

The Elsworth Chronicle



Issue No:6

August, 1993

PETER BUCKLEY - an obituary

The sudden death of Peter Buckley at the early age of 58 came as a great shock to many people in Elsworth.

A kind person of pleasant disposition, Peter was born in Elsworth and went to Elsworth and Swavesey schools. He learned his trade as a master thatcher from his father, Sidney, and carried on the business from Elsworth for all of his working life. He had many business contacts throughout East Anglia and was a member of the East Midlands Thatchers Association.

For 5 years, from May 1986 to May 1991, he was a loyal member of Elsworth Parish Council and his local knowledge of people and the village was a great asset in Council matters.

In his younger days he was a member of Elsworth Sports Club and also played badminton for Gamlingay. More recently his greater sporting interest was in speedway and he frequently attended local meetings.

Our heartfelt sympathy is extended to his wife, Joan, whom he married in 1961 and their daughters, Gillian and Jackie.

J.W.T.

SOUTH CAMBS DISTRICT COUNCIL

A new Chief Executive - Mr. John Ballantine - has taken over after the retirement of Mr. Bernard Hancock. He joins the Council at a time of great change, as Local Government Commission is shortly to look at the options for Cambridgeshire, as it progresses towards the possibility of unitary authorities!

The housing committee is hoping to develop its land in Fardell's Lane for sheltered housing for the elderly and infirm. The Council's architectural staff are currently drawing up a scheme to present to the housing committee for its approval, after which it will go through the normal planning procedure.

The planning committee has still not received the final submissions for the A45 settlement and as a consequence a decision cannot be made. The developers (Stanhope) are still negotiating with the Education Authority and the Department of Transport regarding contributions to be made in respect of secondary education and improvements to the road network.

Ken Collett

JOHN THURLEY
A RECORD OF WHICH TO BE JUSTLY PROUD



It will not have gone unnoticed in the village that John Thurley has stepped down from the Chairmanship of the Parish Council after seven years in that position. Such a period of service in itself is a fine accomplishment. However, there is more to tell; John was in addition Vice Chairman for six years. But these facts fade into insignificance compared with John's record as Parish Councillor - **FORTY YEARS CONTINUOUS SERVICE**, during which time he only missed two meetings. Put another way, he attended 259 meetings out of a possible 261 (99.23%) to which must be added innumerable planning meetings. To assist in putting this length of service in perspective, think back to what you were doing - if born - all those years ago. Or reflect on the year 1953 when John was co-opted to replace the Rev. W. Awdry on the Parish Council. At that time a new Ford Popular car could be purchased for £390 including tax; the four minute mile had yet to be achieved; Len Hutton was captain of England's cricket team; at association football, England, when John first came to the Council, had never been defeated at Wembley! Above all, it was Coronation Year.

John, a native of Sandy in Bedfordshire, first came to Elsworth in 1946 to work for the Davison family after gaining two diplomas at the Midland Agricultural College at Sutton Bonington, to which he had gained a scholarship. Prior to that he had been educated at Bedford School, to which

he also won a scholarship. He was out of the village for three years managing West Bilney Farm in Norfolk for Eric Davison after his initial 12 months in Elsworth, returning in 1950 to take charge of Avenue Farm. He has remained here ever since.

In total, John worked for the Davison family for 28 years, followed by 15 years with John Meeks from 1973. Even now, although of an age when he is entitled to take life easily, he remains in harness, being part-time manager of a warehouse of an insulation company in Gamlingay.

John's influence on the local landscape through farming and his contribution to the life of the village through his membership of the parish council didn't, and does not, mark the limits of his endeavours. Consider the Elsworth & District Show - John was a founder member some 36 years ago, being its inaugural treasurer, an office he has held continuously to the present time. Further for over 30 years he has been a Trustee of Elsworth Non-ecclesiastical Charities, and for several years served as Parish Council representative on the school management board, as it was then called.

In a village known for long-serving stalwarts, the record of John Thurley stands high. Much has been achieved but matters are not just of the past; far from it. He remains as a Parish Councillor, as Treasurer of the Elsworth Show Committee, as Trustee of the Non-ecclesiastical Charities. As such he retains a vital place at the heart of matters in the village. Over forty years service, with more to come, is an outstanding record. John may not have been born and bred in Elsworth, but few who were would dispute the view of one Elsworthian by birth that John is an Elsworth man.

A.W.F.

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SCHOLARS AND TEACHERS V, 1920 - 1930

In the difficult years of the agricultural depression of the 1920's farmers in Elsworth went bankrupt and unemployment among farm labourers was high. These were hard times for needy families living on or below the poverty line and striving to feed and clothe the children. Frequent outbreaks of infectious diseases struck the village, and the school attendance figures fluctuated wildly. In November 1920 cases of scarlet fever were sent to the Cambridge Isolation Hospital, and in the summer of 1927 the School Medical Officer ordered the school to be closed because of the epidemic of whooping cough, a killer in those days. The Head Teacher (Mr Addy) wrote in the Log Book on 5 August: "The attendance this week has been very low. Victor Wright has a sprained ankle; George Desborough has put out his collar bone; Dennis Cross and Arthur Brand are having their tonsils attended to. 22 other children are excluded on account of whooping cough. On roll 77, attendance average 47.8%".

Much greater attention by the County Authority was now being given to the health of school children, and there were regular visits from the School Nurse, who brought cod-liver oil and malt with her; the School Dentist, who followed up his inspection with treatment; the School Medical Officer (or his assistant), who tested eyes, and looked for ringworm and impetigo. Free school milk was supplied from February 1938; one-third of a pint was handed out at mid-morning and another one-third of a pint a midday lunch time. There was education in health and cleanliness from outside sources. On one occasion the makers of Lifebuoy soap ran a 'Clean hand campaign'; on another "a cinemotor lorry of the Health and Cleanliness Council visited the school at noon and showed films in the playground".

It was not only illness which kept the attendance figures down. Each year truants went off to the point-to-point races at Caxton, and to the St Ives Fair. On the day when the children were allowed out of morning school to see the meet of the Foxhounds "12 boys who had followed the hounds too far failed to put in an appearance at school this afternoon.! [7 April 1922]. The annual Sunday-School outing organised by the Chapel was not counted as an official day off, and on 6 July 1925 the Head Teacher (Mr Addy) reported that 22 children were absent on the day of the Baptists' excursion to Hunstanton. When the Church held their own Sunday-School outing the school was closed.

Mr Hunting, the Head Teacher from 1912 to 1925, used to award attendance-medals and certificates at the end of each school year (31 March), and on 11 November 1921 he reports "The school was presented with a board by the LEA because the attendance for the year ended 31 March 1921 exceeded 97 per cent". This was one year after little Maud Lawrence entered the school as an Infant. Nine years later "The Rector made a presentation of a silver watch subscribed by the Mangers of the School and others to Maud Lawrence (who left this school Easter 1928) in recognition of her 8 years of perfect attendance at school. Also present Mrs Iggulden, Mr Wright and Mr Hodson." [9 August 1929]. Mrs Iggulden was the Rector's

wife; Mr Wright and Mr Hodson were school Managers. This record must be almost unbeatable, even today, and where is that watch now?

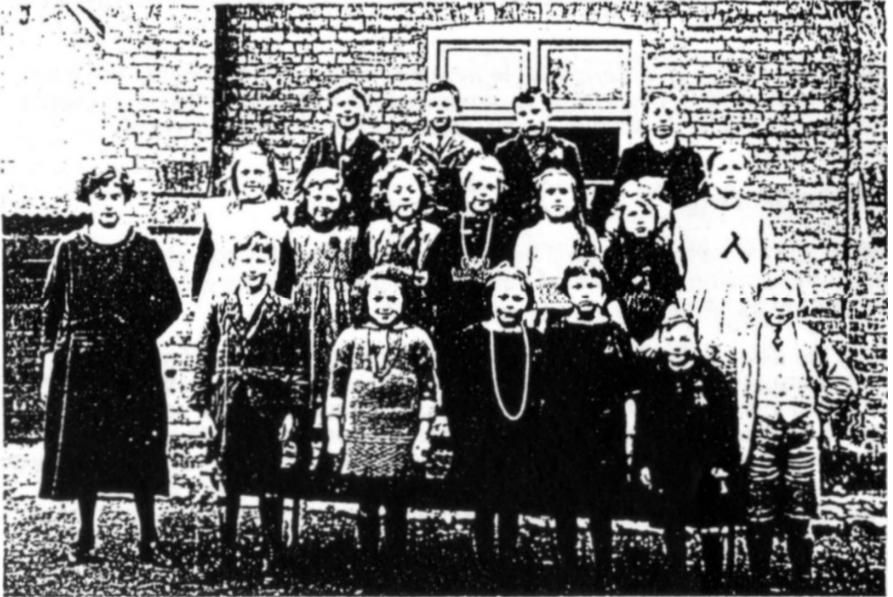
This gladsome event came a few weeks before Mr Addy had to face a serious discipline problem in the Lower class. A new teacher for them had been appointed on 2 July but the class soon summed her up and two days later the Head recorded "The Lower class was very noisy today". By the middle of November the pupils, not the teacher, were in control and anarchy reigned: "Teacher no control over class. Work very unsatisfactory. Some children writing in large untidy double lined printing. Some drawing on scraps of paper in the reading lesson. Constant playing and talking." [28 November 1929]. Four days later: "Lower class very noisy. Now necessary for the two classes to work without the dividing curtain being drawn along. This is very distracting." [2 December 1929]. Mayhem followed: "During Dictation examination this afternoon a girl in Standard II pricked the back of a boy's hand with a pen. This is the outcome of the teacher's lack of control over the class." [11 December 1929]. Conditions were no better next term and the despairing Head agonises over the behaviour of the girls in Standards II and III who "are allowed to walk about where and when they choose. Hence many of them are merely gossiping the whole time. Work is constantly dropping on the floor and at times one or two girls were actually running, across the room". There was only one way out, and the Managers had to give the lady her notice. She left at the end of the term, but not before the Head caught children "running along the writing part of the desk". On another day "four boys fell backwards from the desk on to the floor; and in the general rush to go out to play the board fell from the easel. Miraculously it fell between two children instead of on them". All rioting ceased when Mrs Addy (a certificated teacher) came in as a supply after the defeated one departed. By August Class II showed a great improvement in discipline and quality of work, and never again was such disorder seen in an Elsworth classroom. From the mid-thirties onward minds were all focused on the chaos that was to come in Europe.

Betty Evans

The quotations are all from Elsworth School Log Book III



**ELSWORTH C. of E. SCHOOL
CLASS II - EARLY 1920'S**



The pupil teacher on the left is believed to be Miss Winifred Throssell. Do let the Editor know if you recognise anyone.

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Parish Council News

Annual Parish Meeting

The guest speaker at the annual Parish Meeting on the 26th May was Mark Vigor, Structure Planning Officer for the County. His topic was a view of the Elsworth environment as the present century passes into the new. It is not possible in a few words to summarise his talk, but those not present might be particularly interested in his comment that the A604 is either to be upgraded to a motorway or a parallel motorway constructed, allowing the present road to serve local needs.

It was pleasing to see many people from the village at the meeting, the main purpose of which, of course, is to provide a forum at which the parish council has to account for its actions, and to listen and take note of views of parishioners.

Traffic Calming

Some, but perhaps not all, will be aware that the Parish Council has been active in pursuing the matter of traffic calming although, as yet, there is nothing tangible to be seen.

Why the delay in the implementation of a strongly held view of many villagers that measures should be taken to slow-down motor vehicles in the village? Let it be understood from the start that the Parish Council cannot act as a free agent: any modifications of the roads must be done through the County Council. The response to the petition - some time back now - at Shire Hall was that the accident record at Elsworth didn't warrant expenditure on traffic-calming; priorities had to be made and our village was way down their list. As it would seem wrong to wait for a tragedy, your council endeavoured to have Elsworth included under a scheme whereby traffic calming costs would be shared between the County Council and the parish. However, the money allocated to such a scheme by the County Council was not great, and again it was deemed that Elsworth didn't merit inclusion. Enquires were then made to ascertain whether it was possible for the parish to fund a scheme alone. This was acceptable to the County providing the scheme was approved by their officers and undertaken in association with them. It will be recalled that the results of the village questionnaire gave the Parish Council authority to undertake such discussions.

Councillors have met with Superintendent Bristow - the police officer responsible for traffic in the County - and with Mr. Menzies, the County officer responsible for traffic calming whose approval is required for any scheme proposed. Many methods of slowing traffic were considered, the most notable of which are given overleaf, with summary observations alongside. Readers will doubtless have ideas of their own and comments would be welcomed by the editor (Alan Farrow).

It might well be asked where matters stand at the moment. Guidance should shortly be available from the Dept. of Transport following a study it is conducting into the effectiveness of the various calming measures in use in this country and overseas. The report had been scheduled for publication at the beginning of the year, but there has been slippage and the completion date moved to June this year and subsequently possibly to September. Directly this information is to hand it will be possible to make a firm decision.

Parish Council News – continued

Traffic Calming Possibilities

Method		Comment
Road Humps	1	It is necessary to slow down the traffic before the hump is reached, otherwise the hump would cause the driver to lose control of his/her vehicle.
	2	Owing to the need to reduce the speed of the vehicles before humps are reached, warning measures would be prominent and an eye-sore to some.
	3	Several humps would be required.
Road-narrowing at village entry points.	1	Traffic from the centre of the village would have right of way.
	2	As narrowing would necessitate incoming vehicles diverting to the wrong side of the road, there could be an element of danger.
	3	Further narrowing or other calming measures would be necessary in order to prevent vehicles speeding again after the initial sector had been passed.
Marks on the road (e.g. 30mph)		Considered ineffective - research findings available.
Speed Cameras	1	Ideally should be shared with other villages to reduce costs.
	2	Perhaps the least urbanising of the major calming measures.
Change of road Surfacing.		Research findings awaited.
Change of colour of road surface.		Research findings awaited.
Mini-roundabout at Knibb's Corner		Not favoured by the County Council.
Rumble Strips		Very noisy. Where laid, very unpopular with people living in the vicinity.

Parish Council News - continued

Tennis

A meeting has been arranged - plus no doubt held by the time these notes are read - for the 4th of August at the Sports Pavilion at 7.30 p.m. for all who are interested in the establishment of tennis facilities in the village. A leaflet giving details is to be distributed. Those requiring further information should contact Sue Warboys (Elsworth 548).

Best Kept Village Competition

Judges could be around at any time now. The organisers have emphasised that they are particularly impressed by examples of pride in the village environment. Tidiness, well-kept gardens and hanging baskets seemed to find favour.

War Memorial

The war memorial has been cleaned, the inscriptions painted and, where a little weathered, re-etched.

School Servery

The servery is being refurbished. There is now a new covering on the floor and improvement of the work surfaces is in hand.

Resignation of Chairman

Since the last edition of *The Chronicle*¹, John Thurley resigned from the chairmanship of the Parish Council. An appreciation will be found on another page. Alan Farrow is now Chairman, and Sue Warboys the Vice-Chairman. John remains as Convener and Chairman of the planning and sub-committee.

Change of Address

Liz Sim, the clerk to the Parish Council, has changed her address. She may now be contacted at 6 Brockley Road. Her telephone number remains Elsworth 345.

TERRY WAITE IN ELSWORTH

The line of cars reached from Meadow Drift to the Pavilion. At the school gate was the bustling, excited reception committee. Down the footpath came the Chairman of Governors keeping up with the long strides of the celebrated former hostage. He had come to declare open the hall extension and other improvements to the school building. "Hello Terry", cheered the children, and Terry Waite stopped to talk before entering the school. This was the man for whom they had all prayed in Monday morning assemblies throughout his imprisonment.

Dr. Yule led the service and invited Terry to address the school. He looked down at his shoes, size fourteen, and then along the front row. He spotted two pairs of bunny-faced slippers and called the wearers to him. He held their hands and they measured their feet against his. "Think now of all the children with no shoes to wear." He spoke quietly, warmly, and smiled with friendly brown eyes. His hearers responded, linked as if by a telephone wire. Questions came from the floor, and from the gentle answers rose the faintest picture of the horror of those five years.

"What was it like being in prison?"

"Not very nice." He shook his head.

"What did you have to eat?"

"Sometimes a few vegetables. Rather horrid. Sometimes a bowl of rice".

He cupped his hands to show how small the bowl was.

"Why did they take your shoes away?"

"Because I didn't need them." The children looked surprised.

"Why didn't you need your shoes?"

"Because my feet were chained to the floor." Silence.

He moved across to unveil the oak plaque on the wall. It was fashioned by Adrian Parfitt and lettered by Martyn Barratt, a former pupil. Terry asked for help from the youngest pupil. "We have two", said Mrs Ashard, calling the pair out of line. They were lifted up shoulder high (with Dr. Yule assisting) and together they pulled the tape and revealed the tablet. Two senior pupils came forward with a present. It was a crystal tankard engraved with the school logo by Gillian Barnes. Terry took it out of the box and held it up.

"What shall I put in it?" he asked, smiling delightedly and turning round for everyone to see.

"Beer."

"Orange juice."

"A milk shake."

Everyone laughed and later in the classroom he drank a whole tankardful of milk in less than five minutes.

All this was in front of a posse of press reporters and TV camera men. They intruded upon a private occasion, breaking the delicate threads of conversation between the young and their very special visitor. They denied him the informality of the classroom which Mrs Dixon had planned for him by homing in on faces and staging the discussions as if on a film set. He was even held at microphone length for a fifteen minute interview in front of the TV camera and its headlights while the Governors, staff and guests waited to take a buffet lunch with him. He remained passively polite and genial through it all. What a morning. What a man.

15 July 1993

Betty Evans

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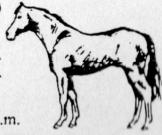
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HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

In previous editions of the Chronicle, references have been made to the antiquity of the bells of our church and to the work undertaken to bring them back to full song.

The restoration was marked officially on the 30th April when the Bishop of Ely, supported by a large congregation, came to Elsworth to conduct a service of dedication. Following the service, refreshments were served in the pavilion, where the gratitude of members to those who had worked so hard was expressed.

Two weeks later another large gathering at the church was entertained by the Huntingdon Male Voice Choir. It was a delightful concert. Another recent activity providing joy and fellowship was the Church Fete, held this year on the sports field. It was good to see so many people of the village present

A.W.F.

ELSWORTH SPORTS CLUB

ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL

The first team finished fifth out of thirteen in Division 5A of the Cambridgeshire League. Of the twenty four games played, ten were won, ten lost, and four drawn.

At the A.G.M. Terry Stevens was elected Manager, the duties of which he will combine with those of Fixture Secretary. Maurice Circus is the Assistant Manager.

CRICKET

Two teams from Elsworth play in the Cambridgeshire Junior League. At the time of writing, the 1st XI has won one game and lost four in Division 2 (S), while the 2nd XI has won two and lost one in Division 6 (S), to which, some might recall, it gained promotion last season.

THE WILDLIFE TRUST

The Wildlife Trust organises many special events throughout the year. Some of local interest are noted in this magazine under 'Dates for your Diary'¹, but there are many more. The editor (Alan Farrow) has a full programme which is available to those interested; alternatively details may be obtained from the Trust at Enterprise House, Maris Lane, Trumpington, Cambridge CB2 2LE (telephone Cambridge 846363) or from the Wildlife Trust shop in Green Street Cambridge.

The Trust has drawn particular attention to talks being given as part of the Wildlife action appeal, but our publication date will proceed only one, namely that on otters on the 9th September at the Gilmour Building at the Botanic Garden in Cambridge. The talk commences at 7.30 p.m.

THE JUBILEE CLUB

The Jubilee Club started the year with lunch at The Poacher*. February brought the A.G.M. at which Mrs Evans gave an illustrated talk, and in March, Miss Mersey talked about her visit to the Galapagos Islands. In April, Mrs Jack gave an amusing talk about her life in Brixton in the 1920's - 1930's, while in May, Simon Butler gave a very interesting talk on the ambulance service. The following month a mystery tour, with tea at Stonham Barns, was greatly enjoyed, as was the talk by Mrs Roe on the life of Leonard Cheshire at our July meeting.

Future Events

Our seaside meeting to Felixtowe on the 29th July is open to non-members. Hilton Club join us on our outings and some meetings and we sometimes join their events, which we find very enjoyable. After the holidays our first meeting will be Bingo on September 9th and in October we have the 'Chestnut'¹ Concert Party to entertain us.

Everyone is very welcome to join our meetings which are held in term time on the first Thursday of the month at Elsworth School at 2.45. We have a 'bring and buy'¹ stall and a very nice tea.

Eileen Grange (Secretary)

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Elsworth and Knapwell W.I. has just celebrated its 70th anniversary. During the past year members made many soft toys for the craft fair which is to be held on Sunday the 31st October this year in Papworth Village Hall to raise funds for Patient's Link.

Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month at 7.30 p.m. in the School Hall (see 'Dates for your Diary¹'). New members are always welcome; contact Mrs B. Simcock (President) of 24 Rogers Close - telephone 470 or Mrs L. Hogan of 46 Boxworth Road - telephone 254.

ELSWORTH NATIONAL WOMEN'S REGISTER

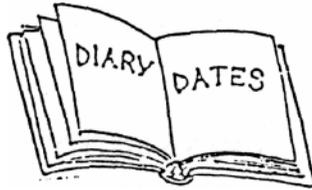
Over the last six months we have enjoyed a variety of meetings including a fascinating talk on Hypnotherapy by Martin Bull which involved several of our members being hypnotised. The American Evening was very successful with everyone tasting a wide range of American cuisine - but no fries! Also, Caroline Coles entertained us with her Tarot cards and at our last meeting members brought along an item from their grandparents era then spoke about its history.

Carol Sims (Elsworth 675) and Gill Barnes (Elsworth 524) are now the local organisers of the group so if you would like further details please give one of them a ring.

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

August 7th	Cricket 2nd XI V. Newton II	Elsworth
August 10th	Wildlife Guided walk to see ancient fields and wildlife at Toft Meadows. Meet 7 p.m. Red Lion, Toft	
August 11th	N.W.R. Lunch at White Swan, Conington.	
August 14th	Cricket 1st XI V. Audley End.	Elsworth
August 21st	Cricket 2nd XI V. Babraham II.	Elsworth
August 28th	Cricket 2nd II V. Thriplow II.	Elsworth
September 4th	Elsworth Show	
September 8th	W.I. "The Vanishing Hedgerow". Talk by Mr Woodman.	
September 11th	Wild Life. Family activity afternoon at Mae Fen. Meet at 2.30 p.m. at reserve gate, Swavesey/Over Road.	
September 13th	N.W.R. Glass engraving demonstration.	
September 22nd	Wild Life. Talk on otters: J. Green, Gilmour Building, Botanic Gardens, Cambridge. 7.30 p.m.	
September 24th	N.W.R Ten pin bowling outing.	
September 26th	Holy Trinity Church - Harvest Festival Service 6.30 p.m.	
October 13th	W.I. - Robin Wilson with the Hartford Singers.	
November 10th	W.I. - "The Nile in Style" - Rodney Tibbs.	
December 8th	W.I. - Christmas Celebrations.	