

# The Elsworth Chronicle



*Holy Trinity Church*

**Issue No. 21**

**May 2007**

**Editor:** Alan Farrow. The Old Rectory, Elsworth,  
Cambridge CB3 8JQ Tel: 01954 267472

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## **Elsworth Church of England (Aided) Primary School**



I trust that you knew you had a highly successful and flourishing school in the heart of your community; with dedicated staff, supportive parents and well behaved and highly motivated pupils.

In brief we are a primary school with 125 pupils on role, ranging from 5 to 11 years with a catchment area comprising Elsworth, Boxworth, Connington & Knapwell. However it is important to note that over half of our pupils come from out of catchment – this includes the villages of Cambourne, Hilton and Papworth. Parents choose us over their local school due to our size, standards of behaviour, good balance between academic and social skills and the fact that as a Church school, all of this is underpinned by a Christian ethos. Without these parents I am sorry to say that we would be unlikely to have a school in Elsworth, so the traffic they bring with them for a brief moment each day is a small price to pay.

The school is divided into 5 classes; 2 infant and 3 junior, with a nominal 25 in each class. The class sizes are a part of our success, however the funding we receive each year makes it harder and harder for us to maintain this 5 class structure and this impacts upon the numbers of pupils in each class. It is only the dedication of the staff and support from the many parents who help each week in school which allow us to maintain class structures without having to become a 4 class school. The truth is that you don't have to be a parent to volunteer in school, as long as the school completes a Child Protection check, anyone can help – in fact many schools have local residents and grand parents who volunteer their time to hear pupils read, teach them to knit etc. If you are interested then don't hesitate to contact the school.

Without doubt it has been another memorable and successful 12 months at Elsworth Primary School. The following are a small selection of what makes our school what it is.

The summer holidays saw the completion of the long over due internal alterations. Returning to school in September we found the contractors struggling to complete the job due to a delay after finding asbestos cement. This meant the staff having to work over and around the carpet fitters on the final day of the holidays to get the school ready for the pupils. Despite the traumatic start to the beginning of the new academic year we are very pleased with our new pu-

pil toilets (replacing the originals from 1954), classroom partitions, carpets, disabled toilet and refurbished staff room. On top of this the Parish council have also refurbished the community kitchen to very high standard – ready to be used by WI and Jubilee club amongst others.

We have a very successful school council which is elected and then run by pupils themselves. They make real decisions including deciding how to spend £3000 donated by Elsworth School Friends Association (ESFA – a group of parents who work incredibly hard to raise funds for the school). The school Council completed a pupil survey, decided to spend it on new climbing frames and decided the specific equipment the pupils wanted and all within budget.

This year the school was nearly closed due to flooding from the aptly named Water Lane. Luckily the school remained open with the help of parents in Land Rovers and 2 adults in bare feet, including the head, carrying pupils over the rising flood waters. The school was however closed by the snow, but as the photo proves it did look fantastic.

The school has held various special days, including one where pupils dressed up and spent the day as Ancient Egyptians. We have held our first, successful music evening with pupils singing and playing everything from recorders, flutes, violins, saxophones, clarinets, trumpets and even a rock band. The school celebrated World Book day with pupils taking photographs of themselves reading in the most extreme locations including reading up a tree, on a roof, underwater and even reading with Gordon Ramsey.

As a school we feel that it is important for our pupils to become socially aware and take responsibility for raising money for a chosen charity. This year the pupils planted 500 bulbs and raised over £1,000 with a Spellathon for the Myasthenia Gravis or Rag Doll Charity.

If you wish to know more about the school then please put July 12th in your diary for our open day and visit our new web site: [www.elsworth.cambs.sch.uk](http://www.elsworth.cambs.sch.uk).

Nicholas Smith - Head Teacher

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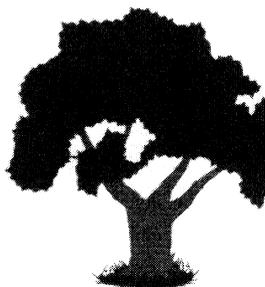
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## ELSWORTH CHRONICLE

The Elsworth Chronicle would seem to be as a ship encountering stormy seas. Regretfully the retiring parish council has not agreed to support the magazine financially after some 15 years of backing from previous councillors, with accepted procedures undermined. The first difficulty was that it was claimed by an officer within the council that it was not permissible for advertisements to be included in the magazine as this constituted trading. Although erroneous it was accepted by members. The ruling was shown to be incorrect but it was subsequently stated that financial support would not be forthcoming unless editorial control was vested in the parish council. In the meantime planned publication dates were disrupted.

Way back, in 1991 the form of the magazine was stated in print to be that the four centre pages - normally on distinctive paper – should contain the official words of the parish council, but the other pages were for recording events in the village and open to parishioners' views and comments. The policy was that should a controversial matter be raised, perhaps relating to the council, the parish council would always have the right and space to give its side of the issue in the same magazine, as would an opposing view from any quarter. Now it seems the editorial control demanded by the retiring council could be obtained through the council funding a commercially based magazine from the Papworth magazine stable.

To the writer it would seem that villagers would be served better by an uncensored magazine; to fund a council censored publication would not seem the best way to use parishioners' money, even if more convenient for the council. Councillors should be held accountable – a magazine outside its editorial control might on occasions be a vehicle for this and its existence might influence opinions in the council and encourage meaningful debate. Hopefully the policy of the retiring council will be changed by those about to take office.

Measures taken by the retiring parish council, seemingly in an attempt to silence the Chronicle, follow numerous abortive requests to retain funding. These difficulties have disrupted the twice-yearly publication of the magazine. Regarding the future, if council funding is withheld it is intended that the Chronicle should continue, reverting to its former production pattern. If it must, it will be financed privately by the editor, with advertising hopefully helping to defray, in part, costs already incurred. Perhaps readers might have funding ideas. If so they would be appreciated. One further point, if you would like to be involved with the magazine, perhaps with production [including advertising], or writing or reporting, do please contact the editor – details inside the front cover. Offers would be most welcome.

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## **ELSWORTH SPORTS CLUB**

On the sporting front the Club enters teams in local leagues of cricket, football and table tennis. Regarding cricket two teams play on Saturdays in the Cambs League, one in Division 3, the other in 4. Matches commence at 2.00 pm and begin on 5 May. A few 'Friendly' matches are played during the season mid-week. Any enquiries to Bill Knibbs on 267266.

The football team have had a very successful season playing in Division 3A of the Cambs League, winning the Division with three matches remaining, therefore gaining promotion for next season. They have also reached the Final of the John Ablett Cup, which will be against Newmarket Town A, to be played on May 10 at Cambridge City FC, Milton Road, k.o. 7.30 pm. Any enquiries relating to football to Mark Brading on 01480 383303.

As for table tennis, the Club runs three teams in the Ely League, one in Division 1 and two in Division 2. The current season has just finished – the first team finishing fourth, the second fifth and third eleventh.

The third team, consisting entirely of juniors, finished runners up in the Final of the Plate competition.

Various club evenings are held throughout the year, everybody welcome.

Enquiries for table tennis to Bill Knibbs on 267266.

Socially, the Club holds monthly Whist Drives in the Pavilion and is holding a Fun Day on Grass Close on Sunday 27 May.

Roger Fensome

*The football team deserves our hearty congratulations. This is the second year in succession that promotion has been won. The team is romping through the Cambs. League. AWF.*

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## CHRISTOPHER PARISH

*Christopher Parish was Dean of Post Graduate education in the Medical School until 1982 when he became the National Consultant Adviser to the Central Council for Postgraduate Medical and Dental Education in London. In this final excerpt he reflects on his role in developing medical education in Cambridge and the region.*

The development of Papworth coincided with the Goodenough Committee Report on the need for further medical schools and the University of Cambridge decided to go ahead and establish a school. I was the medical representative of Addenbrooke's staff on the Faculty Board of Medicine, and I proposed to them that we should establish a medical school in Cambridge. I was on the Clinical School Planning Committee from the beginning.

I was appointed Associate Lecturer by the University when I came, and I had been a lecturer in clinical anatomy in Manchester before that, but only for a short time. I'd taught undergraduates at Sidney Sussex College of which I was made a Fellow, and also postgraduates at the Postgraduate Clinical School. In fact, I topped out the Clinical School on a very wet day. It was allied to the Undergraduate School, and the Postgraduate Dean and the Undergraduate Dean worked in close harmony. I established the teaching and the postgraduate centres throughout East Anglia. The centre at Peterborough I established with the aid of the General Surgeon (Dennie Bracey) who became mayor, and raised the money in his mayoral year. At Norwich we got half the Outpatients Department and converted that to a postgraduate teaching centre, the nurses had the other half. At Ipswich, we adapted an old building and eventually got a new one. Kings Lynn had a purpose built one and so on.

I was very fortunate that the University was considering a new medical school as a result of the Goodenough Report and I was in a position to do something about it. As the Addenbrooke's staff representative on the Faculty Board of Medicine, as a Fellow of a College I knew the ropes of the University organisation. It was a great opportunity to develop the Clinical School in association with Papworth. We tied it in with the University. Addenbrooke's and Papworth is a University Trust, a combined trust, although we're separately located and we're better off there than we would be in Addenbrooke's. As a University Library syndic, I advised combining the Addenbrooke's Hospital, undergraduate and post-graduate libraries in one medical library as part of the University Library, with the help of the then University Librarian, Eric Ceadel. As a member of the History and Philosophy of Science Syndicate, I negotiated the funding and establishment of the Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine and became its first Chairman.

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## OBITUARY



**DONALD GRENVILLE FEW**  
**6.9. 1917 to 8.10.2006**

Don was born on 6th September 1917 in Willingham, Cambridgeshire and was the only child of James Few, a market gardener and well-known cycle rider, and Rose Few (nee Ludman), a dressmaker.

As a child Don balanced his school day with working on the family fruit farm from 5.00am until 7.30am, and after school until dusk. When Don left school he worked for a poultry farmer until he was sixteen and after a while went to work as a builder's labourer on the Guildhall in Cambridge until he was called up for the army.

In 1939 Don joined B Company, 5th Suffolk Regiment and trained

at North Walsham. When the regiment's training was complete they travelled to Hawick in Scotland. Whilst on leave in 1941 Don married Grace at The Holy Trinity Church, Elsworth. Shortly after this the regiment moved to Liverpool where they boarded HMS Manhattan and sailed via the West Indies to Singapore. It was here that Don was captured and became a Far Eastern Prisoner of War.

Don was a prisoner of the Japanese, working on the Burma Railway and the Mergui Road from 1942-1945. He endured unimaginable horrors and through his book 'A Helping Hand' Don writes a personal account of his experiences of those dreadful years. After the surrender of the Japanese Army; Don eventually returned to England.

Don joined the civil service and after working at the Bedford Employment Exchange became an Employment Officer for the Ministry of Pensions and Welfare at the RAF Hospital in Ely. FEPOWs were attending the hospital for check-ups for tropical diseases and Don gave general help and advice about War Disability Pensions and acted as a liaison for FEPOWs returning from the camps up to the time the hospital closed in 1991.

In 1949 the FEPOWs formed a club and named it Yasume (Japanese for Rest). He was one of the founder members of the Cambridge Yasume Club up to his death in October last year, as well as holding a much wider role in the National Federation of FEPOWs clubs, which he represented for 27 years and served as treasurer for 10 years. As the FEPOWS have become fewer in numbers a new association called Children of Far Eastern Prisoners of War (COFEPOWs) has formed to carry on the remembrance.

For Don's immense contributions in improving the welfare of fellow FEPOWs he was awarded the British Empire Medal. This was a fitting tribute to Don and fellow comrades who did so much for this country and future generations.

When Don returned to England after the Japanese surrendered he lived in Cambridge; then in the late 1940s he purchased Homeland Cottages, Church Lane, Elsworth where he lived with Grace for the remainder of their lives. Don renewed his interest in gardening and in the past few years had been very proud to enter his fruit and vegetables into the Elsworth Show. Don had many interests: he was an ardent supporter of Cambridge City Football Club where he became a Committee Member, Director and Chairman. Don also enjoyed the horses as well as the occasional flutter! He was well read and over the years enriched his knowledge of many subjects.

Sadly Grace died in 2001 and to fill this void Don decided to complete his memoirs. After Don's death in October 2006 his ashes were laid to rest with Grace's ashes at the back of their cottage just a few feet from the church wall.

Susan Childerley

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### **JUBILEE CLUB**

We meet on the first Thursday of most months in Elsworth School Hall from 2.30 to 4.30 p.m. We have a speaker or entertainment, afternoon tea and a raffle.

Most of our members are 60+, but if you are younger don't let that put you off! It is a good way of getting to know people and having a chat.

This year on the 31st May we have a coach trip to Sutton Hoo, Woodbridge, and on the 26<sup>th</sup> July a full day outing to Walton-on-the-Naze.

For more information please contact Betty Simcock – telephone 01954-267470. We will be only too pleased to welcome you whenever you have the time to join us.

Betty Simcock

## OBITUARY



**ERIC WESLEY BLEET**  
**30<sup>th</sup> August 1917 to 17<sup>th</sup> May 2005**

Eric was born in the Chapel House, Boxworth Road, Elsworth and on that day the family moved to Chestnut Villa also in Boxworth Road. This became his home for the next eighty-seven years. He was the youngest son of Edward and Ellen Bleet, brother to Ena and William.

On leaving school he joined the firm of the Bleet Brothers. His father Edward was blacksmith and farrier and his Uncle William wheelwright and builder. When war was declared he became a member of the RAF serving most of the war years in the Middle East.

Whilst serving in Egypt, by strange coincidence, he met his brother William who was also in the armed forces.

When demobbed, Eric became a motor mechanic at the Bleet's garage in Swavesey. In 1952 he joined the workforce of farmer John Meeks, remaining in his employ until his retirement

In 1953 Eric married Daphne Waters. A daughter Denise and son Kevin completed their family.

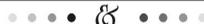
Eric was a real countryman and his hobbies reflected this. He turned wood, making many useful items and his garden was a picture to behold in the spring and summer seasons. He enjoyed a game of dominoes with his friend of forty years, Don Few, and a game of cards with his Elsworth friends.



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## **ELSWORTH N.W.R.**

Elsworth N.W.R (National Womens' Register) meets every three to four weeks in a different member's house for discussions, reviews, talks, quiz between branches throughout the country, special theme evenings, as well as visits to cinemas and theatres and local places of interest.

As a local group we are part of a wider National group and have links with other branches throughout the country.

Our next meeting is on Wednesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> May when we are holding a book review. On Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> June we will be holding a Spanish Evening – an evening of Spanish food and drink. The last meeting before the summer break is a planning meeting on Monday, July 9<sup>th</sup>.

Our meetings are friendly and informal and new members are always welcome. (Come along for a taster session!). Please contact Jen Milns 01480 830864 or Aileen Murch 01480 830625

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## **ELSWORTH WALKING GROUP**

The group has been going for many years now. We meet once a month – on the second Sunday – at 10 am at a venue arranged by the member who has organised the walk. We take it in turns to plan and lead the walks - it works out just once a year. Walks are normally of about 6 miles and range from local walks to others within about a ten-mile radius – transport for non-drivers is easily arranged. We're all very friendly and just enjoy countryside walks – we're always pleased to see new faces, so if you would care to join us contact Rick Stokes [267506] or Isobel Farrow [267472]

Isobel Farrow

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## **ELSWORTH, KNAPWELL & CONINGTON W.I.**

Our Institute meets in Elsworth School Hall at 7.30 pm on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month [except August]. Everyone is really friendly – visiting speakers often remark on the warmth and interest of our members.

We have a short business meeting when we discuss our activities and federation projects and outings, followed by a talk or demonstration, then refreshments.

Talks range over a wide variety of topics. Recently we heard what life was like at Bletchley Park during World War 2. No secrets were revealed but our speaker gave a fascinating account of war-time there and the eccentric characters she encountered.

Christopher and Janet South are intrepid travellers and kept us so entertained that we've booked another visit! And recently we learned of the work being undertaken by the RSPB at Hope Farm, Knapwell when Chris. Bailey came to talk and show slides.

Our new programme begins in April and there is much of interest – an Evening of Poetry, Pickwick's Cambridge and lots more – ending the year with an excellent Christmas Party.

Visitors are most welcome so do come along – you might even think of joining us! It can be daunting to walk in as a stranger and members would be happy to accompany you. Contact Mary Norris [267260] or Isobel Farrow [267472] for more information.

Isobel Farrow

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New homes in Elsworth – an artist's impression

## **AFFORDABLE HOMES**

The new homes built on the site between Boxworth Road and Paddock Row have met with general approval. They are of a pleasing external design and seem well arranged on the site.. These homes should assist in meeting the often expressed need in the village for affordable/starter homes as five are available for shared ownership, others for renting and some for outright purchase.

Shared ownership enables the purchaser to fund a percentage of the value of the property, the balance being met by rental payments to the housing association – in our case the Wherry Housing Association. If the purchaser so wishes, his/her investment in the property can be increased and the rent decreased proportionally. If the property was to be sold, the money realised would be divided according to the proportion of the house owned. Initially the intention to sell would be put to the housing association, which then has six weeks to assess needs from its data base, after which the house would be sold on the open market.

AWF

**ENJOY A DAY OUT**  
**ON THURSDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> JUNE**

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To book, please contact Isobel Farrow [Tel. 267472] by Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> May.

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**JOHN POLKINGHORNE IN ELSWORTH**

The Rev. Professor Dr. John Polkinghorne FRS is to talk and lead a discussion at a Men's Meeting on "Disaster and the God of Love?" in Elsworth on May 21<sup>st</sup>. The meeting is to be at The George & Dragon, where the event is to be combined with a two course meal for £10. 7.30 for 8.00pm. is when to meet. An invitation is extended to join men from west of Cambridge parishes for a good meal and provocative, stimulating discussion. As many will know, John Polkinghorne is a former professor of Mathematical Physics at Cambridge University and sometime President of Queens' College. He is an excellent speaker, well known for his ability to probe the relationships between science and Christianity.

To book a place, please contact Simon George – telephone 01480 830153 or email: [simongorge1@btinternet.com](mailto:simongorge1@btinternet.com).

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- MAY 5<sup>th</sup> Rev. Prof. Polkinghorne - George & Dragon 7,30 for 8pm \*
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Book Review - National Womens' Register \*
- 26<sup>th</sup> Cricket – 2<sup>nd</sup> XI v. Comberton II
- 27<sup>th</sup> Sports Club Fun Day - Grass Close pm
- 31<sup>st</sup> Coach strip to Sutton Hoo, Woodbridge - Jubilee Club \*
- JUN 2<sup>nd</sup> Cricket – 1<sup>st</sup> XI v. Helions Bumpstead
- 9<sup>th</sup> Cricket – 1<sup>st</sup> XI v. Hardwick & Shepreth II
- 11<sup>th</sup> Spanish Evening - National Womens' Register \*
- 13<sup>th</sup> W.I. – "Peter Pan & Wendy" \*
- 14<sup>th</sup> Jubilee Club – Coffee Morning, 10.30 - 12.00 \*  
- Jean Thomas at Orchard Close
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Line Dancing & Auction promises- Elsworth Pre-School  
- Childs Farm, Rogues Lane
- 28<sup>th</sup> W.I. Excursion to Stamford & Elton Hall \*
- JUL 5<sup>th</sup> Penny Lutoslawska – Professional singer - Jubilee Club \*
- 9<sup>th</sup> Planning Meeting -National Womens' Register \*
- 11<sup>th</sup> W.I. - "An Evening of Poems" \*
- 14<sup>th</sup> Cricket – 2<sup>nd</sup> XI v. Elmdon II
- 14<sup>th</sup> Elsworth Pre-school Summer Fete – Elsworth School
- 21<sup>st</sup> Cricket 1<sup>st</sup> XI v. Mill Green
- 26<sup>th</sup> Outing to Walton-on-the-Naze – Jubilee Club \*
- 28<sup>th</sup> Cricket 1st XI v. Granta V
- AUG 4<sup>th</sup> Cricket 2<sup>nd</sup> XI v. Cambourne II
- 11<sup>th</sup> Cricket 2<sup>nd</sup> XI v. Babraham III
- 18<sup>th</sup> Cricket 2<sup>nd</sup> XI v. Thriplow III
- 25<sup>th</sup> Cricket 1<sup>st</sup> XI v. Balsham II
- SEPT 1<sup>st</sup> Elsworth & District Show – Elsworth School
- 1<sup>st</sup> Cricket 1<sup>st</sup> XI v. Fulbourn Institute II

All the cricket fixtures above are home games.

\* See article in this magazine for contact details.