



AMBO

SPRING 2016

The Village Magazine for Radwinter,
Hempstead & The Sampfords



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The Editorial

I am sure you have all been appalled at the recent coverage on our screens of many refugee families fleeing to Europe from Syria. We have seen large numbers of people, including children, drowning when small inflatable boats have capsized and they have perished.

They must be desperate to take the risk of leaving their own country, however bad conditions are. They are paying large sums of money to ruthless profiteers in order to board boats and put their families in danger from the perils of the sea.

I was talking to a transport manager for one of the larger motor companies recently and was told that they find refugees from the camps in Calais in their lorries all the time, in spite of having to run through tear

gas on occasions. This cannot go on, our small island cannot cope with this influx and even Germany, which has opted to house thousands, is finding it difficult.

If we are not careful the very idea of Europe will be in danger. However compassionate we feel, it must be realised that it is integration which would make a difference to immigrants. We are lucky that these problems have not manifested themselves in our community.

On a happier note, I must thank the Sampfords Parish Council for their generous donation of £500 to *Ambo*; we are most grateful and thank them for their confidence in us.

Sue Collins, Editor

The cover picture was chosen to represent the likely conditions in early March and herald the return of warmer spring weather. Arguably we got more floods and warm weather than snow, but what can you do...

Please send us your photos of local scenes, people or events that you think would make a great *Ambo* cover.

Formats for Submissions to Ambo:

Advert: PDF (and source doc if edits required)

Article: any file type *except* PDF
(minimal formatting, no embedded pics)

Photo: any image format e.g. jpg
in highest resolution possible
(email via phone *may* degrade image)



Melting

Ambo Dates

<i>Edition</i>	<i>Submission Deadline</i>	<i>Publication Date</i>
Summer	1st May 2016	1 st June 2016
Autumn	1 st August 2016	1 st September 2016
Winter	1 st November 2016	1 st December 2016
Spring	1 st February 2017	1 st March 2017

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Pause for Thought



Are we there yet?... A familiar refrain heard by many parents as their children try to cope with a long journey. Perhaps unsure where they are heading and impatient for the journey to end so they can move on to the next thing.

In all our different ways we are all on life's journey, with many different circumstances and influences, involving the physical, the emotional and the spiritual. But it is the spiritual journey that concerns us this month as we travel through Lent towards the climax of Easter.

John Pritchard, the Bishop of Oxford, writes about the decline of spirituality and religion. "More and more of us describe ourselves as 'spiritual' and fewer and fewer as

'religious'. Twice as many people believe in a spiritual force within them as believe in a personal God beyond them. And two-thirds of 18-24 year olds have more belief in their horoscopes than in the Bible". But, somehow the search is unfulfilled and the refrain is persistent – "are we there yet?"

Maybe, just maybe, that is because popular forms of spirituality tend to place the individual at the centre and ask what 'God' can do for us. Spirituality as 'me' looking for ways in which to be a more complete or fulfilled person is a fallacy. The more we seek it for ourselves the more it will elude us.

We believe that in the weeks of Lent there is an opportunity to turn all this on its head. If we really do want self-fulfilment and wholeness – then we shouldn't try to find it for ourselves. Rather, we should reflect on one person, Jesus, who showed us the real way to live and

to love. His focus was entirely away from himself. His love for others was complete.

Christian Aid run a good programme during Lent called 'Count your blessings'. Each day there is a thought about our own life and the lives of other people across the world, affected by climate change or hunger. Each day we are encouraged to look at our own life, but also to look outwards towards others, and to make a small donation if we can. Perhaps you might Google it now?

"Are we there yet?" If we focus on others, rather than ourselves, we will be well on our way.

*Philip Tarris
Priest in Charge*



Plough Sunday in Thaxted

Name that Benefice!

We need a name for the new Benefice of Thaxted, The Sampfords, Radwinter and Hempstead

We'd like to invite you to take part in a competition to name the newly expanded Benefice.

Can you think of a suitable Benefice name and email it to the Ambo editor, Sue Collins susancollins@uwclub.net who will pass all your suggestions on to Philip

There will be a prize for the name chosen as the best!



District Council Jottings

When I was a child I had a wonderful book on Greek mythology. Sometimes I feel the progress of the Local Plan is like the Labours of Hercules.

The Local Plan

The results of the Call for Sites were published shortly before Christmas – these are the sites that have been put forward for development by their owners. The results are available to view on Uttlesford's website at <http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/callforsites>. There is also a very useful interactive map.

A number of sites have been put forward by their owners in Great Sampford and Radwinter. It is important to emphasise that just because the owner believes a site is suitable for development does not mean that Uttlesford will share this view. However, we are now in for a period of considerable uncertainty while each of the sites put forward is assessed by the planners.

There will be a further consultation in November - December 2016 on the Local Plan (this will include details of the sites that have been selected for development). The Local Plan will then be submitted in March 2017, with the public examination by the Inspector in August-September 2017. We are in for a long and fraught year, with lots of uncertainty. I will do my best to keep neighbours informed of progress.

Uttlesford's Finances

As the Member responsible for Finance I have been kept busy in recent weeks preparing Uttlesford's budget for the new financial year, starting on 1 April 2016. I have also been preparing something called the 'Medium Term Financial Strategy', which tries to map how our finances will look over the next 5 years. The Chancellor's Autumn Statement and subsequent announcements by the



Government have made the task particularly challenging this year. There has been a general change in the way district councils are financed – though for local residents the one constant remains Council Tax. In particular, the Government has announced a major reduction in our core source of finance from Central Government - the so-called 'New Homes Bonus'. Uttlesford has been identified as the Council in the whole of England that is likely to be the worst affected by this change.

The budget for new financial year (2016/17) looks to be fine, and the position in 2017/18 will be manageable. Put bluntly, thereafter, we face some real challenges and putting together a balanced budget is beginning to feel like one of those party games that just gets more difficult each year. We are going to have to be smarter about how we deliver our services and more imaginative about how we can generate more income from the assets we own. However, I am determined to do everything I can to protect local services and to ensure that Uttlesford remains the lowest cost district council in Essex.

Fly tipping and litter

Like you, I am thoroughly depressed by the amount of rubbish that litters the roads across the district. I drive a lot for work and, on balance, I think that Uttlesford

is not as bad as many other areas. Nevertheless, it is real problem. Uttlesford currently spends about £300,000 a year on picking up other people's litter (apparently, in the UK we spend £1 billion of taxpayers' money every year clearing up litter). There seem to have been a growing number of instances of fly-tipping in the area in recent weeks – all of which I am pleased to say were promptly cleared by Uttlesford.

I know a number of organisations are planning litter pick days this Spring – including the WI in Radwinter, who are doing a wonderful 'Clean for the Queen'. I have joined the Litter Pick day in Sampford for a number of years. I know this will sound an odd thing to say, but it is actually quite good fun (and you get a good feel of achievement afterwards). However, it is depressing to see rubbish starting to appear again on the same stretch of road you cleared a few weeks (and sometimes days) earlier. Good luck to all those who are going out this Spring to keep our villages and the roads around clean and tidy.

Simon Howell

Team Spirit XXVI

Team Spirit XXVI, the annual quiz to raise funds for Sampford's Village Hall, will be on Saturday 19th March, in the Hall at 8pm prompt. £10 per person, and there will be a hot supper, bar, and raffle.

Teams of up to 6 are invited to register with

Jane Lawrence
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Essex Boys and Girls to Nepal

We were selected to join a group of young people to travel to Nepal to trek and carry out voluntary work. Part of challenge was to raise £2,500 each to cover the cost of the trip. We flew with other members of the Essex Boys & Girls Club to Nepal and trekked to the village of Barpak in the foothills of the Himalayas. We taught English and engaged in activities with the children in the local school where we taught them our passion for football.

It was a huge cultural shock when we landed in Kathmandu to see the devastation caused by the earthquake and the living conditions of Nepalese people in general.

'Trekking for me wasn't as much of a challenge as I expected because I'm quite an outdoor person, but I felt for the other members of my group who were brought up in large towns or cities who haven't experienced the outdoor life I have in the countryside.' (Ollie)

For us it was a big shock to see all of these surroundings of hills and mountains, and to climb up steep terrain with little breaks in-between. The trip has helped us to learn team work skills amongst total strangers and to increase our social skills. We hope we have made some life-long friends amongst the team and some Nepalese people who we met along the way, especially the team of guides and porters.

Barpak is only 3km from the epicentre of the recent earthquake and most of the citizens had nothing left. Talking to these devastated people enlightened us and our fellow voyagers about how difficult it is to

live in such poor conditions. Most, if not all, of the houses/buildings were demolished including the school. People are living in shacks made of corrugated iron and tar pooling on top of the rubble of their collapsed houses. There is only electricity for 4 hours a day and it gets dark at 6pm, reducing the working hours. When we were in Barpak they had great trouble getting the generator



*Ollie Smith and Alfie Cole and the EB&GC Team with the Nepalese Team
Alfie is 5th from top right; Ollie is 7th from top right*

up and running which left them without electricity for the best part of a week. They wash their clothes and themselves in the streams which flow from the mountains, which we had to adopt when washing our clothes mid trek.

EB&GC Helps Build a School

The school in Barpak has been given some money which was raised (around £3,000 which is about 500,000 Rupees) which is a huge amount of money in Nepal. When Mickey Gordon, our leader, handed over and announced the amount of money to the Head Teacher of the school there was visible shock on everyone's faces which was very touching to witness. Essex Boys and Girls Clubs have helped build the school over many years but it was destroyed in the earthquake; this money will go a long way to help rebuild it and its facilities.

The children of the village enjoyed our visit very much and were keen to

talk to us, follow us, play with girls' hair (especially blond!) and keen to learn more English and football! The visit to the village lifted their spirits as well as ours.

Football Shirts

We both thoroughly enjoyed playing football with locals teaching them new skills and football terminology. Before we started, we also gave our teams some football shirts which they could use for the activity and keep afterwards. We also handed out clothes to the elder women in Barpak, who are the leaders of the women's society in Barpak, which they believe to be the most important social group.

After leaving Barpak we were treated to white water rafting down the main river in Nepal which was very exhilarating and breath-taking. Our journey on the rafts was cut by half a day due to the bad weather conditions down river.


Throughout our whole trip we were well taken care of by the members of the Nepalese team that guided us through the foothills of the Himalayas. We hope that we have lifted the spirits of some of the Nepalese children to help them continue with their everyday lives and distract them from this tragic event.

'I have found this whole experience to be indescribably life changing. The contrast between my teenage life and that of my peers in Nepal is staggering. I was impressed by their resilience, eagerness to learn and to engage with strangers.' (Ollie).

Continued on page 56



Graham Cook in his Canon's robes last October at Chelmsford Cathedral - see Ambo Winter 2015 page 67



Seedlings 2016

A short informal children's service with refreshments and exciting craft activities.

WEDNESDAYS AT 1.30PM

JANUARY 13	RADWINTER VILLAGE HALL
FEBRUARY 10	BAPTIST CHURCH, GREAT SAMPFORD
MARCH 9	ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH, GREAT SAMPFORD
APRIL 13	BAPTIST CHURCH, GREAT SAMPFORD
MAY 11	ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH, GREAT SAMPFORD
JUNE 8	ST. MARY'S CHURCH, RADWINTER
JULY 13	BAPTIST CHURCH, GREAT SAMPFORD
OCTOBER 12	ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH, GREAT SAMPFORD
NOVEMBER 9	RADWINTER VILLAGE HALL
DECEMBER 14	BAPTIST CHURCH, GREAT SAMPFORD

Just drop in

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Radwinter Boxing Day Walk



The calendar said 26th December, the thermometer said “early May” and the mud said “Brrrrpssgoossh” so a wide range of outdoor wear was modelled by a huge turnout for the Boxing Day walk, determined to prove that there’s no such thing as bad weather, merely inappropriate clothing.

Thank you to David Emberson for the photo, to Suzanne and Robert for the welcome refreshments at the finish and to all three for once again organising this event.

High Speed Broadband News

Hempstead fast broadband needs cash... fast

A small group of internet users in Hempstead has pledged £9,000 (as of late January) to kick-start the provision of high speed wireless broadband in the village. Unfortunately it’s not enough!

County Broadband, who operate wireless broadband networks primarily in Essex and Suffolk, have anticipated they could make a near-immediate start on installing the necessary equipment if the village can come up with an advance of £14,650.

The funding would take the form of a loan to be repaid according to the number of subscribers joining the service (estimated time to repay, 4-5 years). Without it they say they won’t be able to start for another year.

James Nicholson, who is co-ordinating the project with County Broadband, says: “If you are keen to see high speed broadband coming to Hempstead soon and feel able to contribute to the loan for the start-up costs, then please let me know as soon as possible, with an indication of the amount that you would be able to commit. If we end up with more than we need, we can of course

scale down each individual’s contribution.”

James can be reached on prentices-farm@tiscali.co.uk

Meanwhile, in Radwinter

As Hempstead pushes forward with a wireless enabled village-wide solution to bring fast Broadband to the village, Radwinter is considering the same route. County Broadband gave a short presentation to Radwinter Parish Council on 21st December, and it has just been announced that there will be a public presentation on the 7th March at 7.30 in the village hall.

Cllr Peter Fitch is also in touch with Superfast Essex, requesting and should be listed as our “Broadband Champion”.

According to a reliable source (the digger operator), the current trenching work on the South side of the B1054 near Bridgefoot (mid January)

isn’t associated with the new housing development but is “to put in new fibre optic cables for faster broadband.”

Breaking News in Sampfords

Just in: Sampfords Parish Council has also organised a public meeting on superfast Broadband on Thursday 14th April 2016 - see page 51.

fast village broadband is up to you!

Bringing superfast broadband to our village depends on YOUR cooperation.

We are planning a community led project that needs your support.

So join us to discuss how we can improve broadband in our village

7th March 2016

at The Village Hall
Radvinter
at 7.30pm



Organised by:
Radvinter Parish Council

In association with County Broadband



www.hempstead-essex.org.uk

Hempstead Parish Council

Hempstead

Paul Davies
01799 599246
paul@rbc-pr.com



Queen's 90th Birthday

The Parish Council has agreed to sponsor celebrations for the Queen's birthday this year. A small sub-committee will be formed to plan events for the weekend of 11/12th June, with the main event being held on Saturday 11th June. Any monies raised will be donated to the proposed play area on the Glebe.

Village Pond

The Parish Council has accepted a quotation to refurbish the pond at the bottom of Church Hill. The pond will be drained and re-puddled where necessary. All vegetation around the pond will be cleared and the area returned to grass to allow for easier maintenance.

We are hoping to complete the work by Spring. It will be financed from Parish Council funds and the New Homes Bonus from the UDC, granted by our District Councillor, Simon Howell.

Housing

We still await the full implications of the changes to the Local Plan. 580 houses are expected to be built next year and the effect would be felt throughout the District. We are not aware of any proposals for Hempstead although some villages with more facilities than us would be expected to take their share.

Schooling

In view of the above, our County Councillor, Simon Walsh has told us that he has been assured that there is sufficient secondary school capacity in the Saffron Walden/Newport area to meet current needs. He is also seeking clarification on timescales for secondary school expansion to cater for future increases in demand.

Christmas Illuminations

Hempstead had an illuminated Christmas tree in the village for the first time, on the Green by the bus stop. Villagers brought decorations

on a silver theme to adorn the tree for the ceremonial switch-on, which took place on December 6.

Footway

Unfortunately Highways have run out of money to complete the project this financial year. The initial budget has been exhausted because of cost over-runs due to additional works and the return visits they had to make after they were unable to finish the project last year.

They now have to make a fresh application to the Highways Panel to obtain the additional £75,000 needed to finish the job. The good news is that they expect to gain the support of the Panel and the funds required. However planning for the contract cannot begin until the funds are available.

A complication is that work to repair the bridge at Finchingfield will start in the summer. Hempstead is on the main diversion route and the two projects cannot overlap.

www.radwinter.org

Radwinter Parish Council

Radwinter

Stephanie Emberson
01799 599507
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Superfast Broadband

As is the case across the UK, broadband is a hot topic and a number of parishioners have approached the Council with concerns and questions over the prospects of super-fast broadband in our area. Taking up these concerns the Council sent two representatives to the Superfast Essex presentation to Parish Councils in December last year. Here it was reported that the government backed project was ahead of schedule and would reach at least

94% of households by the end of 2017 (see www.superfastessex.org/maps and Parish website). We, of course, are interested in the missing 6% since not all of Radwinter Parish falls within these plans. To this end we have invited County Broadband, who offer an alternative solution, to give a presentation in the Village Hall on Monday March 7th. We urge everyone who is interested to attend.

Gillon Way

Work on the new development off East View Close has now started

in earnest; the proposed name of this new road is Gillon Way, named after the former head teacher of the primary school, Jack Gillon. The Council has now received the Section 106 payment from the Landowners which goes to the Recreation Ground towards building the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) and other facilities. The next decision for the parish is how to use the strip of land donated to us between the new houses and the stream. The Council welcomes suggestions.

Neighbourhood Plan

On the subject of development within the parish, the Council has resolved to work on a Neighbourhood Plan. This legislation gives the Parish some say over details of the District Council's Local Plan when applied to our area. It has been 10 years since the last parish survey and 3 years since the 5 year plan based on that survey expired. A commit-

tee will be formed to work on a new survey and plan, help will also be provided by the District Council planning office free of charge. Anyone interested in taking a role in this should contact the Parish Clerk.

Annual Parish Meeting

Finally, the date of the Annual Parish Meeting is set for Monday May 9th in the village hall. This is the forum where you can have your say

about any and all parish issues that concern or interest you. It is also an excellent opportunity to meet the Councillors and fellow parishioners. In addition all locally run organisations and clubs have been invited to give a small display about their activities before the start of the meeting and refreshments will be served at the end of the evening. The Council looks forward to seeing you there.

www.sampfords.org.uk

Sampfords' Parish Council

Little Sampford is the scene of a mystery crime; it was reported at the Sampfords' Parish Council meeting on January 21st. Two post boxes, one at the bridge and the other near Tewes Farmhouse, were removed, apparently on New Year's Eve, together with the support posts. It is unknown by whom, or why. It is unlikely that it was for the contents, but perhaps for a collection, or even just as a prank. Whatever the reason, it is an inconvenience for local residents and an unforeseen expense for the authorities, who have indicated that the boxes will be replaced in the near future. No doubt the police would be glad of any information from possible witnesses.

A well-attended and very useful defibrillator training session was held recently by a tutor from the Heartbeat Trust, who described all that was needed to be known about the appliance, including how to operate it in case of emergency. The Gt. Sampford defibrillator is installed on the front wall of the school, and the other should be in place by March in the toilet area of Lt. Sampford Church. However, precious minutes can be lost while retrieving the defibrillator and it loses its efficiency if it isn't backed up by CPR, and so there is the possibility of a CPR workshop being arranged before long. Obvi-

ously the more people confident about administering such vital first aid measures the better.

There was a continued discussion of faster broadband within the parish. A neighbouring village is supplying an alternative method of funding the connection, and Sampford councillors have been invited to observe for themselves the improvement in the service. It is hoped that a spokesman from County Broadband will address the Annual Parish Meeting on 14th April, which is open to all.

There were no members of the public present to pose questions, and because they have many meetings to juggle the county and district councillors were unable to attend. They had sent reports, however. In Essex efforts are still being made to effect further savings, and it is feared that the council tax contribution will be raised. Social care costs are also under scrutiny. Uttlesford District Council has published a list and maps of sites offered for housing, two of them in Gt. Sampford. Further consultation is planned before a decision will be made next year. The parish council remains steadfast in its response, but uncertainty prevails. On the financial front, apparently Uttlesford will be very badly affected by government changes to the way district councils are funded. Looking

at it optimistically this year and next should be manageable, but challenges beckon.

Litter and especially fly-tipping (including two instances in Lt. Sampford) are of great concern to the district council, who respond promptly. Please note that this year's blitz on litter in the parish will be on Saturday 19th March. Meet at 10am at The Red Lion and at 12 noon for well-deserved refreshment.

Other matters discussed:

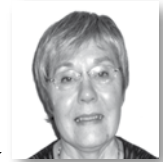
- a) Fallen redundant house-sale boards would be returned to the relevant company by a councillor.
- b) Some footpaths are due to be improved by the installation of kissing gates instead of stiles. It is hoped that a hedge encroaching on an already narrow path will be cut back.
- c) Potholes in Stambourne Road were repaired in November (though damage is now re-appearing), and those in Maynards Lane were completed in January. There are still parts of the lane which would benefit from attention.
- d) The Footpaths Booklet is still delayed, and alternative printing arrangements are being considered
- e) Work on the proposed car park at Gt. Sampford Church was due to start shortly. This area will be of

continued on page 61

The Sampfords

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Housing Market Report

David Emberson from the Saffron Walden office of Mullucks Wells takes our annual look at the property market.

After many years of exceptionally low interest rates it is not surprising that the property market has been buoyant, but the demand for property in Saffron Walden in the last year has been unprecedented. We regularly saw competitive bidding on properties with many achieving over asking price offers. For one property in Saxon Way, we arrange 16 viewings over the space of just one week at the end of 2015 with multiple offers submitted and a sale secured at significantly higher than the guide price.

In fact, in just one week this January, over 18,000 searches were performed on Rightmove for property in Saffron Walden in the £400,000 to £700,000 price bracket; the family house market. Proximity to good schools is the main driving force for this demand but it is not difficult to see why people would want to live in, or close to, this charming town.



The first time buyer market in the town is also thriving but these buyers face stiff competition from buy to let landlords attracted by the strong demand for rental property from young professionals. In a previous issue of The Ambo we mentioned the ongoing influx of Astra Zeneca staff relocating from the north and this is continuing to drive demand for both rental and sales properties.

The fierce competition for properties to both buy and rent in the town will continue to filter demand out into the villages throughout 2016 and, at the time of writing just two weeks into the new year, we have already placed five village properties under offer and have significant interest in many more.

Whilst it is always advisable to prepare your house for sale by updating the interior and tidying up the outside areas, we are finding that a 'tired' house is also no hindrance to selling. If buyers find themselves unable to secure the type of house they want in their preferred location, they are often prepared to compromise on style and do the work themselves.

In the last year our sales team here in Saffron Walden has grown to reflect the strength of the market with the recruitment of Christina Tapper, a licensed conveyancer and dedicated sales progressor, and Nick Bush, a highly experienced estate agent who has spent his career working in Hertfordshire, Essex and Cambridgeshire including 17 years working with the local Saffron Walden market. Both Christina and Nick have a strong focus on customer care and are invaluable members of our team.

If you would like a valuation and some honest advice, whatever your plans, please don't hesitate to call me or one of my colleagues on 01799 520520. We are here to help.

David Emberson

Clean for the Queen

Clean for The Queen is a campaign to clear up Britain in time for The Queen's (official) 90th birthday in June. The idea is to tidy up the country as a birthday present. Radwinter WI will be organising litter picks on the Clean for The Queen weekend:

- **Fri 4th March** - Litter picks morning and afternoon for those who can attend. Meeting point Recreation Ground, at 10.30pm and again at 2pm.
- **Sat 5th March** - Litter pick starting at 10.30am. Meeting point Recreation Ground. Informal soup and snack lunch for the litter picking team to be served by WI in village hall



Muriel finds an unusually large item of litter against her garden wall

from 12 noon (contributions for buffet welcome.) Anyone who wants to continue picking in the afternoon will be welcome.

- **Sun 6th March** (Mothers' Day) - no organised pick, although independent action encouraged. Litter pickers, bags and fluorescent



tabards will be available to use/borrow throughout the weekend if you do not have your own. Thank you to our District Councillor, Simon Howell, who has provided community funding for the purchase of the "pickers". The full litter bags will be collected from the Recreation Ground by UDC on 7th March.

Photos of unexpected, unusual or interesting items are welcome and will be displayed at the Saturday "Litterpickers' Lunch".

Republicans equally welcome, the aim being a cleaner countryside.

Judith Thompson
President, Radwinter WI
www.cleanforthequeen.co.uk

Sir Alan Haselhurst MP Surgery Dates

No appointment necessary, contact the Constituency Office
for further details – 01799 506349

4th March	The Guildhall, Thaxted	17:45 - 18:30
4th March	The Old Armoury, Saffron Walden	19:00 - 19:45
8th April	Foakes House, Dunmow	18:30 - 19:15
6th May	The Old Armoury, Saffron Walden	19:00 - 19:45
3rd June	Foakes House, Dunmow	18:30 - 19:15

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Reg No.9404

The 100 Parishes Society

On a calm, moonlit evening the restored 15th century Finchingfield Guildhall was the venue for members of the Hundred Parishes Society who had gathered for a social evening in this lovely timber-framed building. They appreciated an illustrated talk by Ken McDonald whose photographs of the agricultural landscapes, picturesque villages, fine churches and other listed buildings helped to explain the essential features that make this area so special.

The presentation was followed by the Society's Annual General Meeting, conducted by chairman Douglas Kent. He reported an expanding membership, completion of the comprehensive introductions to each parish on our website www.hundredparishes.org.uk and a regularly-



updated What's On page of information about local events. The Trustees' report and accounts were approved and all six trustees were re-elected.

After the formal part of the meeting and refreshments, members enjoyed a guided tour of Finchingfield Guildhall whose recent restoration programme had been funded by significant grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage as well as generous support from a number of other organisations.

Our guide, Des Fahy, explained

that the restoration had revealed fascinating details of the building's construction, as well as the range of skills of the original carpenters, tilers, plasterers and others who had toiled to create such a long-standing building from what is believed to have been a limited budget. Their modern counterparts have sympathetically rejuvenated it so that today it is fully accessible and all can use and appreciate this Grade I-listed building.

Finchingfield's library is on the ground floor as is a small museum where modern technology enhances the presentation of Finchingfield's history. The lofty and spacious upper floor provides a venue for a popular programme of varied events. For details of future events see www.finchingfieldguildhall.org.uk

Tricia Moxey, Trustee

The Letitia Chronicles - Aga Art

Letitia was in tears. As I went round to the back of her house I found her stamping her little foot (she wears size 4 shoes) in annoyance. She was holding a super-crackle glazed oval china dish in her hands. In the dish was a large quantity of pure black charcoal.

With a practised eye I glanced over her shoulder at the construction in the corner of her terrace: an old clothes horse was practically hidden under a tangle of winter jasmine. Poking out at irregular intervals were rusty kitchen utensils, broken coloured jugs and mugs, damaged plates and bent knives, forks and spoons. These curios forming the *objets d'art* of her Aga art gallery were a memory bank of meals prepared and eaten at her family's kitchen table.

Pointing to the elegant oval she was holding I asked sympathetically, "What was it, and what happened?" Through gritted teeth she told me: "I was saving fuel and effort. Half a pound of minced meat is too much



The oval dish, if not the Aga Art it once contained, lives on... in Suzanne's living sculpture installation

for mother and me, so I made two cottage pies. One in this oval dish and one in a square dish. I took the square one out of the oven first, so that it could cool and be put in the freezer for later. Just then Zio Gino rang. (You know, mother's youngest brother who sailed too close to the wind when working at Morgan Stanley's, and went to live in the mountains of Calabria.)

He wanted to know if we'd sold

that portrait of Great Grandfather Alfonso. It took me ten minutes to explain why Sworders had not found room for it in their recent sale. Then mother came downstairs for supper and I put the square pie on the table. We each had a generous helping, followed by a green salad liberally dressed with the flat-leaved parsley which is growing so well in the garden this year. It was a tasty meal."

"That was last Thursday. This morning, when I got back from the Tuesday market in Saffron Walden I went to put some of Humphrey's chipolatas in the Aga for lunch. That was when I found the oval dish."

I said nothing as she extracted an old kitchen knife from the knot of jasmine and scraped the charcoal into the compost bucket. The oval dish was then reluctantly slid into its last resting place at an jaunty angle to join the other once-loved, now mourned, *batterie de cuisine*.

Suzanne Walker

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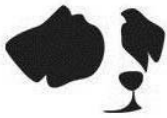
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A Village Childhood - Part 2

I was nearly five years old when I started school, along with five other new pupils from the village. We sat at small tables and learnt to read (although I could already read, having been taught at home) and chanted our 'tables'. We were taught to write, using blackboards and chalk. I remember being given old catalogues and a pair of scissors, to cut out the pictures.

I was fascinated by the teacher's striped summer dress and remember counting the different colours!

We were allowed out from lessons on the morning of The Hunt which met in the village centre, outside the *Red Lion*. It was very exciting being surrounded by the hounds milling round and accepting pats and strokes quite happily. The huntsmen in their habits of red jackets, white trousers and black hats sitting astride their beautiful horses, which seemed so big to us, waiting for the 'off'. Then the horn was blown and off they trotted along the road leaving us rather sad as we headed back to lessons.

When the school day was over, we were soon out playing the seasonal games in the roads: spinning tops, and the boys' trundling hoops came first in the year. The tops were bought from Mr Piper's hardware shop and whipped by some home-made whips, consisting of a straight, firm stick with a length of string attached. The string was wound round the top and pulled to start the spin, then used to whip the top to keep it going as long as possible.

Most of us had a 'curricle', as it was called, which consisted of a board on four wheels; dragged and steered by a rope handle, pulled by one child, with one or two others sitting on the board. Great fun! Especially when left free for a downhill run.

In the cold winter days, with ice and snow on the ground, we would be off to slide on the ponds as soon as they were frozen hard enough to bear us, and would take sledges to toboggan down the hills in the meadows

In the summer time, we spent hours

in the meadows playing, chasing, jumping rivers and climbing trees. Away for hours, till time for dinner.

We ran free; no health and safety rules, and sometimes accidents happened, like falling out of trees or falling in the streams, causing many cuts and bruises, all soon remedied by family or friends. Cricket and football were enjoyed too, with boys and girls mixing together in all activities.



Joan and Barbara and their parents c1936

At harvest time, we looked forward to cart or wagon rides. The carts were filled with sheaves of corn and taken to the stack being built in the field, then driven off to collect the next batch. That was our chance, and into the empty cart we would clamber and off on a bumpy ride to where the men were waiting to fill the cart again.

Before the Second World War, soldiers were on manoeuvres in the area and I remember one evening when they gathered outside the school for a refreshment break. I was given permission to join them and talk to them, and even shared a drink of tea from one soldier's enamel mug!

My sister and I were mostly together with four girlfriends after school and in the holidays we played with our dolls on their lawns.

Sometimes we played with our cousin Alan, at Parish Hall Cottage,

sharing his *Dinky* motor cars and other toys. They had a wind-up gramophone and we loved listening to records of Gracie Fields or Frank Crumit.

We visited Mrs Piper, who was bed ridden with arthritis. Mum took us with her and we usually sang 'Ten Green Bottles' for her. We admired the latest clay-pipe dolls which she dressed with pretty clothes, using her poor, misshapen fingers to stitch the fiddly dresses.

Our cottage was quite small and like most others the general work was carried out in the main living room. It had an open range fire for warmth and cooking and a kettle always heating on the top. A large deal table occupied the middle of the room and was used for cooking, ironing, sewing and as well as many other household jobs.

Here, we sat with Mum on her leather, button-back arm chair, listening to her reading us stories. Dad would always read us the 'Rupert Bear' strip from the paper every bed-time and then off up the stairs, with candles or a small oil lamp for light on the dark nights.

Laundry was done in the scullery in the lean-to. Water was boiled in a galvanised copper, which stood on a brick platform heated underneath by the primus stove.

On winter evenings we played games like Ludo, Bagatelle, darts and dominoes etc. At Christmas time we made paper chain decorations, drew and painted our own Christmas cards.

Then came a change – mother became ill and after several stays in hospital she sadly died in March 1940. The war had already brought change to the village and for us, nothing was ever the same again...

We were looked after by others and spending our evenings with Dad in the cottage, three years passed and what joy it was when Joan left school, and we lived as a family once again, with Joan becoming housewife and mother at the age of fourteen!

Barbara Mizen

Notes from the Registers

Funerals

The funeral of William (Bill) Mortimer, who died on 31 October, aged 85, took place on 8 December at St. Mary's, Radwinter

Marion Gillon, aged 99, died on 5 December 2015. Her funeral was held at St. Mary's, Radwinter on 16 December 2015

Betty Ethel Keen of Little Sampford died on 12 December 2015

Maureen Ramsay died on 3 January. Her funeral service and cremation were held at Three Counties Crematorium on 18 January.

Grant Walshe, aged 83, died on 29 December 2015. His funeral was held on 22 January 2016 at St. Michael the Archangel, Great Sampford.

Burial of Ashes

Derek Reed, aged 98, died on 12 November. The burial of his ashes took place at St. Mary's, Little Sampford on 9 December.

Radwinter Post Office

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	1:00pm – 4:00pm
Wednesday	Closed
Thursday	10:00am – 1:00pm
Friday	Closed



Mobile Library Times

Hempstead Opposite The Bluebell 09:30 – 10:00pm	Great Sampford Opposite The Red Lion 1:40 – 2:20pm	Radwinter Opposite Primary School 2:40 – 3:30pm
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The library now visits all our villages every other Friday on these dates in 2016:

* Dates in these months assumed to be correct if current timetable pattern continues past March 2016

March 4 th & 18 th	April * 1 st , 15 th & 29 th	May * 13 th & 27 th	June * 10 th & 24 th
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Power Cut?

In the event of a power cut contact UK Power Networks who own and maintain our electrical power network. It's worth keeping their contact details somewhere safe.



From Landline: 0800 31 63 105

From Mobile: 0333 32 32 105

Web: ukpowernetworks.co.uk/powercut

Text: POWER and your postcode to 80876

Leaf Letters

Standing in the back garden tonight it is already long since dark, and the patio and beds are illuminated by a single outside light. In the all too brief dry cold days I did as much of the winter pruning as I could, hard pruning the rose into a permanent frame work and further defining the characters of all the deciduous trees captured in their pots. Now, still damp from today's rain, I am able to see the shape of the beds beginning to take form.

Much of them are newly planted, not even a year yet, but I smile to see the *Garryra elliptica* has now reached the height of the fence and maybe next year we will see its first catkins. In my mind I am already rearranging pots, visualising next year's growth and considering the next layer of planting. Standing in a cool breeze in the dark a sudden image of it on a sunny May day springs to me and I can feel its warmth. I am delighted at the old Butler sink

Alice's grandparents bought her, and I consider where it will sit within the garden, and what plants should frame it. Now she can have her own personal space to plant and grow and discover the joy of it all.

In the shed a hare waits, slowly emerging from a block of ash on those rainy days when it is too wet to step onto the garden. When finished he will sit on the ash stump in the main centre bed to mark William Harrison's place in the house's

history, and I look forward to placing him so he can gaze towards the church and welcome all who visit. (William Harrison; rebus '*Hare in Sun*' Rector of Radwinter between 1558 and 1593.)

ship between them, and though all have their individual charms and personalities I feel less and less division between them. Certainly without them our own garden would be much impoverished and so I have a feeling of gratitude to all of my clients.

Despite the lack of time and often a feeling of urgency to get important jobs done within their correct time frame I have discovered that there is a gentleness to gardening. It cannot be forced or rushed, and the development of a garden is seen in years and decades. Recently I spoke to someone who had visited one of my client's gardens in the summer. She said 'it looked cared for', a simple comment that beautifully captured all I could ever hope for.

We have been here three years now, such a tiny fragment of a garden's life, and that one day a week I have in it is precious. In that time I have done a lot that I wanted to and it has given me (and continues to give me) great pleasure.

Naturally there is so much more I would like to do and there are no real shortcuts in gardening. Yet at every opportunity I am watching its progress and fine tuning its future, and even tonight, in the dark as the rain begins to fall again it is hard to tear myself away and come inside.

Leaf Vigurs



Alice with carved hare

No doubt like many gardeners I struggle to find time for our own garden, often spending just one day a week working in it while the majority of my time is dedicated to working in other people's. It is a privilege to do so, and the opportunity to share in their gardens is an invaluable one. By doing so I tap into a vast resource of years of experience, and I have come to realize that all of my gardens feed each other. There is a growing relation-

Radwinter WI Activities

At this time of year the annual WI subscription (£37.50) is due, and in common with many WIs, Radwinter WI now has a waiting list... If you were thinking of joining, or were even just curious about what we get up to, please be reassured – your name is already on our list. If you are still reading this, we are waiting for *you* to join us!



Bagging of clothes donated for the Calais refugee charity Side by Side

What our members are going to do in the next 3 months:

- Organise a Jumble Sale (for WI funds) on Sat 13th Feb, 2pm, Village Hall.
- Organise a Radwinter “Clean for the Queen” litter pick, on the weekend of 4 – 6 March
- Complete our photo scrapbook showing life in Radwinter in 2015
- Try as many new things as possible, aiming for 90 new things for 90 years of our WI
- One member will attend a Flower Walks weekend at Denman, www.denman.org.uk



Microwave meals, as demonstrated by our November speaker, Frances Harper



- Enjoy activities with other WIs, e.g. Pole Fitness (www.poletrain.co.uk) in Thaxted, Spring Lunch with guest Cllr Heather Asker, Mayor of Saffron Walden, in Little Walden
- Make green hearts to wear/display on Valentines Day to highlight climate change



The Committee Dinner (Christina models Muriel's fireplace, Egyptian-style)

- Start collecting all things Spanish for our Sangria and Tapas outing in July
- Attend Essex WI's Annual Meeting (Guest speaker: Ruth Goodman, of “Victorian Farm”)
- Participate in our annual grow-



Our WI with Joanna Eden and the Mayor of Saffron Walden, Cllr Heather Asker



Joanna Eden on stage at Jazz at the Movies, our Christmas outing

ing competition (Pumpkins? Geraniums? To be decided...)

Next meetings

include the following talks and / or demonstrations:

24 Feb – The work of the Citizen's Advice Bureau – Kate Robson

30 March – It's spring! Give your kitchen a treat! – Zoe Kaka

27 April – “A debt of honour – the Gurkha Welfare Trust” – Major Michael Thorp

New Year, New You?

Why not join the largest voluntary women's organisation in the UK?

The WI plays a unique role in providing women with educational opportunities and the chance to build new skills, to take part in a wide variety of activities and to campaign on issues that matter to them and their communities.

Judith Thompson, President
599563, kentho@btinternet.com
www.twitter.com/radwinterwi
www.thewi.org.uk

Danaher Animal Home



Boris



Samson



Lionel



Twinkle



Max

If you love animals and have a few hours to spend helping them why not contact The RSPCA Danaher Animal Home. They need volunteers to work with dogs, cats or the small animals. Full training is provided.

Danaher, whilst affiliated to the RSPCA, is an independent charity that has to raise all its own funds. Whilst they employ staff, there are never enough to give the dogs the exercise or the cats and small animals the attention they need.

Volunteers there play a key role in reducing the animals' stress and making them rehomingable.

The Home takes in animals that are unwanted or where personal circumstances mean they can no longer be looked after. These normally come via local RSPCA branches. In addition it takes in animals, from RSPCA Inspectors, that have been rescued and are subject to a cruelty case and that, due to a pending court hearing, cannot be rehomed for several months or longer.

For further details either look on their web site: www.rspcaessex.org.uk, ring 0300 111 4321 or just visit them at Thorley Farm, Wethersfield, CM7 4EQ (signposted on the Sible Heddingham to Wethersfield Road).

The animals pictured are a small selection of animals in Danaher, looking for their new 'forever homes'.

Marilyn Edwards



Holly



Dolly



Gerbils



Fy and Fo



Lemon



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Radwinter C of E Primary School

Although by the time you read this, we'll already be into the third month of the new year but at the time of writing, 2016 has just dawned. A new year prompts us to new beginnings and making resolutions for the time ahead. I for one am embracing 2016 with enthusiasm, determination and a huge amount of optimism (although some may comment that is my usual self?!).

Prior to the Christmas break though, there was a strong element of sadness not only in the world generally but also in people close to us, which unfortunately I know is all part of life's rich tapestry. If one positive can come out of sadness and distress is the importance of being together and bringing close those we cherish and love and perhaps even more importantly....telling them how much they mean to us!

Fairness, Kindness, Respect, Service, Forgiveness

We have five values at Radwinter Primary which we endeavour to model everyday: Fairness, Kindness, Respect, Service, Forgiveness. Throughout this edition of *Ambo*, I will try to exhibit how we portray these values. But just for a moment, I'm going to take you into my

'Radwinter Hockley Tardis' to where I left off in the last edition of Ambo to our...

Spooks and Sparks Disco



Not only do we love to have a good time at Radwinter, we love a good time when we can raise money to invest in our pupils' learning journeys. It has become a tradition for our wonderful PTA to host an annual 'Spooks and Sparks' disco and this year's was yet another wonderful spooky success just before autumn half term. With over 100 black cats, bats, ghosts and monsters prowling, flying, haunting and stomping around the hall, a 'spookalicious' time was had by all. A fantastic £541.35 was raised by our amazing PTA which goes towards teaching resources for the school and the occasional treat for the children.

- "We enjoyed the dancing and dressing up" - a Year 1 child
- "Exciting, fun-filled, delicious food, especially the cakes"

James and Jonathan, Year 4

- "Spooks and Sparks was very exciting and there were lots of games and prizes to be won. Everyone's dancing was great and so were the costumes" – Ella, Year 6

Class assemblies

You may have gathered that we do like a performance to showcase different talents at Radwinter Primary and every term, each class will present to their peers, parents, carers (and everyone else really!) what they have been learning about in class. This is a really special assembly where the children practise and rehearse extremely hard to showcase and reinforce their knowledge.

- "I liked reading my postcard from space" - Isla, Year 1
- "It was special to see my mummy there" – lots of Year 1 children!
- "They are fun and it's nice that our mums and dads and other family can come to watch. The tea and cake afterwards is thoughtful of the school" – Maddie, Year 4
- "I really enjoy watching the class assemblies because it is interesting seeing what each class has been doing over the term" – Annabel, Year 6



The Hedgehog Class Tree



The Kingfisher Class Tree



The Otter Class Tree



The Swallow Class Tree



Singing the School Creed at Mrs Henderson's Party

Ancient Egypt

This autumn, Swallow and Kingfisher classes both presented Ancient Egypt as a follow-up to their visit to the Saffron Walden Museum earlier on in the autumn term; Otters took us to "What's under the bed" to learn about different layers of the Earth; Bee class orbited us in space with "Whatever next?" to learn about space and Hedgehog class taught us all about journeys!



Scarlett Galdo from Otter class recently competed in the British Irish Dancing Championships and we were thrilled when she treated us to a fabulous performance of Irish dancing. We're so proud of Scarlett and she can certainly move!! (Value: Service)

Music

Music has become one of our passions at Radwinter with the added

bonus of having Karen Semken (teaching guitar), Alison Baillie (teaching flute and piano) and Martin Wilson (teaching orchestra – Band on the Run) tutoring children. We were also thrilled when Jason Meyrick who runs the Saffron Walden Music School came to Radwinter with a musical presentation for our collective worship. We are very excited he is also able to offer us clarinet and saxophone tuition!

- Music – "Band on the Run is fun because you get to learn new instruments and spend time with Mr Wilson" – Emma Year 4
- Year 6 opera workshops – "I'm really enjoying doing all of the workshops, they are really fun and we're really excited about the performance" – Lilia and Katie – Year 6

The school choir also sang to the Radwinter Friendship Group in the Village Hall which is always a pleasure.

Nicola Benedetti

I'm not one to 'name drop' but one of the highlights of 2015 was the exciting opportunity for Hazel, Sofia and Tabitha from Swallow class to attend a violin workshop with renowned classical violinist Nicola Benedetti. What a wonderful experience.

Watch out the Albert Hall, Radwinter Primary is coming!

Remembrance Day

(Values: "Respect"; "Service")

One of our school values at Radwinter is 'Respect' and what more poignant a day to share that value than Remembrance Day to remember those fallen serving their country. The whole school "came together" to congregate at the War Memorial at St Mary's Church, Radwinter for a 2-minute silence to remember, show respect and give thanks. This tribute was particularly memorable as we also welcomed



three French exchange students from SWCHS into school who gave a stunning presentation on the Battle of Verdun.

- "I thought it was good that we were quiet to remember the people that died" – Toby Year 1
- "It was emotional standing outside the church. I felt proud of all the people serving in the wars" – Harriette Year 4



Cooking Chunky Soup

- “I liked it when everyone sang together” – Annabel Year 6

Prevention is better than cure

We all know about keeping our children safe from the obvious dangers or threats life may bring but certainly the annual flu vaccination initiative now offered by the NHS is an extremely important date in our calendar.

For those who don't know, the NHS offers school pupils (Y1-Y6) a free vaccination by way of a nasal spray against flu every winter. Families are invited to complete and sign a consent form if they would like their children to participate. There is the old saying 'prevention is better than cure' and I would certainly concur with that! Thank you and well done to everyone who took part. As they say in Italy..."salute!"

Christmas Starts Early

Of course starting school is a massive transition in a child's life and approaching the end of the autumn term is extremely tiring but magnificently exciting for them with lots to see, do and take part in. Our Hedgehog Class attended the Seedlings Service at Radwinter Village Hall and made wonderful Christmas Angels.

They also enjoyed the Epiphany

party (in early January) and learnt about the three wise men visiting Jesus.

- Christmas starts early – “I liked making lots of Christmassy crafty things” – Rosie, Year 1
- “It's great” – Bonnie Year 4 – “Amazing” – Luke, Year 5
- “Fun spread through the school as the preparations for Christmas started. Everyone had lots of amusement making beautiful decorations. Furthermore, the bazaar was a great hit with lots of stalls, treats and fun games to play” – Izzy and Orla, Year 6.

Christmas Bazaar

One of the highlights of the festive period is our Christmas Bazaar although this takes a lot of planning as you can imagine. In true Alan Sugar *Apprentice* style, we tested the entrepreneurial skills and ideas of our pupils and staff with a 'Wear Something Christmassy Bring a Jar Non-Uniform Day' which brought Santas of varying sizes, elves, snowmen et al with wonderfully inventive jars to sell at the Christmas Bazaar.

If there is a lack of oranges and sweets in the shops at the end of November, it's probably due to us making our Christingles in readiness for the Christingle Service at St Mary's Church, Radwinter. The

lovely ladies from the Radwinter Friendship Group came into school to help the younger children decorate their Christingles (I'm sure a few of the sweets didn't end up on the oranges...ladies? children?). Again, the Christingle Service is a time when we all come together, to be together, to give thanks and it was wonderful to see so many families and friends “coming together” in the congregation. A wonderful £81.26 was collected during the Christingle retiring collection for The Children's Society (Value: “Kindness”)

The 'piece de la resistance' of the season, the Christmas Bazaar, followed with the merry excitement and joy that only 128 children can bring! Tombolers were tomboling, rafflers were raffling and I'm pleased to say that no-one was “fired” (Alan Sugar reference!). I cannot thank our wonderful PTA and staff enough for “coming together”, getting involved, working as a team, having fun and raising in excess of £1,800 for Radwinter Primary's children. THANK YOU!

Christmas Tree Festival

I am sure everyone went along to St Mary's Church, Radwinter for the wonderful Christmas Tree Festival which again, is another highlight of the Christmas season. We're so fortunate to have such a beautiful church in our even more beautiful village.

I'm never quite sure who looks forward to our visit to the Santa Express at Audley end with Hedgehog class more: the children or accompanying adults but I always seem to have a long list of willing volunteers which goes to prove that age is just a number! Seventeen little hedgehogs with a plethora of festively clad 'grown-ups' went to see the 'big man' on the Santa Express at Audley End. Lots of little 'hedgehoggy' faces came back to school smiling with tales of seeing Santa, dancing elves (!) and carrying a much sought-after gift too!

Cinderella

Before anyone could catch their breath, our next “coming together” adventure was to the Pantomime at the Cambridge Arts Theatre to see *Cinderella*....”oh no you didn’t.... oh yes we did!”. Although this sounds like a fun day out (which of course it is!), *Cinderella* is also entwined in our primary writing project where the children will all learn the art of storytelling to enhance their writing. Despite some ‘doubting Thomases’ amongst the boys as to whether they would enjoy *Cinderella*, everyone absolutely did and we were even congratulated by the Cambridge Arts Theatre as to how well behaved the children were. (Strange, but they didn’t mention the adults?! Work in progress maybe?)

Nativity

As a Christian school, the Nativity means so much to us. Again everyone takes part and has an important role to play, from Mary and Joseph to the meeters and greeters... it wouldn’t happen without you. If

Tesco were short on oranges prior to our Christingle, they were duly short on tissues too as the Christmas Nativity never leaves a dry eye in the house. Thank you to everyone for working so hard, taking part and “coming together” to see the children.

Home-Cooked School Lunches

All this excitement though really plays on the appetite and healthy body, healthy mind comes to the fore when I think of our wonderful school lunches at Radwinter. I know I’ve said this before and you must “forgive” (value!)

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me but I'll continue to declare how proud I am of our home-cooked-from-scratch nutritious school lunches.

Julie and Nicky once again excelled themselves creating magic in the kitchen with this year's Christmas lunch of traditional roast turkey with all the trimmings or a delicious vegetarian alternative. Mrs Henderson added festive decorations to the school hall and lunch tables to really make it a wonderful experience. Staff, governors and children all "came together" and ate together and even Mr Catton, my predecessor of 27 years, joined us in festive attire. Yet another 'coming together' experience.

The final day of the autumn term arrived on Friday 18th December which coincidentally was national 'Text Santa' day – a charity which raises money for MacMillan Cancer Support, Make-a-Wish UK and Save the Children. We decided to end our term and start the Christmas holidays with a 'Wear your Christmas Jumper for Text Santa' and asked children and staff to "come together" and donate £1 in school for Text Santa. Thank you to everyone for getting involved and for being so giving raising £100! (Value: "Kindness"; "Respect"; "Service")

St Clare's Hospice

We have been raising money for St Clare's Hospice over the last year or so too by selling their Easter goodies and Christmas novelties. We



Past and Present Office Staff



Mrs Henderson with past pupils Yousef Saja, Jake Schoolheifer, and Bertie Scott

also decided that instead of sending Christmas cards to the children or to each other this year, the staff would "come together" and donate £5 each to St Clare's Hospice helping them to care for local patients and families in need this Christmas.

I cannot tell you how much was raised as it all went into the donation box in the school reception but I can tell you it was extremely heavy! However much or little has been collected, I know our friends at St Clare's will be extremely grateful (Value: "Fairness", "Kindness", "Respect", "Service").

Sports Desk

- "Matt teaches us fun ball games" – Dominik, Year 1
- "Lots of opportunities to compete against other schools and great fun" – Max, Year 5
- "I think that Radwinter gives you a great choice of sports clubs, competitions, tournaments and more. Some of the sports we like to play are: football; tag rugby; athletics; gymnastics and netball" – Imy, Year 6

In any newsletter there has to be a sports page and another passion of ours, in particular Mrs Powell, is sport....of any kind!

Mrs Gittins, Learning Support Assistant, has been hosting a running

club one lunchtime a week and has really got the children excited about competing in cross country events which were held at Friends School during the autumn term. So much so that three of our teams qualified for the District Event at the end of November.

Of particular note was Year 5's Max Johnson who came 2nd overall. Max loves his sport and you will always see him after tag rugby, football or running club, generally caked in mud (it may be good for the skin but not perhaps the bath towels.) Well run Max! Hundreds of children in teams from all over Uttlesford took part with 3 of our teams coming in the top 10! We were delighted with both their commitment and achievements in "coming together" and embracing a new challenge - thank you Mrs Gittins for encouraging the children in a sport they clearly enjoy.



Singing to Radwinter Friendship Group

Mrs Henderson's 25th anniversary

My "right-hand girl", Mrs Henderson (formerly Mrs Foster) very subtly dropped into recent conversations

that as of the start of the spring term, she would be celebrating her 25 years with Radwinter Primary! Quite an achievement by anyone's standards!

Everyone who knows Mrs Henderson will recognise that she likes to know (and generally does know) everything about everything! We started her celebrations with a staff bring-and-share lunch at which she was presented with a "hand-made carriage clock" and a "gold watch" – (due to cutbacks, they were all cardboard and coloured in or covered in tin foil!) As the week went on, her curiosity was set to bursting point when we decided to host an afternoon tea party with her as our guest of honour and invite lots of parents, friends, colleagues (old and new). Mrs Cardy and Mrs Hibbs had a lovely time routinely disappearing to rummage amongst old photographs to find photos of Mrs Henderson.

Unfortunately, she's usually our 'David Bailey' at most events so resources were limited but with a little bit more siphoning and rifling, enough compromising evidence was sourced. Lots of people came to celebrate with Mrs Henderson and another thoroughly enjoyable "coming together" afternoon was had.

The children sang the school creed to her beautifully and then we carried on with the lovely tea and cakes. A huge thank you to everyone for coming and also bringing goodies! I'm pleased to say though that Mrs Henderson isn't retiring as I won't let her! I think she "forgave" us all for our furtive goings on in organising her celebrations!

(Value: "Fairness", "Kindness", "Respect", "Service", "Forgiveness")

Mrs Henderson speaks...

And now a few words from the lady herself:

Well, where did that go? I remember sitting in a very cold Rectory on a December morning in 1990 waiting to hear whether I was going to be offered a job as a Welfare Assistant.

The rest, as they say, is history. Apparently (I was to learn later) I was offered the job... because I smiled!

I started in reception class with another new starter, teacher Gwen Harding. Pupils on roll were around 70. The rest of the school staff at that time consisted of Melvyn Catton, the headteacher, who was a teaching head and shared a class with Christine Hope. Daphne Reader taught class 2, she retired in 1992 having taught at the school for 28 years. Sue Thake then joined the school. The office was manned by Doreen Adams, lunches cooked by Betty Rust, mid day assistants were Kathy Baynes and Joyce Rae and the school cleaned by Florrie Bacon. That was just about the extent of the school staff!

I have fond memories of a gentle Daphne Reader calling children to come and sit around her chair, making jam and Christmas cakes with her class.

Computers arrived and I started working in the office for 8 hours a week as well as working in the classes. Melvyn Catton and I had many days at Chelmsford learning the software. Oh, we did love those lunches and the cookies!

I then decided to study for a Nursery Nurse qualification. Supported by the school two years later we were out celebrating. I worked in reception class with Janet Tindall and then with Kate Hockley -her first position. Wonderful memories were made, the pace fast! I have now been "put out to pasture" working in the office full time.

Some of my highlights:

- Residential trips taking in the glorious landscape of the Yorkshire Dales. Children realising they can have a great time without television and computers.
- Watching children grow in confidence at Kingswood, West Runton residential.
- Teaching children how to plant seeds and see them marvel at

the results.

- Cooking club – how many for the session ? 28!
- Helping to set up Forest School and achieving a Level 3 Forest School Leader.
- That magical time in the Forest when it snowed with Rachel Leeder and Frank Bannister.
- Finding costumes for over 100 children at each production – thank goodness for the internet.
- Helping to set up a successful Dragonflies/breakfast club.
- Being involved in all the building projects which included my dream of a purpose built kitchen.

The school staff is much larger and we now have the heady heights of 128 pupils on roll. The school still retains its ethos under the direction of headteacher, Kate Hockley and I look forward to a few more years at Radwinter. Thank you to everyone for my celebrations and gifts. (I knew you were up to something, Jacqui & Pippa!)

As January comes to an end and the days start to become longer and brighter, I know that the "enthusiasm, determination and a huge amount of optimism" I mentioned before will propel and hold us all in good stead for a wonderful 2016!

Things to come:

- 9th Feb - Shrove Tuesday (Julie's pancakes for pudding!!!)
- 9th Feb - Safer Internet Day (parents to be invited)
- w/c 22nd Feb - Y5 Bikeability week
- Various dates - Parents' Celebration Collective Worship for each class
- 2nd Mar - Mothers' Day lunch
- 3rd Mar - World Book Day
- 10th & 12th Mar – Y6 The Glass Knight Opera performances at The Saffron Hall
- 24th Mar – 9.15am Easter Service, St Mary's Church Radwinter

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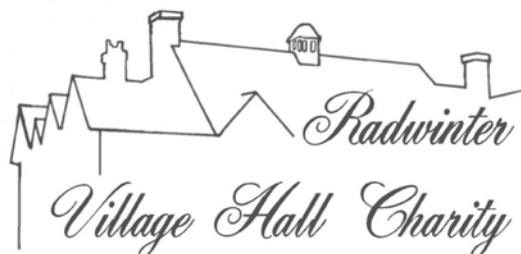
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Hempstead & District Gardeners' Club

During the autumn of 2015 we have been seeking a new Chairman for the Club and to date no-one has made any approach or shown any interest. It is therefore likely that at the 2016 AGM it will be agreed that we dissolve the Club.


I have been Chairman since 2002 and we have held many great events over those years. It is disappointing that no successor as Chairman has come forward, but life-styles change




and perhaps the activities of Clubs like this are no longer so compatible with modern family life. If it would be helpful for you to know more about the activities of the Club and what is involved in its running, please contact Diana Frost on 599771 or Tim Ham on 599084.

I will let you know in the summer edition of *Ambo* what decision was taken at the AGM.


Diana Frost, Chairman



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Great Sampford Primary School

After a well-earned Christmas break we were delighted to welcome back 110 children to help us see in 2016. This, in itself was cause for celebration since it is the largest number of children we have had at Great Sampford since I became the Head Teacher in the autumn of 1999. It was brilliant to catch up with all of the children and listen to their excited stories about what they got up to over the Christmas and New Year period. I have to say that I always find this the hardest Ambo edition to write for since much of what has happened in school since the our last submission has had a distinct Christmas focus which now seems somewhat out of place.

The Ordinary Ox

The children in Class 1 and Early Years put on an amazing Christmas production entitled The Ordinary Ox. This told the story of two children who are woken up on Christmas Eve by their toys. They listen and watch as each one explains what Christmas means to them. There are the clowns who love to make children laugh, the ballerinas who love to dance, not to mention the cowboys, robots, soldiers and dolls, who all love Christmas for different reasons. But the only one who knows the real reason for Christmas is an ordinary looking ox.



The Christingle Service



Making Our Christingles

As ever, it was really wonderful to welcome so many parents, relatives and friends to take part in this very special celebration. The Christingle Service not only heralds the start of the Christmas season but it also presents the children with an opportunity to reflect on the meaning of Christmas. Having learned all about the symbolism of each element they

shared this knowledge with Reverend Brown who led the service at St Michael's for the first time. Reverend Brown was particularly impressed with the children and he conveyed to me how "...they handled themselves so well: self-disciplined and naturally so - a lovely combination, attentive, eager and impressively thoughtful. They are a real tribute to you and the staff and, of course, to themselves." I thought this was a lovely compliment to them all. Special thanks go Mrs Howell (Governor), Mrs Kidd (former parent) and Mrs Mikkides (member of staff) who helped the children make their Christingle and to Layla Pannett, Emily Kelvin, Mia Collins, Ebony Girling-Cook and Thomas Walker who read so eloquently.

Early Years visit Santa

The children in Early Years enjoyed a magical morning of adventure when they boarded the Audley End Express to visit Santa and his helpers. They were whisked away far into the woods to visit Santa who was surrounded by all sorts of woodland animals as well as his trusty helpers.

Children in Need

The children all entered into the spirit of Children in Need by dressing up in a huge variety of costumes. The School Council decided that it would be a great idea to support



Early Years prepare to meet Father Christmas at Audley End Miniature Railway



Children in Need Cake Stall

Children in Need as one of our 6 non-uniform day charities for this year. The suggested theme was superheroes, or what the children wanted to be when they grew up. We had an amazing turn out with all manner of costumes and ideas on the theme with almost everybody entering into the spirit of the day. Mrs Gordon and her children Edward and Violet also baked special Children in Needs cakes and cookies which were on sale at break time. All in all the children raised a grand total of £262.56 which is a brilliant achievement for such a small school so a huge well done to everybody. It was fantastic to see that the Children In Need appeal raised a new record amount this year (£37,100,687) and to know that we did our part to help.

Operation Christmas Child

Following the non-uniform day linked to this appeal the children raised £260. This enabled the school collectively to put together 19 boxes to be sent to children around the globe. The School Council carefully selected a variety of items both purchased and donated by the children and their families to pack into the parcels ready for distribution. In all, 203 boxes were donated in conjunction with the local church. Items packed included: small toys,

cuddly toys, puzzles, pencils, scarfs, socks, hats, essential toiletries and of course Christmas treats. The School Council would like to thank Mrs Mikkides for suggesting this worthwhile charity.

Winter Sock People

As part of their expressive arts and design curriculum the children in



Winter Sock People

Early Years had an amazing amount of fun with Mrs Booth and Mrs Hale designing and building their very own 'snowmen' out of old socks. Using their imaginations, a few odd buttons, some googly eyes

and taking inspiration from the sock they had brought in from home they created a wonderfully fun and colourful winter and snowman themed display.

Shri Swaminarayan Mandir Temple

The children in Class 3 enjoyed a first for Great Sampford's pupils when they trekked up to London for the day to visit the Shri Swaminarayan Mandir Temple. This is a Hindu Temple in Neasden built in a traditional style and also using traditional materials. The visit itself provided the children with a unique opportunity to experience first hand the world's oldest living faith. As part of the day they not only immersed themselves in Hindu culture and religion but also witnessed the Arti Ceremony as well as being able to marvel at the craftsmanship that went into the actual building itself.

Phonics Workshops

Mrs Booth (our Early Years Teacher) has organized two phon-

ics workshops for the parents of our Early Years' children. Both workshops have proved to be very useful for the parents concerned and have enabled them to gain a greater understanding of not only how we



Class 3 visits the Shri Swaminarayan Mandir Temple

teach phonics at Great Sampford but also how they are able to support their children at home.

Cross-Country Club

Miss Smith ran a very well attended Cross-Country Club last term and the fastest children in Years 3 – 6 were selected to take part in the district cross-country event held at the Friends' School. They did fantastically well on a cold and windy day and Louis in Year 3 was fast enough to be selected for the next phase of the competition. At this event he was out in front and looking very strong when he unfortunately took a bit of a tumble; by the time he had got up and brushed himself down it sadly left him just a little too much to do to get back to the front of the field. However, it is all good practise for next year.

Dodgeball

Having trained hard during their class P.E. lessons and also at the after school Dodgeball Club all of the

children in years 5 and 6 took part in the local Dodgeball Tournament. Every child put in a tremendous amount of individual effort and, as a team, they performed incredibly well. However, whilst they were not actual winners, they all had a fantastic time and thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

PTA

The PTA are determined to build on their successes of last year and have got off to a flying start. To date they have already organised a film night and two discos for the children with another one in the pipeline. They also held a well attended Quiz



The Cross-Country Team looking very clean... and deservedly pleased with themselves



Fauvism in Class 2

Night that raised in excess of £800. Thanks need to be noted for Damon Knight (an ex-parent and Governor) for acting as Quiz Master.

Mayan Masks

The children in Year 5 and 6 had a great time designing and making their own Mayan masks as part of their history and art and design curriculum. They combined their knowledge of ancient Mayan culture and their contemporary knowledge of the lively Mexican holiday known as Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) to produce a stunning array of celebratory masks. Many of the masks shared common themes such as: bright colours and scary faces to

ward off evil spirits, symmetry of design and woodland elements to represent the Tree of Life.

After School Clubs

The staff continue to offer a wide range of after school clubs for the children. Since our last Ambo the children have been able to attend clubs as diverse as: archery, French, dance, sewing, arts and crafts, drawing and colouring and chess. The children in year 2 thoroughly enjoyed their craft club where they



The Dreamcatcher is ... finished!

were given the opportunity to make: snow globes, dream catchers, and a variety of Christmas decorations.

Fauvism in Class 2

As part of their art curriculum the children in Years 3 and 4 have been looking at Fauvism. This is art work



Designing and Painting a Mayan Mask

in the style of les Fauves (French for “the wild beasts”), a group of early twentieth-century Modern artists whose works emphasized bold lines and strong color over the representational or realistic values retained by Impressionism. The most well known member of this group was Henri Matisse. The children all had great time working with Miss MacPherson to produce their own bold and bright abstract works of art.

Twitter

Miss MacPherson has set up a Twitter account for the school. This will be used predominantly to provide parents with timely updates and reminders of what is happening in the school. We can be followed at @GtSCPS.

School Website

We are continuing to update our new website, www.greatsampford.essex.sch.uk, which we hope you will find both informative and engaging. Please feel free to browse the site and leave any feedback to enable us to make it as user friendly as possible.

We would, as always, like to take this opportunity to thank all parents, friends and family members for their continued support and enthusiasm for the work we do at Great Sampford.

*Ian Pollard
Head Teacher*



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Great & Little Sampford WI

Following the November talk by Anita Sackett about Christmases spent in a number of different countries, with their contrasting climates, time zones, cultures and traditions affecting the food and activities enjoyed, Gt. & Lt. Sampford WI members concentrated on their 92nd birthday lunch in January. Once again this was held in Thaxted Bowling Club, and an excellent meal was served in a room beautifully decorated, as always, by Mary Green and Sue Faulkner. A raffle to offset expenses with a huge number of prizes, as well as lucky number prizes and a game of pass the parcel on each table meant that many members went home bearing gifts. There was also a fun game of "identify the celebrity" from photographs. Glasses were raised to the memory of Maureen Ramsay, a former President who had recently died; the following week some members attended her cremation in Braintree and afterwards the gathering in Thaxted.

"Mmmmm - delicious" could be heard at the January meeting when three staff members from



Mary Green (President) and Jane Lawrence (Secretary) cutting the birthday cake



Ladies enjoying the Sampfords WI 92nd birthday lunch!

Waitrose looked ahead to Fair Trade Fortnight (29 Feb. - 13 Mar.) and offered tastings of several of their products. Who could resist mango, banana, pineapple, different flavours of chocolate and even white wine? In addition, on display were brown sugar, coffee, marmalade, cut flowers and tea, which was enjoyed during teatime. The Fair Trade movement is 20 years old and now offers several hundred products, including jewellery, toys and cotton clothing. The purchase of any of these will help the farmer or producer to lead a better life and educate future generations. Waitrose was the first supermarket to sell exclusively Fair Trade bananas, and continues to sell a large selection of Fair Trade products. Even the company's lower-priced "essential" range is of as good a quality as the more expensive brands.

The audience was surprised by some of the statistics regarding the number of Fair Trade farmers: how much land is owned by women (even though they provide a huge work force); and how much tea in the world is Fair Trade. During a discussion session it was suggested that the Fair Trade logo on packs needs to be made more prominent in order to catch the attention of prospective buyers. The over-riding message was that even a small purchase will ben-

efit the producer. The speakers judged Mary Green's six home-made biscuits as the winner of the competition that month.

The Flower of the Month competitions have been won by a fuchsia and a euphorbia, and the winner of the Rose Bowl for the most points gained during the 2015 competition was Joan Gray, one of our Thaxted members.

In preparation for the National Annual Meeting in June members were given the opportunity to vote for the Resolution they would like to hear debated at that meeting. The range of topics was wide; covering health, agriculture and the environment, but



Joan Gray, overall Flower of the Month winner, with the crystal flower bowl award

it was the topic of sudden cardiac death in young adults that emerged the strongest candidate. It will be interesting to see which one is finally selected to be on the agenda for a campaign. It will be discussed in this WI in May. Before that we look forward in March to hearing about how a Consul became a novelist. In April we will learn about District Nursing before the NHS. Let it be a New Year resolution to join the WI - 2.30pm on the last Tuesday of each month, in the Village Hall.

Jane Lawrence

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Essex Castaways - Sue & Mike Lindsell

Mike and Sue Lindsell are popular figures in *Ambo* territory, known to hundreds as the friendly farmers who supply their free-range turkey at Christmas. But the innovative couple do more than rear poultry; they also manage a vineyard as well as growing conventional crops at their farms in Great Sampford and Radwinter End.

Both are unusual as farmers, having trained in technology – Mike in chemical engineering and Sue in computer programming. They are also fully involved in the community, Sue singing in Saffron Walden Choral Society and the Sampford Singers. They have three children, Helen (40), Mark (38) and Simon (28). Here Paul Davies enjoys a Desert Island chat to them about their backgrounds and life at Salix Farm.

Mike: I'm a local boy, born in a nursing home in Saffron Walden in 1950, lived at Hamperden End near Debden Green, then moved to Radwinter when I was three.

Grandfather was a farm worker at Debden, and in the 1930s managed to secure the tenancy of a farm. My father was one of 12 children but as child number 10 there was no chance of him staying on the family farm, so during the war he volunteered to be a pilot. He got his wings only six months before the war finished so he survived, one of the lucky ones.

He wanted to be a commercial pilot after the war but of course they were two a penny. Instead he hired 50 acres of land at Debden Green, so I was brought up on farms. My long-term plan was to do something different and to come back to farming when I was 40.

Paul: How did the farm grow?

Mike: Father moved to Radwinter End in 1953 after buying 120 acres. In 1969 we bought some land over here at Sampford, 110 acres at Hill Farm. We bought the bare land in Sampford then in 1972 we bought some more land at Radwinter End – 200 acres to add to the existing farm. Then in 1979 we bought some more land here. We've had the two farms running together for about 30 years.

Paul: And how about you?



When I was 12 my parents let me have piano lessons. But I didn't like walking home in the dark, because parts of Hull were quite rough so I gave up. I used to listen to my sister, who was a really good pianist, and try to play it myself. I could never get beyond the first two pages. So I have to listen to it as one of my favourites.

Mike: I went to Radwinter Primary and then, in 1961, to a boys' school down in Surrey. At the time Essex had three county run boarding schools which were specially built during the war as evacuation schools, one at Fyfield, one at Cranleigh near Guildford and one in Sussex. You had to fail the 11 plus to get in! I was there until 1966 where I did O levels. Then it was back here to Newport Grammar for two years where I got my A levels and then to Teesside Polytechnic, where I met Sue.

The father of one of my schoolfriends had been a chemical engineer. I remembered how he used to travel the world. It seemed like something worth doing, so I planned to give chemical engineering 10 years and then come back to farming. The subject is not pure chemistry but more about the engineering of factories and equipment that handle chemicals.

As part of a sandwich course I worked for a paper group in Kent and also with BP at the Isle of Grain refinery. I graduated in 1972, unfortunately a year when they were not employing any new graduates. Meanwhile my father had bought some more land so there was a chance I could go back home sooner rather than later.

Sue and I were engaged by now. I was offered other jobs but got back early into farming. Perhaps I should have done something else but having a house on the farm was a big attraction.



First record - Sue: Debussy's Clair de Lune



Joint second choice: Leonard Cohen *Suzanne*.

It was something we remember from college. Cohen is actually far more musical than his rather monotonous delivery suggests and the lyrics are marvellous.

Paul: Was it all arable farming in those days?

Mike: No, mother started breeding turkeys in 1955. She kept 25 turkeys in the first year and did really well, so doubled it to 50 the next year. At one point the market collapsed and she lost money. But we've done it every year since then. It's an important part of our business.

Farming had good times in the '70s and '80s. Today the commodity market is very volatile - two years ago we were getting £250 a ton for wheat and now it's down to £100.

Sue's choice: March of the Toreador, from Bizet's Carmen



I used to play that as a duet with my sister. I took up the bassoon at school! Bizet was included in one of the first concerts I did and loved it. Last year

in Saffron Walden Choral Society, we actually sang it in French and I never tire of it.

Paul: Sue, did you ever expect to become a farmer?

Sue: No I'm a townie, born and brought up in Hull. I went to school there, played out in the streets there, made my friends there for 18 years, so when I came down here I couldn't tell a cabbage from a sugar beet.

My sister and I used to cycle to the ferry - there was no Humber bridge then. We'd catch a paddle steamer across the river and cycle the other side from New Holland to my Grandma's, about 30 miles, at quite a young age. We had a lot of freedom.

I was at Newland High School for Girls with Maureen Lipman. She used to take the teachers off brilliantly, especially the headmistress. You can imagine her in the sixth form review - she had everyone in stitches.

Maths was my best subject; I didn't want to take one of the normal careers like a nurse or teacher, so when I got a place at Teesside Poly in 1968 I took computer science. The computer at college was the size of a house. It used magnetic tape and punched cards, but probably had less power than a domestic PC today. I learnt all the original programming languages - Cobol, Fortran, Pascal, Basic and later on C.

We married in 1973 in Sutton upon Hull. I was 22, he was 23 - quite young by today's standard but not so unusual then.

My computer qualifications served me well. I was a systems analyst at Addenbrooke's Hospital until I went full time into farming.

Paul: Are you unusual as farmers with industrial backgrounds?

Mike: Yes, most of our farming friends went to agricultural college. I wasn't formally trained but when you're brought up on a farm it's in

your blood. I love making things so my engineering background has been very useful around the farm.

It's the same with our son Mark. He's in partnership with us now, but he did music technology at college. A subject like that is never wasted.

Farming is quite high tech these days and you can buy in most of the information you need. We have an agronomist who walks the fields with us every two weeks to discuss the next stages of treatment.



Mike's choice: I was born in 1950 and was brought up with the Beatles, it was a close run thing between this and Hey Jude, but I have chosen John Lennon's Imagine. It sums up the whole era.

Paul: Tell us about your famous turkeys.

Mike: We have about 390 acres in total, quite small in today's terms. The challenge is to make the most of it, which is why the turkey business is such an important part. We now breed about 3,000 turkeys.

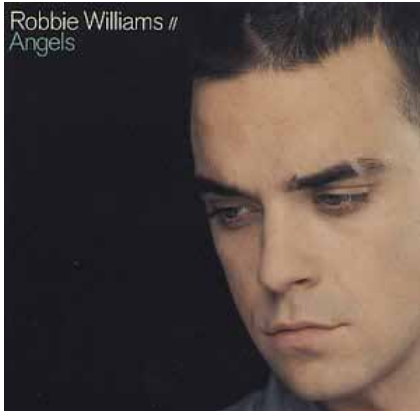
It is different from normal farming, where you are buying inputs from the cheapest supplier and selling to the highest bidder. With turkeys you have got to go out and sell your wares. Both our sons have been helping us with this, actually cycling round London with a rucksack, picking up independent butchers. We already have 500 orders for next Christmas.

Retailing to local people direct from the farm accounts for only

about 350 turkeys; the rest go to butchers or farm shops

Sue: There are a lot of high class butchers springing up in London who are looking for top quality meat. We even sold two turkeys to Sainsbury's when they had run out and Waitrose sent a customer to us when they had none left.

We used to sell them 'long legged', where the customer needed to do most of the preparation, but now they like them neatly bundled in a box.



Joint choice: Robbie Williams singing Angels.

We love the song and it was one of the first performances our son Simon did on the piano at the County High School.

Paul: So who does all the preparation?

Sue: The family pitch in and we have ten Eastern Europeans come over every year. This year we had seven Hungarians and three Poles.

They fly into Stansted and spend two weeks with us, staying at the farm. They are lovely people with a terrific work ethic who can't do enough for you. The monthly wage over in Hungary is typically £300 so they can earn with us several months' salary in a fortnight and they make a bit of a holiday of it as well.

We go online and get a load of food delivered from Tesco for them. Some come back year after year. One of the Hungarians has been coming every year for twelve years.

Mike: The great thing is they are sure to be here every day with no distractions. It's terribly important as the operation is so time sensitive. They are such helpful guys. One day a butcher sent a van which arrived at 5 o'clock in the morning and they were very happy to get up, help load the van and then went back to bed.

Without the Eastern Europeans, I doubt if we'd have carried on doing the turkeys. We just couldn't do the job without them. They are almost like family and they get on very well with each other.

Paul: Tell us about your vineyard.

Mike: We planted it in 1999. That came about with some friends who were keen to plant some vines in the corner of the field. We were told it would take five years for our first crop and that we would end up with 2,000 bottles of wine, but we actually had our first vintage after two years. The next year we had 4,000 bottles, the next 8,000 and we have had up to 13,000 off that two acre vineyard.

It started off as a hobby but just grew and grew. We didn't plan on producing that much but realised with that amount of wine we had a market. We just grow the grapes – we've had various winemakers making the wine and have had some very good years.

Mike: I like country and western so my next choice is Johnny Cash singing Jackson. Sue says: I didn't used to like Johnny Cash but we have been to a couple of tribute evenings and he has really grown on me.



Sue: Our first wines were made in Framlingham (Suffolk). The first sparkling was done in Kent.

We did try to sell retail from the farm, but it is very difficult because even then we had to charge £8 or £9 per bottle. We supplied restaurants as well, but it was a lot of money for wine that was just about okay, although there were some really good ones.

People tend to buy by variety these days, a Merlot perhaps, or a Sauvignon, whereas our varieties are all German, so we are selling on reputation and location instead.

The margins are very tight even at that price. We had to deliver it ourselves and it is surprising how much is lost in transit. One broken bottle can make a whole case unsellable.

We eventually made the decision to stop producing our own and to sell the grapes to another vintner.

We really enjoyed doing it but the amount of time spent marketing just couldn't be justified. Growers like the Australians and Chileans have the advantage of a large almost tax-free domestic market to support their operation. We are immediately hit with a tax of at least two pounds per bottle.

We also had extra costs transporting our grapes to the winery, paying others to bottle it, cork it, bring it back here and then take it to the retailer.

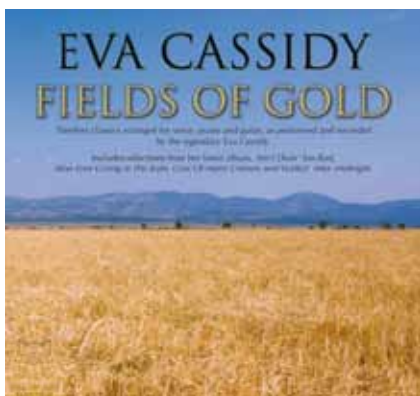
We didn't have time to market it properly. One of the bigger vineyards offered us a good price for our grapes and it just seemed a sensible thing to do. We sold them and had a cheque in the bank in three days. They blend ours in with their own grapes; it is sold as English wine with a proper 'passport'.

They sometimes mix their Bacchus grapes with our own. Bacchus is a popular German variety that does well here, with a florally, elderflower nose to it. The majority of our white wines were Bacchus. This will do for

the moment, but we are introducing a new variety and may start to sell locally again.

We have got planning permission to build a house for Mark which will also incorporate a café, where we can sell the new varieties. They would still be marketed as Sandyford wines. It's the old name from which Sampford is derived. We didn't think Pant Valley sounded quite so good!

Mike: With wine making the cash flow is terrible. From the time you pick your grapes, it is six months before you get your wine back, then another six months to prepare it so you have a year minimum before seeing any possible return, but with sparkling wine it could be two or three years, whereas now we are selling grapes getting a really good price for them, the equivalent of £1.50 a bottle for just the grapes.



Sue's choice: Eva Cassidy Fields of Gold

The line "the west wind moves upon the fields of barley" is just perfect for us.

All the grapes are picked by hand and a lot of local people come down to help. Some even see it as a nice outing for a summer's day. We sit down at lunchtime with everyone and have a picnic, anything up to twenty people, picking at once.

It is a real community activity. There are not many farming jobs left like it.



Our final choice is a joint one: The Righteous Brothers Unchained Melody.

We love the Elvis version too, but not quite as much as the Righteous Brothers.

Paul: What else do you grow on the farms?

Mike: Elsewhere we do the normal wheat, barley, sugarbeet, as well as the grapes. The sugarbeet goes to the Bury St. Edmunds factory. The farm is well established for the next generation.

What about favourite books to read?

Sue: I have never been a great reader except on holiday, but I would take *Les Misérables* by Victor Hugo. It is my favourite musical which I have seen about four or five times. I did start the book but lent it to someone and would love to go back and have time to read the whole thing.

Mike: I am more of a do-er than a reader. So on the island I would like a DIY book on yacht-making to plan my escape.

And a Luxury item?

Sue: I would take my piano and a big box of piano music, with a copy of *Clair de Lune* so I can learn to play it properly.

Mike: 20 years ago I built an AC Cobra (pictured) from scratch from a kit and spare parts from scrap yards. I would like to take that and a lot of petrol!

Mike and Sue Lindsell were interviewed for Ambo by Paul Davies



Radwinter Pavilion & Rec Update

We've had several people ask the same questions, so I'm going to answer to the best of my ability. First, the easy one:

Why site the new pavilion in the far corner of the rec?

The simple answer is that the planners wouldn't let us put the new building where the old one stands. It makes sense anyway; the new building is going to be wider and higher than the old one, so needs to be far enough away not to have any impact on homes and gardens near the Rec.

Why has it taken so long?

Initially, we were slowed down by an out-dated constitution and an expired lease (the recreation ground is leased from the Parish Council.)

The lease has now been updated, and we now have a 99-year lease registered with the Land Registry. The constitution has been re-written and the charitable status has been changed to a more robust Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

As well as sorting out the legal side of things, the Steering Group has spent a lot of time exploring options. We have looked at different types and sizes of building, been realistic about what we could afford and what the village can sustain and consulted with the current users.

As well as looking at affordability we were conscious that as the new building should enhance our lovely recreation ground we shouldn't just go for cheap and cheerful and need to be something that would look good as well as being functional.

We have agreed that what we needed as a minimum was a building to support the activities on the recreation ground, to provide changing and showering facilities and a community area for those watching and waiting for those taking part outside. We used a Sport England guidance document in deciding the final design, and added a social and kitchen area as we felt that if the building could be let out for small functions the income from that would help fund the running costs.

Why are we planning so many additions to the recreation ground before we have the money for the new pavilion?



We had just got to the point where everything was in place to start applying for funding when something else that had been talked about for years happened.

Planning permission was granted for the extra housing behind East View Close and with that came the promise of an extra hectare of land and a large donation via the Parish Council for the recreation ground.

Although initially we thought that this would be enough money to build the pavilion, the new donation came with some ties.

The Parish Council wanted something to show that the village would benefit from the new development and had a wish list of items that they wanted to see on the Recreation Ground. As the emphasis was on *new* things, they did not want the money to be spent on the pavilion, which was a replacement rather than a new item. The items on their wish list were: a MUGA (multi-use games area), improvements to the play-ground, a road to the new pavilion and a further football pitch on the new hectare of land.

After discussions between the Parish Council, the Recreation Ground Trustees and the Pavilion Steering

Group it was agreed that there would be a great advantage both with funding and planning for the steering group to take on the whole project and that the donation would be passed to the Recreation Ground towards all the improvements.

While it is exciting to have this large donation and the prospect of new facilities on the recreation ground, the additional work needed to incorporate these additions has set us back several months. We have had to re-cost the project and reconfigure the layout of the improvements to best fit in the space we have. This has also meant that we have missed some grant deadlines because we didn't have all the information to proceed. As a steering group we didn't feel that there was any other option but to go with the *whole* project. Nobody would have taken

us seriously for grant applications if we had continued while money was being spent on other parts of the recreation ground. Some of our investigations and discussions have already meant that we are able to divert some of the new donation to the pavilion and we know that we can make savings by grouping some of the works together and be able to show match funding for grant applications.

Where are we now?

Well, we have our wish list and we have a budget estimate of costs so now we just need to find the funds. The target for the whole project is £410k, we have raised or have been promised £252k, so to do everything planned we only need to find another £158k. We have just gone out to tender for the pavilion building and are about to submit a grant application to DEFRA.

If, once we have exhausted all the fundraising options, we have not met our target we will continue with the fundraising and prioritise and phase the project accordingly so that we can make a start. We have been encouraged by the support we have had locally with fund raising events and donations and welcome new ideas and offers of support.



The first tangible development will be a new Zip Wire in the play area in the first quarter and we hope to we hope to make a start on the Pavilion by this time next year.

The next local event will be the Duck Race on Easter Monday followed by the Hangi Hog on June 11th (see advert on page 38.)

*Julie Haines
Steering Group Chair*



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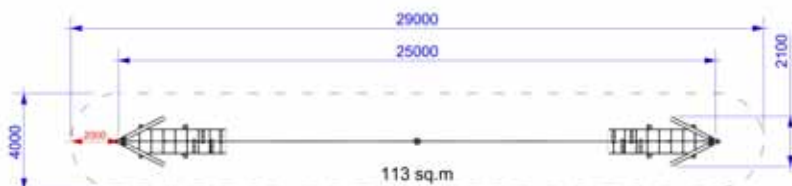
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The Art of Knowing Your Neighbours

Having lived in a village all my life, I would consider myself as belonging to that very select category of being a “villager”. Three years ago I upped sticks and moved (temporarily) away to the North of England to get myself a university education, and it’s only now I’ve spent some time living in York that I’ve started to realise just what being from a village means.

News flash: village people are not like other people.

There are those ladies and gentlemen, “townies” we will call them, who do not know their neighbours’ names. Not even their names. I am quite proud that I know the names of at least 70% of the inhabitants of my village, even if I don’t know them in person. Sometimes it feels as though we have a good selection of them in our living room every Christmas Eve, but I digress. The real point I would like to make is that “village-people” are trained to look at the world in a different way.

My town-abiding housemate doesn’t see the point in knowing her neighbours names. She considers herself nosy if she can remember



Annie in York, her home city from home village, Radwinter

which house in her cul-de-sac certain faces belong to. She doesn’t care if they go on holiday, or what their children do at the weekends, or how many cakes they can make 24-hours before an event. And because of this, she will now think the same wherever she lives. In York, the only time she ever thinks about our neighbours is when either we have stolen their post, or they come round with cheese scones (as a thank you for ‘looking after’ their post). Whereas I, village resident that I am, will always wave and smile at people in the street that I think I might vaguely recognise. I took great pains to learn

the names and birthdays of the fifty residents of my first-year accommodation block, most of whom I am still in at least brief contact with. I asked for their addresses and sent Christmas cards. I enjoyed doing all those little personal things that constitute ‘getting to know people’. I would like to think of this as being a village mentality.

Constantly used to people saying ‘you live where?’ we are much more talkative than your average city-dweller. Much more accepting of having to drive for at least ten minutes

before we see the next signs of civilisation, we are overjoyed by the fact that a supermarket is a whole ten minutes’ walk away, rather than complaining about there not being a Co-op on every street corner. The fact that takeaway places will deliver is nothing short of a miracle – who cares if they’re late? We take our small-town skills to the big city and treat it accordingly. My housemates just laugh when I tell them about village life (the Duck race is always a quacker.) But I am the only one brave enough to pop next door because I’ve run out of sugar...

Annie Camp

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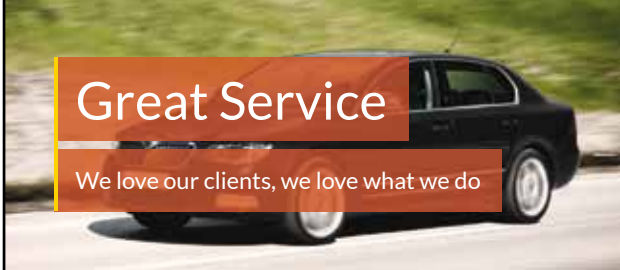
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Radwinter Village History

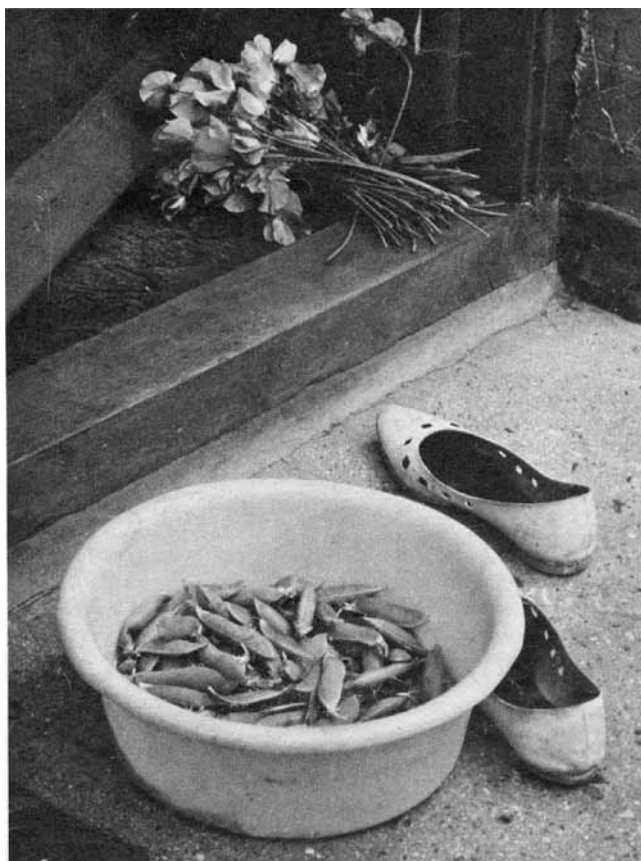
In the winter edition of Ambo, with grateful thanks for the help of Dave Smith, I was able to publish a picture by the renowned Observer photographer, Jane Bown. It had previously appeared on the front cover of *The Observer Magazine* for 15th December 1985 and showed two little Radwinter girls, Helen Hughes and Naomi Tuxworth, with their Harvest Festival Marrows.

Its publication prompted Matthew Moss of Hempstead to write to me saying that the picture had appeared in Jane Bown's book, *Pillars of the Church*. Matthew, who was Jane Bown's son, told me that his mother's book also contained another Radwinter picture and he promised to send a copy to me. I grateful accepted.

When It arrived, I saw that it was a picture that had been published in *The Observer Magazine* on 21st August 1966, the issue which contained a feature on Radwinter W.I.'s



Katie Newell polishing brass in Radwinter Church in 1966 Copyright Jane Bown



Backdoor in Radwinter Copyright Jane Bown

award-winning scrapbook. It showed Katie Newell polishing the brass in Radwinter Church. Katie was the last remaining member of the Newell family in Radwinter. The Newell family farmed Little Brockholds, where they raised pigs and sold the meat in Newells Store in the centre of Radwinter. This became The Brewery Tavern shop and when that closed it became a private house renamed The Old Brewery.

Matthew confirmed that the literary executors of Jane Bown's book were happy for us to publish these photos in *Ambo* provided we acknowledge her copyright. We are pleased to do so.

Receipt of the picture prompted me to look through the 1966 *Observer Magazine*, where I discovered that the cover picture was also by Jane Bown. This prompted me to ask if any of the other pictures in the issue were also by her.

I gave Matthew spare copies of each of the two colour supplements and asked if he could identify any to the other pictures as by his mother. If any other photographs are identified they will hopefully appear in future editions of Ambo.

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We still need to find businesses to advertise with us as we are not currently covering our costs, and we do wish to keep up the standards we've set ourselves in producing a high quality prize-winning publication.

In this first issue of 2016, some advertisers have dropped out, but we have some new ones including a holiday villa in Spain, KDW Financial Services, Chop and Chisel and a local classic car meet, so do have a look and see if something takes your eye. Also several of our advertisers have upgraded to colour adverts, and quite a few have updated their design and content, so something else for you to discover.

Happy reading...

Frank Bannister

Sampfords Broadband

Sampfords Parish Council invites you to a public meeting to be held at 8pm on **Thursday 14th April 2016** in Great Sampford Village Hall.

County Broadband will be providing a presentation to the community, explaining who they are, what they do, and why they are different from other broadband suppliers.

County Broadband utilise aerials to deliver superfast broadband to speeds of up to 32mb in both download and upload, which is delivered in a very similar way to television. If you can get a signal you choose what speed you want to receive.

Down on the Farm

After an autumn that was almost perfect for the drilling of winter crops we have had a very mild and wet winter. This is a combination that signals a potentially difficult spring from the point of view of disease control. Weeds continue to grow as the soil temperature remains above normal for the time of year. Aphid activity has been reported and slugs have also remained active in some fields. Pigeons (and rabbits) are also now causing damage to oilseed rape and every effort is being made to keep them on the move. What we need is a spell of really cold, frosty weather.

Each season brings its own challenges and every farmer handles them in a different way. Despite many technological advances farming still remains a constant battle against weather, weeds, insects and

disease. We have now been notified that the cattle are to be TB tested.

On the day of the test we need plenty of help to ensure the process goes as smoothly as possible and to ensure both people and cattle remain safe. Bovine TB is an infectious disease for which there is no cure. I despair for the many farmers who have had a positive test resulting in their animals being culled. Badger culling is a very emotive subject, farmers do not want to see all badgers killed, we just need to deal with TB infection in wildlife as well as cattle. A vaccine for cattle is still some way off. There is talk of vaccinating badgers, but I am not sure how effective it would be. However, the fact remains that the financial impact of TB is huge not only to farmers but also to the tax payer.

Giles



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Marion Blagdon Gillon 1916 - 2015

A celebration of her life by Christine and Deirdre

Mother was born to Edmund and Mamie Mansfield on June 22, 1916 in their flat above the family dairy; the only daughter of five children.

She met Jack when she was 12 and he was 15. They met after school and on Sunday afternoons at the Young Peoples Fellowship. The fortunes of the dairy business fluctuated and they realised that they had much in common as bailiffs were often seen at the door of either home.

Through all the financial difficulties Mamie managed to keep Marion at her private school as it was arranged that Marion would spend part of the day teaching the infants. Thus began her teaching career. Ilford education authority then agreed to fund her place at College provided she repaid the loan while working for Ilford after qualification.

With the war the School was evacuated to Ipswich. Luckily Jack was billeted close by and they arranged to get married - an army event complete with an arch of crossed swords. She records the one day honeymoon:-

‘When we arrived and opened our bags, horror of horrors confetti showered everywhere. Wet flannels removed some but not all. We lay on the bed and laughed and laughed. Finally we retired for the night, it had been a long and happy day and we were both tired. What a dirty night it was! I am always in trouble for expressing it like that; but the wind was howling, a storm got up and we saw a ship blown up at sea.

The marriage had to be kept secret as Ilford education authority did not allow married women to teach. Marion removed her wedding ring and continued teaching until the ‘bump’ which was Christine became too obvious.

Marion moved several times to be near to Jack and was at Woodbridge when Deirdre was born, to quote from her diary at the time “Baby arrived



Jack and Marion Gillon

unexpectedly, no nurse, no doctor, we (she and her sister in law) managed to keep smiling and shared the brandy”.

She was extremely fond of all her grand-children, the extended family and friends and neighbours in the village. She was always interested to hear what they were doing and to rejoice in their successes.

After the war Marion and Jack moved to Little Clacton. At first Marion was a supply teacher cycling to schools with 3 year old Deirdre on a seat on the back of the bicycle and being left to play in the infants’ class.

Marion was always conscious of her upbringing and was keen to help disadvantaged children both by education and passing on our clothes, shoes, books and toys – even if we hadn’t finished with them. She got involved with the Guide movement, becoming District Commissioner and for many years took guides camping.

In 1966 the headship of Radwinter School became available and Jack was appointed and so the family moved again. It was the happiest and most fulfilling period of their lives with Marion only leaving the village in June this year.

Marion concluded her teaching as Headmistress at Littlebury Primary School and then at R. A. Butler Junior School. We are often told ‘Mrs Gillon used to teach me’.

Marion would try her hand at anything be it canoeing with the school children on adventure holidays or learning to use a computer at the age of 88. Jack was much amused to come

home one evening to find that during the day Marion had purchased the materials and panelled the bath. The panels are still there!

Marion and Jack enjoyed camping holidays. Unfortunately the Guide way and the Army way of putting up a tent varied considerably. Once this little difficulty was overcome they had a wonderful time. Marion’s motto on camping was “leave nothing behind but your thanks”. We would like to thank all her friends and neighbours for their friendship and support.

Marion entered into and enjoyed many of the village activities. Her taking of the WI minutes were renowned for saying what she thought should have been said and done rather than what actually happened. Many will remember the ‘no baking cakes for the local hospital’, health and safety policies and Marion’s inclusion in the photograph which reached the Daily Mail. She was heard on local radio in a calm and sure manner holding her ground

On retirement she was able to take up art again and with many of her friends from the village, design and make the church kneelers. She joined the quilting group and thoroughly enjoyed the work and the companionship.

It was with some difficulty that we persuaded her to resign from various church and village committees when she was well past 90. It seemed that she feared Radwinter could not survive without her input and she continued to take an interest in all that was going on. She enjoyed hearing pieces read from Ambo and did not forget her friends in the village.

We remember someone saying of Marion “If we had more women like your Mother we would never have lost the empire”

Marion died on 5 December and returned to St Mary the Virgin, Radwinter, the church and village she loved.

Grant Walshe 1932 - 2015

Grant was born in Coventry just around the corner from me but it was not until our teenage years that we cemented our friendship. We went trainspotting, to the speedway, youth club, music and sport, particularly cricket and football and watching Coventry City. This dominated our lives and we watched them play whenever we could.

We both passed the 11 +, Grant was allocated a place at Bablake and I went to the other Grammar School. Whilst at Bablake he was asked by a careers advisor what his ambitions were. Grant had no hesitation in telling them that he wanted to be a bank manager, so he left school at 16 and joined Barclays. In those days if the tills did not balance the staff stayed on until the error was found. Grant was never angry about staying on and was delighted if he was the one to discover the missing



three pence halfpenny; an early sign of his dedication to banking.

At the age of 18 His Majesty required us to do National Service and Grant was posted to Hampshire where he met Molly who became his wife for over 60 years and supported him in all he did.

They moved on seven occasions as his career progressed. They lived in Birmingham, Dorridge, Leamington Spa, Dunmow, Bristol and finally Cardiff, where he rose to become Regional Director of South Wales and became an active member of the business community.

They moved to Great Sampford in 2001 to be nearer to their family and became involved with village life. He was the Treasurer for the Conservatives in Sampford, ran the 100 club for the church and spent many a happy hour at the Saffron Walden Golf club where he was Captain of the EGGs.

He was a devoted family man and especially proud of the achievements of his six grandchildren.

Grant Walshe
21st June 1932 - 29th December 2015

Colin Watkins

Betty Keen 1921 - 2015

Betty was born on the 14th April 1921. She was one of four children born to Herbert & Isobel. She attended the village school in Finchingfield up to the age of fourteen when she left to join her sisters in service at Vespers House in West Sussex. She met Curly, her future husband, there as he was the groceries delivery boy. As this was 1939, he was called up and joined the RAF. Betty worked in a munitions factory during the war for a while but, as her parents had a farm in Little Sampford, she returned home and became part of the Land Army. Curly was granted leave and, on the 16th June 1941 they were married at St. Michaels Church, Great Sampford.

After the war, they set up home together in Little Sampford where their two children, Valerie and Gra-



ham were born. Whilst her children were growing up, she worked in the kitchen of the local school and was the Akela for the local Cub pack.

When Betty was widowed in 1967, she took up full-time employment in Thaxted and then at

Pedleys in Saffron Walden, where she worked until she was well into her eighties.

She loved a drink in the pub and enjoyed talking to people but she was also a very good listener. She had a great sense of humour and enjoyed a good laugh. She could be stubborn but was a strong-willed and independent lady.

She was very much a family person and was very proud of her children, her granddaughters, Rachel and Sarah and her great grandchildren, Harriet and Georgie.

Betty was kind, good natured and much respected and will be sorely missed by everyone who knew her.

Betty Keen
14th April 1921 – 12th December 2015

Graham Keen

Maureen Ramsay 1925 - 2016

Following her parents' move from the North of England to North Chingford, Maureen was born on the 13th of June 1925.

Having grown up in North Chingford, and attended the local school, Maureen initially wanted to train to be an actress, so went to study at RADA. However, at that time, there wasn't a lot of money to be had in acting, so Maureen left RADA and went on to train to be a teacher.

Once qualified as a teacher, Maureen went to lecture in maths at Forest Road School, Walthamstow, before moving on to work at Barking College. She was very much liked as a lecturer by her students and colleagues. She was very good at her teaching job, which may well have been helped by her acting. Both involve playing to an audience which Maureen relished, though for different reasons, acting for pleasure, and teaching to communicate information.

For a while, Maureen was in the Air Force, stationed at Wethersfield it was here that she met a Canadian gentleman also serving in the Air Force. They went on to marry, but having bought Flea Hall in Little Sampford in the early 1950's, he returned to Canada and the couple then divorced. Maureen however, remained working in London whilst living in Sampford, driving up on a Tuesday, staying for two nights and returning to the village on a Thursday.



Maureen threw herself into village life. Always having an interest in acting, Maureen became involved with the Thaxted Chronicle Players which is where she made many friends. Although she did act on occasions, Maureen concentrated mainly on producing the shows. She could be a 'bit of a dragon' at times and worked the players very hard during their rehearsals, though it was always 'alright on the night!' Some of the shows and concerts that Maureen produced were held in the village churches as fundraisers, as although Maureen didn't attend church she was very keen that the beautiful buildings should remain standing. The highlight for me was helping her produce *Becket* in Great Sampford church.

As well as being involved in the production of plays, Maureen loved going to the theatre, opera and ballet herself, and as a member of the WI arranged many trips. She also organised theatre trips for the village which were a great success, though co-ordinating tickets and transport and supper arrangements for groups of twenty people at a time was definitely not a task for the faint hearted.

Maureen was a very busy lady, for along with her acting and producing she enjoyed hunting with hounds. She also started a poetry group, cared for her mother for many years (as she was now living in Finchingfield) and as a member of the village hall committee was heavily involved with the fundraising for a new hall when the old hall was sold.

About ten years ago Maureen moved to Thaxted where she was not so isolated and much nearer to the shops, but while still driving made regular trips back to Sampford for the WI, her theatre trips, or just to get her hair done.

Maureen was a very sociable person who enjoyed a good conversation, a good laugh and a good party. She was also a very feisty, independent lady with a very strong character.

She will be sorely missed by all those who knew her.

Maureen Ramsay
13th June 1925 – 3rd January 2016

Susan Collins

The Sampfords Society

At last there is good news concerning Kingfisher Lodge. A former garage has been transported to Tewes and over several weeks reassembled, painted and fitted out as a secure weather-proof depository for the Society's archives. A decorative nameplate will be affixed in due course. Thanks are due to Steve Horne for finding it, and, with the assistance of Martin Cross, doing the physical work to Kingfisher Lodge Mark II. Transferring and storing the archive material will be the next big task.



There has been only little activity within the Society over the past 3 months, The Garden Club held a meeting in December to plan the 2016 programme, which will include garden visits and a talk. Details will follow. As always at these informal meetings a variety of topics form the basis of conversation, and a few quiz questions were discovered among some papers sent by Jan McLaren, who, having moved away,

is now not able to attend meetings. Our new coordinator is Chris Knight at Monks Corner, in whose home we met.

For the past 2 years the biennial New Year Event occupied the committee's attention, with several discussions, more intense as the time drew near, about how best to present the suggested theme of birds. On January 30th all the plans came together and "Mr. and Mrs. Kingfisher" took flight, this overall title being chosen as said bird is the emblem of the Society and of The Sampfords.

Providing an appropriate setting in the Village Hall there were birds decorating table napkins, bunting made of bird pictures, colour illustrations of birds on screens, a display of bird books, a large jigsaw, and a member's collection of "kingfisher-alia", comprising pictures and small items featuring kingfishers.

Forming two intervals in the entertainment a substantial meal (no poultry or game to be seen!) of salmon, ham, salads and the customary array of high-calorie desserts was enjoyed, accompanied by a selection of beverages including Kingfisher ale.

The proceedings began with the delivery to each table of confectionery eggs in a nest, appropriately followed by the recitation of a poem about fledglings. Over a dozen different species were the subject of the poems, readings, piano solo and Egyptian dance (what grace,



what control!), and many more were mentioned by the threading through these items of a 6-part look at the part birds play in everyday life, such as advertising, the arts, names, superstition and especially language. Following the audience participation in "The owl and the pussycat" a query "What is a runcible spoon?" met with one suggestion that it was a spoon with a bowl at each end. However, subsequent research from more than one source indicates that it is a fork-like implement with two broad prongs and one sharp curved prong. During the evening the guests were invited to tackle a bird quiz, which, though considered challenging by most was won by one table's occupants with full marks.

A successful event like this might appear effortless, but quite apart from the stresses of performance the organisation is rather like a swan apparently gliding smoothly through the water but with extremely energetic paddling underneath. Special thanks must be extended to the

noble member who volunteered to spend the evening alone in the kitchen, washing up.

What we need now is a theme for the 2018 event. Suggestions please!

Jane Lawrence



Nepal

Continued from page 6

Their positive and cheerful outlook and plans to rebuild their lives has made us feel quite humble and extremely grateful for what we have at home.

Moving forward we must remember the challenges we faced when trekking and the problems faced by these lovely people and hope that it will help us as we move through education and onto employment.

We have learned a great deal from this experience, both about ourselves and about the lives of people in Nepal. We have learned how to be resilient and have seen great resilience and cheerfulness amongst the Nepalese who have had to deal with some immense devastation and loss.

We have learned how to work as a team, to be tolerant and resourceful, to look after ourselves and take care of our belongings and to cherish what we have, not taking them for

granted. We have seen how those who have little show determination to improve their surroundings and their opportunities for the future – things that we here in westernised society take for granted.

We enjoyed getting to know people on the team, seeing the breathtaking scenery in Nepal, experiencing the lives of those who have little or nothing, teaching football skills to Barpak children, playing with them, interacting with them, teaching them English. We enjoyed being part of a team, being encouraged and supported and returning the favour when needed.

We would like to thank the following groups and organisations that helped us both to get to Nepal and experience the trip of a lifetime: Jack Petchey, Uttlesford District Council, Great Sampford Parish Council, Great Sampford Youth Club, Ethan Linwood Memorial Fund and all others that have supported us.

Ollie Cole and Alfie Smith

Tracing Joseph Swan

We are trying to trace our ancestor Joseph Swan(n) born Wimbish 1833 died 1866. His parents were John and Mary. Joseph married Martha Suckling born in Thaxted 1841.

We believe we found her parent's resting place but we cannot find any trace of how Joseph died (perhaps cholera) or where he was buried.

His brothers and sister: George 1827, Susan 1830, John 1834. Joseph and Martha's children: Emily 1859, Arthur 1863, Johnny (my line) 1863 who had a daughter Emily 1896 – 1970 who married Frank Kent 1894 - 1946.

From census information we have: 1851 Radwinter, 1861 Wimbish. 1871 Martha was married to Robert Surry (Surrey). Their children Robert Jnr 1878 and Robert's children from his first marriage, Martha 1850, David 1852, Elizabeth 1854, Josiah 1855, Ada 1870.

From WW2 the family lived in Much Hadham and Littlebury. We'd love any help and gained a great deal of information from Saffron Walden library, and Wimbish and Radwinter churches but simply drew a blank with Joseph's death and resting place.

I'd also be interested to know how the name Swan Meadow Car Park, Saffron Walden, originated and if 'Swan' is any connection to my family or coincidence.

Please drop me a line at primroses007@yahoo.co.uk or 2 Moat Terrace, Walpole St Peter, Norfolk, PE14 7PB.

Thank you very much

Lesley Harbron

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Jill Palmer

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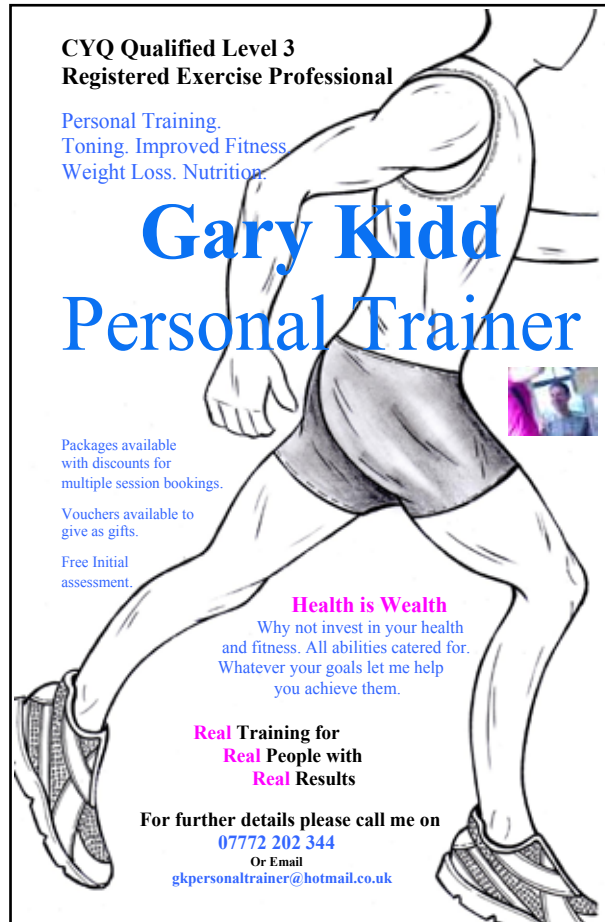
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Dad's Drawers - Part 4

The Pig, the Pheasant, and the Paper Bag

Since 2012 Radwinter resident Julie has been publishing an online blog about the contents of the cornucopian drawers of treasure or junk that her compulsive collector father Fred left behind when he departed this life aged 92.

The story continues with Part 4 from January 2013. Arrangements and photos by Julie.

I have noticed two things over the past few months. The first is that I have inherited the 'might-come-in-useful-one-day' gene. While sorting through dad's things, I can't bring myself to throw away anything that looks like it might be a part of something else even though I know that the likelihood of me recognising that 'something else' is fairly slim. In true Plisner fashion I now have a pile of these almost-useful objects waiting for their long-lost counterpart that, for all I know, could be lying in the very same pile. One day it will have to be dealt with - but not today.



The second is that my once-large garage appears to be shrinking; strangely dad's looks more spacious than usual.

A couple of blogs ago, when I told the tale of the guns there was a suggestion that dad may have had them to try to shoot a pheasant. This is the story of the pheasants at the end of the garden and one about the Agnes the pig; interspersed as usual with more drawers and collections.

After moving into the house near Cambridge, dad harboured ideas about using his one acre of land to

become self-sufficient.

For inspiration a visit was paid to John Seymour, the 1960's Self-Sufficiency guru (on whom the TV series *The Good Life* was said to be based) at his small-holding in Suffolk. Mum recently told me that she and dad had been disappointed with the visit.

While they were there, John's wife returned from a day's shopping in London having purchased lots of fancy cheeses. This was not a model of self-sufficiency that mum and dad were particularly interested in subscribing to and anyway my mum always hated blue cheese.

Not to be deterred from the ideal, in the years while I was growing up, dad used the garden to house beehives, pigs, one sheep, geese, ducks, chickens and rabbits and there

was always a vegetable patch full of leeks and potatoes. Having lived off the land for several years, whilst hiding in rural France during the war, dad was quite a dab hand at killing, plucking and gutting most things and, apart from the occasions when my pet rabbits appeared as Sunday lunch, we were all quite happy to go along with it.

Agnes, our first pig appeared when dad realised that the school where he taught was disposing of large volumes of food on



a daily basis. Anyone who experienced school dinners of the 60's and 70's will remember why more was thrown away than was ever eaten and I am sure that a large proportion of the pigs-swill was tapioca and re-hydrated cabbage which at my school seemed to be on the menu every day. True to form dad decided that he could put this waste to good use. He purchased a pig, two plastic dustbins and some wire fencing. A pen was constructed in the back garden and before too long Agnes was in residence. Each day dad would return from school, the two plastic dustbins in the back of his Austin 1300 full of the still-lukewarm food, along with that familiar school-dinner aroma. Agnes would snort with delight as the dustbins were emptied into her trough. That same pattern continued for several years,





during which time we bred pigs and ate pork as an alternative to chicken and my rabbits were spared. Then new regulations came in that stated all such food had to be re-processed before it was fed to animals. At which point the pigs were recycled into the freezer.

Much of my childhood was spent rounding up said livestock from other people's gardens in the village (neighbouring villages in the case of the sheep). The geese were the worst offenders and it was a regular



occurrence for my brother Peter or I to have to go up to the village shop, where we would find them hissing away at anyone who passed. One unforgettable occasion was when I was about 15. My friend (Splodge) and I were going to a party and, armed with our 30p bottle of cider and dressed in the latest fashion of long wrap-around cheesecloth skirts, we were waiting for a lift. Just as we were about to get in the car a pig wandered by. The next half-hour was reminiscent of a Benny Hill comedy chase, minus the scantily-dressed women: Pig; followed by Peter; followed by me; (with restricted movement in my long skirt and one hand on my head protecting the curling-tongued hair that had taken several hours to perfect); followed by dad,

who was shouting directions at everyone (including the pig); followed by friend also in long skirt and with curling-tongued hair). The chase continued around the garden several more times: pig; Peter (who was now armed with a board to try to steer the pig in the right direction); me (skirt now embellished with leaves and twigs and hair slowly un-curling); dad getting louder and louder; friend who by now was wondering how she came to be chasing a pig in her new cheesecloth skirt on a Saturday night. Eventually the pig was cornered and steered back to her pen. Though slightly late, we did get to the party sporting a new rustic, unkempt look with just a mild aroma of pig. Needless to say our pulling power was severely handicapped that night.

Always on the lookout for menu variety and free food dad had always had his eye on the pheasants at the end of the garden. They never came anywhere near the house and you rarely saw them, but you could frequently hear the squawking and fluttering as they moved from ground to tree.

Dad described the pheasant in his book:

“He allows me to get within ten paces, pretending not to notice the stealthily approaching *homo ineptus*, after which he deposits a dropping and withdraws lethargically. Should I start running, he would lift himself angrily over the hedge, swearing



while airborne.”

Over the years he tried numerous tricks to entice the pheasants closer to the house so he could bag one for the pot. One recommended method involved sewing raisins onto a thread, which in turn was attached to a brown paper bag. The idea was that the pheasant would eat the line of raisins one by one until it got to the last raisin in the bag, by which time it would be inside the bag. Being the stupid creature it was, once it could not see where to go it would



stay put on the ground and could be easily caught. Unfortunately for dad, nobody had informed the pheasant of its role in this plan and it gaily ate the thread and raisins, shook the bag from its head and disappeared with its raisin-filled gullet back to the hiding place at the end of the garden. Dad also tried leaving out bowls of brandy in an attempt to make the pheasants too drunk to run or fly away. The brandy was drunk, but the tolerance for alcohol clearly higher than expected as there was never any sign of an inebriated pheasant.

And, here is the strange part of the story (cue title music to *Tales of the Unexpected*). The morning after dad died, just outside the kitchen window, closer to the house than they had ever been seen before, were 5 or 6 pheasants strutting around. You could almost hear them calling to all their friends “He’s gone; it’s safe to come out now”.

I add the final four pictures in response to comments made on my blog and an article on Hidden Museum (http://www.hiddenmuseum.net/ihre_post.html). The article

makes references to something that I had always thought was one of my dad's many eccentricities. He enjoyed playing with the postal service and as well as sending letters and postcards (mostly addressed back to him) with minimal address details, he would also try various stamp combinations. For example, he would cut a stamp in half to represent half of its value or he would use foreign stamps in the wrong country or a combination of different country stamps on one envelope. He would also stick something in the corner of the envelope that wasn't a postage stamp at all. If ever I went abroad I would be given a batch of postcards with the request to post them when I got there. Dad would have already stuck on his assortment of stamps and added odd message. A lot of these cards and envelopes form part of 'the hoard' and that has enabled me to illustrate his actions and quote a couple of the messages. "We have left the cat in the oven with enough food and tranquilizers for five days" was closely followed



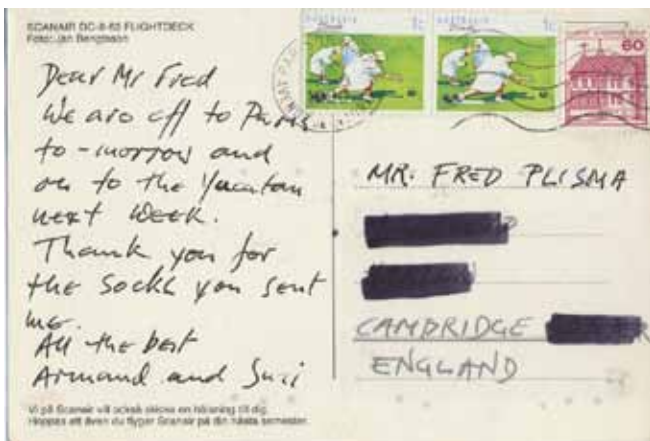
by "No need to look after the cat, the tranquilisers ran out and she did not survive the trip". I can confirm that no real cats were ever subject to either the oven or the tranquilisers.

For those of you too young to remember, Green Shield Stamps were not postage stamps at all, but loyalty stamps, issued by many shops and petrol stations each time a purchase was made. They were collected and stuck into a book (I'm sure I'm not the only person of my age

who remembers being responsible for all the licking and sticking that required). They could be exchanged for items that were chosen from the Green Shield Stamp Catalogue and there were shops of the same name dotted around the country. I don't remember anyone who was patient enough to save up the 375 books required for a colour television, but in 1965 you could exchange just one book for 'A set of six mugs in pastel colours', 'Stainless steel salad servers' or 'A set of six lager glasses with gold rims'. All vital items for the 1960's household!

I leave you with the good news that I have found the stash (I knew there would be one!) A neat little bundle of damp fifty pound notes was retrieved from under a floor board and came just in time for mum to pay the man for trimming the trees.

Julie Haines



Both Australian and German stamps for postage within the UK



UK stamps cut to show a new value



A 'To Pay' stamp added by the Post Office because the correct value of stamps was not put on the letter.



This is my favourite - a letter posted and franked with a Green Shield Stamp

Sampfords' Parish Council

continued from page 10

benefit to parents on the school run, though it was reported that the congestion and thoughtless parking had improved.

f) The Village Hall finances were such that they were unlikely to need assistance from the parish council in the immediate future.

g) The seat missing from outside the Baptist Church had been removed for cleaning by the Highway Rangers.

h) Because it is finding that advertising revenue does not cover the mounting costs of production councillors agreed to make a substantial donation to AMBO, the quarterly magazine which is a valuable communication tool throughout the benefice.

i) The chairman confirmed that he would be retiring from the council in May, and the clerk mentioned that she was prepared to serve for just one more year. She will be interested to hear of anyone willing to fill the post, for which there is remuneration, and will explain what is involved in this interesting and demanding role.

The next meeting will be on Thursday March 10th at 8pm and will start with questions from members of the public.

Jane Lawrence

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Radwinter Pre-School

We'd like to start this newsletter by thanking all the individuals and organisations who have contributed either time or money to help the pre-school. There are too many to list but as a start, Jayson Norris for his brilliant performance at our fundraiser on 3 December and the community for coming to support us (we made an amazing £849), the Hempstead Village Hall Committee for the donation of new cushions, Beth Wheeler for our relaxing yoga sessions and Susie Diggons, Tesco Community Champion, for always bringing engaging activities for the children.



As always thank you to the parents who use our services, the volunteers who give their time to the committee, and the staff for their enthusiasm and dedication.

In the setting, this half term, the children have been practising letter sounds. We have a letter of the week and the children are encouraged to bring in items from home (that start with this letter sound), for our interest table. We have had lots of fun with actions and songs and making resources with the initial letter sound to reinforce our knowledge.

We have also been talking about shapes, and have made structures from junk modelling materials, made frozen shapes and even been on a shape walk (with the children taking photos of the shapes they found in our environment).

We have continued to visit Radwinter Primary School for our weekly forest school sessions, the children have loved using hand drills to make natural resources, jumping into puddles, exploring mini-beasts' homes, swinging in a hammock and making mud pies.



The children enjoyed celebrating the Hindu festival of Diwali, making colourful Rangoli patterns and Bafi sweets.

Based on the Developmental Movement Programme, we have set aside an open space in the setting to allow children to be more physical inside. This area, equipped with soft resources such as gym balls and cushions, allows all the children to move freely and safely in a range of ways to aid their physical development. It is of special benefit to children with special needs.



In December, we held parent consultations where we shared the children's Learning Journeys and had informal chats with parents/carers about their child's development. We were pleased with the lovely feedback we got from parents with comments such as 'how well their child has flourished' since attending our pre-school.

To end the term, we had a Christmas party where we played games and had party food. We also had two very special visitors, Christmas Elves, who came with presents for the chil-

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dren (thank you Mrs Hockley and Mrs Hibbs from Radwinter Primary School). We finished the celebrations by singing Christmas songs to all the parents and extended families, which was a great success.

We are pleased to announce that we will be starting our own Forest School this Spring. Once again we have to thank the individuals who are helping us in the process: Janina Vigurs for her enthusiastic help with everything from paperwork to ground clearing, Paul Frainer for his risk assessment of the site, the Church for allowing us to use the land and Kevin Wade for his generous price for the tree felling required to make our Forest School site safe. The children are already practising outside for Forest School, learning the rules, safe boundaries and enjoying the benefits and freedom of the great outdoors. As soon as the site is ready (hopefully after half term) our sessions will start. We will continue to visit Radwinter Primary School for Forest School sessions. This regular connection with the school allows an easier transition for children when they start at primary school.

As we mentioned in the last issue, our intention this year is to remodel and renovate our outside area. We would like to resurface and install a mud kitchen and water wall. A large portion of our fundraising efforts this year are in aid of this. If you are able to lend a hand or provide sponsorship for our project, please email us on info@radwinterpreschool.co.uk.

If you would like to arrange to come and visit and see us in action, please call us on 01799 599 797 (during pre-school hours) or email info@radwinterpreschool.co.uk. For more information, please visit our website www.radwinterpreschool.co.uk.

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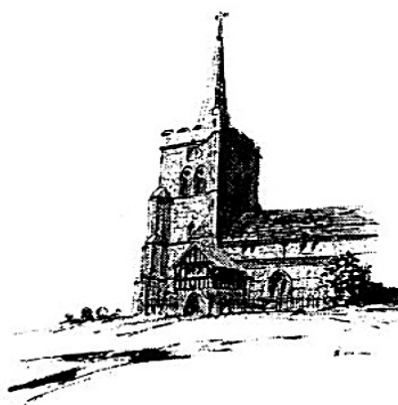


St Mary the Virgin, Radwinter

As I write we have just celebrated Epiphany and are looking forward to a service at Thaxted to celebrate Plough Sunday and the work that all our farmers do to keep this beautiful corner of England so productive.

Christmas is over and a new year begins. I hope you enjoyed the Christmas Tree Festival - I know from comments that many of you did. Having the Quiz this year and a theme for the trees certainly added a different perspective. Congratulations to Margaret Ashton and Alex Mikkides who were the winners in the Adult and Under 16s sections.

I must also add a very big 'Thank you' to all who worked so hard in the week before the festival, bringing the trees in, decorating them and the rest of the church and to those who helped during the two days. Thank you also to the handbell ringers



and others who played the organ so beautifully. Having the school Christmas Service on the Friday begins a very special weekend.

The Crib service also went well with a large congregation and lots of participation by the children of the village and the Midnight service helped many to find the real joy in Christmas.

It was very sad that just before Christmas the village lost two of its

oldest and much-loved residents. Both Billy Mortimer and Marion Gillon were buried in our churchyard in December. They will both be missed by many of us in Radwinter.

The quiet, reflective time of Lent starts early this year – Ash Wednesday is on 10 February – leading to glorious Easter tide.

We look forward to a planned Flower Festival and two weddings in the summer and Music at the Crossroads are planning concerts in June and September. Do come to the Coffee Mornings on the first Saturday of every month (apart from January!). It goes without saying that you would be very welcome at the 10.00am service on the first Sunday and the 8.00am service on the third Sunday.

Wendy Rowley, Churchwarden

St Andrew's Church, Hempstead

In 2014, for the second year running, we repeated two events that had been well-received in 2013. The first was "stir-up" Saturday. For this event, some of our talented ladies had provided large basins filled with Christmas pudding mixture. The rest of us stirred the mixture and had our own bowls greased and filled with mixture that we took home to cook.

This was very much a social occasion with refreshments, and for a small donation we had a high quality pudding, and what is more the church made a respectable profit.

A similar event was the Christmas card exchange on the 12th. December.

This is how it works: you write out and address all your cards that



are for other people in the village. You then put them on the alphabetically labelled pews, make a donation (less than the cost of stamps), and then have some refreshments. At the end, before you leave, you collect the cards addressed to yourself. The cards that are not collected are then delivered by members of the P.C.C. and their friends.

In 2014 it was our turn to host the Advent Carol Service, after which

there was only the 8.00 service until our traditional village service of nine lessons and carols on Christmas Eve. This is always the largest congregation of the year, around 130 adults plus a dozen or so children, and was followed as usual by mulled wine and mince pies.

Now, looking forward, it is something of a shock to realise how soon the season of Lent will be on us, as Easter is quite early this year (27th March.)

Alan Weedon

St Michael the Archangel, Gt Sampford

The children of Great Sampford School have joined us on two separate occasions during the autumn. This year they celebrated Harvest Festival in October at the Baptist church but came to St Michaels for the Remembrance service in November and their Christingle service in December.

The children were a credit to the school and those who did the readings were excellent, read very clearly and appeared to enjoy the experience.

Christingle

We were very pleased to see so many parents who came to support



their children. The churches were packed on all three occasions. We were pleased to welcome the Rev Chris Brown from Thaxted who took the Christingle service and who is supporting us in the Benefice as part of the ministry team.

The floodlights were mended in time for the Christmas services which were well attended in all four

churches. It was lovely to have a packed church on Christmas Day amidst the beautiful flowers.

Sampford Singers

The Sampford Singers enhanced our worship at a number of those services. They also sang at the Plough Sunday service at Thaxted recently and were joined by farmers and the Morris Men who pulled the plough up the aisle to be blessed by the Bishop.

An excellent lunch was provided by volunteers for 150 people.

*Sue Collins
Church warden*

St Mary the Virgin, Lt Sampford

I write on a warm but bright winter's day. The weather has been so unpredictable our poor wildlife must wonder what has happened to this topsy-turvy world. We continue to feed the birds and squirrels; thankfully we have not had to break much ice this winter. We are extremely fortunate that this part of the country has escaped flooding. Our hearts go out to those who have had much suffering. We continue to remember them in our prayers.

St Mary's continues to attract many visitors. We were fortunate to have over 20 on Christmas Day. Sadly, we did not have any other service over Christmas but it was lovely to see such an interest in the building and churchyard. We are trying to think of ways of using the building for other forms of fellowship and friendship. St Mary's is the only place in Little Sampford for us to come together as a village. We were delighted to have a magnificent congregation for our Nine Lessons and Carols on the Sunday before Christmas. We had not had this service at St. Mary's for seven years so it was very special. I would like to say a huge thank you to all of you



who came, but especially folk from Little Sampford. Some of you were married here or were christened or have had children christened and it was wonderful to see you all back where you belong.

We do have a service of reflection bi-monthly with music, readings and stillness. This might be a service you would enjoy as it is informal but meaningful, especially as so many people said how much they enjoyed the carols and readings.

On mentioning other ways of using the building, do you have any ideas? We do have an evening of music every other Tuesday. Would you be interested in A Flower Arranging Course or Book Club? I wonder if anyone has any time on their hands to help to clean. There is also a position for Churchwarden, along with readers, sides men and flower

arrangers. Our churchyard does have a small amount of paid work but the rest is reliant on volunteers to help. Could you manage a small patch? We are almost at the end of January and in couple of weeks we will be munching on pancakes for the start of Lent. We either give something up or why not take something on. Maybe you could or would like to be part of the life of our beautiful village church.

St Mary's has a large project to fundraise as a number of windows need work to address the damage they have sustained over hundreds of years, along with a number of other problems. I am looking to explore funding if I can get any grants to help with ongoing works. In the meantime watch the diary for fundraising events. Again, any help or ideas would be encouraging.

I have not received the schedule of services for Easter but I very much hope to welcome you to any of our services throughout the year. Please do contact me if you require any information and I would be only too pleased to help you.

*Roberta Hayward, Churchwarden
colinhayward293@btinternet.com*

Holy Week & Easter Services

Please see our programme of services in Holy Week and Easter shown below. Do come and journey with us as we move from Maundy Thursday, through the events of Good Friday to Easter Eve and Easter Day and as we travel around each of our four churches. Everyone is welcome.

Date	Day	Time	Church	Service
20-Mar	Palm Sunday	8.00am	Radwinter	Holy Communion (said)
		10.00am	Little Sampford	4 Churches Holy Communion
22-Mar	Tuesday	7.30pm	Great Sampford	Compline
24-Mar	Maundy Thursday	7.30pm	Great Sampford	4 Churches Holy Communion with the Sampford Singers
25-Mar	Good Friday	10.00am	Radwinter	Service of reflection with the Sampford Singers
26-Mar	Easter Eve	7.00pm	Hempstead	Service of light
27-Mar	Easter Day	8.00am	Radwinter	Holy Communion (said)
		10.00am	Little Sampford	4 Churches Holy Communion with the Sampford Singers

What else do we do?

Approximately once a month we provide a Sunday club for children of primary school age with stories and activities. We call this 'Churchtastic' – a name coined by the children themselves. For the under 5's we run, jointly with the Baptist Church, a relaxed service on a weekday at 1.30pm, with a story, song, prayer, craft and refreshments. This is called 'Seedlings'. If there is a fifth Sunday in a month we often arrange something different for our main Sunday service which is advertised separately.

Sampfords Cricket Club

Throughout the history of human literature there has been a finite list of stock characters that continually and repetitively appear however primitively original the author may feel their writing is. The reason these characters continually crop up, and will keep doing so until the sun swells and destroys the earth and all on it, is because they are character traits copied from the real world and the people around us, and the one thing we all know is that people are basically the same recipe with slightly different icing.

Sampfords cricket club is no different from literature and thus the rest of society. We have a selection of players that fit perfectly the stock characters of antiquity. We have the fall-guy, the gentleman thief, a paladin and a mummy's boy, we have a yokel, rake and a wise fool.

Being such a small club there are of course some characters that we do not have currently playing for us.

I expect they were here in the past and trust they will re appear within our futures. If you believe you fit any of these bills, or know someone who does, and wish to take up the valiant sport of cricket, then please get in touch. We are looking for the loner warrior hero who rides into town to save the day, a whisky priest, the mad scientist or an endearingly innocent and wholesome local ingénue, then please come on down and show your support for the club.

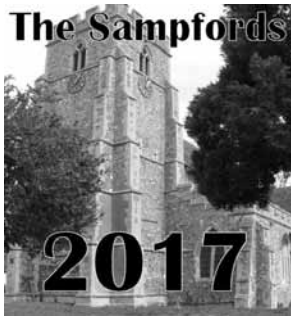
In my playing career for The Sampfords, around the 25 year mark, and during my 11 year epoch as captain, I was truly thankful that the cricket team was blessed and served by many quietly powerful luminaries, the latest of which was our former long-serving chairman, Mr Brian Gypps, a man on a quest to serve the cricket club and village in any duty or endeavour. Brian did great things for our club from the mundane to the magnificent

– fixing mowers, overseeing the purchase of the field to help secure our long term playing future and the construction of our beautiful new pavilion in 2009 to ensure us players can eat their tea undercover when required and that malevolent body odours are kept away from the rest of the village population following a match.

As the new chairman I think my character is trending towards either the romanticised outlaw or the hooker with a heart of gold so I just hope I can fulfil the role as proficiently and effectively as Brian did. What else can we do up at the ground? Some new players bringing with them scores upon heaps of spectators and then the required grandstand perhaps. Or maybe an immigration and visa application centre. I will keep you all informed.

Simon Hughes
Chairman Sampfords Cricket Club

Sampfords' Calendar

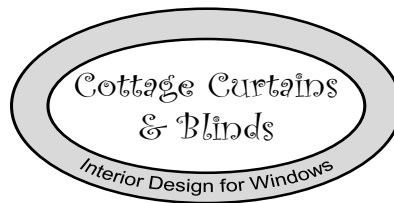


Sampfords' Village Hall Committee are to produce a calendar for 2017, featuring photos of both parishes.

We are calling on everyone to take some interesting photos and submit them. Or you can dig deep into your treasured albums if you have something of special interest from years ago. The subjects can be anything you choose, as long as they reflect local life – landscapes, buildings, events, transport, work, play... If you photograph people, please make sure you have their permission for the photo to be published. And of course, only submit your own photos – we don't want to fall foul of any copyright issues.

All entries will be judged and the best 13 will make it to the calendar (one for the cover, in case you were wondering). The judge is Kelly Bishop, landlady of the Horse and Groom in Cornish Hall End. The prize for each published photo will be the glory of your name in print plus a free copy of the calendar itself.

Electronic entries can be emailed to wend92@me.com, or contact prints and memory cards can be sent to Wendy Peacock at 2 Robletts Villas, Gt Sampfords, enclosing your details so they can be returned. We can accept a maximum of six photos from any one person, and entries must be received by 17th September. Calendars will go on sale at the start of November, and all profits will go towards the upkeep and running of the Village Hall.



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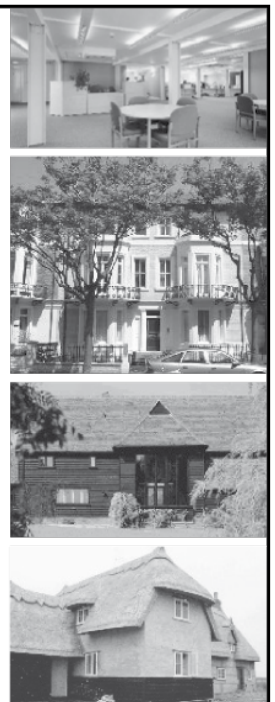
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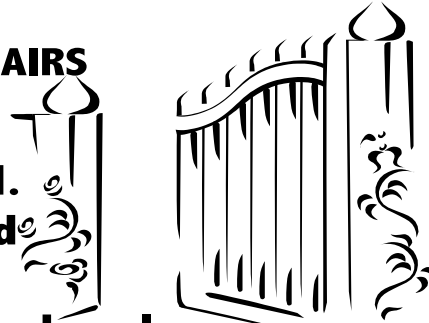
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Bluebell Springs Back to Life



Bluebell clean-up squad: Ross Midgley, Alison Midgley, Rob Boreham, Claire Dittrich, Ben Rudder, Mark Dymond, Mark Welbourn, John Cockman, Rob Hamerston, Richard Crane, Nigel Smith, Chris Bampton, Chris Scott, Julian McCarthy, Sean McCarthy, Kim Griffin, Sue Ray, Eileen Shimmin, John Sladen, Ann Woods, Martyn Long, Jess Long, Stuart McNeill, Brian Ray. Also Terry Rodgers, Sophie Boreham and Paul Davies (who took the picture)

The Bluebell is almost ready to re-open, a full year after Rod and Marian Stokes served their last pint.

Hempstead's historic pub is now under the management of the Henham-based Saffron Brewery, promising an ideal partnership between Utlesford's (arguably) most notorious inn and its largest craft brewer.

Saffron Brewery even has a *Turpin's Temptation* in its established range of beers, ready to serve in the pub where Turpin himself was born.

Running the show are Peter Hoskins and his son James, directors of Saffron Brewery. As *Ambo* went

to press they were recruiting staff, in particular live-in managers and a chef, with the aim of re-opening in mid-March.

The building, still owned by the Nagel family of gems merchants in London, has needed a considerable amount of repair and refurbishment work, not least new floor timbers to replace rotten joists which have been resting on bare earth possibly for centuries.

Two workmen have been camping upstairs to ensure an early start each day. They expect to have the kitchen up and running by summer.

The burst of activity after nine

months' closure kicked off on November 28 with a big clean-up operation when at least 25 villagers turned out for the day to tackle the overgrown garden and accumulation of rubbish.

Peter Hoskins was so impressed by the effort he wrote to Parish Council Chairman Sean McCarthy: "I am touched and grateful beyond words for all your collective help... Rest assured we will not let your community down."

The Hoskins also donated a barrel of beer to the pre-Christmas "Pop-up pub", a series of informal get-togethers held in the Village Hall while *The Bluebell* was shut.

The Worst Joke Won!

The "Groanometer" was in full swing at Hempstead's big pre-Christmas festivity in the village hall.

Hempstead Dramatic Society hosted a variety evening on December 5, where guests enjoyed an evening of jollity including a table round of Christmas Cracker jokes.

The winner was Alex Knibb's niece

Tara Coyle, aged 8, with a gag so absurd it left the audience groaning for more.

What did the farmer say when he lost his tractor?

He said "Where's my tractor?"

Branded 'Festive Plus', the evening also featured sketches by Mark

Dymond, Tricia Ridgway and Diana Frost, Alex Knibbs, Paul Frainer (guitar), Liz Buckridge, Denise Vincent, Cath Sladen and Alan Weedon.

Festive Plus was organised by HDS chair Liz Buckridge. Richard Crane was Master of Ceremonies while Paul Davies on keyboard led the singing of carols and seasonal songs.

Saffron Walden Choral Society

Puccini: *Messa di Gloria*

Rossini: *Stabat Mater*

Saffron Hall, Saffron Walden

Saturday 19th March 2016 - 7.30pm

Full of youthful exuberance and irresistible melodies, Giacomo Puccini's stunning *Messa di Gloria* was written as a graduation piece when the composer was just 21 and shows him at his melodic best. Saffron Walden Choral Society has paired it with Rossini's wonderful setting of *Stabat Mater* (popularised by Pavarotti) for an evening of Italian sacred music at its most operatic. A superb quartet of soloists boasts 'bel canto' singers from the international operatic and concert stage circuit while Chameleon Arts Orchestra provide professional orchestral support.



Laura Mitchell - Soprano

Laura Mitchell: soprano

Diana Moore: mezzo soprano

Milos Bulajic: tenor

Andrew Greenan: bass

Chameleon Arts Orchestra

Janet Wheeler: conductor

Tickets will be available from a Buy Tickets link on our website (www.swchoral.org.uk) to the Saffron Hall booking system, from Saffron Hall Box Office (0845 548 7650), Saffron Walden Tourist Information Centre (01799 524002) and, subject to availability, on the door.



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The Great British Fish & Chip Supper

Hold a Fish and Chip Supper to help spinal cord injured people rebuild lives after injury

Great British Fish and Chip Supper – Friday 20th May 2016

Want to eat Fish and Chips, while raising money for charity?

Hold a fish and chip supper on Friday 20th May 2016 whilst raising awareness of spinal cord injury and supporting SIA's vital services.

You can hold a fish and chip supper in your own home, at work or hold a larger supper at your local community centre.

SIA will provide a fundraising pack containing hints and tips, recipes, invitations and donation envelopes. By inviting 8 friends and asking them to donate an additional £5.00 means you will raise at least £40.00 from your supper but we will also give you additional fundraising ideas to raise even more money for SIA.

Just £50 could contribute towards the support from our Peer Support Service for one hour, in a district general hospital or Major Trauma Centre.

In 2016 we want to make the batter matter and raise £40,000 from



everyone holding suppers. Last year we raised £12,000 from the suppers.

The money raised from the suppers will help the Spinal Injuries Association offer support to individuals who become paralysed and their families, from the moment a spinal

injury occurs, and for the rest of their lives by providing services and publications which enable and encourage paralysed people to rebuild lives after spinal cord injury.

Every year in the UK over 1,000 people experience a spinal cord injury and there are an estimated 40,000 spinal cord injured people in the UK alone.

Community Fundraising Manager, Elizabeth Wright, says, "The Fish and Chip Supper is a wonderful opportunity for a great evening with friends and family. We are also encouraging people who work to hold a Fish and Chip Lunch in their work places to raise even more funds. You may be even a local community group wanting to run a fun evening with your

group.

For more information or request a fundraising pack call Elizabeth Wright on 0845 071 4350 or email fundraising@siafishandchips.co.uk or visit www.siafishandchips.co.uk

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March 2016

Date	Time	Title & (Cert)
Thu 3 rd	6:50pm	Hangmen – Wyndham's Theatre
Fri 4 th	8:00pm	The Hateful Eight (18)
Sat 5 th	3:00pm	Capture the Flag (PG)
Sat 5 th	8:00pm	The Hateful Eight (18)
Sun 6 th	2:00pm	Capture the Flag
Sun 6 th	5:00pm	45 Years (15)
Mon 7 th	8:00pm	The Assassin (12)
Wed 9 th	7:30pm	Jonas Kaufmann: An Evening with Puccini – La Scala
Fri 11 th	8:00pm	Creed (12A)
Sat 12 th	2:00pm	Goosebumps (PG)
Sat 12 th	5:00pm	Room (15)
Sat 12 th	8:00pm	Room (15)
Sun 13 th	11:00am	Babe (U) Cinema for Tinies
Sun 13 th	3:00pm	Spartacus - Bolshoi
Sun 13 th	8:00pm	Room (15)
Mon 14 th	8:00pm	Rams (15)
Fri 18 th	8:00pm	The Revenant (15)
Sat 19 th	3:00pm	Goosebumps (PG)
Sat 19 th	4:00pm	Inside Out (U) Pop-up Saffron Screen
Sat 19 th	8:00pm	The Revenant (15) / Suffragette (12A)
Sun 20 th	2:00pm	Goosebumps (PG)
Sun 20 th	5:00pm	Brooklyn (12A)
Sun 20 th	8:00pm	The Revenant (15)
Mon 21 st	7:15pm	Boris Godunov – Royal Opera House
Fri 25 th	8:00pm	The Big Short (15)
Sat 26 th	3:00pm	Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Road Chip (U)
Sat 26 th	8:00pm	The Big Short (15)
Sun 27 th	3:00pm	Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Road Chip (U)
Sun 27 th	8:00pm	Youth (15)
Mon 28 th	3:00pm	The Railway Children – York Theatre Royal
Mon 28 th	8:00pm	Janis: Little Girl Blue
Tue 29 th	4:00pm	Oddball and the Penguins
Tue 29 th	8:00pm	Youth (15)
Wed 30 th	4:00pm	Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Road Chip (U)
Wed 30 th	8:00pm	Dad's Army (PG)
Thu 31 st	4:00pm	Oddball and the Penguins (U)
Thu 31 st	8:00pm	Dad's Army (PG)



The Hateful Eight



Room



Spartacus - Bolshoi



The Revenant



The Big Short



Alvin and the Chipmunks



Dad's Army

Tickets: Eve: Full price £7.70, 65 & over £6.90; Other Adult conc: £5.90, 18 & under: £5.50 (£4.10 on Mondays)

Day: Full price £6.70, 65 & over £5.80; Other Adult conc: £5.10, 18 & under: £4.30

Cinema for Tinies: Adult £3.90, Child £2.90, Under 2s Free **Special Events:** See our website for prices

April 2016

Date	Time	Title & (Cert)
Fri 1 st	4:00pm	The Iron Giant: Signature Edition (U)
Fri 1 st	8:00pm	Spotlight (15)
Sat 2 nd	3:00pm	Dad's Army (PG)
Sat 2 nd	8:00pm	Spotlight (15)
Sun 3 rd	2:00pm	Dad's Army (PG)
Sun 3 rd	5:00pm	Dad's Army (PG)
Sun 3 rd	8:00pm	Spotlight (15)
Mon 4 th	4:00pm	The Iron Giant: Signature Edition (U)
Mon 4 th	8:00pm	Marguerite (15)
Tue 5 th	4:00pm	Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Road Chip (U)
Tue 5 th	8:00pm	Zoolander 2 (12A)
Wed 6 th	4:00pm	The Iron Giant: Signature Edition (U)
Wed 6 th	7:15pm	Giselle – Royal Opera House
Thu 7 th	4:00pm	Zoolander 2 (12A)
Thu 7 th	8:00pm	Pride and Prejudice and Zombies (15)
Fri 8 th	4:00pm	Oddball and the Penguins (U)
Fri 8 th	8:00pm	Trumbo (15)
Sat 9 th	2:00pm	Oddball and the Penguins (U)
Sat 9 th	5:00pm	Pride and Prejudice and Zombies (15)
Sat 9 th	8:00pm	Trumbo (15)
Sun 10 th	4:00pm	Don Quixote – Royal Opera House
Sun 10 th	8:00pm	A Bigger Splash (15)
Mon 11 th	8:00pm	A Bigger Splash (15)
Tue 12 th	7:30pm	Monet to Matisse – Royal Academy
Fri 15 th	8:00pm	How To Be Single (15)
Sat 16 th	3:00pm	Kung Fu Panda 3 (PG)
Sat 16 th	8:00pm	Triple 9 (15)
Sun 17 th	2:00pm	Kung Fu Panda 3 (PG)
Sun 17 th	5:00pm	Trumbo (15)
Sun 17 th	8:00pm	Triple 9 (15)
Mon 18 th	8:00pm	A War (15)
Thu 21 st	6:50pm	National Theatre Live TBC
Fri 22 nd	8:00pm	Hail, Caesar! (cert TBC)
Fri 22 nd	8:00pm	Pop-up Saffron Screen TBC
Sat 23 rd	3:00pm	Kung Fu Panda 3 (PG)
Sat 23 rd	8:00pm	Hail, Caesar! (cert TBC)
Sun 24 th	2:00pm	Kung Fu Panda 3 (PG)
Sun 24 th	5:00pm	The Lady in the Van (12A)
Sun 24 th	8:00pm	Hail, Caesar! (cert TBC)
Mon 25 th	7:15pm	Lucia de Lammermoor – Royal Opera House
Fri 29 th	8:00pm	Eddie the Eagle (cert TBC)
Sat 30 th	3:00pm	The Divergent Series: Allegiant (cert TBC)
Sat 30 th	8:00pm	Eddie the Eagle (cert TBC)
Sun 1 st May	2:00pm	The Divergent Series: Allegiant (cert TBC)
Sun 1 st	5:00pm	Eddie the Eagle (cert TBC)
Sun 1 st	8:00pm	Eddie the Eagle (cert TBC)
Mon 2 nd	8:00pm	The Pearl Button (cert TBC)



Spotlight



Trumbo



Triple 9



Hail, Caesar!



Kung Fu Panda 3



Eddie the Eagle

Tickets: Eve: Full price £7.70, 65 & over £6.90; Other Adult conc: £5.90, 18 & under: £5.50 (£4.10 on Mondays)
Day: Full price £6.70, 65 & over £5.80; Other Adult conc: £5.10, 18 & under: £4.30
Cinema for Tinies: Adult £3.90, Child £2.90, Under 2s Free **Special Events:** See our website for prices

The Directory

Churchwardens

St Mary the Virgin - Radwinter CB10 2SW

Wendy Rowley	599753
Harvey Orrock (Deputy)	599236

St Michael the Archangel - Gt. Sampford CB10 2RG

Sue Collins	586354
Sarah Parker (Deputy)	586327

St Andrew's - Hempstead CB10 2PA

Alan Weedon	599366
Hugh Nicholson	599354

St Mary the Virgin - Little Sampford CB10 2QL

Roberta Hayward	586212
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Parochial Church Councils

Radwinter

Vice Chair	Harvey Orrock	599236
Treasurer	Brendan O'Brien	599571
Secretary	Wendy Rowley	599753

The Sampfords

Vice Chair	Graham Cook	586343
Treasurer	Graham Cook	586343
Secretary	Anthea McMyn	01371 810850

Hempstead

Vice Chairman	Alan Weedon	599366
Treasurer	vacancy	
Secretary	Zoe Hoar	599466

Our Benefice Priest

Revd Philip Tarris, Priest in Charge, Thaxted,
The Sampfords and Radwinter with Hempstead
The Vicarage, Watling Lane, Thaxted, Dunmow
Dunmow CM6 3QB
01371 830374
pgtarris@gmail.com

Rural Dean	Rev'd David Tomlinson	500947
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Baptist Church, Great Sampford

Pastor	Sue Johnston	586164	Secretary	Beryl Kemp	586432
			Treasurer	Ann Wolstenholme	586480

Parish Councils

Radwinter

www.radwinter.org radwinterparishcouncil@gmail.com

Chairman	Mark Halls	Trees & Footpaths, Rec Ground, Village Dev/Planning	599537
Vice Chair	Eileen Duck	Planning, Highways, Env't, Youth, Village Development	599691
Councillor	Victoria Boyden	Trees & Footpaths	599537
Councillor	Jill Mary	Environment, Public Transport, Publicity	599667
Councillor	Rob Rains	Village Development, Recreation Ground	07773 353755
Councillor	Paul Kleber	tbc	599824
Councillor	Pete Fitch	tbc	599565
Parish Clerk	Cathryn Carlisle	Clerk to the Council	01440 731964

Sampfords

www.sampfords.org.uk

Chairman	Christopher Robinson	Finance	586276
Vice Chairman	William Burton	Planning, Highways, Footpaths & Litter pick	586779
Councillor	Jane Lawrence	Publicity	586286
Councillor	Graham Keen	Grasscutting and Trees	586486
Councillor	Kath Thompson	Play Area and Youth, Transport & Village Assets	586623
Councillor	George Smith	Play Area and Youth, Sport and Broadband	586511
Councillor	Kay Adye	Sport and Broadband, Play Area and Youth	586845
Councillor	Gordon Deuce	Planning, Highways, Footpaths	586766
Councillor	Rhiannon Chappell	Website, Events, Liaison with village organisations	586819
Parish Clerk	Sarah Parker		586327

NB: If there are any errors or omissions, please let us know before the next edition

SPRING 2016

Hempstead www.hempstead-essex.org.uk

Chairman	Sean McCarthy	Chairman and Police Liaison	599558
Councillor	David Drane	Highways and Public Rights of Way	599397
Councillor	Niki McNeil	Website	598074
Councillor	Sara Scott	Tree Warden and Neighbourhood Watch	599178
Councillor	John Sladen	Emergency Planning and Village Hall Rep	586429
Councillor	Alan Weedon	Environmental Issues	599366
Councillor	Mark Welbourn	Legal and Traffic Issues	598113
Parish Clerk	Martyn Long	Clerk and Responsible Officer	01440 730196
District and County Councillors; Local Police Officer			
Uttlesford District Councillor		Simon Howell	586619
Essex County Councillor		Simon Walsh	01371 870334
Nominated Local Police Officer		PC Hannah Griffiths	01376 551312
hannah.griffiths@essex.pnn.police.uk			

Village Activities

Hempstead & District Gardeners' Club	Chairman	Diana Frost	599771
Hempstead Bellringers		Matt Antrobus	599229
Hempstead Village Hall	Bookings	Sally Rowden	599257
Hempstead Dramatic Society	Chairman	Alex Knibbs	599611
Radwinter Google Group	Chair	Julie Haines plisner.haines@btinternet.com	
Radwinter Pre-School	Manager	Maria Powell (info@radwinterpreschool.co.uk)	599797
Radwinter Recreation Ground	Hon. Sec.	Janina Vigurs	599631
Radwinter Neighbourhood Watch		James Briggs	599352
Radwinter Bellringers		Matt Antrobus matt.antrobus@babraham.ac.uk	
Radwinter Cricket Club	Secretary	Mark Fanthorpe	07770 393571
Radwinter Football Club	Manager	Mark Jeffs radwinterfc@gmail.com	
Radwinter Pavilion Fund Raising	Coordinator	Julie Haines	599764
Radwinter Village Hall	Bookings	Wendy Rowley	07852 954162
Radwinter WI	President	Judith Thompson	599563
Radwinter Bowls Club	Secretary	Brian Hyett	501616
Radwinter Lectures		Sue Bright	599396
Radwinter Cubs - Radwinter Sch. (Weds 6.30-8.00pm)		Julie Pledger	599493
Radwinter Friendship Group	Chairlady	Diane Redfern	599365
Radwinter Pavilion & fence padlocks		Julie Haines/Janina Vigurs	599764
Sampfords Church Youth Club	Leader	Martin Boughtwood	586440
Sampfords Cricket Club	Secretary	George Smith	07896 618944
		Cpts. James Smith/Steve Thrower	586511 / 07779 168214
Sampfords Flower Show	Secretary	Fay Stalley	586397
Sampfords Baby & Toddler	Chair	Sue Johnston	586164
Sampfords Hand Bell Ringers		Margaret Sorger	586356
Sampfords Signal (weekly email update)	Contact email:	sampfordssignal@gmail.com	
Sampford Singers		Ali Wakelin	07717 125743
The Sampfords Society	Chair	Steve Horne	586237
Sampfords Primary School PTA	Chair	Sara Goggin	586287
	Secretary	Nicola Robertson	586932
Sampfords Tennis Club	Chair	Mike Lindsell	586586
	Membership	Joan Lyon	586543
Sampfords WI	Secretary	Jane Lawrence	586286
Gt. Sampford Fitness Club	Organiser	Edna Banks	586409
Gt. Sampford Baptist Hall	Bookings	Beryl Kemp	586432
Gt. Sampford Village Hall	Bookings	Wendy Peacock (wend92@me.com)	586065
Baptist Sunday School		Ann Wolstenholme	586480
Seedlings Service		Sarah Kidd	586576
Sampfords Footpath Representative		Clare Watkins	586311
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To advertise in Ambo, please contact

Frank Bannister

Telephone 07850 199447

or 01799 598150

frankthebank2000@btinternet.com

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