

The Elsworth Chronicle



Holy Trinity Church

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ELSWORTH CHRONICLE

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A HEART-WARMING MOMENT

Walking from house to house collecting money for the British Legion Poppy Appeal is usually a somewhat bland activity, but this year it provided the highlight of the day when a young lad of some six years of age gave the contents of his purse, some 20p. "The Widow's Mite" comes to mind - no one could have been more generous. A moving moment.

AWF.

ELSWORTH RAT- RUN

Not so long ago Elsworth was a virtual haven of peace, being, as it is, away from the clamour of the main roads. To-day, though, at the morning and evening rush-hours many speeding cars now come our way to avoid the congestion on the principal routes to Cambridge and other places.

As has been noted elsewhere, the parish council is giving attention to taking measures to reduce the speed of vehicles by means of activating a “speed watch” scheme. Using a speed gun could appeal to many of us and be useful at the same time. Volunteers should contact the Parish Clerk, Liz Sim.

Welcome as it is, the scheme addresses the symptoms not the cause. Can anything be done regarding the latter? With the increasing growth of the area around Cambridge, a complete cure might not be possible but the problem could be ameliorated if attention was to be directed to the round-about at the Caxton Gibbet. During rush-hours there is marked congestion as traffic on the A1198 heading southwards is markedly impeded by a continuous stream of traffic from the west. Regretfully, a diversion made by way of Rogues Lane, thence Brockley Road to the A428 can allow the bottleneck at The Gibbet to be avoided, to the detriment of Elsworth.

As the hold-up of vehicles from the north at The Gibbet is basically caused by the continuous line of easterly bound Bedford to Cambridge traffic having the right of way, the installation of traffic lights operative at rush hours would doubtless ease the problem and there would be little incentive to use the narrow roads of an Elsworth diversion.

Are traffic lights likely to be installed? Not, it seems, unless officials in positions of responsibility are made aware of public feeling. A complication is that although Cambridgeshire County Council is responsible for the A1198, the Highways Authority manages the A428. As the latter authority might be reluctant to agree to short breaks in the flow of traffic on the A428 through the installation of lights, it is vital that Cambridgeshire officials are armed with many letters of concern. The name of the Head of the responsible department at Shire Hall is given below. Communications need not be long – the volume would seem an important influencing factor. If many would write now, the urgency of the matter would be made clear to those in high places.

Contact address: Nicola Debnam, Head of Local Infrastructure & Street Management, Castle Court, Shire Hall, Castle Hill, Cambridge CB3 0AP

e-mail: Nicola.debnam@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

If you write, do let me know (farrow16@googlemail.com or 01954 267472 or any parish councillor) - numbers could be important in a campaign. If in disagreement your thoughts would be welcomed.

AWF



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RICKY CHINN - 1934-2012



February this year sadly saw the death in Elsworth of a prominent member of the Antarctic Survey. He began his long and distinguished career with the British Antarctic Survey in September 1961 as Base Leader at Deception Island. He transferred to Argentine Islands South in December 1962 as Base Leader, returning to the U.K. in May 1964. In July 1966 he rejoined BAS as Base Commander at Halley Bay on the Brunt Ice Shelf on the Antarctic continent, where in 1967 the major task was to rebuild the base. In recognition of his significant contribution to this project he was awarded the MBE in July 1968.

In 1972 the second phase of Rick's work with BAS began when he accepted a role with the Logistics Section then based in London. BAS moved to Cambridge in 1974 and Ricky came to live in Elsworth. Applying the knowledge he had acquired working in the Antarctic he developed specific areas of logistics, notably tents, sledges, medical supplies and cargo management. In recognition of his many achievements he was awarded the Polar Medal in 1988. He undertook several Antarctic tours during this period to review logistics before retiring in August 1994.

Eric James Chinn, known to everyone as Rick, was brought up in Leigh on Sea. He began his working life as a compositor for a printing company in 1950. In June 1951 he decided that this was not the life for him and began an apprenticeship as a Thames Waterman. In July 1956 he was granted Freedom of the River Thames. In November 1953 Ricky was called up for

National Service and opted for the Parachute Regiment because it sounded interesting. He spent three years with the regiment mainly with the recruiting team and completed over 50 descents. He went back as a waterman and spent spare time sailing with his brother Ray in Leigh. In June 1960 he became a sales representative for a rope making company and in 1961 called to see officials of what was then called Falkland Island Dependency Survey [later to be known as BAS]. The potential customers were impressed by the ropes but even more by the representative whom they entertained to a pub lunch and then recruited him.

Throughout his life Ricky had enjoyed many walking holidays in the Lake District and Snowdonia. He became a walking leader for HF Holidays in 1992 and over the next eleven years also designed walks and assessed potential leaders for HF. During this time he met his partner Janet, also an HF leader. They shared their love of the hills until Ricky's last year when he found walking difficult. He is fondly remembered by all who knew him as a kindly man who always had time for others.

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A SHOPPING HERITAGE IN ELSWORTH



This year, of course, marked an important anniversary in Elsworth - the community shop successfully completed its first year of trading. Congratulations have been earned by all who have assisted in this venture, particularly Rick - our enthusiastic and energetic manager over much of this period; the committee; and all who have served behind the counter. The opening of the shop has given back to Elsworth a feature of village life which had been taken for granted over so many years in the past.

Within the village vestigial reminders of formerly competing shops exist, many of the buildings remaining but without marked evidence of the former role they played in the life of Elsworth. Some fifty years ago there were three food shops here, and going back further into the 20th century there were competing bakeries also.

The largest of the shops was located in Brook Street. It was established by Alfred and Linda Throssel, the grandparents of Bessie Woolf of Church Lane. Although principally a grocery store, it was also the general store of the village, selling a range of items from groceries; fruit; vegetables; bread; meat; clothing, including bonnets, etc. etc. The meat was principally from animals slaughtered in an out-building in the yard

at the back of the house. A photograph of this fine building is reproduced on the previous page.

A rival grocery shop was situated in Boxworth Road, on the eastern corner of where Duncock Lane joins Boxworth Road. The business would seem to pre-date Throssel's shop in that it is noted in Kelly's Directory of 1922, whereas Throssel's entry dates from 1929. It was probably established by William Kent and was later to be acquired by Barbara and Peter Hancock. Then Barbara and Peter purchased a shop in Longstanton, but were not happy there. They missed Elsworth and returned here. A family connection remains, for Barbara was an aunt of Bob Empson, and Peter his uncle.

Way back from the early 20th century the butcher's shop run by the Knibbs family on the corner of Boxworth Road and Paddock Row served the village, and remained open until only a few years back. It was in the 1930s that Tom Knibbs opened his shop here and the business remained as a family concern over several generations. The meat sold was of excellent quality, as many still in the village would testify. Its former slaughter house remains - but not now used for its original purpose - in Boxworth Road immediately beyond the light industrial estate as you leave the village. At one time, towards the end of the 20th century, an application was made to use it as a Moslem slaughter house, but this was rejected. There is an interesting reference in Kelly's Directory of 1916 in which Isaac Knibbs is noted as a butcher in Elsworth. This reference was to a small shop established in Brook Street, now a dilapidated building completely hidden from view by vegetation, and hopefully soon to be restored.

Just as there was competition for the sale of meat and groceries, so too, it seems, was the case of freshly baked bread and cakes. There was a bakery on The Causeway, owned by the Richardsons, and another in Brook Street, the present Old Bakery (not then known as such for it was a building of the 1930s.) which was a Throssel concern. It would seem the bakery on the Causeway was noted for its cakes as well as bread, while the shop in Brook Street concentrated more on bread. The Causeway bakery has been demolished, to be replaced by a two-storey house. A remnant of the enterprise remains in the form of the single storey building which was later to become the post office and the B. & A. News shop. The Brook Street bakery remains, with its former function proudly recorded in its name. Within, the old oven still exists. It is said that at one time certain people in the village

were allowed to cook their Sunday joints there, for the oven fire was never allowed to go out while the business remained.

Elsworth's Post Office has had a somewhat nomadic history. At one time it was located in the Victorian detached house - now No. 16 Brook Street - set back from the road near where the Victorian sluice of late lamented memory was situated. Here Annie Throssel had a magnificent collection of old post cards of the village which she would happily share with anyone showing interest. When Annie retired the post office facilities were transferred to The Causeway and remained in the building which had been part of the former bakery, as noted above. Brian, the second Postmaster on that site was sadly killed in a motor accident when going home to Hilton. The post office remained open in the mornings for several years until closure in 2009. It was this, together with the loss a few years earlier of Billy Knibbs's shop, where groceries as well as meat could be purchased, that led to the activities which gave rise to our present community shop.

Looking back, to mind comes a picture of a more leisurely time with people strolling to several shops in the village to meet their needs - and this not in the long distant past, but within the experience of people still living in the village. Doubtless in each shop people would meet by chance and enjoy the company of others. But to return to the theme of the first paragraph, the present has much to offer. To-day there is no need to tramp from shop to shop, for all requirements can be provided under one roof in the Community Shop - even a chance to gossip is facilitated by the provision of tea, coffee and biscuits, with a table and chairs to provide comfort.

Out of a seemingly depressing situation of decline with the closure of shops [and earlier threats to The Poacher] has come revitalisation. No one would dispute the attractiveness of the interior of our Community Shop or the service it brings. Its friendly atmosphere is also of note - in it a focal point has been re-created, bringing together people who otherwise might remain strangers. Elsworth, without doubt is an attractive village; it is peaceful but yet vibrant through the nature of its people. A thriving Community Shop is the latest testament to its quality.

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ELSWORTH LUNCHEES



The above photograph shows a gathering of happy faces at one of our Elsworth Lunches. They are usually held on the last Tuesday of every-other month, the next being in November. If you haven't yet joined us but are interested, please contact Alan Farrow on 267472, or e-mail farrow16@googlemail.com. There are normally between 30 and 40 present. The food and company are excellent. And the cost is only £7.50 for a two-course meal.

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ELSWORTH, KNAPWELL & CONINGTON W.I.

By Lyn Hogan (President)

We meet on the second Wednesday each month, except August, at Elsworth School Hall at 7.30pm.

We invite speakers to our meetings, which can be quite varied. We have had talks on the Ghurkha Welfare Trust, Gardens and the National Trust, Stories from around Cambridgeshire and Evacuees in World War II. We are all looking forward to our meeting in December which will be our Christmas Party.

Talks planned for next year include Wildlife in Kenya and True Stories of a Lorry Driver.

Visitors are always welcome. If you wish to come, either turn up at the School Hall or telephone Lyn Hogan on 267254 or Isabel Farrow on 267472.

JUBILEE CLUB

By Betty Simcock

On the first Thursday of most months we meet in Elsworth School hall from 2.30pm to 4.30pm and welcome everybody who would like to meet others of the local villages, have a chat, listen to an entertaining speaker [we cover many subjects] and then enjoy refreshments and a raffle. In the summer two coach excursions to places of interest are arranged.

We end the year as follows:

November 8th Mr. Carter [The last Eel Catcher].

December 6th Mr. Bob Harding-Jones [Laughter in the Village].

We start 2013 with our New Year Lunch at the George and Dragon.

For more information please contact Betty on 01954 267470.

ELSWORTH SPORTS CLUB

By Roger Fenson

The cricket season this year was very disappointing for Elsworth with the bad weather causing several matches to be cancelled, and at other times lack of players meaning either incomplete teams or the forfeiture of matches. Because of this only one team has been entered in the Cambridge Junior League for next season. Of the matches played, the first team, in Junior League Division 3B, won one and lost seven, with one abandoned and seven cancelled due to the weather. The second team, playing in Junior League 5A, won one and lost one, with five cancelled due to the weather and a further five forfeited due to insufficient number of players.

Regarding the league tables the first team finished eighth of nine teams and the second team seventh of seven teams. Anyone interested in cricket for next season please contact Bill Knibbs on 267266.

The football team, however, has been more successful. After their runners-up position last season in Division 4B they were promoted to NMC Division 3B for this season. They have made an excellent start and at the time of writing have won all of their matches. In the league they are currently in third position but have played five and three games fewer than the first and second teams respectively and are only six points from the top. In the two cup competitions in which they compete, again they are so far unbeaten. In the Cambs Lower Junior Cup, of which they are the holders, they are through to the third round, playing Cherry Hinton Reserves on the 10th November. In the John Ablett Cup they are also through to the third round in which they will play Eaton Socon 'A' on January 5th. Anyone interested in football, please contact David Triggs on 0789 1011055.

The table tennis season started towards the end of September, and again we have two teams playing in the Ely league. To date, the first team in Division 1, is currently first of nine teams and the second team, in Division 3, is currently sixth of eight teams, but have played fewer matches. Anyone interested in table tennis please contact Bill Knibbs on 267266.

Carpet bowls is played throughout the year on Wednesday afternoons in the Pavilion, and Whist Drives are held monthly on Friday evenings commencing at 7.30pm with Bridge sessions taking place on various other Friday evenings.

DO YOUR BIT TO BRING BETTER BROADBAND FOR ALL

Have you registered for the Connecting Cambridgeshire campaign to bring better broadband access for everyone across the county?

Time is running out and we need as many people as possible to register before December 2012, when a supplier will be selected and planning for the big broadband rollout begins.

It only takes a minute to go online or fill in a Freepost reply form in the leaflet at your local library or council offices.

All we need is your postcode and a landline phone number, and whether you are a home or business user – and we will only use this information for the campaign.

The more registrations we get, the more likely we are to get the investment needed to install better broadband connections for all (2 Mbps minimum) with superfast speeds (25mbps minimum) for at least 90% of premises by 2015.

Latest figures show that over 18,000 homes and businesses across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have already registered their demand for better broadband making our campaign one of the fastest growing in the country.

Much of the support is being generated through the fantastic efforts of more than 80 Broadband Champions, who are busy promoting the campaign locally through leaflets, posters, events, and community websites.

Many parish councils and local councillors are also backing the campaign because good broadband connections are vital for our businesses and communities to thrive, particularly in rural areas, with benefits for health and education too.

So, why not do your bit so that more people can benefit from better broadband?

To find out more, visit www.connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk, email contact@connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk or call 0345 045 5200.

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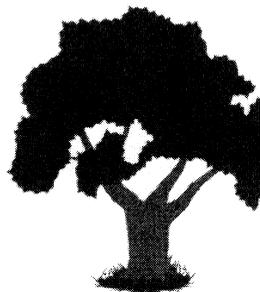
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