

The Elsworth Chronicle



Holy Trinity Church

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ELSWORTH CHRONICLE

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ELSWORTH AT PLAY

The present year marks, of course, the Diamond Jubilee of Elizabeth II and there will be celebrations throughout the land. It is thought a glance back to the beginning of the millennium might be of interest, with an indication of celebrations in the village at that time, in much the same way as the national press has focussed on the 1948 Olympics when looking forward to the Games of this summer.

The overall millennium programme was under the auspices and direction of the parish council, with village organisations taking their part in running certain events. The celebration extended over a week, there being activities on every day. The support was tremendous throughout, there being a wonderful feeling of Elsworth 'togetherness'. The village was divided into four street groups, which were in competition with each other throughout, points being awarded at each event. The winning team was the North West, with a total of 246 points. An outline of events is noted below

Sunday 2nd July Light-hearted cricket match v. Conington, involving adults and children, even grandparents. **Monday 3rd** First of inter-street competitions - darts, dominoes in the pavilion, croquet on the sports field. **Tues. 4th** Village Question Trail organised by the NWR. **Wed 5th** Victorian Evening organised by the W.I. **Thurs 6th** Quiz Evening at the Poacher. **Fri 7th** Concert in the school – New Orleans Jazz Band. **Sat 8th** All Embracing Sports Day - events included: running backwards; three legged races; slow bicycle races; throwing the welly; tug of war, etc. **Sunday 9th** Celebratory church service.

The photograph alongside is of participants eagerly waiting to take their part in the welly throwing competition. The one below is one of a walking race - the rule was that books should not be supported!



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Obituary by Brian Hartley



KATHLEEN M. HARTLEY [1925 - 2011]

Kathleen was an Ulster lass, born in Belfast on July 21st 1925 and educated mainly at Methodist College, Belfast. Her father was an RUC sergeant and her mother was a sales lady at a big Belfast department store, but by the time we met they had moved to her mother's family farm near Enniskillen. We met in 1945 at a coffee shop in Downing St. Cambridge much frequented by Natural Scientists like a second year chemist from Queens' and by Girtonians like Kathleen, who was the first Ulster woman to win a scholarship there. It was love at first sight and until she died in June. We had to part briefly while I did my military service as an RN meteorological officer in Malta and she finished her degree [which she collected 50 years later when the University decided to award belated degrees for early Girtonians]. We were married in 1949 after I left the navy.

We first lived in Leeds while I worked for a Biochemistry PhD and she taught English in the prestigious Leeds Girls High School. Then back to Cambridge in 1952 where I got an ICI Research Fellowship in Biochemistry and she brought up our two children, David and Vicki, in a small house on the river in Old Chesterton opposite the finishing post for the Bumps. This was no easy task because Vicki had brittle bones disease and spent most of her early life in plaster and the rest of it in a wheelchair.

(continued overleaf)

We continued to live in Cambridge until 1975, apart from two years in Seattle where I got a Whitney Fellowship in the Medical School. After our third child David arrived in 1958 we bought a new house in Barton and Kathleen got a new job as Editor of "Where?" - a consumer educational magazine founded by Michael Young of "Which?" fame.

When Patrick appeared in 1965 we decided to move to a big old house in Hills Rd, close to the MRC Laboratory of Biology [LMB] where I became a founder member. Kathleen had her hands full with a new baby, two boys and a disabled daughter, so had to give up her editorial job but invented a new one called 'The Committee for Children's Playthings'. This involved accepting gifts of new toys and letting our family test them to destruction, whereupon she issued a report to her consumer clients.

Unfortunately I did little to help her because my research was in full flood. LMB was then in the news with Nobel Prizes to Perutz and Kendrew for protein crystallography and Crick and Watson for DNA structure and a second to Fred Sanger for DNA sequencing techniques to add to his earlier one for protein sequencing techniques. I was now an FRS, Fellow of Trinity and frankly not much use as a husband and father. But there were compensations for Kathleen. She loved travel and became my travel agent and companion for numerous foreign lecture trips and conferences. The family mostly missed out on such trips, but were occasionally included.

Our connection with Elsworth began in 1976 after we had moved to a huge penthouse flat on top of the Biochemistry Department in Imperial College, where I was appointed Head of Department. It came with the job having been built for my predecessor, Sir Ernst Chain, as reward for his part in the discovery of penicillin. The children loved it, since they could invite friends to come up in the lift to their large playroom overlooking the Science Museum while Kathleen and I were reading or listening to music in the 40 ft. Living room overlooking the Albert Hall.

But although the rent was trivial, this luxury came at a cost. We had to sell our Cambridge house to pay for the children's education and had to buy a house with our remaining modest funds to stay in the rocketing housing market. We sold a cottage we owned in Donegal so as to purchase a pair of derelict cottages in Smith St., Elsworth, that are now Grove Cottage. There

was a tin roof over the leaking thatch, a ladder instead of stairs to the No. 2 bedroom, thistles grew through the wattle and daub walls and the garden was a sea of nettles!

The theory was that Kathleen and I would come up from our Kensington palace at weekends to repair and decorate it ourselves, but that proved too much. She had to get a full time job to supplement my inadequate salary and landed one as Private Secretary to Sir Jules Thorn, the millionaire founder of Thorn Electric, now GEC. She didn't like this, and resigned as soon as she had earned enough to pay for the necessary repairs to Grove Cottage and exchanged it for a more amenable par-time job as Research Assistant at the Tavistock Institute. She also resumed as unpaid Travel Agent for me, which became increasingly pleasant when I was asked to do a lecture course every January at the University of Miami Medical School. By this time the children were grown up and often came with us.

By this time we had fallen in love with Elsworth, so when I was allowed to sell my Biogen shares we decided to build a new extension to Grove Cottage and to upgrade the garden to what became our pride and joy. We have lived there peacefully and happily since I retired from Imperial College in 1992, although Kathleen had a series of illnesses in the last five years, including disability from a botched spinal operation, a small stroke and breast cancer from which she eventually died.

But she was cheerful and happy to the very end. The whole family including the Australian contingent celebrated our Diamond Wedding in 2009, and assembled again in May last year for a huge barbecue in our garden in which Kathleen participated from her hospital bed, laughing through the open window at the antics of the grandchildren. But when they left she relapsed into sleep and died peacefully on June 12th. All who knew her admired and loved her. She is still with us.



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BOXWORTH AND THE KING JAMES BIBLE

By Alan Farrow

‘The greatest work in prose ever written in English’

‘It has informed the English language more powerfully even than Shakespeare’

Comments such as the above were commonplace last year as the 400th anniversary of the publication of the King James Bible was celebrated. We probably don't give much thought as a rule to those who compiled this great work, but perhaps here in this neighbourhood we should for a man from Boxworth, a certain John Bois, was to play a prominent part. The notes which follow rely to a large extent on the writings of Adam Nicholson, who in his turn depended on the 16th century memoir of Anthony Walker.

John Bois was inducted as Rector of Boxworth in 1596. The circumstances regarding his appointment were somewhat unusual. It would seem his predecessor as Rector, a Mr. Holt, had asked in his will that John Bois of St. John's College might be procured as his successor by marriage to his daughter. What sort of man was he to be so sought out? At this time Bois was 35 years of age, described by Adam Nicholson “as unflirtatious and unseductive a batchelor as could be imagined”. Nicholson ponders on what Miss Holt might have thought as she saw “coming up the dusty lane from Cambridge, this cleric, with his tendency to hypochondria, short sighted, pale skinned....” However, all was well. Anthony Walker, Bois's friend put the matter succinctly “He went over to see her, and soon after [they taking a liking to each other] was presented to the parsonage”.

Bois came to Boxworth from St. John's College in Cambridge, where he had established a reputation as one of England's greatest scholars. He was devoted to scholarship and books, often going in the summer months to the university library at 4 am and staying until 8 pm at night. As a don, it would seem he would every week read by candlelight a Greek lecture to a group of fellows at 4 am in his own rooms. Marriage did not mean the academic world was to be a thing of the past; far from

it, for John would travel by horseback to Cambridge nearly every day.

In the first decade of the 17th century Bois was appointed to the body of scholars who were to prepare what was to be termed the King James Bible. The chosen 50 or so were to form six companies of Translators, which were to be based at Westminster, Cambridge and Oxford, with each company focussing on specific parts of the Bible. The approach was interesting, focussing on blending scholarship with the beauty of the sound of words. All commentators would seem to agree that Tyndale's translation was very influential, but nevertheless meanings and derivations were given careful scrutiny.

Each member of each company was to translate or amend the chapters in his allotted section, after which members of the relevant group would meet together to discuss the text and decide on their final submission. When a book was completed by a company it was sent to other companies for their consideration. Finally there was to be a general meeting at which the wording of the new translation was agreed.

Bois was clearly held in very high esteem for he was appointed as the amanuenses of this final committee. Only he took notes; otherwise the whole procedure was oral. When every person at the meeting accepted the reading, no note would be taken, only when someone objected would variations and suggestions be discussed. Bois, and the other scholars, had been immersed in Greek and Latin over many years. This English version of the Bible was being prepared for others, the non-educated. The translation was meant to be read and heard - the pleasantness of sound was very important. Clearly this objective was achieved. T.S.Eliot is quoted by Melvyn Bragg as stating that it has "a feeling for syllable and rhythm, penetrating far below the conscience levels of thought and feeling, invigorating every word".

While Bois worked on the new translation, he stayed at St. John's College during the week, returning to Boxworth at the weekends. On its completion he was invited by Sir Henry Savile, the Provost of Eton College, to come to Eton to assist with a major scholastic work on which he was engaged. Bois hoped that he might be invited to fellowship at the college, but it was not to be. Writing of this, Adam Nicholson suggests that Bois may

be the source of the following tale, for it is “the kind of gauche, donnish and unworldly joke Bois might have made”.

It seems Lady Savile was “bored and annoyed by her husband's devotion to his enormous pile of Greek manuscripts. Coming up to him one day in the Eton College library she said ‘Sir Henry I wish I were a book too, and then you would a little more respect me.’ Savile said nothing, but one standing by said ‘Madam you must then be an almanac, that he might change you every year’. Whereat she was not a little displeased.”

Bois was to return to Boxworth before retirement to Ely where he was made a prebendary [one sharing the income from the cathedral estates] in 1615. There would seem much to be said in commendation, although like us all he had his faults. At Boxworth, this great scholar could adjust to the needs of his parishioners, speaking from the pulpit with great simplicity; he could tell funny stories after dinner and was devoted to his seven children. He was far from being wealthy and had to take in lodgers in his home, but nevertheless gave generously every Christmas to the poor of the parish. Financial difficulties would seem to have occurred early in his married life - he being an unworldly man left the management of affairs to his new wife, almost unaided. She, however, couldn't manage the finances, and debts led to the sale of his huge beloved library, which earlier he had moved from Cambridge to Boxworth.

To John Bois came the great responsibility of noting correctly the final agreed wording of the King James Bible. Boxworth must be proud of its link with a book of such importance throughout the world and over so many centuries. And so too must we of Elsworth, for Boxworth and Elsworth have for long been linked ecclesiastically, first as a threesome in the 20th century with Knapwell, and now as part of a larger group. Bois is on the Elsworth family tree, then, a fact of which we must be proud.



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A VIEW FROM THE BACK BENCH

By Alan Farrow

The purpose of these notes is to bring to parishioners the reality of events at parish council meetings as they would be witnessed by those present. That being the case, I am obliged to report on a short altercation between the writer and the Chairman at one point at the January meeting when gratuity payment for clock winding was, after many months delay, on the agenda. Such interchanges serve no constructive purpose - emotions must be curtailed and I must apologise for my involvement. By Westminster standards, though, it was low-key.

Reflections this week are from the easy chair at home with the *Els-worth Times* containing a note from Paul Solon before me, written in his capacity of chairman. He has taken it on himself to accuse *The Chronicle* of making “irresponsible and unfounded” criticisms. If this column is to serve the function noted in the first sentence of this article, namely to bring to parishioners what they would observe if present, together with relevant background material, it must be completely truthful with regard to facts. [Of course relating events to familiar tales from literature is entirely personal, but all would be aware of this].

There is clearly no point in making “unfounded” remarks. I am reminded of *Gulliver’s Travels* and the less well-known tale of his visit to the land of the horses - the *houyhnhnms*. The animals were proud of language and considered its purpose to inform people - to tell untruths made no sense at all. This is a guiding principle of this column.

I have asked Paul to inform me of what he had in mind but he has not done so. The proverb that ‘Mud can stick’, probably contains some truth, though, even when not justified. Off hand I cannot think of a fable or parable appropriate to unjustified allegations, although the tale told many years back by Bernard Miles showing there could be unexpected repercussions is not far off. In a rich Hertfordshire voice he would recall a tale of when a farm labouring man, who only wished to please, was falsely accused by an elderly strict teetotalter, of missionary zeal on the subject, of frequenting the village public house. Her evidence was based on the fact that she had noticed the man’s barrow outside the hostelry overnight. The man - let us call him Bernard - attempted to persuade her that he had left it there as he had been working on a nearby site, which

was true. She dismissed this. The following night he left his barrow outside the lady's house! "That had her!"

To return to Gulliver's Travels and to the public accusatory note with which I am confronted. There is clearly no point in making unfounded statements in this column, and this has always been the case. Items arising in the last edition of the Chronicle should perhaps be considered, for these presumably triggered off the accusations. Two main points were being made in the December Chronicle, firstly that an item for the agenda was vetoed for some five meetings by the Chairman, which transgresses his authority, and secondly such censoring when linked to the abolition of 'Matters Arising' as well as 'Any other Business' gave complete control over matters discussed to officers, and made it very difficult for them to be held to account.

Writing as Chairman, Paul Solon states that the parish council is 100% honest; 100% democratic and 100% transparent. No one would surely expect anything less? Hopefully this aspiration will again be reached, as it was in days gone by. However at the moment it would seem to fall short.

[a] Vetoing by the Chairman of items requested for the agenda is not constitutional, and must reduce the claimed 100% percentage figure for "democratic" behaviour, and could do so for "transparency".

[b] Abolition of 'Matters Arising' and 'Any other Business' must reduce accountability to below 100% as the executive cannot be questioned re. developments, particularly in view of the point re. vetoing. "Democratic behaviour and "transparency" are further plundered.

[c] To imply in writing that the Environment Agency supported the proposed sluice scheme in spite of the fact that letters from the Agency were markedly hostile and favoured another site must reduce 'honesty' from 100%, particularly as these letters were held

back from public view. The ‘transparency’ category must also be devalued, the fact only coming to light through these columns.

[d] The parish council did not disclose that the sluice application had been rejected by the Environment Agency and was only allowed on a technicality. Transparency is reduced further.

Failure to adhere to government regulations is another matter of concern, although ‘Legality’ is not one of Paul’s categories. Regulations demand that the correctness or otherwise of Minutes should be discussed if corrections or amendments are required, but at the March meeting an opportunity to consider rectifying a view, erroneously attributed to me, that a document should be ignored was deliberately denied me. This should not be so. I hold strongly to the view that it is my duty, and that of all councillors, to pursue all relevant facts relating to the matter under consideration, not to bury them. Perhaps this mistake came about as I had stated when endeavouring to raise over several months the matter of a gratuity commitment, that it was an internal issue and there was no need for officers to delay matters by involving an outside body. However, once outside views had been received it was clearly our duty to give them our full attention. Nevertheless this does not justify the flouting of regulations.

The above paragraph could be said to have added salt to a wound. At the previous meeting the parish council was led by its chairman to ignore the evidence of e-mails that did not seem to support the pre-existing view relating to gratuities contained in a Motion tabled by him, and they were dismissed without comment or debate. Had they not been ignored it would have been seen that the documents were complementary, not in conflict, with a paper in hand and together would have given a greater understanding and maybe have brought about a different outcome. The need to be open-minded cannot, of course be framed in regulations, but clearly it is the responsibility of the council to parishioners to act in this way.

Despite possible ostracism [I should soon know Coventry well!] the Chronicle will remain alert so as to ensure our council is accountable. Let us on the parish council resolve to pursue facts - if they are inconvenient, so be it, the correct outcome must surely be the goal, not a determination

to hold to pre-conceived views. The framework of procedures that facilitate discussion is laid down and must be followed. If matters require a discussion too lengthy for the bi-monthly meetings, let the issue be considered at an ad hoc sub-committee meeting so as to arrive at sound conclusions. These words are meant to be constructive - the hope remaining that they will help to focus minds on the procedures laid down nationally and thereby promote decisions and outcomes which are soundly and democratically based. As a councillor for over 20 years, ten as chairman, I am saddened by the present state of affairs. I am reminded of the maxim "*When you play a game you must play by the rules; otherwise there can be no game.*" Likewise a council must abide by the rules imposed on it, otherwise it cannot legitimately use its rules to govern others.

LEAVING THE VILLAGE FOR A MOMENT - TRUTH IS FUNNIER THAN FICTION

The following is an alleged transcript of an actual conversation between the Irish and British and released in 1998 by the Chief of Naval Operations.

Irish: Please divert your course 15 degrees to the South to avoid a collision.

British: Recommend you divert your course 15 degrees to the North, to avoid a collision.

Irish: Negative. You will have to divert your course 15 degrees to the South to avoid a collision.

British: This is the captain of a British naval ship. Again I say divert YOUR course.

Irish: Negative. Again I say divert YOUR course.

British: This is the aircraft carrier HMS Britannia the second largest ship in the Atlantic Fleet. We are accompanied by three destroyers, three cruisers and numerous support vessels. I DEMAND THAT YOU DIVERT YOUR COURSE 15 DEGREES NORTH. AGAIN I SAY 15 DEGREES NORTH or counter measures will be undertaken to secure the safety of this ship.

Irish: We are a lighthouse.

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ELSWORTH SPORTS CLUB

By Roger Fenson

As I am writing this report the football season is drawing to a close, the table tennis season has recently been completed and although the weather at this time could be better, we look forward to a pleasant season of cricket for our teams.

This year, with a reduced number of available players we fielded only one football team, playing in BIS Division 4B. It has proved to be a successful season and at the time of writing, with one match to play, the team will finish runners-up having lost only once in twenty three matches, with a goal difference of 74! That should mean promotion next season to Division 3.

The team also entered two cup competitions and in the John Ablett Cup reached the semi-final where they lost 2 – 3 in a very close match against Balsham, a Division 3 side. In the Cambs Lower Junior Cup they have gone one better and reached the final, which will be played on the 16th May at Histon Football Club against Coater Athletic Reserves, with a 7.30 pm start.

Anyone interested in football please contact David Triggs on 0789 1011055

The table tennis season finished at the end of April, with mixed success for our two teams playing the Ely league. The first team finished third of nine teams in Division I, and the second team finished seventh of eight teams in Division 2. Both teams competed in the Handicap and Plate competitions, but failed to survive the early rounds.

Anyone interested in table tennis please contact Bill Knibbs on 267266.

The cricket season is now with us and again we have entered two teams in the Cambs League, in Divisions 3B and 5A. We have also entered the second team into the Lower Junior Cup and entered a team into the Mid-Week Business Houses League.

Anyone interested in cricket please contact Bill Knibbs on 267266 or Rod Deavall on 267465.

Carpet bowls continues to be played throughout the year on Wednesday afternoons in the pavilion. Whist drives are held monthly on Friday evenings, commencing at 7.30 pm, with Bridge sessions taking place on various Friday evenings.

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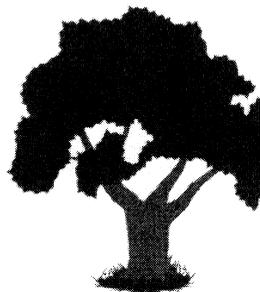
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ELSWORTH, KNAPWELL & CONINGTON W.I.

By Lyn Hogan (President)

We meet every 2nd Wednesday in each month, except August, at Elsworth Primary School at 7.30 pm.

In January our speaker was Fiona Windsor who spoke about her life as a Vicar. February, Daniel Bruce talked about living and reporting on the front line.

March was our Annual Meeting and in April, Eric Salisbury talked to us about running a busy Doctors' surgery (Papworth).

Our talks for June and July are on the Ghurkha Welfare Trust and Gardens and the National Trust.

As you can see, our programme is very varied with not a jam making session in sight!!!

Visitors are always welcome. If you are interested please contact either Lyn Hogan (267254) or Isobel Farrow (267472).

JUBILEE CLUB

By Betty Simcock

The club is open to everyone either living in or visiting Elsworth and surrounding villages. We meet on the first Thursday of most months from 2.30 to 4.30 pm and have a speaker or entertainment, afternoon tea and a raffle.

We are having two outings in the summer, namely:

Colchester - 7th June

Southwold - 26th July

both leaving Elsworth bus shelter at 9 am and starting home at 4.30 pm. Seats are still available at only £10 per person.

Please come along if you can, you will certainly know people there - and you may want to come back! For more information call Betty on 01954 267470.

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