

ALL CHANGE – ON BOTH SIDES OF THE HIGH STREET

There have been two major developments more or less opposite each other on the High Street since the last edition of *The Newsletter* went to press. The Wayside Garden has closed with the sale of the Cambridgeshire ACRE headquarters (at 218 High Street) and the White Horse is no more and is in the process of being converted into an Indian restaurant. Both of these events are likely to provoke mixed feelings in the village.

The demise of the Wayside Garden is an event which causes sadness in those of us who used to use it on a regular basis (it was certainly an excellent source of conkers for one six year old I can think of). It was also a haven of peace and a lovely garden. There is a lot of frustration on the part of those who built-up and maintained the garden to a high standard. These frustrations are elaborated upon inside, particularly by Watchman with his characteristic forthrightness.

However, there is the possibility of creating a new garden on a more sound owner-

ship footing. The patch of land on the other side of the footpath to Franklin gardens is currently owned by 218 High Street. I understand that the Parish and District councils will enter into negotiations with the new owners to see if that land can be purchased and used as the site for a new village garden.

The closure of the White Horse represents a continuation of a long trend, which has seen the number of pubs in the village decline from around 40 at the turn of the century to the four remaining today following its closure. The decline in the number of village pubs has been relentless and is probably inevitable. However, four is getting to be a small number for a village the size of Cottenham. At the risk of being accused of advocating intemperance (which I don't), the message regarding our local pubs is the same as for all of the businesses that serve us in Cottenham – 'Use them or lose them'.

Having said that, the demise of the White Horse is not all bad news. We are, after all, getting an Indian restaurant in its

place. This is infinitely preferable to the plans for conversion into offices, which were being discussed towards the end of last year. Pundits tell me that Indian cuisine is the most popular in the country. It is certainly a favourite of mine and many of the people I have talked with about the change at the White Horse. Therefore, I would like to welcome the new owners of the White Horse and look forward to sampling their food.

Rosalie Dunnico has kindly passed on some of her memories of life in the White Horse over the last 33 years. Read on inside.

Eddie Murphy

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Annual Parish Meeting will take place on Thursday 20th April at 8:00pm at the Village College. The Parish Meeting is the occasion when residents can have their say and the Council is obliged to listen! Can you resist it?

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VILLAGE DIARY

March

- 16th Cottenham Village College at 1:45 – 2:45 pm Sweet Charity, CVC musical
17th Cottenham Seniors Club, Common Room Village College,
2:30pm Keep fit demonstration
30th Cottenham Village College at 1:45 – 2:45 pm Training for the Police,
Nick Percival
31st Cottenham Seniors Club, Common Room Village College,
2:30pm Benji Warwick and friends entertain
31st Bus Pass Refund, Franklin Gardens Community Room 4:00 – 6:00pm
31st Cottenham Gardeners Club, Garden Photography – A talk by Howard Rice,
Cottenham Village College 7:45pm

April

- 12th Cottenham WI: Franklin Gardens 7:30pm – Travel Talk “Egypt”
by Laura Simmons.
13th Cottenham Village College at 1:45–2:45 pm Cooking, Trish Paskins
14th Cottenham Seniors Club, Common Room, Village College,
2:30pm Any questions panel
14th Cottenham Village Society, Primary School Hall, Lamb’s Lane
7:45pm Mrs E. Gale – Cottenham/Cambridge Cheese
16th Yesteryear Road Run
20th Annual Parish Meeting Village College 8:00pm – All welcome to attend
28th Cottenham Gardeners Club, Summer Vegetables – A talk by Mark Williams,
Cottenham Village College, 7:45pm

May

- 2nd Cottenham Parish Council Meeting – Village College 7:30pm
5th Cottenham Seniors Club, Common Room, Village College,
2:30pm Annual General Meeting
6th Cottenham Fun Run – Register at CVC Sports Centre from 9:00am –
run begins at 10:30am
10th Cottenham WI: Franklin Gardens 7:30pm – Resolutions
13th Cottenham Seniors Club, Common Room Village College,
2:30pm (Saturday) Millennium Year Party
17th Cottenham Gardeners Club, Garden Visit – Mr & Mrs Gordon 10 Pepys Way,
Girton, 7:30pm
26th Cottenham Seniors Club, Lecture Room Village College,
2:30pm Illustrated talk: “A zoo in Zambia”
26th Cottenham Gardeners Club, Old English garden plants –
A talk by Tim Clark, Cottenham Village College, 7:45pm

SMALL ADS

COTTENHAM VEHICLE HIRE — Local move? Visit to Cheery Calais? Get LOCAL Hire: For big loads: S-registered VW Transporter diesel van — **Tel: 01954 251521**

For smaller loads, either SEAT Arosa diesel or Mazda 626 diesel and 5-door — **Tel: 01954 203111 or 0831 111247**
Competitive rates.

.....
NANNY SHARE WANTED – please contact us if you would like a part-time nanny two days a week (Thursday and Friday preferred). We’re looking for someone Monday to Wednesday, and would like to pair up with a family interested in the rest of the week. After-school shares might also be a possibility. Phone Liz or Brian on **250300**.

.....
FOR SALE – attractive comfortable sofa, three years old. Plain slate-blue ‘damask’ style cover £250 ono **Tel 250300**.

.....
HOUSE CLEANER required **Tel: 251350**

.....
FOR SALE – STOVES FREE STANDING ‘Newhome’ gas cooker for sale £280 ono (purchase price £500). Good condition. 2 years old – only used for one year, then in storage for 1 year. House move forces sale. **Tel. 01954 250998**

SMALL ADS

Why not advertise in the Newsletter! Items for sale, announcement of family events...

5p per word, with all proceeds going to charity. Send advertisements and payment to the editors.

Cheques should be made payable to ‘Cottenham Newsletter’

£27.75 was donated to MAGPAS in February from small ads proceeds



DIARY NOTES

Cottenham Toy Library, Salvation Army Barn –
Thursdays 2:15pm – 4:15pm – April 6th and 20th May 4th and 18th.

Baby group, Baptist Church – 1:00pm – 3:00pm on Mondays

British Summer Time Begins – Sunday March 26th.

PLEASE SEND IN YOUR DIARY DATES —
THERE IS NO CHARGE FOR ENTRIES IN THIS SECTION —
CHARITY AND CHURCH EVENTS ESPECIALLY WELCOME.

ARTICLES, DATES AND ADVERTISEMENTS.

E-mail, PC floppy disk and paper submissions are all welcome. PC floppy disks will be returned to contributors.....eventually! Please contact the Editors if you have any questions. Dates of events to be advertised in the next issue (No. 57) should span the last week of May and the months of June and July.



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COTTENHAM

VILLAGE DESIGN GROUP

- Update on Rubbish

Cottenham Village Design Group was delighted that so many people came to their AGM on 10th February. Dickersons gave detailed explanations of the proposals for a recycling and waste management plant sited on the 400 acre site between Long Drove and the A10. Representatives of the County Council and South Cambs District Council contributed to the discussions and helped field questions from the packed audience in the lecture room of the Village College.

We were told that although the existing landfill site at Milton is not yet full, at 2.25 million tons of waste per annum there needs to be more waste disposal sites in years to come. Cambridgeshire has to dramatically reduce its existing landfill methods and improve production of 'beneficial waste' by 2014, under the terms of the EU Landfill Directive. So far the only comprehensive proposals addressing this problem have been advanced by Dickersons.

Organic waste management, sorting recyclable materials, landfilling stabilised materials and harnessing energy given off during the processes form the nub of the proposals. The aim is to divert 60% of the waste from landfill into recycling. Unsorted 'Black bag' (domestic) waste fed into huge revolving drums will be separated into compostables, and recyclable glass and metal. What remains will be tightly baled and landfilled in sealed clay lined cells, raising the land level by 16 meters. The surface will be grassed over and contaminated water leaching out will be re-used to grow biomass crops such as elephant grass for fuel. Reed and Willow beds will further clean the water. Only water which meets Environmental Agency standards will be released into local waterways. In addition, non-hazardous building waste will be processed and re-used.

Access to the site will be via a new roundabout on the A10. However, the prospect of HGVs taking short cuts through villages caused some concern. It is hoped that both Dickersons and the Planning department will incorporate a means to avoid this inconvenience to residents. The emotive issue of

COTTENHAM FUN RUN 2000

It's time to get in training for the first Cottenham Fun Run of the new Millennium! This popular event takes place, as usual, in conjunction with the Saturday market on 6th May. Regular attenders should note that this is not the Saturday of the Bank holiday weekend as it has been in the past. The run and market will this year coincide with a visit from a party of people from Avrillé, Cottenham's twinned town in France, so it promises to be a lively weekend in the village.

The run will follow the usual gentle four and a bit mile course - starting from the Village College, the run heads out towards the race course, onto Long Drove, down Church Lane and back down the High Street to the college (with a bit of a detour through the Lanes). All ages are welcome, from small children to

reducing waste, notably packaging, and re-using (e.g. bottles) wasn't addressed, but there is a clear incentive for Councils to encourage separation of waste materials by issuing householders with the means to do so.

Among the considerations taken into account during the consultation process are increased traffic, dust, smell, future extensions and the effect on flora and fauna. The thriving population of birds, in particular lapwings and redshank, will lose their existing floodland on the edge of Long Drove, but will find another smaller and more sustainable habitat to the north end of the site, where there will also be a viewing area. Many people will be aware that Cambridgeshire has three major sites of special scientific interest including Wicken Fen, Welney and Car Dyke, not to mention a nearby site for the protected Great Crested Newt, and consultations continue about the environmental impact on these.

Once the application has been scrutinised at local level by the District and County Councils - it will go to the Secretary of State for consideration. We await the outcome with interest. A more detailed account of the meeting will be placed in Cottenham Public Library.

pensioners, and there will be winners in the following categories: men, women, village college boys, village college girls, primary school boys, primary school girls, and teams. The run will start at 10:30am and you will be able to register at the village college sports centre from 9:00am on the day.

Anyone interested in helping with the organisation of the run should please telephone Andrew or Catherine Snelson on 01954 200138. Remember, events such as these can only take place with the help of volunteers from the community. Come and join in the fun!

On the day: Registration from 9:00am at CVC Sports Centre. Registration Fees: Adults £2.50, Children £1.00. Categories for all ages. Course length is 4.5 miles.

YESTERYEAR ROAD RUN

- Sunday April 16th

Once again it's time for the Yesteryear Road Run. Come and see us in Cottenham on this very important fundraising day.

Watch the parade of vintage vehicles, tractors and motorcycles. Our route will start from Cottenham Village Green at 9:30am moving on to Rampton, Willingham, Over, and Swavesey, where we will be stopping for lunch at the Trinity Foot (approx. 12:30 pm), and here you can view the vehicles at close quarters. We will then continue to Longstanton and on to Histon, before returning to Cottenham at approximately 4.00 pm.

There will be stalls, entertainments and refreshments on the Village Greens at Histon and Cottenham.

This is the seventh year of the Yesteryear Road Run and each year it gets bigger - again we will be collecting for MAGPAS. Last year we raised £7,250.

This will be a great event for all the family, please come and give us your support. If you need any further information or wish to help in any way, please contact

G B Roofing

E-COTTENHAM

It's E-everything at the moment, as the Internet and computers come into more and more aspects of life. Many services are already available "online", including shopping, banking, entertainment and travel information. Local authority services will be joining them soon. Increasingly, interactive computer programs are used to teach people skills, and not just computer skills. Furthermore the Internet is a mine of information on an amazing number of subjects.

The computer revolution we are living through demands new skills, especially for work. Being literate in computer skills – now called Information and Communications Technology (or ICT for short) – is already as important in many jobs as a driving licence is for others. The Government recognises this, and wants to set up hundreds of "ICT Learning Centres" in communities around the country. These would not be "schools", in that they are not just for children, but they would be places of learning for all members of the community, particularly those who do not have access to this new technology at home.

Cottenham, as a large village with a diverse and growing population, would surely benefit from having such a facility. It would serve people of all ages and interests allowing them to learn and to share experiences, and to build up confidence and skills in using new technology.

The village could make a bid to set up and run its own ICT Learning Centre. The bid could set out how we would involve different groups of people within the village, especially those who have few computer skills and no access to new technology at home or at work.

Those with more experience could use the centre too, providing the breadth of support from within the community, and possibly training required by less experienced residents.

It's a fine vision, and would need the backing of different groups and organisations in Cottenham (as well as hard work, money and a little luck) if it is to become a reality. If you think it's important and you want to help, or if you're part of a group that would support such a venture, do get in touch.

Graham Arnold (251324) or e-mail sue_arnold@msn.com
Funding information can be found at <http://www.dfec.gov.uk/ict-learning-centres/ict3.htm>
http://www.nof.org.uk/educ_pg04.htm

This article is a personal viewpoint and does not represent the views of any organisation or body.

COTTENHAM LIBRARY "WIRED"

The year 2000 is starting with the introduction of the Internet in Cottenham Library. This is part of the roll-out of the Internet organised by the Cambridgeshire County Library service.

There are two PCs for free access to information. Taster sessions for senior citizens will be available in March. The library staff are hoping the community will enjoy this new service.

The Internet (and all other library services) can be accessed at Cottenham Library in Margett Street at the following times:

Monday 2:30pm – 5:00pm and 6:30pm – 8:30pm
Tuesday 2:30pm – 5:00pm and 6:30pm – 8:30pm
Wednesday Closed
Thursday 10am – 12noon and 2:30pm – 5:00pm and 6:30pm – 8:30pm
Friday 2:30pm – 5:00pm and 6:30pm – 8:30pm
Saturday 10:00am – 12noon

MILLENNIUM AWARD BOOST FOR COTTENHAM CRICKET CLUB

Cottenham Cricket Club has been awarded a grant of £5000 for the construction of new outdoor net-practice facilities from the national Millennium Festival Awards-for-All Scheme. This is great news for the club, whose 1st XI has gained promotion in each of the last two seasons, and a massive boost for cricket in the village. Cottenham, as a village, has been desperately short of such facilities for far too long.

The new nets will be constructed at the Village College and, as well as being used by the Cricket Club, will be available for use by both pupils at the Junior School and students at the Village College. The award is the culmination of much hard work by Cottenham C.C. Secretary Mick Dean in collaboration with Steve Halkyard at the Village College and we hope to have the nets up and running during the course of the coming season.

On the playing front, the club is again running junior teams at both under-11 and under-13 levels, and parents/young cricketers wanting to find out more should contact Mick Dean as soon as possible on (01954) 250037.

Net practice for the senior players is now well under way. Despite our recent success, we still need to increase our player base, so we really do want any cricketers living locally to perhaps consider making a change and joining us in our efforts to build a cricket club that will serve not just the current generation of Cottenham cricketers but, perhaps more importantly, all those to follow.

Please do think seriously about joining the club. You can get in touch with Mick Dean for details of our indoor/outdoor practice arrangements and we will be delighted to welcome you there.

Nigel Lawrence (Chairman)
Dave Partridge (Vice-Chairman)

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Here endeth the lesson

At the time of writing, the Village College has recently collected an A-star from the Ofsted inspectors. By the time this edition of the *Newsletter* hits your doormat, the primary school will also have been picked over by the little grey woodentops from the planet Woodhead. And no doubt it too will have come out well.

What a fatuous waste of our money. Why send in the storm troops, so soon after previous inspections of both the VC and the primary school, to take up the floorboards and poke about in the cupboards all over again? There are many schools in this country which are said to be 'experiencing problems'. If Ofsted is going to turn out to be any use at all, it must help where help is needed, not squander our money nit-picking in schools which are quite evidently performing adequately.

In Australia school inspectors inspect, and then stay on for an appropriate period to help the staff solve any problems. It is a supportive professional partnership which truly promotes improvements in education.

But in Britain we have this pernicious accusative system, based on snap-shot impressions. The toll on teachers during the six weeks' notice of an impending inspection can be terrible. We read of teachers disappearing, going long-term sick — even killing themselves — under Ofsted pressure.

You only have to look at the taut faces of school staff as an Ofsted approaches to see the effects of stress,

overwork and fear of Chris Woodhead's big stick. Education has to wait while even the best school will have to waste time, money and resources on preparing for the Ofsted inquisition.

And yet the government thinks this is wonderful. Similarly, we hear Blair crowing about how regular testing and league tables have boosted standards in schools. Of course the ludicrous SAT exams show a growing success rate. The system is obliging teachers to become more adept at cramming kids for these silly tests — instead of educating them.

What can cramming for SATs, or the compilation of combative league tables, have to do with education? Ah yes, it's all coming back to me now: Tony Baloney's triumphal declaration on becoming PM. His three absolute priorities, he said, were education, education and education. Or was that just b*****s, b*****s and b*****s?

Round and round the garden

So the Wayside Garden has fallen by the wayside, and Cambridgeshire ACRE will be leaving the village shortly. Ironic that a charitable organisation called Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) should be leaving behind so many unhappy former neighbours in this particular rural English community.

The Wayside Garden at the rear of ACRE's property was planned, dug, planted and maintained by local volunteers, many of whom also donated plants. ACRE tells Watchman that it too devoted resources to the project. However, it is fair to say that the garden was essentially developed willingly by the village for the village.

Now consider how this delightful garden has enhanced the marketability, at little cost to ACRE, of 218 High

Street. No wonder people are saying that the recent 'privatisation' of the garden, following the sale of the property, is piracy. The goodwill of those people who made the garden, they say, has been hijacked. In effect ACRE is pocketing the proceeds of their effort.

It would not be difficult to get an estimate of the garden's added-value effect on the overall price of No 218. If ACRE was prepared to donate that portion of the sale price for the development of an alternative open garden, it might regain friends in Cottenham and leave the village in good heart.

But ACRE insists it has done quite enough already in making the space available to the village for the decade or so that the garden has been in existence. It will not be stumping up, even as a parting public relations gesture.

The village understands ACRE's need to move to larger premises. What it does not understand is ACRE's stubborn refusal to acknowledge that some part of the Wayside Garden belongs morally to the people of Cottenham, regardless of more formal claims to ownership. With a little more humility ACRE could have made it so simple.

One up for the Printer's Imp

Watchman was appalled to note, in the previous edition of the *Newsletter*, his approving comments about Clements hardware store underpinned by a paid advertisement for the shop. It's what we hacks fear most — any suggestion of collusion between editorial and advertising—the dreaded 'advertorial'.

So just in case you imagined that Watchman might be in the business of soliciting advertising, please be assured that this is absolutely not the case. The unfortunate juxtaposition was entirely the work of the treacherous Printer's Imp.

WATCHMAN

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COTTENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

The Council has received many comments from residents on the new amenity area off Broad Lane, or the "Retention Pond" as it is officially known. Sadly the majority of these have been to express disquiet and often disgust at the way this potentially very attractive area is being abused by a few of you. This area of water and its immediate surroundings were constructed as part of the Tenison Manor development as a necessary component of the surface water drainage system. The original scheme had the pond surrounded by a high fence to exclude the public, but, largely due to representations from the Parish Council, Beazer Homes generously agreed to landscape the area as a public amenity. Footpaths were laid, seats installed, and trees and bulbs planted.

Unfortunately, due partly to thoughtless behaviour by a minority and outright vandalism by a few, this very valuable amenity in the village is being ruined. Trees have been uprooted and broken off, rubbish has been thrown into the pond, but for many people the worst aspect of misuse is the thoughtless way in which some residents and their dogs have promptly adopted the area as a canine toilet. While many dog owners do keep their dogs under control and clean up after them, others allow their pets to run freely in the area, and look on benignly while they foul the grass areas and the footpaths and dig up the bulbs. The pair of swans who looked like taking up residence have

become tired of being chased and departed, as have many of the other wild birds.

The Council has therefore decided, with regret and for reasons of public health and hygiene, to exclude dogs from the area as soon as the necessary steps can be taken. The dog fouling laws, which the Council intends to strictly enforce throughout the village, will apply here also, and remember that each offence can carry a £200 fine! Being so intensively cultivated and built upon, the village has almost no public access areas, and the Council cannot allow this precious resource to be destroyed by a few thoughtless individuals. It is a shame that responsible dog owners will suffer as a consequence.

A recent letter from a resident has pointed out the potential dangers, both to themselves and to others, of youngsters riding their bicycles at speed on the pavements. While some may hold the view that cyclists are safer on the pavement than on the road, there is little doubt that to ride at high speed is to invite an accident. Elderly people are not always nimble enough to get out of the way in time, and a vehicle emerging suddenly from one of the many blind gateways along our streets can do severe damage to cycle and rider. Parents are urged, for the safety of their children and others, to remind their children of the dangers.

All residents are reminded that the annual

Parish Meeting will take place at the Village College on Thursday 20th April at 8:00pm. While members of the public may attend Parish Council meetings, they may not participate in the discussions unless invited to do so. The Parish Meeting is the occasion when residents can have their say and the Council is obliged to listen! Within the memory of some Council members, this meeting was attended each year by several hundred residents. These days we are lucky to get into double figures. If you have matters you wish to raise, come along and tell us.

GARDENS GALORE

The weekend of July 1/2 has been chosen for the planned Village Open Gardens event mentioned in the last *Newsletter*. Cottenham Gardeners Club is now compiling a list of those who are willing to open their gardens for viewing on one or both days (afternoons, between 2 and 5 pm).

Whatever your garden is, wherever it is in the village, no matter how large or small, if you would like to share it with fellow enthusiasts, then please join in this special event.

Full details and entry forms are available from Bridget Walker, 11 Ivatt Street, Cottenham. Tel: 250559.

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DISTRICT COUNCIL NOTES

TELECOMMUNICATIONS AERIALS, COTTENHAM FIRE STATION

At the time of writing, a planning application has come in to attach aerials to the top of the drill tower at the rear of the fire station in the High Street. Over the past few years the District Council has managed to refuse three applications for such aerials within the built-up area of the village, but this one may prove more difficult to turn down as it does not involve a new structure and will only marginally increase the height of the existing tower. Many residents have concerns about the possible health risks associated with such aerials, but at present it is not possible to take these concerns into account in the planning process as it is not officially proven whether the microwaves emitted by such aerials are a health hazard or not. However, it is always worth residents writing in to the Council's Planning Director with all their concerns in such cases and, hopefully, public concern may still win the day.

COTTENHAM POUND

The Pound, which is in the High Street almost opposite the junction with Rooks Street, is jointly owned by the District Council and Cottenham Parish Council. Dating back over several centuries, it was originally built to 'impound' stray animals but is now officially designated as a car park. Over the years it has deteriorated, despite several abortive schemes to refurbish it, and most of the historic sections of wall have collapsed. Some residents have even mistaken it for a bomb site!

Now both councils have voted money to give it a facelift and Cottenham Parish Council is drawing up a scheme, in con-

sultation with the District Council, to re-surface it and rebuild the walls. Hopefully this will make it a much more pleasant and useful feature in the High Street.

COUNCIL TAX AND RENTS

This is the time of year when Council tax bills make an unwelcome addition to the letters which we find on our doormats. The good news is that the District Council is not increasing its Council Tax for the coming financial year, which will remain at £50 for the year for a Band D property. (The charges for the different property bands will range from £33.33 for Band A, the lowest band, to £100 for Band H, the highest band.)

Unfortunately, however, that is not the end of the story. The District Council also has to collect Council Tax on behalf of the Parish and County Councils and the Police Authority, and it is clear that total bills will be up on last year. Amid the gloom that this is bound to produce it is perhaps some consolation to know that, for an average household, the District Council's services – planning, conservation, housing, environmental health, refuse collection, electoral registration, community facilities grants, arts and recreation to mention the main ones – are costing on average just under £1 per week.

From April rents for Council accommodation and garages will rise by 2.5%, roughly in line with inflation, giving an average council house rent of £50.74 per week. The charge for warden services will rise by the same percentage. The Council is continuing its programme of improving its housing stock and a considerable amount of this work has been done in Cottenham over the past two years.

ELECTIONS AND POSTAL VOTING

There will be District Council elections in Cottenham on Thursday, 4th May. If you know that you are going to be away then – for example because you will be on holiday or working away, or because you are a student who will be away at university or college – you can apply for a postal vote. (Students studying away can vote BOTH at home AND in their university town, provided they are on the electoral register in both places). You can also apply for a postal or proxy vote if you are not well enough to get to the polling station. Completed applications for postal or proxy voting MUST reach the Electoral Registration Office at South Cambs. Hall by 5:00pm on Thursday, 13th April. Application forms can be obtained from Mrs. Helen Malkin, Electoral Registration Assistant, South Cambs. Hall, 9-11, Hills Road, CAMBRIDGE, CB2 1PB (Direct Dial 01223 443013). I also have some forms available. **THE COMPLETED FORMS MUST BE RETURNED DIRECT TO THE ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICE.**

If you want to check that you are on the electoral register, copies are available in Cottenham Post Office or Margett Street Library. District Councillors also have copies.

COUNCILLOR'S SURGERY

This is held on the third Friday of each month, except August, in the Communal Room at Franklin Gardens from 5.30 – 6:30pm I am also always happy to be contacted at home – 20, Rampton Road (Tel. 251377) – to discuss residents' problems – and I am happy to visit you if that is more convenient.

REX COLLINSON – District Councillor

WAYSIDE GARDEN UPDATE

You are no doubt aware that the sale of 218 High Street and Wayside Garden has gone through despite our best efforts. We thank you for your support in our campaign to save the Garden, and especially to all those who have supported our community Garden since its beginning.

It is not yet clear whether or not South Cambridgeshire District Council will succeed in purchasing Plot B (the piece of land on the left of the public footpath that leads to Franklin Gardens, also belonging to 218 High Street) for development into another garden. They will negotiate directly with the new owner of 218 High Street. Watch this space for more details next time.

The Wayside Garden Action Committee

HIGHGATE FARM EXISTING AD

REFLECTIONS – by Moyra A Borg

I am about to escape England's winter for a week. Yes, I am off to Malta. The flight time is about three hours from Stansted, which means that I can actually get to Malta quicker than I can get to see my aunt in Lytham St Annes by car. Oh yes, I suppose you are right, you could say my car is a little past-it. 'Jason' is definitely in her 'dotage' now and has just 'proceeded' – I could hardly say 'whizzed' – past the 250,000 miles mark. This is equivalent to ten times round the world at the Equator. I used to drive on average 1000 miles a week. I have only done 7,500 miles in the past year! This could be why I am looking more relaxed!

I find that the journey to Malta is very like being in the Tardis. When I get out at the other end, I feel as though I have been in a time machine. I step back 20 years. At home I am approximately aged 17 again. I smuggle chocolate over there to eat in the middle of the night if I get hungry. I then have to dispose of the noticeably English wrappers in other people's dustbins. The problem is, you see, that fridge raiding there is not very productive as everyone at home is permanently on a diet. My father is not 'allowed' chocolate by his doctor and my mother and brother are so healthy they never happen to have any in the house. I am therefore the only junk food eater and, incidentally, the largest!

Years ago when there was chocolate in the fridge – it was cooking chocolate – my mother used to label the polythene bag with its weight. 'This chocolate weighs 8oz' she would write on the bag in a bid to stop my brother from raiding the fridge in the night. He was quite honest as he ate what he wanted, then re-weighed it and wrote on the bag, 'This chocolate now weighs 2 1/2 ounces'. His sense of humour saved him!

I must tell you about something which tickles me every time I think about it.

This was my first and, I dare say, probably last time I ever made an attempt to get onto the stage. It happened years ago. I was in Cambridge and saw an advert for people to audition for a Shakespeare play at St Catherine's College in Cambridge. I had to pluck up all my courage to go there as I was not a 'proper' student. I joined quite a long queue of people who were going in for it and I very nearly ran away. Eventually I was called up and a young lad pointed out a paragraph in a book which he handed to me. 'Go out there and read that' he said, 'from there to there.' I went back out into the corridor and started to read. People stared but I thought 'Ah well, I'll have to get used to this'. 'Can you hear me?' I asked, quite worried because no-one around me had made any effort to keep quiet. 'Shall I carry on reading?' I enquired. There was no answer, so I carried on reading with a resoundingly loud voice. Well the panel must be making their minds up I thought. Eventually the very young lad came out and said, 'Well, actually we meant read it to yourself and we'll call you in a minute.' I then realised why everyone had been staring at me. I was so painfully shy by that point that I made a sharp exit and could have crawled under a stone!

NAVAL TRIVIA

After a ceremonial entry to the small port of a West Indies island, our ship, a Royal Navy frigate, made fast alongside the only jetty. Later that day the sun was beating down on us as we waited, resplendent in tropical uniform, for our transport to take us to a garden party at the President's House to mark a further year as an independent nation. Transport, when it arrived, was a large American Cadillac with a Taxi sign and a most helpful driver who informed us that as we had time to spare he would take us on a quick tour of the sights and bars, before delivering us to the garden party. "So you know where to go after the party", he informed us. Arriving at our destination our driver wished us well and drove off. Later, as we mingled with the other guests we spotted our driver enjoying himself with glass in hand. On seeing us he came up with a large smile, "now I can officially introduce myself" he said. "I am the Minister of Tourism and Transport".

This is a true story. "Old Salt"

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What is MAGPAS?

MAGPAS is Cambridgeshire's volunteer doctor accident service. If you are involved in a serious road accident in Cambridgeshire or around its borders, it is almost certain that a MAGPAS volunteer doctor will be called out to the scene by the Ambulance Service to provide additional specialist help. And it's not only road accidents that they go to – if you are badly hurt in an industrial or agricultural incident, or as a result of a plane or rail crash or boating incident they will be on hand. They are even called to fires, felonies, sieges and suicides – in fact, wherever their special medical skills are needed.

There are 40–50 doctors in the service and nowadays they are not only GPs but also hospital doctors, often from an Accident & Emergency Department. They all give their services absolutely free while MAGPAS provides them with all the specialist medical and communications equipment they need. Additionally, there is driver training to allow them to get to the scene quickly and safely because immediate care and treatment at the scene often determines the ultimate survival and degree of recovery of the casualty. All this makes the MAGPAS immediate care service arguably one of the best in the country.

To provide this service costs over £200,000 per year, and in 1999 MAGPAS doctors were called out to support the emergency services at nearly 1100 incidents. MAGPAS is a registered charity, founded in 1972, which receives no government funding. For the past 27 years, it has relied totally on the continuing support and remarkable generosity of the people of Cambridgeshire and the dedication of the doctors.

Those who support MAGPAS often say they do so because “I might need them one day!”. We hope this won't happen but if you would like to help MAGPAS doctors keep saving lives by volunteering a few hours of your time or making a donation, or if you would like more information, please contact us at:

MAGPAS
(Mid Anglia General Practitioner
Accident Service)
4 Adkins Chambers
Perne Road
Cambridge
CB1 3RU
Tel: 01223 413477 Fax: 01223 506127
Email: MAGPAS@dial.pipex.com

NEWS FROM COTTENHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cottenham Primary School is part way through a particularly busy time. By the time this article appears we will have been 'Ofsted-ed'. The parents' evening left the Inspector in no doubt before he and his team embarked on their inspection in early March as to the high regard in which the school is held. The inspector's report is due towards the end of March.

As a result of a thriving and supportive PTA, the school now has a fully equipped Information Technology suite. As if this wasn't enough, building work is shortly due to commence on a major extension to the school. An enlarged hall and additional classrooms will result in the removal of the remaining 'mobiles'. Governors, staff and pupils all look forward to these new facilities.

Gareth Hayward – Chair of Governors

BUS PASS REFUNDS

All Cottenham residents who have a concessionary bus pass, whether it is funded by the County or the District Council, can claim a £4 refund on the cost of the pass from Cottenham Parish Council. Each bus pass is valid for 12 months and the refund can be claimed once during the 'life' of each pass.

With the kind permission of the three sheltered scheme wardens, there will be three refund sessions on the following dates during this year:

Friday 31st March, Communal Room, Franklin Gardens

Friday 30th June, Communal Room, Stevens Close

Friday 29th September, Communal Room, Coolidge Gardens

Each refund session will last from 4:00pm to 6:00pm. Just come along to the one which suits you best.

Concessionary bus passes can be bought from Cottenham Post Office.

There are currently two kinds:

£5 Pass funded by Cambs. County Council. This is available to all people of pensionable age who receive either Income Support or Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit. It is also available to people of any age who are registered blind or partially sighted or without speech.

£16 Pass funded by South Cambs. Council. This is available to all other pensioners and anyone else who qualified for a pass before April, 1998 but who now no longer qualify for the County Council pass.

Concessionary bus passes allow a discount of 50% off the bus fare for single journeys up to a maximum discount of £1 per journey.

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AN ODE TO CHURCH END

Kaajal, hooray, a happy day
When she and Shaun returned to stay.
We missed them sore in USA,
Alas, poor Fayco crept away.

The Jolly Miller, Bob, in sight
Our footsteps quicken. Eyes alight
Upon the sign "No Food Tonight."
Oh, woe indeed, can that be right?

The Church End knights in armour ride,
Travis, with Perkin by his side,
Watching, looking far and wide,
And Friars by the church abide.

Clement John and Clement Jill
with happy faces ring the till.
We're glad that they are with us still -
May Horseshoes Three keep them from
ill.

And have you seen the new Church
Hall?

Bill the Busman drew it all.
Will it be open by next Fall,
Garlanded and standing tall?

We should have moved here long before.
Ten years are done, we hope for more.
And if our age should pass four score
Then "newcomers" we're not, for sure.

Anon 2000

Short Stories & Poetry

Readers are invited to send in either original poetry or short stories for inclusion in *The Newsletter*. Short stories should be no longer than 600 words. The objective should be to entertain the general readership — go on, have a go!

FEN EDGE TWINNING ASSOCIATION NEWS

Just a reminder that the villages of Cottenham, Landbeach, Rampton and Waterbeach are now officially twinned with the town of Avrillé, which is adjacent to Angers in the Department of Maine-et-Loire in France. We first signed the twinning charter on Armistice Sunday 1998 in Cottenham Village College, followed by the reciprocal signing in May last year in the town hall at Avrillé, when a coachload of people of all ages from all over the Fen Edge Patch had a lovely weekend as previously reported in these pages.

We are fortunate in having found a twinning partner in such an attractive part of France which can be reached from here in one day. Further north it's more difficult to get away from the British influence.

All those who have been involved in the twinning so far have found it a very rewarding experience. Many have made friendships but the idea of twinning encompasses much more than contact between families. We hope that in future sporting and social organisations in the Patch can form relationships with their opposite numbers in Avrillé, for example.

The next event to take place in the twinning programme is that we will welcome guests from Avrillé for the weekend of 5th to 8th May. The theme of the weekend will be architecture. More details will be available nearer the time, but of course we would welcome new members. Anyone who is interested should please contact John or Deborah Loveluck on 252267, Chris Couchman on 200824, or Steve Howie on 250823.

There is no requirement to be able to speak French as many of our members will attest; for those who wish to practice or improve their French, however, there are plenty of opportunities. We will need to offer our French guests accommodation, so if anyone from anywhere in the Patch can put up a French person or couple and thereby make a worthwhile contact, please let us know.

Steve Howie

HEALTHWATCH by David Bradley

Curtains for noise

Hospitals are often so noisy it's impossible to get a good night's sleep. Now, it's curtains for noise pollution from rattling trolleys, chatting nurses and grumbling room-mates.

Scientists at Georgia Institute of Technology have sandwiched noise-absorbing plastic panels in pockets between layers of fabric for noise-baffling curtains to hang round the bed. The panels block out noise by sixteen times in tests, and so should help patients rest!

The quiet curtains could also be used in nursing homes, offices, factories and hotels, even the home.

Stay...just a little bit longer

Early to bed early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise? True and false! — according to a study of elderly people in America. Those who are always up with the lark don't seem to be any better off than their night-owl friends who go to bed late but have a long lie in. In fact, age, money in the bank, and brains, don't seem to be connected to how early or late people get up at all. It seems that getting enough shut-eye is more important than fitting in with old sayings.

David Bradley is a freelance science and medical writer and can be contacted through his Elemental Discoveries website at: www.sciencebase.com

R S MEMORIALS

20 years is a GREAT achievement!

Congratulations to all of you who have ever been involved with Cottenham Toy Library. This May we celebrate 20 years of existence and we are really grateful to anyone who has helped or supported this valuable community resource over the years. Sessions are still as busy as ever and with all the new housing in the area we are looking forward to many new members. If you know nothing about Toy Library here is a brief low-down on what we have to offer.

The Toy Library meets at the Salvation Army Barn between 2:15 – 4:15 on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month. There is a vast range of toys to borrow. The age range stretches from newborn to 8 years of age. So if you have children at school, there is no need to feel that we may have nothing to offer your child. We try very hard to buy toys to suit the whole of the 0–8 age range. Toys cost as little as 30p for the duration of one loan period (two weeks) and the annual membership fee is STILL only £1.00, which is the original joining fee of 20 years ago, so you can't say you're not getting value for money! You may reserve toys for that special party, and groups such as the Village College Creche have been thrilled with the number of toys that they can use and exchange to improve their own toy cupboard. If you are a local group in need of some robust toys to borrow, please contact us for details of our stock list.

We are a charity so like all charities we rely heavily on support from the local community. We have been very lucky in recent years to have generous support from the Cottenham Schools Trust who have given us money to buy computers, an activity bead table to use during the sessions and musical equipment. Many

of these items would have taken a lot of fund-raising to buy so their support is very welcome.

The Toy Library year is a busy one, we plan many fundraising events plus some more community spirited ones like providing a play area at the ever popular Fun-Run, and the Nearly New Sales for Toys in November and Baby clothes and equipment in March. During the summer we host Messy Play days where children can have fun playing with paint, sand, water, and various other activities you may rather they not play at your own home! Also, we are regular at the annual October Feast Day parade – look out for our Jack-in-the-box clown at the next parade. Cake stalls are another of our specialties; eyes peeled for the next date to buy some lovely homemade delicacies.

So, if you have been involved with Toy Library in the past or want to find out more about us, give Carol a call on Cottenham 251528, and next time you are at a loss as to which toy to choose from the shelf, think of us at Cottenham Toy Library, and pay us a visit!

'HAY FEVER'

Spring 2000 will see a revival of the Noel Coward favourite 'Hay Fever' on the stage of Cottenham Theatre Workshop. Set in the Twenties, in the delightful country house of the eccentric Bliss family, this charming play is full of humour and fun, with some splendid characters appearing.

We are very fortunate at Cottenham in having an excellent mixture of older experienced actors and a large group of extremely talented youngsters, and 'Hay Fever' makes good use of both groups.

The play is directed by Sue MacDonald and she is delighted with her strong cast of Clive Borrow, Robin Morgan, Duncan McCallum, Mary Garside, Cathy Matthews, Liz Godfrey, Michelle Smiley, Lee Dobinson and Matthew Unwin. 'Hay Fever' will be performed at Cottenham Village College from Wednesday 3rd to Saturday 6th May, with performances starting at 7:45pm.

Tickets are £5 [£4.50 concessions], with a special offer of two for £6 on the first night. Box Office: Valerie Leach, 111 Rooks St. Cottenham Tel.01954 201702.

So be brave – come and catch 'HAY FEVER'!

COTTENHAM BOWLS CLUB OPEN DAY

During the dreary winter, many of you will have enjoyed the exciting bowls shown on TV, with advantage changing with each bowl and the result frequently resting on the delivery of the final bowl.

Cottenham Bowls Club invites you to participate in and enjoy this lovely game (May–September) on our fine rinks on the recreation ground. Our club has one of the finest 'Greens' in the country and welcomes both ladies and gentlemen. The club competes in four leagues, one of which is for afternoon players. Therefore we can provide plen-

ty of games against local teams as well as club competitions. Our club barbecue drives are also very popular.

If you are interested in playing bowls then come along to our open day on April 29th 10:00am to 4:00pm during which we will be happy to introduce you to the game without obligation. Please wear flat-soled shoes. Bowls and light refreshments will be provided.

To register your interest please contact Tony Harding 01954 252734 or Gerald Young 01954 250172.

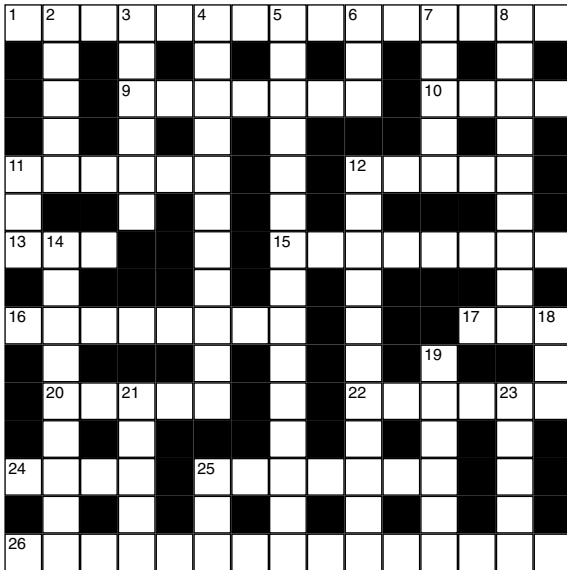
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Crossword

Know Your Cottenham – Compiled by Roger Gautrey



ACROSS

- 1 Currently in charge of the High Street Onions (3, 3, 3, 6)
 9 Fruit found close to the Village Green (7)
 10 Whichever way you look at Them, They are a Group (4)
 11 See 3 down
 12 & 14 Fuscias are the speciality of this Village Servant (5, 9)
 13 Initially thought to be related to CJD (3)
 15 Men who love themselves as much as flowers (8)
 16 Kens Will provides hole fillers in old desks (8)
 17 Item that is nothing to the North East (3)
 20 Nude about to take a 'P' on arrival (3, 2)
 22 Are torsos around resting places (6)
 24 Have the books catalogued initially (1, 1, 1, 1)

- 25 'Him a pro' what a drug (7)
 26 Her, not a pathogen, appears once more as a seven sided figure (7, 8)

DOWN

- 2 Go nutty about the colour of her eyes (5)
 3 & 11 Is Bob a Clerk, we hear, no a Chairperson (6, 6)
 4 Place loaves around French slice (meat) (4, 7)
 5 Adorable place in The High Street (3, 6, 6)
 6 Soar like this insect (3)
 7 Did once prominent family live in this street? (5)
 8 Store born from the fruits of their labour – Golly! (9)
 11 Carry nuts in it for horse or swan (3)
 12 Marriage for example is one (11)
 14 See 12 across
 18 Numerically unlucky letters, perhaps printing measures (3)
 19 Take a musical composition from Mason at a Lodge dinner (6)
 21 Go ape and become an American food (5)
 23 Nag to drink and dance (5)
 25 Personal award for member of Chamber Orchestra (3)

Answers on inside back cover

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BIRD REPORT

Have you noticed that the roads in the new Broad Lane development are named after birds? Of course we already have a Rooks Street, but now we have Bullfinch Way, Kestrel Close, Kingfisher Way and Woodlark Drive. I wonder how the names are chosen. Bullfinches, kestrels and kingfishers can all be seen here, but woodlarks are rare visitors to Cottenham, although I have seen them recently in Thetford. However, I warmly applaud these names.

Kingfishers have regularly been seen this year between Smithy Fen Bridge and Broad Lane, and also on Long Drove. I have also seen bullfinches in Church Lane and kestrels nearly everywhere.

On January 9th I saw 100-200 golden plovers near Twentypence Inn, and on February 12th about 500 lapwings on a field near the Rampton Road.

I have several times seen a short-eared owl near the the Old West River and a barn owl near Rampton. Snipe have been seen in several places and wagtails are regularly seen in Broad Lane. The latest grey wagtail I saw was outside the Chemist's shop, so perhaps they are becoming as tame as the pied wagtail.

On the Long Drove lagoon a shelduck appeared at the end of January, followed a few days later by a second one. There has also been a variety of gulls there.

Birds began singing early this year. At the end of January we had a mistle thrush singing in the garden, and since then there has been a lot of noise from robins, dunnocks, blackbirds and, out in the fields, skylarks.

My RSPB handbook lists the ten most common British Birds and then the sixty most common birds. These lists make interesting reading. For instance, the first list includes dunnock and skylark, and the

skylark is now considered an endangered species in some parts of the country.

The second list of sixty also provides some surprises. Apart from some sea birds (kittiwake, fulmer, razorbill, guillemot and puffin) it also includes some birds which are now quite uncommon - namely tree sparrow, coal tit, marsh tit, tree creeper and grey partridge. On the other hand, there is no room in this list for collared dove (which I see every day in the garden) and heron and mute swan which I see almost every time I go out. In fact, on February 19th we saw eight herons together on Cottenham Lode.

Perhaps I should buy a more up to date bird book!

Jasper Kay - Feb 2000

CVC MILLENNIUM REUNION

Saturday 1st July 2000

Did you attend Cottenham Village College at any time since it opened in 1963?

We would like to invite you to the College on July 1st

Open day: 12:00 - 6:00pm
Reunion Event: 7:30 - Midnight

For further information contact Geoff Redhead on 01954 288944

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IT'S TIME FOR A CHANGE

Did you know that you can save up to £600 by using washable nappies instead of disposables during your child's 'nappyhood'? Or that the super-absorbent gel used in disposable nappies has been banned from use in feminine hygiene products because of its link with toxic shock syndrome? Or that in the United Kingdom we throw away 9 million nappies EVERY DAY, releasing viruses and active vaccines (e.g. polio) through untreated human waste? Makes uncomfortable reading doesn't it?

As a member of the 3 County Real Nappy Network (Cambs, Beds and Herts) and the Real Nappy Association, I offer impartial information, advice and tips on buying, hiring and using washable nappies. I am a mum with my second baby in washable nappies (recycled from child number one) and have a vast amount of personal experience, all on tap for parents and carers everywhere. So far we have set up a permanent nappy display board at the Rosie Maternity Hospital; provided nappy samples and leaflets for the County Council 'Slim Your Bin' campaign; sent posters and leaflets to all 102 surgeries in the county and 'Health Professional Information Packs' have been distributed to all health visitors, child and family nurses, and community midwives attached to Addenbrookes and Hinchingbrooke hospitals.

We receive full support and backing from Cambridgeshire County Council, South

Cambs District Council and Cambridge City Council as part of their efforts to reduce waste following the approval of the Waste Minimization Bill in 1998.

Elsewhere in the UK a lot is happening. Some maternity hospitals now use real nappies and encourage their continued use at home – Mid-Sussex District Council are offering a subsidized nappy service. The Lister Hospital (Herts.) have a nappy service in the Maternity unit and 90% of the mums who take up the service continue at home. One London borough council has been giving out free nappies for the last year. These are just three of the many initiatives happening around the country. Further afield, in Seattle USA, 22 out of 24 hospitals use washable nappies and 70–80% of parents continue to use them at home.

All of this activity stems from the fact that disposable nappies represent the single greatest source of domestic waste. Furthermore, disposable nappies will never fully decompose, and their continued dumping will ensure contamination of the environment for generations. Is this what we want our children to inherit? If you have children or are expecting a child then you can make a difference by changing to washable nappies.

For further information contact me, Karin Fitch, on Cottenham 251700.

LADYBIRDS VISIT KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL

In the middle of January, the Ladybird Pre-school took a group of thirty, three and four year old children to visit King's College Chapel in Cambridge. The coach arrived outside the primary school at 9:30am and to the sounds of much chattering we were off. Seeing the Co-op from the coach was the first highlight of the trip and being stuck in traffic in Impington was quite exciting. You can see so much more from a coach, especially if you are little.

On previous days, and before leaving the Ladybird building there had been a lot of discussion about how we mustn't walk on the grass in the college grounds and what would happen if someone fell in the river. We also knew that we shouldn't shout or run in the chapel and how sad we would be if we lost anyone. Armed with all this we set off up the path to the bridge.

Bright yellow aconites were in flower and through the leafless trees there was the awe-inspiring beauty of seeing King's College Chapel across the river. A squirrel scrambled up a tree, two swans flew overhead to land on the water near Clare Bridge. We reached the great West door of the chapel. 'Dragons' said the small girl with me, and sure enough little gold dragons were twined around the railings in front of the door. We looked at the carving on the door, at the portcullis on the gate, the sculptured Tudor roses, dragons and heraldic emblems. The windows way above us were black.

continued on next page

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continued from previous page

The side of the chapel in the great court had gargoyles perched at the top of the walls and there were turrets and decorative emblems precision carved from stone. It was cold so we went to the entrance in the north door. The staff on duty at the door gave each child a leaflet about the chapel. Inside the organ was playing and the sound enveloped us. We walked slowly to the back of the chapel and looked up. The windows glowed with colour. Stone crowns set in the walls were under lit and the fan-vaulted roof seemed higher than the sky. One little boy gazed and gazed with wonder 'Is this heaven?' he asked.

There were more dragons and dogs cut out of stone. There was an A for Anne Boleyn and an H for Henry VIII carved in the wooden screen. There were choir stalls and candles. (Only one child tested the college staff awareness by climbing in the choir stalls). There were gold organ pipes topped by carved wooden angels holding golden trumpets. At the altar was a beautiful painting of the "Adoration of the Magi" by Rubens, and noone set the alarm off by climbing over the railing.

In the exhibition was the wooden chest that King Henry VII sent coins in to go towards the cost of building the chapel. We saw another painting of Jesus and his mother Mary and many examples of stained glass, plaster and stonework.

The children discovered the Kings echo not by shouting but by stamping on the wooden wheelchair ramps. Toilets were a problem. Apparently people in medieval times attending chapel didn't need them. For those children who were desperate a nearby office obliged. A group photo outside the West door concluded our visit, and no one was sick on the coach until we reached Rampton Road in Cottenham!

Where are we going next? We've been invited to meet the Mayor at Cambridge Guildhall!

Rosemary Miller, Pre-school Supervisor.

GOODBYE FROM THE WHITE HORSE

After 33 years at The White Horse we have decided to retire. The restaurant is now closed and is being extensively redecorated and refurbished and will soon be re-opened as an Indian restaurant to be known as the CURRY PALACE. So this is goodbye from the Dunnicos (although we will be staying in the village).

We would like to say thankyou to all our friends and customers and to everyone who has worked for us over the past 33 years. We could fill the place with the couples who have met here! It's been hard work but it has been fun (most of the time). We wish the CURRY PALACE every success.

Rosalie Dunnico

TALES FROM THE WHITE HORSE

When we came to The White Horse in 1967 it was our plan to stay for about 18 months to get started and to persuade the Brewery to take us seriously. Food was almost unheard of in pubs in those days and the brewery thought we were mad to think it would succeed. Therefore, they wouldn't let us have one of the good tenancies – so we got a bit desperate and decided to take the White Horse and move on when we had proved that food was a good idea.

On that first day in July 1967 I arrived on my own as Warren had gone to Court for the exchange of licence. I drove through the narrow entrance into what I thought was the car park but it had disappeared under a forest of weeds with a single track across it to the outside gent's (which was nearly hidden by giant hollyhocks).

The man from the brewery said I had to open up – they wouldn't let me wait until Warren arrived. They gave me the key to the Public Bar door, which in those days was in the side wall, and I was nearly flattened as the first customers rushed in.

All were quite elderly, smartly dressed in their best suits, watches and chains in their waistcoat pockets, their hair neatly brushed and their teeth gleaming. (After that first lunchtime I never saw them with their teeth in again, although they mostly carried them around in their coat pockets).

Only the public bar was open and the counter flap was left up so that drinks could be served at table. When Warren arrived the first thing he did was close the flap! No more drinks served at the table.

Beer was 1/10d (old money) per pint, Best Bitter was 1/11d, Dark Mild – which was the most popular drink – was 1/9d. It was all hand pulled (known now as Real Ale). Lager was unheard of except in towns, and spirits were know as 'top shelf' and were 2/6d a measure.

The bar furniture was formica top kitchen tables and chairs with red plastic seats with 'Made in Czechoslovakia' stickers. The floor was covered in green tiles. The rent was £1 per week.

We had some wonderful customers with splendid nicknames. There was Khaki, Chicken, Snowy, Digger, Nimble, Nuts, old Edgar who dressed the horses for the shows, and dear old Dave Savory who we were told was living on borrowed time having been told he was going to die three years previously. They were mostly farm workers and fruit growers. Pyretheums and peonies were extensively grown and sent to Covent Garden.

Cottenham was a small country village and outsiders were not very welcome – and we were townies! Never just pity the country girl going to London – pity also the London girl coming to the country!

Dunstal Field was still being built, as was Lyles Road and Coolidge Gardens. There were lots of open spaces where there are now houses – there was even a pond. It was not like it is now.

(My stories are intended only to amuse and entertain – I hope. All my characters are either living or dead!)

Rosalie

[I have a feeling that we may be hearing more reminiscences from Rosalie in coming editions - Ed.]

Down
2 Hazel, 3 & 11 across Robert Clarke, 4 Veal escalop, 5 All Saints Church, 6 Fly, 7 Watt, 8 Robertson, 11 Cob, 12 Partnership, 14 See 12 across, 18 EMS, 19 Sonata, 21 Donut, 23 Tango, 25 MBE

Across
1 The Rev Ian Friars, 9 Bramley, 10 Abba, 11 & 3 down Robert Clarke, 12 & 14 Peter Sanderson, 13 BSE, 15 Narcissi, 16 Inkwells, 17 One, 20 End up, 22 Roosts, 24 ISBN, 25 Morphia, 26 Another heptagon

Know Your Cottenham – Crossword answers

Deadline
FOR NEXT ISSUE
25th APRIL

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