to May 17th.

If you can help please come and have a cup of coffee in the Church on Tuesday 6th May at 10. 30 am

**Betty Akers** 

#### **Northwold Bowls** Club 100 Club

Draw for March 2008

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T Ager £ 15

**G** Jones £10

**Sylvia** 

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#### **St Andrew's Church**

#### In spite of "Christmas" weather, the Easter events all went extremely well.

On Maundy Thursday, the Pilgrims on their way from London to Walsingham, stopped at the Church for rest, refreshment and use of the Loo! By arrangement, the children from The Norman school arrived for their end of term service just before the pilgrims left so that they could hear, from the Pilgrims, just why they were making their long pilgrimage, and after a short prayer, the Pilgrims left, carrying with them the large, wooden cross, and singing as they went. And the school began their endof -term service.

**On Good Friday**, the Church by now bereft of flowers, frontal and falls, there was a meditative service of devotion conducted by the Rev. Angela Nichol. We left in silence.

So that the excitement and activity on Easter Saturday morning when the Church was beautifully decorated. marked the change of mood in preparation for Easter Day, when Canon Rowsell officiated at Holy Communion, and a good sized congregation sang traditional Easter Hymns.

In the afternoon, the dreary snow of the morning, mercifully melted and we had plenty of support for the Quiz round the Village, - tea - and Easter Egg Hunt. There were some clever and original entries in the "Decorate a hard boiled Egg" competition. A good time was had by all.

On Wednesday, April 2nd we had a coffee morning in the Church in aid of the Bishop's Lent Appeal – which this year, was The Leprosy Mission. We were delighted to find that we raised £126. 60. Thank you so much to all who gave, helped or supported in any way. Rev Griffin from the Leprosy Mission preached at the service on 13th April.

#### **Church Services for** May and early June 2008

#### May

11am Holy Communion. Rev. J. Terry

11th 11am

Matins

Rev A Nicoll

25th

11am Matins.

Mrs C. Nicholas – Letch

<u>June</u>

11am Holy Communion Rev D. Kightley

Matins. 11am

Mrs R. Kightley

#### THE MATT MORLEY CRICKET **TROPHY**

The Trophy commemorates Matt Morley, the Northwold Cricketer, who lost his fight with Cancer at the age of 36 last year.

The Northwold Cricket Club held their first Charity Match against Gooderstone for the above trophy on Saturday, 19th April.

Despite the cold, both teams played and enjoyed a good-spirited and competitive game. Northwold proudly gained the Matt Morley Trophy, scoring 171 to Gooderstone's 86.

In the evening the cricketers held a disco, raffle and auction to raise funds for the St Nicholas Hospice. The total donation to the Hospice was £500.

#### WATCH OUT! THERE ARE THIEVES ABOUT!

Just a word of warning to all Villagers. The Sports & Social Club has been the recent victim of oil theft. Their tank was emptied.

As oil is no cheap item these days this is a timely reminder to all to make sure their oil tanks are kept as secure as possible.

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Page 10

Page 3

#### St Andrew's Church Clock

#### Stephen Eyles talks about the history of the Church Clock

The year of 2007 may not be significant to many of you but after passing a milestone in my own life I started looking at things around me that had stood the test of time.

One of the villages' assets that have stood the test of time is the church clock. The internal clock plate reads 'George Yonge London 1807'. Yonge was not the maker of the clock but a small watch time peace dealer who operated from a shop in the Strand, London from 1776 to 1832. His role was as an agent between clock makers and the prospective buyers.

The clock was made by Thwate and Reed from the borough of Clerkenwell, London. This was an area where many skilled craftsmen worked making individual components as well as assembling the clocks to customer specifications.

In terms of its construction, the clock is a weight operated turret clock with an anchor escapement and a 2.9 meter (114 inches) long pendulum. The hourly striking occurs through a ratchet-type mechanism built inside the frame, the maintaining power lever is driven be a leaf spring. This allows the clock to be rewound without losing any time and safe guards the escapement from damage. All these elements result in an exceptionally well built clock for 200 years ago.

With a trip to London's Guild Hall library to research our clock further, we found in the Maker Work book entered on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1807 the entry of:

'To an 8 day church clock to one outside dial, hand and minute to strike the hour on a bell. To a copper dial plate of 5 feet diameter moulded around the edge. To a man days at Northwold to fit the above. Packaging and cartage for the above.'

This enabled us to trace the clock to the Ledger book of 1807. Written within was the cost of the clock when brought by Mr Yonge, £85.00 + cartage £5-2s6d (this is about £6,3100 in today's money). The parish records log a bill for the clock of £102.14s6d, therefore Mr Yonge made a profit of £12.12s (£848.40p) on reselling the clock.

I hope this is of some interest to the parishioners and visitors to the church. A large picture and text is available in the church for all to see.

Thanks to Ken Sheffield, Oxford and Johnathan Betts, National Maritime Museum in helping me to carry out this research.



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#### WHAT DOES THE DOCTOR THINK THIS MONTH? MY INTERNET SKILLS AND MANAGEMENT'S TUSSLE WITH A DINOSAUR!

We had arranged to spend 5 days at Center Parcs in Penrith with six of our seven children, their partners and eight of our nine grandchildren, a party of 20 in all. Macho man here was planning to leave at 7am and arrive before lunch but management suggested that we split the journey to prevent tiredness before we met the family! I went on the internet and booked a night in the Cave Castle Hotel in Brough, only 20 miles from Penrith. You will have heard of Brough Moor, a remote, bleak and often snow-ridden area of moorland near Shap and the Scottish border. Center Parcs was booked from Easter Monday soothe journey was to be on Easter Sunday. As you will remember, Easter Sunday was very white first thing, with snow on ice. We endured a hairy journey to church in Methwold, skidding several times and having to take three runs to conquer the hill at the top of Lodge Road. We set of for Brough at noon, had a very pleasant lorry-free journey up the A1 to Scotch Corner, with little snow. As we turned left for Brough, the skies darkened and the snow began to fall. As we progressed, the snow became thicker and thicker and started to lie on the road. A large red shape appeared out of the gloom, travelling in the other direction; near and nearer it came until it transformed into an old London Routemaster 'bus and slid past before being swallowed up in the snowy gloom. Deannie thought of Harry Potter and I just thought it surreal.

I was wondering whether we were doomed to spend the night in the car, snowbound, when we arrived at Brough (Cumbria). We drove around but could not find the Cave Castle Hotel. We found The Castle Hotel which had a couple of Neanderthals scratching in the doorway and would certainly have been vetoed by management. We decided to ask someone for help, turned a corner and came across half a dozen 'buses from the 1940s and 1950s, the tail end of an Easter 'bus rally organised by local enthusiast, Alison Morris. Alison looked at my internet printout and,

within a millisecond, realised that I had booked a hotel in Brough, East Yorkshire, a very long way away. Standing in the falling snow, directing 'buses (An old Western coach from Kilmarnock, an old Ribble 'bus from Manchester and a Crosville double-decker similar to my school 'bus, she pulled out her mobile 'phone and rapidly found us accommodation at The Black Swan in Ravenstone Dale, a nearby village. Alison, who lives in Ravenstone Dale, owns four old coaches and a double-decker from the 40s and 50s and she runs them as service 'buses. vintage tour 'buses and, between March and October, she offers conducted tours and a free ride to the farmers' market in Brough. She trades as Cumbria Classic Coaches (015396 23254 info@cumbriaclassiccoaches.co.uk

www.cumbriaclassiccoaches.co.uk) Her coaches are used on the BBC programme "Heartbeat", based in Goathland. With her husband, she owns runs a signwriting business.

At The Black Swan, we were made immediately welcome by Louise Dinnes, who, with her husband, Alan, runs the family hotel. Deannie's approval was immediately given and we moved in. The room was lovely and warm; Deannie popped into the bathroom and, very soon, there was a managerial shout of alarm. I knew she had not planned to take a shower, which usually causes such shouts, so I was interested to hear what had happened. She told me that, whenever she pulled out the basin plug, there was a mighty "GRRRRRR" from behind the toilet. The same happened when she flushed the loo - "GRRRRR". It transpired that she had met the dinosaur – not Tyrannosaurus, Plateosaurus. Protoceratops or Ankylosaurus, but a very small dinosaur which lives in a box behind the loo and is called Macerator! Macerator is very useful for this purpose as he likes to digest solid waste matter and drinks a lot of water (the bath water also goes through his box) before passing it down a narrow bore pipe to the main sewage system. The use of such a mini-dinosaur makes it possible to mount a WC against an inside wall,

thus increasing the possibilities when making conversions in old buildings. Of course, there is no need for the hotel owner to feed him but he does get blocked occasionally and this causes problems.

Deannie and I would like to recommend The Black Swan. It's in a tiny village in the middle of nowhere in the Eden Valley, the food is wonderful and the welcome could not be surpassed. (The Black Swan, Ravenstone Dale 015396 23204 enauiries@blackswanhotel.com www.blackswanhotel.com) Also, it is only a few hundred yards from the Settle to Carlisle railway, there are Alison's 'buses to ride on and a whole raft of activities in the local area. To top that, when you return home, nobody will have a clue where you have been, even when you tell them! Journey times from Norfolk: a) via A1 and Scotch Corner 4 hours b) via M6 and A14 7 hours!

#### A warning for Tom Tom users! changed my Espace recently and bought a lower spec model which does not have a built-in satellite navigation system. No problem – I purchased a Tom Tom sat nav for just over £100. The distance from Brough to Penrith was 19 miles so, on the Monday morning, well rested and fed, fresh from my failure with the internet booking, I read the instructions for getting to Center Parcs. They had helpfully included their postcode for use by those with sat. navs. Although the road to Penrith was dead straight, I punched in the postcode and followed the sat nav directions. We travelled through blizzards, tiny villages, over cattle grids, through farmyards and up into the moors. The road became narrower and narrower and, just as it petered out in the middle of nowhere, the sat nav announced You have arrived. We tried again and ended up in another equally remote spot. Son Scott, who knows about these things, tells me that Tom Tom only reads the first four digits of the postcode and that, in Cumbria, postcode areas are vast, hence the problem!

Journey time Brough to Penrith 2 hours Best wishes to you all

Ian G. Nisbet

Page 4

Page

#### No doubt most of us have heard a song called "The Old Rustic Bridge By The

Mill". It's Olde English sounding lyrics are as English as they could possibly be. But In actual fact it was written by an American.

Frank Fendick has sent in this Poem which again seems English right down to it's roots. Except for one word, "Vacation" it might well have been. In fact like the Old Rustic Bridge By The Mill it is most likely of American origin, and one of the best we have had for some time.

#### **The Clothes Line**

A clothes line was a news forecast To neighbours passing by. There were no secrets you could keep When clothes were hung to dry.

It also was a friendly link For neighbours always knew If company had stopped on by To spend a night or two.

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For then you'd see the 'fancy sheets'

And towels upon the line; You'd see the 'company table cloths' With intricate design.

The line announced a baby's birth To folks who lived inside As brand new infant clothes were hung So carefully with pride.

The ages of the children could So readily be known By watching how the sizes changed You'd know how much they'd grown.

It also told when illness struck, As extra sheets were hung; Then nightclothes, and a bathrobe, too, Haphazardly were strung.

It said, 'Gone on vacation now'
When lines hung limp and bare.
It told, 'We're back!' when full lines sagged
With not an inch to spare.

New folks in town were scorned upon If wash was dingy grey, As neighbours carefully raised their brows, And looked the other way..

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throughout the year.

RESTAURANT MEALS

SENIOR CITIZEN SPECIALS

of seasonal events

BAR FOOD

But clotheslines now are of the past For dryers make work less. Now what goes on inside a home Is anybody's guess.

I really miss that way of life. It was a friendly sign When neighbours knew each other best By what hung on the line!







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## **School Report**



Once again, it has been a busy and productive time in the life of the school. Children from all classes have proudly shown me examples of their work on a daily basis and the frequently changing displays on the walls of our school are testament to the variety of achievements that the children make through their efforts.

A group of children from the school have represented the school at the Cross Country Running event held at Feltwell. They have spent the previous few weeks practicing at a lunchtime club and gave an excellent account of themselves, in both the sporting sense and as ambassadors of the school. We were very proud. More recently our footballers have competed in the Cluster Football Tournament and achieved a creditable third place, winning on penalties in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> place play-off.

This level of effort comes also in a half term when many people, both adults and children, are fighting off a range of illnesses. I know at first hand how being laid low by illness, accompanied by the unfair and outrageous accusations of 'Man Flu' levelled at me by Mrs Hothersall, can interrupt the momentum needed for effective work and learning. I feel that this makes the achievements of the children all the greater.

The past months have been good ones for history at the Norman School. We have been visited by two teachers representing the Fenland Trust who have worked with the children to look at the local history of the area, especially exploring Roman Norfolk. Also, Class 3 enjoyed an excellent visit to the Anglo Saxon Village at West Stow, where they were able to look at and think about a range of artefacts from Saxon times, and to investigate the various attempts at the reconstruction of Anglo Saxon house based on the meagre evidence that survives. The children made the most of the opportunity and once again, I was proud to be with them as their behaviour was exemplary.

Mark Ogden, our School Travel Plan Officer has visited us and talked to the School Council about further measures to try and encourage people to make their way to school in a healthier and more environmentally friendly way. The School Council are organising and advertising the 'Steppers' scheme which rewards those who are able to walk to school and encourages those who come by car to think about not driving all the way to school, but shorten the journey enough to allow a five minute walk. I think it is very important to be creative when doing our bit to encourage not only good health but also environmental awareness, and this scheme seems to fit the bill.

We have had the honour of taking part in a new book prize, organised by the Norfolk Library service, called 'Story Shorts'. This is a prize specifically for shorter children's stories which are more accessible to a wider range of readers. A group of our children have read the shortlisted works and decided on their favourites, their votes being added to those of other schools to decide the winner. Last week the children went to the award ceremony at Fakenham Library where we were entertained by three of the shortlisted authors, Geraldine McCaughrean, Vivian French and Kaye Umansky. The authors shared their experiences and writers hints and tips with the children. I was able to obtain signed books from two of the authors dedicated to the Norman School as a reminder of the day.

Our Easter celebrations were extremely enjoyable. The children contributed to a lovely service in St Andrew's Church. The quality of their prepared pieces and singing was well received by the congregation. At school the Easter Bonnet Parade was a delight, with so much work going into the intricate and creative Bonnet designs. The children who were awarded prizes can be especially proud due to the strength of the competition.

As I write the school is busy preparing for another traditional event, that of the May celebrations. The sound of jolly country dance music is becoming a regular feature around the school and I feel sure that this will be another glorious occasion.

**Rob Hothersall** 





#### Our Past According To POG Aka Mike Coley



On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June 1953, the whole country celebrated quite a rare event, with street parties and all manner of events, needless to say our village was no exception. In fact just one of the many lasting changes for our country that came about as a result of this momentous occasion, was that our singing of the national anthem was to have different words. The old words we had used for so long before started "God Save Our Gracious "King" but ever since that day in 1953 we have sung the words in current usage, "God Save Our Gracious "Queen", which we have loyally done from thence forward. It was of course the occasion of the Coronation of the Princess Elizabeth, the late King George 6th eldest daughter. She was already a rare beauty and almost immediately became elevated to her new position, together with the numerous titles that she has held for over half a century now, being amongst others

#### "Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth the

Its hardly surprising that we made a big deal of it in our own small way. after all there was no television in those days, ( although invented in the 1920s and released upon the public in the 1930s, it had been suspended during the war years and in any event it hadn't reached the likes of us generally by that time anyway) and so the only chance of our seeing anything of the great occasion, with all its pomp and ceremony would have been at one of the cinemas on one of the newsreels during the main performance, like (Pearl and Dean.) It would have been shown at some time after the event, as we had nothing like the 'up to the minute' coverage of world events that we get as a matter of course nowadays. It seems that we're force fed with all the latest happenings from all around the world, at the drop of a hat if you like. News, and anything else that is even slightly newsworthy appears to be just about ready to come out of ears right now.

I can't pretend to remember a whole lot about that day as I was only 5 years old at the time, although I do remember going round to the recreation ground

with Mum and Dad, where there was a fancy dress competition amongst other things. I took part of course and emerged with a splendid cash prize for coming in third place. My winnings were a shiny 'Half Crown' (12½p by today's reckoning )( our currency has been devalued since then of course, but at that time a quid would have bought you 4 dollars U.S on the exchange market, and so the slang term for Half a Crown 'was Half a dollar) you'd think that I was 'Lord of the Manor' with that much 'filthy luker' loose in my pocket. ½ a Crown was a goodly sum at the time and I deemed myself extremely fortunate to have won such an amount.

A shilling (5p today) was known then as a 'Bob', singlar or plural. A 10 shilling note (50p) was known as 'Half a Bar', 6 pence was called a 'Tanner' while a three penny piece 'or a (thrupny bit') was called a 'Joey.' We called the coin known as a farthing, which had a wren on the obverse side, worth just <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of a penny, a 'Sprat', so you can guess it wasn't worth much even

The costumes paraded on the day were all magnificent, and what's more they were all home made of course, expertly produced from colourful crepe paper, with the much more substantial Brown Paper, that was used for wrapping parcels normally, utilised on this accession as the backing for the comparatively flimsy, though highly decorative, crepe paper. I have to say that all the entry's were terrific, but then again people were of course used to making and mending nearly all their clothes at that time, ( how long is since you darned a pair of socks nowadays? ) so I imagine that they would have found the production of this temporary attire an absolute piece of cake. Certainly there was no surplus money (I cant imagine anyone spending it if there had been cash to spare for something as trivial as hiring fancy dress) in those austere days, having only just emerged from the rationing of wartime.

My own fancy dress regalia depicted a Royal Herald in all his glory. The outfit was predominantly coloured Gold (yellow I imagine) and Purple and it involved me carrying a rather splendid Trumpet from which was

suspended a colourful loyal pennant, with the letters E.R (standing for 'Elizabeth Regina' of course,) emblazoned upon it. My make believe instrument was fashioned from a shiny

( chrome plated ) bugle that unscrewed and came apart so that it could be extended in length beneath its elaborate covering, by nothing more grandiose than a simple piece of wooden doweling, though you would never have guessed to look at it.

I kept the shorter version of that trumpet for quite a while, and played with it often as it made a splendid noise when I blew it, a sort of shrill whistle that rose in intensity. Eventually I took it with me when playing at the Chalkpit one day, and rather stupidly left it in the hedgerow by the entrance gate there, (it was after all pretty heavy and quite bulky for a toddler to carry very far ) I never caught sight of it again but have often wondered whatever became of it, and who would have stolen it. That after all was simply **not the kind of thing** that we would do in those days, however poor our own circumstances may have been.

I must confess that on another occasion I 'almost' fell foul of temptation myself, after seeing another girl sneakily helping herself to some tasty sweets in the Top Shop. Happily, and with the benefit of hind-sight, I truly mean 'Happily', I was caught in the act by a hawk-eyed shopkeeper, none other than Chrisy Filby herself. She gave me a stern talking to, about the likelihood of becoming known generally as a thief if I ever I did such a thing again, and believe me I have never forgotten it.

Well my Dears, another trip down memory lane comes to an end, what a pity we no longer have magic names for our money, but then I don't suppose we hang on to it long enough to make friends with it nowadays. None the less you can be guaranteed that I shall however be looking forward to looking back with a few more memories from yesteryear, very soon.

**Best Wishes** 

Pog

#### **River Watch**

#### **By Ivor Hook**

It is deathly quiet and everything seems fast asleep. It is mid afternoon but there is no brightness. The trees and surroundings alongside the river are drab and dreary as if in a morbid suspension. Already the shadows of dusk are obvious. Suddenly there is a swirl and a splash in mid-water and a fleeting glance sees an enormous tail fin disappear back into the deeps. The disturbance causes a large expanding circle of waves, which hit the bank with a succession of loud slaps. Before peace returns a lone ivory black moorhen paddles out from the margins and protests with a long laborious chant.

the prowl. During the winter months the pike's movements are somewhat irregular. When the temperature is cold she is lethargic and spends long periods hidden in thick weed beds. Her size dictates she must still feed and then she slowly swims up and down the well-defined patrol routes in her role as predator. However today the weather is mild and she is fully active. She heads for the warmer and shallow water of a nearby dyke. Here several shoals of small fish are gathered. The dyke provides them with protection away from the strong currents of the main river but their peace and safety will soon be threatened.

Under the surface a monster pike is on

The sound of slow beating wings heralds the arrival of a family of swans. In perfect formation they circle and quietly land on the long narrow stretch of river. The cygnets have outgrown last years grey plumage and are now spotlessly white. They glow in the half-light. With regimental precision and full of purpose they paddle downstream as if on an important mission. Immediately the swans disappear a flight of many geese also land but their arrival is unlike the swans. They shatter the calm with non-stop splashing and fierce arguments. Resembling a gang of thugs they loudly contest each other for watery territory until they eventually divide into less animated groups.

The mottled green colouring of the giant pike makes it almost invisible and no one has seen her passage to the fish-filled dyke. En-route a solitary silver bream has been intercepted near the surface. The attack was so quick that the prey had no knowledge that its fragile life was to end as a tasty morsel for one the rivers biggest residents.

At the entrance to the dyke the pike stops. The only movements are her tail fin to keep station and the essential workings of her gills. As if to confirm the dyke as a prime location another dozen or so roachlings swim into the trap. They failed to see their natural enemy but she has certainly seen them! A few minutes later the dyke erupts in a fury. Tiny fish leap out of the water. Great splashing and slamming is heard. Our pike has demolished huge numbers of fish with her shovel-like mouth. Her size is deceptive as the speed and fury with which she attacks is breathtaking. Her tail alone has stunned several more fish which are now floating on the surface and will soon be found to satisfy the wanting appetite.

Heavy black clouds now fill the sky. Ever since morning there has been uncertainty as to whether it will rain and it seems the decision has at last been made and that the heavens are now ready to remonstrate. Another day is ending and for the time being at least the small insignificant dyke adjoining the river Wissey is quiet again.

**By Ivor Hook** 

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Page 7