

# Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,  
Three things.

Thing 1. Congratulations on your recent appointment as Editor.

Thing 2. Does your contributor POG know (or know anybody who knows) anything about the structure known as Oxborough Ferry? I believe it consisted of a wooden platform fixed to a chain enabling users to pull themselves across the river. It was capable of carrying a pony and trap and was used by people living south of the River Wissey who wanted to get their persons and produce to Oxborough, Gooderstone and Swafham etc etc. the track to the ferry is on the north side of the A 134 about a mile east of Whittington and passes the farm occupied by the late Simon Porter.

Thing 3. Under it's section headed Northwold sub-section Whittington, White's Norfolk Directory 1845 says. . "The hamlet of Whittington where there are 178 inhabitants and where Messrs Whitbread & Co, the great London

brewers have an extensive malt house, with 5 cisterns capable of steeping (whatever that is) 1700 bushels (whatever they are) of barley at one time." The enclosed map of 1826 (Reproduced here by kind permission of The Larks Press, Dereham) clearly shows the melting's in the place where their remains are today.

Whites Directory of 1854 gives the name of the malting's as Fisons, and Kelly's Directory of 1825 describes Parkard and James Fison Ltd Maltsters and Chemical manure manufacturers and Whitbread & Co Maltsters. Surely there weren't two companies in the village doing the same thing. Can POG throw any light on what the truth of this is?

In the meantime may I, through your columns, thank Mr Coley for his fascinating insight into gone but not forgotten days.

Thing 4. Does POG know where the causeway land is, about 5 acres, left by

Richard Cobnstable towards repairing the causeway extending to Whittington which is now held by the trustees of the turnpike made under an act passed in 1770?

**Roger Warner**  
Grange Farm, Whittington.

*Editors note:-*

*Thanks Roger, this is very interesting and by coincidence POG has dealt with the same subject. See page 6.*

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## The Voltz in practice



whether you like this sort of thing or not. But when you are as keen as they are I don't suppose they worry about that.

They actually did their first "Gig" on 25th September, 2003 in Northwold Village hall for an 18th birthday party. In 2004 they did 27 Gigs which included playing in the new Downham Market precinct to help celebrate the opening of the re-vamped Market Place.

But by far their greatest achievement came in late 2004 when a Nation Wide competition was run by XFM Radio Station in London. This competition was for bands under the age of 18 years. Out of an entry of around 200 bands they were placed Sixth and with another 25 votes they would have been fifth and would have competed in the grand final in London.

## A Session With The Voltz

Or a mature man's guide to modern rock music.

At 11 am on a Saturday morning I am standing outside Methwold Social Club where I have come to listen, film and interview our local Rock band,THE VOLTZ. I am here by prior arrangement with Mick Waring a member of the band. Father Tony had just delivered the equipment and as I entered the hall they were busy assembling all the gear that these Bands use. The band consists of four members And it came into being through Mick and Owen sharing the same interest, which was playing the guitar. Having formed this duo they were joined by Adam as lead Guitarist. The last to join was Joe on the drums. And the band was formed. While they were setting up their equipment I watched them and I was impressed by the way that they got on with what they were doing, which they told me takes about half an hour to get everything ready, and they will

be practicing from now until 4pm, which they do every Saturday.

Then they were ready. A few preliminary plucks on the strings and a roll on the drums and without more ceremony they launched into their first number. My first impression was "these lads are good!" The playing of the instruments was excellent and then Mick started to sing. I wondered how this quiet reserved lad(Qualities no doubt inherited from his father) could suddenly become such a confident and I suppose you would call it positive singer. What I couldn't believe was that I was actually enjoying it.

They did the first number again just for me to film, then they did another one to help me out. They had no problem with this, they just did it.

Then it was "Docky" time. Off the stage and out came the rolls and drinks. After I had collected up all my gear and got ready to leave they lined up and shook hands. In my estimation it is not easy work

In the press and on TV we get plenty about all the bad youngsters who get into trouble and cause all the mayhem. You don't hear too much about youngsters like these, but one day, we just might do. They are only 15 and already established . Who knows ? One day they may be famous and Village Life will be able to say that we interviewed them first. The last word came from my wife when I showed her the film I had made. "They're as good as any you see on the television and better than most" was her verdict. So if you want to book this band you can contact Mick Waring or any of the other members, further details of which can be obtained from Village Life. As to the question," Are you planning a career in this field,"? the answer was definite. "We have got to get the GCSE's out of the way first." So there you are. If you want a Rock Band you know where to go for one, but if, like me you are a bit mature for that sort of thing I must tell you that you may have trouble doing the Waltz to THE VOLTZ.

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

Easter Attractions In Northwold

**Exhibition with “Firefly Silks in the Village Hall on Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> March.**

An exhibition with “Firefly Silks”. Hand Painted Silks and Watercolours. Norma and Alan Ashcroft are partners in a cottage craft based upon “Painting On Silk” known as “Firefly Silks” based at their home in Thetford. Norma initially trained in Haute Couture in London. She has experience in many art forms having worked and taught over 30 years in the world of design and technology. Alan became interested through involvement in craft fairs and demonstrations and he was accepted into the Guild of Silk Painters as a result of his work in the areas of “Watercolour” picture technique and scarf design. They are members of the

Guild of Silk Painters and regularly demonstrate the art of Silk Painting around the Eastern Region. They are also members of the Society of Amateur Artists.

They produce a variety of hand painted Silk greetings cards. They also “Hand paint on silk” framed pictures either of set subjects or landscapes. In addition they produce original designed silk scarves, cushions, jackets and waistcoats.

The exhibition is their inaugural event in the Village of Northwold and they hope it will be well supported. Should you not be able to visit this event, they can be found in the Cinema gallery, Aldeburgh, Suffolk over the period 27<sup>th</sup> May top the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June 2005.

**Easter Fun At St. Andrew’s**

**Why not join us** – and bring the family- on Easter Sunday, March 27th in the afternoon. Meet at the Lych Gate at 2. 30pm, and follow the trail round the village looking for Easter Sunday “Bunnies”.

Back at the Church for tea and simnel cake from 3pm onwards and the children can search for chocolate Easter Eggs !

Encourage the children to enter the colouring competition – pictures available from 12, West End. Do Join Us!

**Northwold Bowls Club**

**Easter Bingo** on Good Friday, March 25th at the Sports and Social Club. Doors open 7 pm.

**CHURCH FLOWERS**



After Easter I shall be taking over responsibility for Church flowers, from Brenda Ayres, who will be a very hard act to follow. She will continue to be in charge of wedding and funeral flowers.

I would be very pleased to hear from anyone who would like to help; no expertise is needed, and you do not have to be a churchgoer.

St. Andrew's is a beautiful church, and flowers make it even more welcoming to the congregation and to the many visitors.

Jackie Elliott (tel. 728571)

 **Northwold Produce Show**

The Annual Meeting of the Northwold Produce Show will be held on Thursday, 24th March, 2005 at 7.15pm in the Village hall.

All people interested are invited to attend to offer any suggestions for inclusion in the show schedule.

The balance sheet for last year will be presented at this meeting.

**Hod**



NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

During the late afternoon of Thursday 3rd Feb at 4.05pm, a man claiming to be from the Electricity Board attempted to gain entry to a property in Victory Road, Downham Market. He stated that he needed to check the light switches. He didn't have any ID. The householder who is in her nineties refused to allow the caller entry to her property. We do not have any description of the caller.

Please warn all your members, especially the elderly ones, about this incident. Whilst the lady dealt with the caller correctly in this incident, the next person he targets may not, so if any of your members are approached by someone claiming to need access to their property and the caller cannot produce genuine ID they must refuse entry and call the police immediately using 999. The more information they can give

about the caller i.e. gender, age, height, build, clothes and any vehicle they may be using all will help the police in possibly apprehending the caller.

It has come to our attention that a company calling itself the European Environment Agency are cold calling homes by telephone. They are offering to carry out a free safety & security check on your property. They try to play on the householder's fear of crime by claiming that crime is rife in your area and you will only be safe, if you allow them to make an appointment to come and post code you valuables. Whilst they are in your home, they will try and convince you that you require a very expensive alarm system and possibly an equally expensive fire suppression system.

This company is not accredited and doesn't belong to any associated body that represents Security Companies.

If you are cold called by any company offering free home and security checks please decline any offer and contact the police and trading standards with details about the caller you have.

**The Yellow bicycle reported stolen in the last issue has been recovered and returned to the owner.**

**Are you feeling stressed and full of aches and pains?**

You could try holistic healing and meditation either or both.  
**No Fee.** Enquiries and appointments. Eileen Cooper. Tel 01366 728289

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## Keith MacLeod's Monthly Report

### March 2005 Letter

I am looking out of my window at the remains of last night's snow and gales, but we are only a few weeks from Easter and although the ground is drenched, the sky is blue and the sun shining strongly. Midwinter seems barely days ago and yet I can already see the promise of Spring and Summer, with some daffodils already out.

It is a busy time for us in the Church. Lent has already started. The General Synod starts its latest sittings as I write – it is a time when we are expected to be thoughtful and caring and to look at all that we have and to ask how we can be compassionate and generous.

The Synod (which is the nearest thing the Church of England has to a governing body) is not going to discuss the recently announced impending marriage of Charles and Camilla, although many are convinced that this finally disqualifies Charles from becoming Supreme Governor of the Church, when he accedes to the throne – and by the next Synod the marriage will have been celebrated and then, after the civil ceremony, blessed by the Archbishop of Canterbury himself. Probably most Britons feel that it is about time they got on with it and good luck to them. Many, many Christians also feel, if only out of compassion, that we should be generous and wish them luck.

The big issue before the Synod, that IS on the agenda, is the question of Women Bishops. Having now ruled that women can be ordained as priests, it seems barely logical, even theologically logical, that they should be rejected on principle as candidates for elevation to the rank of Bishop. Confused into this debate is the question of the standing of gay men and women in the Church, especially in the priesthood.

The opposition to any further relaxing of the rules is based on interpretations of the Bible and the lack of apostolic

tradition for women and gays in these roles. It is sincere. Those who are in favour point to Jesus' attitude to the law of Moses. He was NOT cavalier in disregarding it, as some suppose, but argued strongly for the need to uphold the law. However, when asked which were the most important laws, he summarised the whole of the law into two commandments – to love God and to love humankind. He looked beyond the prohibitions and requirements of the detailed written law to the motives behind and the divine purpose of the law. By the same token, for example he adjudged any one as fully guilty of adultery who even looked lasciviously at a member of the opposite sex, even if those thoughts remained wholly private. Where circumstances required, he would breach the letter of the law – for example he would heal on the Sabbath.

So I would argue that our adherence to law and tradition must not be blind or unthinking. Many years ago Galileo Galilei was convicted by the Church for his propagation of what were perceived as heretical theories – theories which are now widely, if not wholly universally, accepted. He said 'I do not feel obliged to believe that the same God who has endowed us with sense, reason, and intellect has intended us to forgo their use.' I find it very difficult to find any basis for contradicting any part of that. In fact, I would add to it, that the God of unearned Mercy and unnecessary Grace must appreciate us the more when we find it in ourselves to give undeserved Mercy and Grace to whose with who we have to deal – ie when we obey Jesus' command to love our neighbour.

With a following wind and possibly some divine nudging, maybe our Synod will be able to look at the rules and traditions and apply sense, reason, intellect, mercy and grace to their application. I am sure that Galileo had every confidence that in four hundred years people would look back and marvel at the hidebound attitude adopted by the Church

towards him with horrified amusement, as we do (except for the flat-earthers of whom there are still some about). I am personally confident that in another four hundred years people will be as horrified and amused at the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Church's attitude to the inferiority of women as most of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa are now to their attitude to the inferiority of non-white races only 25 years ago.

GK Chesterton was a Roman Catholic writer in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. All of us who are sure we are right need to think about his view of bigotry. 'It is not bigotry to be certain we are right; but it is bigotry to be unable to imagine how we might possibly have got it wrong.' I hope we have no bigots sitting in the General Synod on either or any side of any of the debates.

I have mostly looked at the question of Women Bishops in the Church of England, which is, in a sense, a private domestic difficulty – but the same general sentiments apply to any debate or dispute about change and progress. NIMBY is a sort of Chestertonian bigotry!

### Keith MacLeod

Licensed Lay Minister (CofE)

### Northwold Bowls Club

**Easter Bingo** on Good Friday, March 25th at the Sports and Social Club.  
Doors open 7 pm.

**Annual General Meeting** on Monday, 14th March at 8. 30 pm in the Sports and Social Club.

**Committee Meeting** Wednesday, 9th March time to be fixed later.

# Northwold News Jim Booty

Reports on activities, news and events in and around Northwold

### Parish Council

It was decided to increase the precept (our part of the Council tax) to £10,250 in line with inflation.

The contract for grass cutting was again awarded to Adrian Jenkinson.

The following is the contents of a letter received by the Parish Council.

West Norfolk M E Support  
Registered Charity No. 1090401

I write on behalf of your local King's Lynn and west Norfolk M.E. Support Group. We have been supporting M. E. sufferers in the West Norfolk area since 1997,.Two years ago we became a charity in our own right.

Because of the incapacitating nature of M.E. we find it difficult to raise funds in the normal way, Street Collections, Market Stalls or events of any kind are very near impossible for the members to cope with, consequently we rely heavily on non sufferers help and local groups such as yourselves for financial support.

We keep in touch with local sufferers by monthly meeting and a monthly newsletter, the latter is of extreme importance as many members are unable to get out for even the monthly meeting.

I am asking your council's support for a donation, no matter how small to enable us to continue this support for the following year.

One thing you can be sure of is that there is at least one in ten that has suffered at some time in your village.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter to your councillors.

Yours sincerely

M.M.Duhigh (Chairman).

If any reader would like to make a donation the address is as follows:

“Sunnymead”

Main Road, Clenchwarton,

King's Lynn, Norfolk. PE34 4AF

### Northwold Spiritualist Group

At our evening of Clairvoyance Feb. 12<sup>th</sup> £120 was raised for The Tsunami Appeal Fund. Many thanks to all who made this possible.

Our meetings are open to all who wish to attend.  
Any enquiries to Eileen Cooper Tel. 10366 728 289.

Forthcoming meetings in the Village Hall at 7.30 pm  
Friday 4<sup>th</sup> March Carol and Len Minnett  
Friday 18<sup>th</sup> March Billy McClean  
Friday 1<sup>st</sup> April Jill Rogers  
Friday 15<sup>th</sup> April Peter Fox

The following amusing item was submitted by Chris Darlow of the Village Life team.

### Doghouse Rules

There is no such thing as bad breath. All animal droppings are worth investigating, some more than others but all are worth rolling in.

All areas of walkways, i.e. doorframes, are natural sleeping spots.  
The inside of the car is mine.

Why shake yourself dry outside when it's still raining, when you can shake yourself dry inside where its not.

Fetid objects need special attention.

It is my duty to chase anything with fur, feathers or wheels and to refuse to return when called.

Any form of carpeting is to be used as a napkin, doormat or litter tray

Wind is an acceptable way of showing appreciation for a meal but don't blame me for yours.

The sofa or chair is a dog's spiritual home. It is used as a healing, resting and rejuvenating centre.

A wagging tail, a sideways look, a glint in my eye, means that you have another chance tomorrow to try and make me make your life a little bit fuller.

Thanks Chris I know the feeling. Ed

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# River Watch

By Ivor Hook

Having only recently moved to the village I somewhat unwisely attempted to be merely friendly towards your editor only to be quickly “apprehended” and told that it is virtually obligatory for newcomers to make regular contributions to the Newsletter. This Northwold tradition seems somewhat strange and most unfair but I have willingly conceded.

My only claim to fame is that of coarse fisherman and I am fortunate to be able to enjoy this pastime at least once a week. So regardless of weather I am often up before dawn blending into the scenery alongside a river. Because of my pike fishing I am already very familiar with the river Wissey up to and especially around the sugar beet factory so it is a real bonus for me to now live so close to the upper reaches of the same river. Hopefully it will be enjoyable for me to try to provide an ongoing picture of the river, similar to good old Mr Crabtree, by describing the different

seasons as we go through the year.

At present Spring is waiting but the fast flow of Winter is still clearly obvious with the water very high, racing and creating small eddies as it follows the meandering river course. The dead and yellow waterside reeds will soon be shooting green again, the trees and bushes likewise will shortly be budding with the likes of pussy willow and catkins to signal the awaited warmer weather.

Those who are fortunate may spot the colourful kingfisher skimming the surface at breakneck speed. The solitary heron is often overlooked as it can remain motionless for ages. The smell of a fox is always obvious at certain locations even although the culprit is seldom seen. The drab skies with precious little brightness show the bare trees almost in silhouette therefore resembling an Arthur Rackham picture. Any sun is deceptive as invariably the days remain cold but still always rewarding if only you dress sensibly.

Lots of the wildlife is more difficult to spot at this time of year but the faithful

swans are always there and seem impervious of the cold and frosty mornings. The young swans, no longer cygnets but still sporting their grey plumage, venture downstream. Fish are likewise hard to spot as the wind allows only a few sheltered vantage points. The fish anyway are less active because of the low temperature and will be holed up in the deepest parts of the river. Perhaps only the ever hungry pike is really desperate for food. During the middle of the day a surprise swirl may indicate that the pike has found a hidden shoal of unsuspecting roach. Will the same pike soon find my dead bait adjacent to the reeds?

There is so much to see just being alongside the river and at times even fishing can become almost secondary. The approach of dusk is normally my prompt to pack up so it can be a long day out but equally just ten minutes leaning over a bridge can also be very rewarding. The picture is changing every day and it’s all out there for free. All you have to do is go and look.

Ivor Hook

## St Andrews Church Northwold



### Annual General Meeting

The Annual general meeting of the Parochial Church Council will be held at 7.30 pm on Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> April in the Village Hall. This is an open meeting to which you are all invited

### Easter Fun At St. Andrew’s

Lots of fun at St. Andrew’s Church, Northwold on March 27th - See page two for full details.



### From Molly Waring

As some of you are probably aware, I did a charity skydive two years ago and managed to raise £500 for The Anthony Nolan Trust. I was overwhelmed with the amount of donations that I received from people in the village and successfully reached my fundraising target.

I am writing to ask for your help once again! I have recently set myself an extremely large fundraising challenge in which I have four months to raise £2350 for a charity called *Raleigh International*. *Raleigh* is a registered charity that aims to inspire people from all backgrounds and nationalities to reach their full potential by working together on challenging environmental and community projects around the world.

This summer I plan to go to Borneo in South East Asia. I will spend seven weeks in remote villages, rainforests and National Parks participating in two large projects. The first community-based project will be helping to build a school in the state of Sabah to try and increase access to education in the area. The second will be an environmental based project helping to develop rainforest regeneration strategies in the Danum Valley and improving the

**Church Diary.** At Northwold unless otherwise stated.

March 6th. (Mothering Sunday) 4pm Family service for Mother’s Day

March 13th 11am Matins

March 20th Palm Sunday. 11am benefice Matins

March 24th. Maundy Thursday. Pilgrimage to St Andrew’s Church for coffee and a short service. Do join us! Details to come.

March 25th. Good Friday. 9. 30am Procession Of Witness – Stoke Ferry

March 27th Easter Sunday. 11am Holy Communion with Canon Rowsell.

infrastructure in the National Parks. Before I go to Malaysia I must raise £2350, all of which contributes to *Raleigh International’s* activities both in the UK and overseas. I will pay for myself to fly out there and grants from the National Lottery and the European Social Fund cover the cost of my food and accommodation (hammock).

This is where I need your help! Obviously £2350 is a lot of money to raise and I have until June to raise it all, which is going to be quite a challenge! However, I am determined to reach my target and with your help I can. I would be truly grateful for any donations towards my funds, every little helps!

*Raleigh International* is a wonderful charity that has done a vast amount of work in many countries over the last twenty-one years, I really would love to contribute to the work they do and reach my fundraising target.

Many Thanks,  
Molly Waring,  
11 West End,  
Northwold

(for more information on Raleigh’s work go to [www.raleigh.org.uk](http://www.raleigh.org.uk) )

### This competition was submitted by “Sir Royston” of Leek Hall

See how many of the cryptic clues you can solve. All the answers are Birds either UK resident or summer or winter visitors. Answer’s in the next issue.

Question	Answer
1	Batman’ friend
2	Epiglottis bird
3	The cost of shaving
4	A chicken on the heath
5	Hang out the flags in winter
6	Please lower your head
7	Fast steam engine
8	Sticky paper not one colour
9	Arthur’s Dr Who
10	A China man’s mallet
11	The Berkley Square Nurse
12	Turbulent fuel
13	Hot head
14	Cost of crossing a meadow
15	Mr Greedy
16	Scottish musician in the desert
17	You may find one in the pear tree
18	This one doesn’t reach the parts another one does
19	A young twinkler
20	Gossiping statues
21	A peaceful tortoise in the sea
22	Message carrier
23	Worn by a judge at an old murder trial
24	The big one at the fairground
25	Female relative
26	Coarse
27	Female plane
28	Old prisoner
29	Revolving rocks
30	Early morning call
31	Robin Hood’s long johns
32	You need one “Large Size” for the turkey
33	Almost eaten for breakfast
34	Most of us have one
35	6080 ft equals one

**Independent Financial Advisers**

*Many readers may already know of me from my 7 years working locally as a financial adviser. Since becoming an INDEPENDENT financial adviser over a year ago, your support has kept me very busy. Thank You.*

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**W.I. Report**  
**From Brenda Ayres**



We were very pleased to welcome more than 20 members to our February meeting. Our membership has now risen to 29 which for a small village is very encouraging.

Among the items discussed were an update on the new curtains for the village hall. These have now been ordered and together with the new poles and fittings should be ready to collect later this month

Members who visited the theatre Royal to see the musical Jesus Christ Superstar all had a very enjoyable day.

We also discussed arranging to organise lunch visits to local restaurants or pubs, perhaps once a month. This seemed very popular and we will make further enquiries.

Members will be visiting Chilford Hall for the Tastes of Anglia event. Invitations were also received to visit

Weeting, Thetford and Great Cressingham W.I's. A trip to Wells with a guided walk around the harbour was also proposed.

Knitting patterns for the bonnets for premature babies were also made available.

Our speaker this evening was Mrs Llewellyn who talked about her journey to a Quiet Garden, telling us of events in her life which led to her arrival at the Clock House, Marham and the establishing of her Quiet Garden.

Our speaker next month is Mr Baker who will tell us all about the Decline of Wool and the Rise of Silk.

If you would like to join us we are always happy to welcome new members. Please contact our President, Pat Coles on 01366 728224 or any of our ladies who would be pleased to invite you as a guest to a meeting to find out just how friendly a group we are.

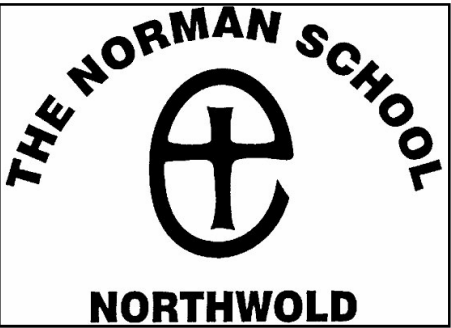
**Brenda**

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Following the success of the re-union in 2003 it has been decided to do it all over again on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> May at St Georges Hall, Methwold.

We will start the evening off at 6.30 pm with a sherry reception followed by a 3 coursed meal which will be served to your table. There will be entertainment and a licensed bar.  
Cost £ 15. 50p per person.

If you would like to attend please contact one of the following:  
Nigel Malster. On 01366 727085.  
Janice Fuller on 10366 728859.  
Christine Bloomfield. 1366 728498



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From The Headteacher

The half term break is upon us and already we are half way through a school year.

Today we said goodbye to Mrs. Gina Turner who has been the secretary in school for eight years. The children and staff all wish her well and thank her for her service to the school.

After the holiday Mrs. Margaret Stanbridge joins the staff as the new secretary and finance officer. We hope she soon feels at home with us.

Last Friday we held another of our charities mornings but instead of sharing the proceeds as we usually do the children were keen to support the Tsunami Appeal. Children and staff dressed up as children from other countries, either in the colour of a flag or in full costume. We had an amazing selection of places from all over the globe and many children enjoyed learning a little about the

country they were representing. I would like to thank the children, parents, staff and members of the community who generously donated items for us to sell and to also thank Darby's Nursery for their donation of plants. We raised £273.50 which is a magnificent sum of money.

This week we have been holding a Health and Fitness Week and on Wednesday we visited Brandon Leisure Centre for the whole day. Staff, children and accompanying parents all had a wonderful time and the feedback from everyone has been very positive. We danced, played five-a-side football, played parachute games, jumped on a bouncy castle did aerobics and much, much more. One of the children told me her favourite activity was the fibre-side football!

Finally our thanks to Mrs. Pat Cooper who presents the Athena Graham Swimming Awards. This year the winners are Cristina Fonken and Michael Watts with Cristina winning the Shield.

**Marion Dawe**

**Bowls 100 Club Draw for**  
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**Sylvia**

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School Garage Foulden: Require a motor vehicle mechanic. Heavy Goods Vehicle experience and driving license would be an advantage, but not essential. Please telephone Roger on 01366 328446 or Karen on 01366 328992

**Thanks**

Pam and Michael Parfitt would like to thank all the people for their support and those who sent cards and messages of sympathy following the sad loss of Bill, (Pam's Father) They were much appreciated. Thanks again.

**Pam and Michael**

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**Our Past according to Pog (a.k.a Mike Coley)**

In my first offering I took us back to the most Easterly point of the parish, the Watermill at Dilton. So now I thought it might be a good idea to look at the most Westerly part of the Parish, known as ‘Oxborough Ferry’.

Access to the ‘Ferry’ was via the Loke ( farm track ) which was known as Ferry Drove. This crosses the main road to Whittington and eventually leads to ‘Ferry Farm’ ( note! there was, and still is another ‘Ferry Farm’ on the Oxborough side of the River). The whole area, including the farm on our side was known as ‘Si Porters’ ( Simon Porter ) when I was a child. Across the river the Loke becomes a more substantial byway called ‘Ferry Road’, along it the Ferry-man’s cottage still exists. Although visibly extended now to accommodate the perceived requirements of a modern household, the old part of the cottage is clear to see. In either guise, ancient or modern, it represents a highly desirable home for someone that treasures their privacy. Ferry Road connects with the Oxborough/ Stoke road, to the West of Oxborough Hall.

Watermill Farm and Ferry Farm are about as far apart as you can get in the village, yet they are linked by a singular commonality, the ‘Little River’. Both are situated along the Big River of course but equally important is the fact that they each reside close to the Source, and to the Mouth of the Little River respectively. Another, rather more incidental thing that they shared in common was, that people swam in the Big River at both locations, especially after losing the right to swim at Dilton.

At one time, well within living memory in fact, Si Porter’s became popular as a kind of ‘Rural Lido’. This can be verified by the fact that I have had one first hand account, from a lady who used to regularly meet her school friends there in the Summer, after cycling all the way from Wormegay.( just 7 miles from Kings Lynn)

But the ferry itself could hardly be said to compare with the ‘Isle of White’ ferry, or indeed with any other vessel of that ilk, as it appears that it wasn’t designed primarily with passengers in mind.

In the 1800s, river freight was commonplace along the Wissey as road traffic was all but non-existent. There were a number of stages along the way that were either Drop Off, or Collection Points for the horse drawn vessels that plied their trade between Kings Lynn and Ely. Oxborough Ferry was the end of the line for water born cargoes as the river becomes too shallow upstream from there. So in the face of a lack of evidence to the contrary, it seems that the old Ferry was simply another mini wharf. ON THE OTHER HAND, if you know better, then I would be thrilled to hear about it..

The commodities that were being traded at that time were many-fold and included grain as well as other farm crops of course, but for domestic use there was coal, brought down from the North of England on ships which were called ‘Coasters’. The Barges would then collect it from seaports like Lynn and Wells, for inland distribution to Coal Merchants who would take it the rest of the way to their yards, like everything else by horse and cart.

The site of the Oxborough Ferry has been well used over the decades, and certain cargoes could be said to have been extra special. One such delivery is said to have been the pulpit for St Andrews church. Having been brought from elsewhere by barge, the tale goes that the pulpit was transported the rest of the way by road and into

the village. (The downstream part of the river beyond the ferry was reputed to be navigable right through to Bedford)

Many a lesson has been delivered from that old pulpit over the years, perhaps another lesson for today could be along the lines of extolling the virtues of leisurely but reliable River traffic. This, with its gently meandering waterways would surely be preferable to the stress and tension created by the more recent proliferation of that urban scourge the ‘White Van Man’. The barges of yesteryear neither polluted nor posed a constant threat to life and limb as modern transport does. The ‘Want it Now’ culture is here to stay however and so I see little hope of a river revival, However, that picture of serene tranquillity will linger in the minds of many for a long time to come I’m quite sure.

Well that’s about it for this time people, hope you enjoyed it, and don’t forget, if you have a question or something to share I would love to hear from you,

Till next time then ( Tony Robinson, who’s he ? )

Best Wishes, **Pog.**



The above picture was taken from Whittington side of the river in an exact line towards where the ferry would have gone across. Nothing remains of the landing stages or anything connected with the Ferry

**For more information on this subject and other local items of historical interest please see the letter from Roger Warner on back page. Ed.**

# Rita’s Ramblings

As I write this months ramblings, winter has finally decided to make an appearance and our familiar landscape is covered with sparkling snow first thing in the morning. Every evening the weather forecasters are on our television screens with tales of gloom and despondency and the next



morning we have had a few centimetres settled on the grass and roofs. Sometimes I wonder if they err on the side of caution and, after studying their charts, predict the worst that Mother Nature could throw at us. Despite the disruption that snow causes I do think it all looks remarkably beautiful when the sun is low in the sky and reflecting off the crystals of ice – the clarity of colour surely rivals most of the diamonds seen in jewellers’ shop windows! Both Amber and Bonnie have thoroughly enjoyed themselves in the garden

chasing each other around, trying to get rid of the snow by eating it and then rolling over on their backs and doing a ‘doggy dance’. This phrase was coined many years ago by a six year old who saw our first dog lying on her back, with all four paws in the air, moving as if trying to get to an itch right in the middle of her back. This is all very well – but not quite what I have in mind at quarter to seven in the morning!

This week at work we have been subjected to our Examining Board. They visit all air traffic control units about every 15 months or so and sit behind each controller in at least 2 control positions. They make sure that we are adhering to all the many rules and regulations and being as expeditious as possible. It is all quite similar to when you take your driving test when, during the road test, you never know what the other car drivers on the roads are going to do. Once we have passed the practical examination we are then tested on our understanding of the reasons why we

do things in certain ways. It was rather touch and go whether they would be able to complete the visit as the weather has a direct impact on whether aircraft can fly ; fortunately the mixture of snow showers and

bright sunshine allowed a near normal flying programme and we were all given a clean bill of health. It made the number of hours spent poring over the books time well spent.

At the beginning of February, I achieved a New Years resolution when I rejoined the WI. When we first moved to the village 20 years ago, Mary Armstrong came and knocked on my door and invited me to go along and give it a try. I became Secretary for a while and then remained a member for a number of years. Unfortunately work then got in the way and I could only get to about 5 meetings during the year: it also meant that I could rarely commit myself to activities as I could never be sure if I would be able to make them when the time came. When I went into the Village Hall I was very touched by the number of members who welcomed me back with open arms. Thank you to all of you. The monthly meetings are certainly an excellent way of making new friends and learning something interesting from all the different speakers: I am certainly looking forward to the planned programme.

That’s about all for now; so, until next month, take care.

Rita

**Thanks...**

I would like to thank everyone who sponsored me on the Brownie walk in aid of the Norfolk Air Ambulance. I raised £70 in sponsorship.

Thank you very much,

Jasmine Barnett

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