



All Saints, Great Thurlow

THE Village Link



St Peter's, Little Thurlow

March 2010



News and views from Great and Little Thurlow
plus The Little Bradley Column

Free to every residence (£5.00 p.a. when purchased)

THE VILLAGE LINK

**Editorial co-ordinator
Reporters**

**Conrad Hawkins 783259
Gt. Thurlow Margaret Ince 783117
Lt. Thurlow Iris Eley 783534
Lt. Bradley Diana Curtis 783898**

Village Link deadline 15th of each month. email villagelink@aol.com

From the Rector. A goodly congregation worshiped on the first Sunday of Lent at the Benefice Service and Communion at Barnardiston. The weather had threatened its worst but a large number of families came. ASH WEDNESDAY saw the beginning of Lent earlier in the week and the Lent Course has begun and if the first one is anything to go by they are well worth the effort. Steve and Kathy Diddams are organising and leading them. Together with the Lent Lunches, which if you have never been to then perhaps its worth considering, the Benefice is marking LENT in a full way. Despite all these “corporate” events there is also the call to a personal time for reflection and prayer on how we live the Christian life> We might paraphrase that slogan we see at Christmas but with a twist, “Lent is not just for Lent, it’s for Life!” Christians are called to a godly lent and sharing in the Lenten disciplines with others helps us through and even to change. **The Benefice Service on 21st March, when Passiontide begins, will be at Lt. Wrattling at 10.00am.** This is one our smaller churches, but with a big heart and always a warm welcome. The whole of March is in Lent but there are some points for celebration in a less sacrificial way. **Mothering Sunday** falls on Sunday 14th. March and at **11.00am in Little Thurlow** we will have the Mothering Sunday Holy Communion Service. Is there a volunteer to read from one of the younger members of the congregation, ‘phone me on 710216. **History of Mothering Sunday:** Traditionally this was the Sunday when most churchgoers returned for a service at their local or mother church and an occasion for family reunions when children who were working away returned home. Most historians think that it was the return to the 'Mother' church which led to the tradition of children, particularly those working as domestic servants, or as apprentices, being given the day off to visit their mother and family. As they walked along the country lanes, children would pick wild flowers or violets to take to church or give to their mother as a small gift. No doubt health and safety might have a word to say about that today! **Palm Sunday** will see us at Great Thurlow Church for the distribution of the Palm Crosses and the Service of the Word. In **Holy Week** there will be Compline said at Little Wrattling on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday at 6pm and on **Maundy Thursday** the service will be at 7.30pm in Kedington. **Good Friday** we will be at Little Thurlow at 11.00am. On **Easter Eve** the service for Families and Children will be at 6.00pm at Great Wrattling when we renew our Baptismal Vows and let off a few rockets!! **Easter Day at 9.30am there is a Service of Holy Communion at Kedington and Great Bradley at 11.00am.** As my Theological College Principal said by the end of Holy Week we should be exhausted.

John Eley. Rector

NATURE NOTE. I've just seen one of the great natural spectacles in Britain. Birdwatchers tend to get most excited over rare and exotic birds, but this encounter involved a very common bird, and not an especially beautiful one, indeed a bird regarded as a pest by some people in the country – the rook. But I wasn't watching just one rook, I was watching over 10,000 as they came in to roost at a traditional winter roost site in the Yare valley in Norfolk. I positioned myself in the open fen on a chilly February evening with the wind in the east, and waited. About an hour before nightfall the rooks started streaming in from all directions, ragged skeins of birds arriving from up to twenty miles away to congregate in this one wood. The darkening skies were full of them, whirling around like black chaff. And the noise was tremendous: imagine the communal cawing at a church rookery and then multiply that up several hundred times; what was at first a distant conversational murmuring became a deafening clamour as the streams of birds converged and congealed in one towering vortex. For a long time they spiralled upwards, like a gigantic shoal of fish seen from the ocean bed. Then there was a moment when they all descended as one to a huge grassy area that served as a mustering ground, and as if at a signal they suddenly all went totally silent, rather like an expectant theatre audience just before the curtain goes up. Then the curtain did go up and the enormous flock rose in one last combined aerial display and after a minute or two they all descended to their roost in the nearby wood. I could no longer make out the shapes of individual birds in the murk, but every branch was lined to near breaking point with them and each tree had this densely serrated silhouette. Then silence, as the darkness became complete. At dawn (which I didn't actually wait for on this occasion, since when the magic moment had passed I began to realize how cold I was!) the whole process is reversed and they again disperse to their feeding grounds in the surrounding countryside.

The poet John Clare captures this perfectly, as usual:

Whilst many a mingled swarthy crowd –
Rook, crow and jackdaw – noising loud,
Fly to and fro to dreary fen,
Dull winter's dreary flight again;
They flop on heavy wings away
As soon as morning wakens grey,
And when the sun sets round and red,
Return to naked woods to bed.

This extraordinary spectacle is repeated every evening in the winter months in the same place at the same time, and has been so from time immemorial – an ancient rite of winter before the spring.

Jeremy Mynott

Thurlow Estate Farms. Cutting vegetation on ditch banks (internal sides) and hedgecutting finished on 28 February. Ditch cutting resumes on 15 September and hedgecutting on 31 July. This is to ensure minimal disturbance to nesting birds and animals. Calving is almost complete with just three cows still to go. The calves are doing well and surprisingly don't mind the cold as long as they are dry. Bulls are reintroduced to the heifers on 20 March to start the next seasonal cycle. Warmer weather is welcomed to prompt both grass and crop growth. Silage stocks are low owing to the lack of grass last year so an early spring would make life easier. Similarly, the oilseed rape and barleys are looking tired and battered, after weeks of cold weather and the ongoing assault from pigeons and rabbits. When ground conditions allow, the first applications of nitrogen are being applied to the rape to stimulate early growth. Current applications are usually first thing in the morning after an overnight frost. When the frost thaws the ground is too wet to allow access. EDF Energy are proposing to refurbish the overhead lines which run from Stradishall to Little Thurlow along Broad Road and Great Thurlow to Great Wratting. The work is proposed during the summer and the lines will be shut down during the scheme. The Estate is currently arranging access routes to ensure minimal damage to crops and land under the Entry Level Stewardship scheme.

Thurlow Woodlands. The Woodland Management Plan produced is pending internal and subsequent external approval. This involves up-to-date maps of the Estate's 184 woods are being produced, a full survey of the woodlands being undertaken and a 5 yr plan of forestry operations being approved by the Forestry commission. In the meantime felling progress in Norney Plantation has been badly affected by the wet weather and saturated ground conditions. Sadly the forecast over the coming week is much of the same, so operations are likely to shift elsewhere. You may have seen the area adjacent to the graveyard on The Street in Little Thurlow is being cleared. This area forms part of Chapel House. Firewood deliveries have now stopped to allow stockpiling for next season. This is to ensure we have dry and seasoned logs to deliver for next winter. For those of you wishing to order a load of seasoned firewood before the proposed price review on 1 August 2010 please ring 01440 783661. Gray-Nicolls have agreed to purchase 62 cricket bat willow trees from Great Wratting. The timber will be taken to their Sussex timber yard and manufactured into cricket bats. Gray-Nicolls will arrange the necessary felling licence in addition to carrying out all felling and extraction and replanting 200 x 4yr old willow sets on the site. It is normal practice for the willow purchaser to undertake the felling, as there is an art to felling the trees and the techniques involved try to avoid damaging the timber fibres which, if done incorrectly, could damage the timber, making it obsolete.

Thurlow Estate Management Limited . Following our plea for information with regards to the damaged wall at the bottom of Withersfield Road, I am pleased to say we have identified the vehicle involved and the matter has been passed to the Suffolk Constabulary. Having received two comparable quotations to make good the damage, the work will cost in excess of £3,500, so a very big thank you!

Hunts Park Farm is now occupied, following its refurbishment. Properties to let 91 School Terrace, Gt Thurlow (Semi Detached, 2 Bed, OFCH, Garden, Off-road Parking). Manor Farm Office, Horseheath (653 sq.ft, OFCH, Off-road Parking, Broadband). Rook Tree Barn, Great Wrattling (1,830 sq.ft), open plan air conditioned converted barn with first floor conference room, OFCH, car park, broadband). We also have a number of sheds/garages available for rent, and units for storage. For more information, please contact the Estate Office (01440 783661).

Thurlow Hunt. After a sharp frost the night before, there were early speculations that the Cambridgeshire Hunt Point-to-Point might be cancelled. However, the sun broke through and the weather at Horseheath Racecourse turned out to be glorious. Despite a good number of initial declarations, many of the usual owners and trainers decided to keep their racehorses at the yard. There were, however, entries from as far away as Shropshire. At the time of writing, preparation is well underway for the Thurlow Hunt Point-to-Point which will be held on 27 February. The fences, which take a fair battering during each race, have been rebuilt where necessary using Estate birch and conifer. Four bitches are due to whelp in March. Meanwhile Thurlow Bookcase '07 has a litter with 2 doghounds called Dalesman and Daystar and 2 bitches called Daydream and Daylight. They will be going out to walk in early April. Another season under the Hunting Act 2004 is nearing the end. The hunting community are anxiously awaiting a date for the general election. It is hoped that a change in government will allow a free vote on the future of the Act.

Thurlow Shoot. March provides a slight respite for the gamekeeper (and his dogs). Efforts to retain the game birds in certain woods/covers have now relaxed and dogging-in stopped. However as the cold period continues, the birds find it increasingly difficult to find food, so regular feeding continues, albeit on a smaller scale. The Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust grey squirrel survey commences in March and runs through to the summer. The survey identifies squirrel activity and damage in two woods; one where squirrels are controlled and the second where no control is undertaken.

Daffodil Dawdle Walk. On Sunday 28th March, The Long Distance Walkers Association (LDWA) has organised the "Daffodil Dawdle" encompassing a 26 mile or 18 mile challenge walk starting and finishing at Kirtling Village Hall. The route of the walk crosses Thurlow Estate between Withersfield and Weston Colville with checkpoints in Great Thurlow, Weston Colville and Burrough Green. Last year there were approx. 150 participants. For more information please visit the national web site www.ldwa.org.uk.

AND FINALLY..... Hedgehogs.....Why can't they just share the hedge!!

THE BOWLS CLUB urgently requires members for this new season. Experienced players or novices are all welcome as help and training can be given. Please contact Rosemary Heyes on 783460.

APIARY DIARY. This month, I thought that I would walk you through the basics of bee terminology, describe the hive and its various parts and what equipment I use regularly in the Apiary. Lets describe the bees first. Under normal circumstances, there is only one Queen per colony of bees. The queen will lay eggs at varying rates during the year depending on the colony's need. At this time of year, she lays just a few eggs a day to strengthen the colony in preparation for the spring flow of nectar, but when she really rev's up in the late spring, she can lay up to 2000 eggs a day. The hive will contain at this time of year about 15,000 worker bees, all sterile females, when the colony's needs are greatest and there is bounty by way of forage, the hives may contain up to 80,000 workers. The queen will also choose, on occasion, to lay male eggs which hatch into drones, usually about 300 per hive in spring. Drones do absolutely nothing in the hive. Much like men generally, they don't clean or cook or hang washing out, they wander around being cared for and fed by the female workers, until the hive has no more use for them. I am sure there are many women out there in who in the autumn would like to do what bees do; force their men out of the home and into the cold and leave them to die, as they serve little or no purpose! In late spring you may be lucky enough to see a 'drone caste' which is a gathering of drones, hanging around on a corner somewhere on the wing, with a pint of honey each and a cigar, waiting for a pretty young virgin queen on her maiden flight after reaching sexual maturity who is searching out for a perfect mate or ten! To look at, the queen is glamorous, with a long slender abdomen, sleek wings and a deep chestnut colour. The drones are much shorter furry boys, with large dark eyes and easily identifiable in the hive. Workers are grey and furry when they are young, but become progressively more shiny as they age, but look and seem far more proportionate than their queen or drones. Although the queen has a sting and venom sac, she would only use this to kill other queens, drones do not possess a sting or venom, and workers have a barbed sting which they can use only once... a worker will commit suicide to protect the colony if provoked, so think if you are stung, that the price to pay is huge for the bee and mildly uncomfortable for us.... disproportionate really, when we are 'mentally hard-wired' to fear anything that flies and is yellow and stripy. Bees are placid insects, unlike wasps who actively search out a fight!

I use the most common hive in the UK, which is a national hive. Boxy but practical, it is precision made to ensure that the bees have the absolute optimum living conditions which benefit honey production. Standing on top of a purpose made hive stand I use an open mesh floor which helps control parasites living in the hive. This has the entrance to the hive for the bees built into it, and upon this sits a brood box. The brood box contains 11 brood frames of wax cells, which the workers maintain in a spotless condition and will have the queen, nursery bees and developing bees of all stages present. Sitting atop the brood box is a slotted thin sheet of plastic called a queen excluder. The slots are cut so that workers can get through but the queen cannot, preventing her from laying in the boxes above which are solely for gathering and storing honey. These boxes, about two thirds the size of the brood box and called supers, also contain 11 frames of wax cells, and is where the workers produce, mature and cap

honey, which we later steal if lucky! You can have any number of supers on a hive, given that bees can fill this with 20 pounds of honey in a week when the rape is in flower! The supers are topped by a crown board (every queen has to have a crown of sorts, I suppose!) and last of all this goes the roof. Sounds simple, but it is made to ensure that the space needed by the bees (6 mm all round) is never exceeded, or the bees tend to glue everything up and make it difficult for the beekeeper to manipulate the hive. Opening and fiddling around in the hives and the bees is called a manipulation, by the way!

I use a flat piece of metal called a hive tool to help me crack open and move various parts of the hive during a manipulation, and a very important piece of kit called a smoker, which I burn straw in to produce a cool smoke. When you begin a manipulation and during the process, you regularly 'smoke' the bees, which causes them to panic, thinking that the hive is under threat of fire. They instantly gorge themselves on honey which sedates them, causing their abdomens to swell making it more difficult for them to sting, and whilst they are occupied elsewhere, they are less likely to be bothered about me poking around in their bedroom and pantry! I also use a bee brush which helps me clear frames to inspect what is going on, which when there are 80,000 bees milling around, can be challenging! Finally, and most important of all, I have sturdy wellingtons, a bee suit and leather gauntlets, all to protect me from the bees. There is absolutely no glory in being stung and I prepare very carefully to prevent bees getting into my suit. There are various other bits of kit such as a queen cage, hive straps, feeders, quilts to keep them warm, porter bee escapes... I could go on, but these will become apparent during the year!

And so, on to the apiary then. The weather is generally warming up and the days becoming longer, and I was absolutely delighted to see bees from one of my hives flying on a warmer sunnier day in February. This time of year is when the hive is most vulnerable from starvation, so I took the opportunity to open and inspect both hives, to ensure that they had adequate stores to see them through until the conditions are right for them to become self sustaining. Funnily enough, they love fondant icing that we use to put onto cakes, so a kilo of this into each hive will see them right for a while! Nothing more to report from the bee's point of view, all seems to be well in both hives, much to my relief. We will be busy preparing for the spring and summer ahead, building spare brood boxes, supers and frames in the coming weeks, and I continue to attend my night classes and to network with other beekeepers of varying experience and capability to ensure that I have the best mix of skills to bring in a harvest this year.

Next month, I will describe (briefly, I promise) the biology of the honeybee, but in the meantime, a bit of trivia... just to survive (not with me robbing their precious bounty either) each colony needs around 500 lbs of nectar per year. To gather 1lb of nectar, bees need to forage on 56,000 flowers. That means that for their annual needs, they forage on 3.4 million flowers... quite incredible, I am exhausted just thinking about it!

Tim Knappett

R.I.P. JOHN LONG of 'Brora', Little Thurlow Green, died on 16th January 2010, age 91 yrs.

John Seaber Long was born on 28th June 1918 and grew up in a farming community, living initially at Great Wilbraham. He joined the army at the beginning of World War 2, enlisting as an artilleryman but soon gaining a Commission to serve as an Aero-Pilot. Having spent a couple of years in Germany at the end of the war, he retired in the rank of Captain. It was during his military service, however, that he met his future wife Helen. They married and raised two daughters, Sheila and Elizabeth, both of whom went on to marry and to bless them with five grandchildren. Ultimately, John became a great grandfather, five times over.

On returning to 'civvy street' John took up farm management, eventually settling to run, and live at Peacocks Farm, Wickhambrook in the early 50's. He retired from farming in 1984, having been assisted by his two eldest grandsons with the harvest that year, and moved to Little Thurlow to a house they named 'Brora' after the Scottish village where Helen grew up. However, he hadn't retired completely – he continued to take a very active part in village life and remained busy with Council and civic duties for both Parish and County Councils, and, indeed, was chosen as Mayor of Bury St Edmunds. This included activities in support of the twin town relationships between Bury St Edmunds and Compiègne in France and Kevelar in Germany. He did all this with the strongest sense of pride and duty in doing his 'bit' for others and the community. Also, he continued to pursue his hobbies - gardening, wood turning, stamp and coin collecting, and bowls. Sadly, Helen passed away in 1992 and although devastated by this John kept busy and took the opportunity to continue to travel to places as diverse as North America, Barbados, Western and Eastern Europe and the Middle East.

John will be greatly missed by all who knew him – as a father, father-in-law, grandfather, great grandfather, friend and colleague. The thing is, though, he was 'great' to everyone and he worked extremely hard to live the best life that he could, and we are all so lucky to have known him by heart.

Liz Crane (daughter)

John was very much part of Thurlow Life. He always supported village events and was a great stalwart of the Thurlow Fayre where he could always be found at the coconut shy. His great love was bowls and was a keen member of the village bowls club. He was much honored to be made President of the club when he retired from playing. Even in later life when he didn't get out much, he was still part of the fabric of the village and wanted to know who was doing what, where and when. He was very much the 'elder statesman'.

In November of last year he moved to Mansion House, a care home in Bury St Edmunds, as living on his own at Brora was becoming increasingly difficult due to ill health. Although he was only there a short while he was extremely happy and comfortable and was visited regularly by his many family and friends. I feel honored to have known John and to have been one of those 'friends'.

Chris Field

LITTLE THURLOW PARISH COUNCIL – Councillors were joined at their February meeting by PCSO Kayla Packman and one member of the public. Following formal co-option, Keith Bunting was welcomed as a new Parish Councillor to fill the one vacancy which existed following the resignation of Jeremy Mynott. The Clerk reported that Anglian Water and Thurlow Estate had been helpful in relation to the clearing of mud from the concrete road/public right of way to the Water Treatment Works. There were no objections to a Planning Application for the felling and reduction in height of conifer trees at Ascham House. Councillors agreed to fund the hire of a marquee for the 2010 Thurlow Fayre, as previously. In response to requests for financial aid, donations are to be made to five local charities. Following discussion, it was agreed that Suffolk County Council should be advised that the Parish Council supported the proposal to change the catchment area for the Colleges in Haverhill. The next meeting will be on Tuesday 16th March 2010, 7.30pm at Thurlow Village Hall.

M. Hawkins, Parish Clerk

GREAT THURLOW HEDGEROW SURVEY – **volunteers are needed** to walk hedgerows and record the trees and shrubs therein. To begin in April in groups of two or three, with initial training, nothing too arduous. Please contact Conrad Hawkins on 783259 if you are able to help or need more information about this opportunity to walk in areas not normally available to the public.

WHAT'S ON AT WICKEN FEN IN MARCH – Spring Walk with the Warden, Sunday 21st March - Discover the fen as it bursts into life, guided by one of our regular wardens Friday 26th or Saturday 27th March - Create functional and sculptural forms for your garden. Led by local basket-maker Nadine Anderson. Tel 01353 720274.

THE VILLAGE SHOP AND POST OFFICE – Well aware of the strains now with VAT returned to 17 ½% and petrol and diesel another stealthy 10pence on a litre, perhaps it would be more economical to use the Village Shop. Our merchandise is competitively priced and the saving on fuel usage could be considerable over a period. It would be appreciated if, say, you could purchase the cleaning materials from the shop. We hate the expression “use it or lose it” but.....With any business there are overheads and fixed costs. We can only keep it going if it is used. Notwithstanding, we are much obliged to the faithful few as regular customers; our thanks to you.

Patricia & Monty Banks

POLICE NEWS. Hopefully we have all survived the worst of the weather and spring is on its way. The nights are eventually pulling out and today I even hung my washing out in the sunshine and it dried!!!!!!!

On a staffing note sadly PCSO Alex is still off sick with her broken ankle, however the cast is off...and hopefully she will be back to work soon. And secondly as happens, we will soon be losing our Inspector Jane Hertzog and a replacement will be announced imminently.

We have just had the monthly SNT meeting and we have 2 new priorities for the South:
1. Farmwatch – overall review and ensure schemes are actively running. 2. Youth provision within the villages of Kedington and Clare. Anyone interested in signing up for Farm Watch or receiving general crime prevention advice please contact the team or come and meet us at one of our engagements.

The next SNT tasking meeting is Wednesday 3rd of March 2010 2.30pm at Whepstead Village Hall. Please come along and tell us what issues concern you.

Previously we have tackled Burglary (outbuildings) and speeding in certain villages. We have visited many small businesses to offer crime prevention advice and worked with Neighbourhood Watch to improve communication between the Police and the various schemes. We continue to conduct Speed checks in the villages and support the Community Speed Watch Scheme in the Thurlows. The assistance of the Parish Councils and Councillor Jane Midwood has helped greatly in these matters.

Please note that there have been a few incidents where residents who leave their milk/paper money out have had it stolen.

Your Safer Neighbourhood Team is:

Sgt Kevin Horton 566

PC Ruth Horton 704

PC Trish Sinclair 18

PCSO Alex Foster 3140

PCSO Kayla Packman 3219

PCSO David Matchett 321

The Police non emergency number is 01284 774100, or you can e-mail us at stedsruralsouth.snt@suffolk.pnn.police.uk

Please dial 999 if immediate response needed.

If you wish to report criminal activity in your area anonymously please ring the Crime Stoppers number 0800 555111

SUFFOLK POLICE AUTHORITY APPEALS FOR MORE PEOPLE TO JOIN THE INDEPENDENT ADVISORY GROUP. Suffolk Police Authority is appealing for more Suffolk residents to become involved in policing matters by joining the Independent Advisory Group (IAG).

The IAG provides independent advice on a range of police issues, which can help shape the way Suffolk is policed. It may also be asked for advice on the impact of serious crime investigations or critical incidents from a community perspective. It is made up of individuals of all ages, from all backgrounds, who reflect the diversity of Suffolk's communities.

The Police Authority is keen to ensure that the membership of the IAG reflects the diverse social and cultural make up of the county and would like to urge members of the

public from all backgrounds to consider becoming a member.

Members of the group can see things from a different perspective and are often able to anticipate how police responses to policing problems may be interpreted in communities.

Chair of the Suffolk IAG, Bhupindar Singh Sually said “We would really appreciate more people getting involved and taking an active role in providing independent advice to the police. The IAG allows the police to consult with people who are not usually in dialogue with them, but whose views are crucial in providing a fair and equitable police service to our diverse communities.

“The primary role of the IAG is to act as a ‘critical friend’ to the police, we can challenge conventional thinking and give an independent perspective on policing issues. We are not providing expert advice, rather we are providing advice on how policing services may be, or are being, perceived by communities.”

The presence of the IAG provides additional opportunities for engagement between communities and the police force. It may also lead to people having greater confidence and trust in the police, knowing that their views are welcomed and valued.

Membership is open to any individual who resides in Suffolk. You need to have an interest in policing and its effects upon your community. You will be encouraged to point out any criticisms you may have, but also to offer suggestions about how the service can be improved.

You do not need any formal qualifications; members are required for opinions, advice and personal experience. The group meets at least four times a year and there may be occasions when the IAG or individual members will be asked for advice on specific issues. It is voluntary work, but the fact that individuals are giving up their time to support this initiative is highly valued, so reasonable expenses are paid.

If you would like further information and an application form, please telephone 01473 782774, email: sarah.carter@suffolk.pnn.police.uk or visit our website at www.suffolkpoliceauthority.org.uk

Suffolk Police Authority and Suffolk Constabulary carefully consider the advice given by members of the IAG; however, they are not legally obliged to act on the advice given. The advice is independent of the police service and carries no responsibility or liability for the outcome of decisions based upon it. Where possible, members are kept informed of what action, if any, is taken upon the advice and why.

Chair of Suffolk Police Authority, Gulshan Kayembe said “We are keen to make sure that we deliver the highest quality police service to all of the communities within Suffolk. However, we need advice from members of the public to make sure that our services match the needs of communities as closely as possible. For that reason, we are very keen for more people to join the IAG and assist us by reflecting their personal opinions and those of local communities.”

PAPERS – Early morning delivery of daily and Sunday newspapers. Also magazines, comics etc. Tel. Mary 01440 783585

RAF STRADISHALL cont....By September 1942 the building of RAF Chedburgh was finished. It was the first of many wartime additions of airfields to cater for an expanding Bomber Command. Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex were the eastern most counties to Europe and therefore airfields located there shortened the journeys on the bombing runs. Another factor was the arrival of the USAAF of the 8th and 9th Bombardment air forces with America entering the war after their terrible embarrassment of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour with the total loss of their capital ships of their Pacific fleet. There was an all out effort to construct airfields on carefully selected sites. September 1942 saw 214 Sqn move to Chedburgh. It was not popular with the aircrew who had to leave the comfort of Strad to be located in nissen huts with coke stoves and rather basic facilities. Those officers with their own cars would often nip back to the Mess at Strad to get a nice hot bath as the showers at Chedburgh were very basic. Chedburgh came under Stradishall as a satellite, as was West Wickham which opened on 5th May 1943.

It was 90 Sqn which took up residence on 31st May 1943. It had a rather unsettled existence prior to serving at Upwood, Watton, West Raynham, Polebrook, Bottesford and latterly Ridgewell in Essex. This last airfield had been allocated to the 381st Bomb Group USAAF. 90's claim to fame was that it had been the only RAF Sqn to be equipped with Boeing B17 Flying Fortresses. They had converted to Stirling Is and IIIs. Bomber Command found the B17s short on bomb load, 4000lbs against the Stirling's 12000lbs. In November 1944, 195 Sqn was posted in with Lancasters due to some confusion with an existing station of Wickham Underwood. August 1943 brought a change of name from West Wickham associated with the adjacent village of that name, to Wrattling Common. It also housed 1651 Heavy Conversion Unit (HCU). Aircrew losses were horrendous up to the end of 1943. Strad and its two satellites in 3 Group had a major role in aircrew training and for two years 42-44 it ceased being an operational station. The initial aircrew training in the Operational Training Units was undertaken in twin engined aircraft, typically Wellingtons which were withdrawn and replaced by 4 engined types with greater range and bomb loads. So operational stations had their HCUs to bring crews up to speed on the heavies. The Short Stirling was the first of the 4 engined replacements. There was a problem. Pre war the standard pattern hangars had 100 ft width openings. This was quite enough to enable the Heyfords-Blenheims and Hamdens and Whitleys to pass into the hangars for normal maintenance and repairs. The four engined heavies needed a wider wing span. Typical British compromise limited the span of the Stirling to 96ft. This had serious repercussions to the performance of the aircraft limiting its laden ceiling to 12000ft. It was prey to fighters and an easier target for the radar controlled search lights and ack ack guns. By 1942 the losses of Stirlings had reached alarming proportions. As the Lancaster and Halifax variants were not hampered by spar restrictions and hangar types erected on the latest airfields had the necessary additional width of opening. By mid 1943 as the availability of the later heavies could not only satisfy initial issues but reserves and replacements could be catered for too. The Stirlings could still make a valuable contribution in aircrew training but also as transports and glider towing. The Horsa Glider Pilot

training relied on the Stirlings as the towing a/c. Wisely Air Chief Marshall Harris had ordered the Stirlings out of the battle. 214 Sqn had flown a long and meritorious campaign with its Wellingtons and Stirlings having completed 315 bombing and 89 mine laying missions for the loss of 99 a/c. Total losses of Stirling Sqns came to 16%. They had suffered disproportionately compared to Lanc and Hallibag Sqns. In December 1942 214 left for Downham Market and service with 100 group engaged in a variety of radio and electronic counter measures. Like its parent station Strad, Chedburgh became largely engaged in aircrew training. A year later with the arrival of 218 Sqn from Methwold dit it return to full operations. There is very little that has survived of RAF Chedburgh it having become a busy industrial complex. From the A143 take a right turn at the top of the rise past the church and on the right it is possible to make out the main runway.

The RAF Bomber Command was expanding rapidly. New Sqns were formed. To give them some experienced aircrew to start with a flight from an existing Sqn was made the basis of the new one. 620 Sqn was formed from 'C' flight of 214 Sqn and equipped with Lancasters. Gp.Capt. Bachelor was the Station Commander at Chedburgh, he returned in very good form for the dedication of the Station Memorial in the village in 1998. An RAF guard of honour from RAF Honnington performed the ceremonial. 214 Sqn had a membership of mainly RNZAF personnel. Some indigenous aircrews provided back up and a few of these surviving members were able to support the event. One such was Flt. Lt. Ian Crichton fittingly attired in his wartime uniform, still a perfect fit after 56 years, if showing that it had seem some service as a navigator. On a sortie to bomb Berlin in December 1944 his Lanc got badly damaged by flak. He, the skipper and the Engineer Officer were last to take to the silk. Good fortune found them within hailing distance in open country. Ian had a bad landing and badly sprained an ankle. Using their escape and survival packs, they made modest progress, the two helping Ian along. It was only fair, Ian thought, to give himself up to allow his comrades to make good their escape which they did. As the aircraft would have gone some way on its own before coming to grief, any German ground forces would be otherwise occupied. Ian was hospitalised for three weeks and was then posted under guard to North West Camp in Sagan Poland, Stallagluft III. As a U/V lecturer in English he became involved in study groups for the other POWs. It then became evident to him that something was afoot. Such was camp security, it wasn't until the muster parade at first light that he became aware that a major escape had been attempted. We now know this as the Great Escape. The bad news came a few days later when the Commandant called a muster to announce that some 50 of the escapees had been shot. It soon became apparent that it had been a mass execution. A charge of murder was made by the Allies after the Red Cross investigation was published. Hitler apparently went berserk and ordered them all to be shot. His Gestapo Officers were only too willing to oblige. Fortunately 26 who were caught fairly close to the camp were returned before the mass execution took place. We know that three made it. In the next edition we shall tell Flt. Lt. C Crichton's story, he was a member of 620 Sqn.

Monty Banks

WANTED, TOAD CROSSING INFORMATION. A lot of people may be surprised to learn that many toad crossings are registered, and of course many are not. The Suffolk Amphibian and Reptile Group (SARG) are seeking more information about where the annual toad crossings exist, and also need to update information about existing crossings. Registered crossings may have signs erected annually by Suffolk County Council for a few weeks in the springtime, but there are a few that do not.

We are currently updating the Suffolk Register and are keen to receive more information about toad numbers crossing at Registered Sites, and also about new crossings, but these will have to be registered locally so there may be a bit of form filling to be done. Information about crossings should be sent to Sue Morgan, a member of SARG, who can be contacted on suemorgan06@hotmail.com or you can write to her at 1 Red House Farm Cottage, Pixey Green, Stradbroke, Eye, IP21 5NJ.

Rosie Norton is the Suffolk Naturalist's Society's County Recorder for Amphibians and Reptiles and welcomes all sightings of frogs, toads, smooth newts, great crested newts, slow worms, adders, common lizards and grass snakes. She can be contacted on rosie@brundish.demon.co.uk, or write to her at 3 Wood View, Sibton, Saxmundham, IP17 2NH. Thank you for your help.

Sue Morgan

WI. February is our bird night when Thurlow resident Jeremy Mynott comes with his pictures and stories of his latest visit to observe bird life. This year we were treated to birds that visit the Suffolk coast, mainly around Shingle Street. As usual Jeremy kept us amused, not only explaining his subject but also telling us of the first live outside broadcast from the BBC when all was not as it seemed. Anne Roberts thanked him for once again giving up his time to entertain us. Next year we hope to hear of his visit to Borneo which is to take place shortly.

We had seven visitors and welcomed Dawn Abbey. Notice was given by Jill Steele of a Fairtrade Coffee Morning at Long Melford and a chance to go Nordic Walking at Park Farm on 23rd March. Pauline Crooks and Olive Jeffrey are joining the Federation trip to Norwich to see Les Miserables.

Winners in the draw were Iris Eley and visitors Mary Hilton, Maureen Shipp and Geoff Patient.

Next month its Gillian Grinham giving us her version of Joyce Grenfell. 9th March in the Village Hall at 7.30 pm. All welcome.

Iris Eley

HAVING A PARTY, BIRTHDAY/WEDDING/ANNIVERSARY?

Need a bar and/or caterers?

Look no further, ring The Red Lion at Great Wratting 01440 783237
or Stan Cook 01440 783532

WE AIM TO PLEASE.

GENUINE EXAM QUESTIONS FROM YESTERYEAR

ELEVEN-PLUS

The phrases on the right are similar in meaning to the words on the left. Write in a column the letters (a) to (h), which are given with the words. Opposite each letter, put the number of the phrase that is similar in meaning.

Example (a) 5

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------------------|
| (a) faithful | 1. all of a flutter |
| (b) dislike | 2. like a bear with a sore head |
| (c) while | 3. with one's nose in the air |
| (d) irritable | 4. for ever and a day |
| (e) haughty | 5. as good as one's word |
| (f) always | 6. afraid of one's shadow |
| (g) timid | 7. in the course of |
| (h) excited | 8. take exception to |

O LEVEL

An aeroplane flying between two airfields takes 16 minutes less on the outward than on the return journey. If the distance between the airfields is 900 miles find the average speed on the outward journey if it exceeds that on the return journey by 20mph.

Answers to exam questions on page 23

LACKFORD LAKES EVENTS IN MARCH -

Sat 6th NATURALLY ART WORKSHOP - £4. 10.30am-12.30pm, For 5-10yrs, all abilities. Bring an old shirt. Pre-book!

Wed 10th LACKFORD LAKES GUIDED WALK - a tour around Lackford Lakes led by a knowledgeable guide. Bring or borrow binoculars. 10.30am - 12.30pm. £3 Pre-book!

12th/13th/14th SECOND HAND BOOK SALE - A large selection of good quality second hand books for sale. 10am – 4pm.

If you have suitable books to donate, please drop them into the centre from Wed 3rd March.

Sun 21st WATCH CLUB – wildlife activities for 6-12 years. 10am – 12noon. Pre-book!

Sun 28th LACKFORD LAKES BIRD CELEBRATION – Family event for all ages. 11am – 4pm. Entry: (A) £3 (C) £2. Find out how to encourage birds to your garden, make a bird nest material pocket, bird feeder and other bird crafts and go on a bird walk. Wildlife gardening stalls, INFOCUS binocular and telescope sales and demonstrations, homemade soup and cakes will also be available. No need to book. **Tel. 01284 728706**

DEDHAM VALE WALKS, Sunday 28th March, 10am – 12.30pm. The Dizzy Heights of Bures. Let's celebrate the official start of British summertime with a walk around the historic village of Bures, before a very special visit to the mysterious Mount with an experienced archaeologist. **Tel. 01473 264263**

Mrs Allin,
Parish Clerk to Great Thurlow
89a Wrattling Road,
Great Thurlow,
Haverhill,
Suffolk
CB9 7LJ

Section: Highway Network Improvements
Block 1
Endeavour House
8 Russell Road
Ipswich
Suffolk
IP1 2BX

Enquiries to: Karen Smith
Tel: 0845 606 6067
Fax: 01473 216864
Email: tmwest@suffolk.gov.uk
Web: <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk>

Your Ref:
Our Ref: 500/281/00
Date: 10/12/2009

Dear Mrs Allin

Proposed new and existing footway improvements –The Street/ Wrattling Road, Great Thurlow

I refer to the travel plan meeting recently held at the school and the subsequent site meeting with Stan Cook your representative, to discuss the highway issues raised as part of those discussions. These included discussions on improvements that would assist pedestrians both to the school and the sports ground.

I enclose copies of plans showing:

Location 3

The proposal to widen the footway in front of the burial ground, The Street, by extending the paving back to the wooden fence. I understand that you will shortly have ownership of this land. The hedge will have to be replaced as part of the works.


Location 4

At the junction of Wrattling Road/ Bury Road it is proposed to improve and construct new footway to improve pedestrian access through this junction. This will assist in pedestrian access both to the school, shop and to the sports ground. These proposals have been extended following the site meeting.

The present proposal is to progress these schemes to final design and put forward a bid for funding to implement. Can you please confirm that the Parish council is in agreement with progressing these schemes?

If you have any queries on these proposals, please contact me.

Yours sincerely



Karen Smith, Highway Network Improvements

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Casino Night

Friday 16th April
8pm – 11pm
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 Call Tim or Kevin on 01440 783654

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2010

Dinner and Dance

Saturday 9th May 2010
7.30-11.30pm
Thurlow Village Hall
 Fish/chicken and chips dinner served at 8.00pm prompt (veggie option available) followed by live music and dancing to **Easy Livin 60-90s Band**
 Tickets £15 each. Admission by ticket only.
 Dress smart casual
 Call 01440 783756 or email ltbradley@uwclub.net to book
In aid of Little Bradley Church

LITTLE BRADLEY QUIZ NIGHT WITH FISH AND CHIP SUPPER

At The Garden Barn
Little Bradley
On Friday 5th March 2010
At 7.00pm
 Adults £8 inc. meal, child £5.50 inc. kids meal, choice of either fish, scampi or chicken with chips
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INFORMATION FOR RESIDENTS. This is a brief guide, intended especially for newcomers to the villages, with information about the facilities and services available locally and some useful telephone numbers and addresses.

Emergency

Emergency telephone 999

Police Response (any officer, non-emergency) 01284 774100,
stedsruralsouth.snt@suffolk.pnn.police.uk

Police Direct messaging service (information only) 01473 613997,
police.direct@suffolk.pnn.police.uk

Local Refuge in case of major disaster or if village cut off: Thurlow Village Hall; key-holder Diana Allin, 89a Hill House, Gt. Thurlow, 01440 783560

Suffolk Fire Service 01284 558888

Hospitals

West Suffolk (Bury) 01284 713000,
A/E Department 01284 713333
Addenbrookes (Cambridge) 01223 245151

Doctors

The Christmas Maltings & Clements Practice (Cornish), Camps Road, Haverhill 08444 773543
Selby Practice 01440 702010
Stourview Medical Centre, Crown Passage, Haverhill 01440 761177

Haverhill Social Services 01440 764949
Citizens Advice Bureau 01440 704012

St. Edmundsbury BC Emergency Planning 01284 763233
Floodline: 24 hour with recorded update 0845 9881188
EDF electricity main cabling (24 hour) power cut and emergency, Helpline 0800 783883
Anglia Water water/sewerage (24 hour) 08457 145145
British Telecom faults (24 hour) 0800 800151
Suffolk Radio (BBC FM 103.9 or 104.6) 01473 250000

Other useful contacts

Parish Clerks:
Little Thurlow, Molly Hawkins 01440 783259, mollyhawkins10@aol.com
Great Thurlow, Diana Allin 01440 783560, nilla.home@tiscali.co.uk See Parish Council Notice Board in front of the Village Hall for further information and dates of meetings etc.

St. Edmundsbury Borough Council:
General enquiries 01284 763233

Website www.stedmundsbury.gov.uk

Haverhill offices 01440 702271

District Councillor: Robert Clifton-Brown, 01440 783562, robert.clifton-brown@stedsbcc.gov.uk

Waste Management 01284 757320 – bin collection is every Wednesday morning alternating black bins one week and brown and blue bins the next. Environmental Health (pest control) 01284 757054

Suffolk County Council:
General enquiries 08456 066067
Website www.suffolkcc.gov.uk
County Councillor: Jane Midwood 01440 821428, jane.midwood@councillors.suffolkcc.gov.uk

Thurlow Estate Office -
Agent: Tim Barling 01440 783661
Assistant to Agent: John Frank 01440 783661

Chemists:
Boots Chemists 01440 702058
Co-op Pharmacy 01440 702079
Sainsbury's Superstore Pharmacy 01440 708043

Useful contacts cont...

Vets:

Swayne and Partners, 84 Hamlet Road,
Haverhill -01440 702007

Lida Vets, 162 High Street, Newmarket
01638 560000

Hawkedon Veterinary Surgery
01284 789428

Age Concern: Mary Hilton 01440 783649

Libraries:

Haverhill 01440 702638

Bury St. Edmunds 01284 352545

A mobile Library visits the village on
alternate Mondays, stopping at Sowley
Green, 150 Bury Road 11.30-11.40am,
Great Thurlow, 109 Bury Road 11.45-
12.10am and Little Thurlow Green,
1 Coronation Villas 12.45-1.00pm.

Transport

Local Bus Service:

Current timetables are on display at
Thurlow Stores

Dial-a-ride 01440 712028

Taxis: several operate from Haverhill – see
Yellow Pages

Local facilities

Thurlow Stores & Post Office, Mrs.

Patricia Banks 01440 783214

Opening hours: 8.30am to 5.30pm each
day, except Wednesdays and Saturdays
8.30am – 12.30pm. Closed Sundays and
Bank Holidays.

Newspaper delivery: Mary Atherton
01440 783585

Plumbing Services: TK Heat
01440 783654, 07966 208794

Thurlow Village Hall bookings: Diana
Allin 01440 783560

Churches: Great Thurlow (All Saints),
Little Thurlow (St. Peter's). Part of the
Stourhead Benefice which includes the
Bradleys, the Wrattings, Barnardiston and
Kedington. Rev. John Eley 01440 710216

CEVC School, Little Thurlow, Head
teacher Ros Bunting 01440 783281
Thurlow Pre-School. Secretary Mat Cowell
mathew.cowell@sky.com
Thurlow Mother & Toddler Group: Rosie
Winner 01440 702182 and Helen Smith
01440 783272

Thurlow Sports Club, secretary Allan
Loveday 01440 707416

Thurlow Fayre: Janice Klimcke 01440
783626 and Diana Allin 01440 783560

Thurlow Garage (Great Thurlow)
01440 783248

The Cock (Little Thurlow) Janie &
Giles Reardon-Smith 01440 783224

Local Societies

Women's Institute: President Jill Steele
01440 783310

Village Hall Committee: Chairman Janice
Klimcke 01440 783626

Carpet bowls: Ella Ainsworth
01440 783349

Outdoor bowls: Peter Thomas
01440 783700

Woodcraft Folk (children's activity for
ages 5-13): Diana Allin 01440 783560

Answers to Exam Questions from page 15:

ELEVEN-PLUS: (a) 5, (b) 8, (c) 7, (d) 2, (e) 3, (f) 4, (g) 6, (h) 1.

O LEVEL: 270 mph

Stourhead Benefice Monthly Service Rota, March 2010

Rev. John Eley 01440 710216

Steve Diddams 01440 710225

7th March		9.30 Kedington FC	11.00 Lt. Thurlow SW	11.00 Gt. Bradley FC	
14th March		9.30 Kedington SW	9.30 Barnardiston FC	11.00 Lt. Thurlow FC	11.00 Gt. Wratting SW
21st March			10.00 Lt.Wratting Benefice Service		
28th March	8.00 Kedington HC	9.30 Lt. Bradley HC	11.00 Gt. Wratting HC	11.00 Gt. Thurlow SW	18.00 Kedington Evensong

john.eley@btopenworld.com

Dates for your Diary: *Lent Hunger Lunches* 12.30-2.00; 3rd March Gt. Thurlow, Tim Knappett 783654, 10th March, Gt. Wratting, Anne Roberts 783212, 17th March Gt. Bradley Village Hall.
Little Thurlow Parish Council meeting 16th March 2010, 7.30pm at Thurlow Village Hall
Great Thurlow Parish Council meeting 17th March 2010, 8.00pm at Thurlow Village Hall
Casino Night in aid of All Saints Church funds 16th April 2010 at The Cock
Joint Village Litter Pick 17th/18th April 2010

GREAT THURLOW PCC DRAW CLUB February winner K. Hearn

Thought for the month – Democracy is being allowed to vote for the candidate you dislike least.
Robert Byrne

Front cover photo: Brown hare, copyright Basil Warren.

Little Thurlow village website is **www.littlethurlow.org**