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Upwell Parish Council

Council and Community Newsletter

Summer Edition **2011**

YOUR NEW LOOK PARISH COUNCIL IS UP AND RUNNING!

By Kate Cobley

Following Local Elections on May 5th, Upwell Parish Council has a new look!

There are three new councillors and new Chairman, who's first report for this publication is on the next page.

New to the Council this year are Margaret Hodgson, Steven Calton and Vivienne Spikings. Many of you will know Margaret as the proprietor of Margaret's fruit and vegetable shop on Town Street. Steven Calton has lived in the village for many years and has now decided to take on a role within the Council as he has retired and last, but definitely not least, Vivienne Spikings is part of the successful Spikings Butchers family in Upwell and is an active Borough Councillor with a pivotal role in Development Control.

We will produce a feature on each of our new Members over the next three editions so that you can get to know them better. In the meantime, your Parish Councillors are listed out on the back page of this newsletter, along with their telephone number, so that you can contact someone if you have an issue affecting the village.

A welcome return for gymkhanas at Upwell Playing Field — see page 9 for the full story

UPWELL CHILDREN'S FUTURE SECURE AT DOWNHAM

By Kate Cobley

Recent rumours that Downham Market High School is to redraw its catchment area, possibly excluding children from Upwell, proved to be unfounded when the Parish Council asked local MP Elizabeth Truss to investigate on its behalf.

Elizabeth spoke to the Head of Downham Market High School and the board of Governors and has ascertained that numbers on roll are actually predicted to drop over the next few years and there are no plans to exclude Upwell from the catchmen the future.

QUALITY PARISH COUNCIL

UPWELLIANS ABROAD!

By Neil Morgan

The Oberammergau Passion play is famously staged only once in every 10 years, and the last occasion was between May 15th and October 3rd in 2010. A group of our fellow citizens decided that this was their opportunity to fulfil a long-standing ambition, and so they temporarily relocated to Germany between the 17th and the 21st May 2010. The group photograph shown would enable most of us to identify the group members, but we are once again indebted to Hazel Medlock for the recording and description of their visit.

In her diary notes, Hazel details their flight to Munich airport, some interesting moments when trying to find the correct train, and finally arriving at their hotel, ready for a shower, a meal and a good sleep. The Passion Play is performed daily by a very large body of actors, in an enormous and memorable spectacle. Having witnessed the play and thoroughly enjoyed the experience, the group also visited two of the several very famous and elaborate castles in the area, including Neuschwanstein Castle, pictured above. Hazel notes that, in one instance, it was necessary to climb135 steps in order to complete the full exploration of the castle. As a result, "tired but content" would be an apt summary of their condition at the end of each day.

On a very personal level, Hazel wrote down her own summary of each day, and the following extract describes very appropriately the effort put in, and the pleasure gained, from each day.

Tuesday

Weather fine. Got up about 7.30 am showered and went down to breakfast which was most welcome. Walked into Oberammergau and looked around this picturesque village with lots of wooden carvings and clocks. We bought a few souvenirs, met up with the others for coffee. We then went to lunch at Wirsthaus restaurant. We then made our way to the theatre where the Passion Play was being performed. It started at 2.30 pm until 5 pm. Then there was a 3 hour break, which gave us time for a meal at our restaurant, then we went back to the theatre for part 2 which started at 8 pm and lasted until 11 pm. It was very cold and we needed to wrap up well with scarves, gloves and blankets.

We also managed to see the museum about Oberammergau's history. To be in the play you have to have lived in Oberammergau for 20 years. Nobody who lives outside the town can be in it. Some people who are working in the shops stop working at lunch time to be in the play in the afternoon while others do the evening performance. It was said that nearly 2000 people were in the play with over 3,500 people in the audience (approx), Stephanie (who we were staying with) told us that her brother was in the play. It was spoken in German but we were all given a book in English so we could follow it. I just do not know what to say about the play it was so inspiring and spectacular. I was on a high for at least 2 days and even after that when I thought

about it I would say to myself "Yes Hazel, you have been there and seen it and got the tee shirt". It had been unbelievable. I was so pleased that I had been asked to go. Daphne and I walked back to our lodgings very tired but very happy.

With typical charm and modesty Hazel wrote, in her final paragraph:

"I thoroughly enjoyed myself and was pleased to have been asked. Everybody had been so kind and helpful to me. They said I had not been too much trouble!"

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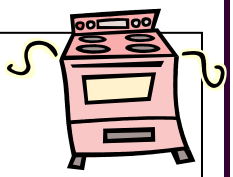

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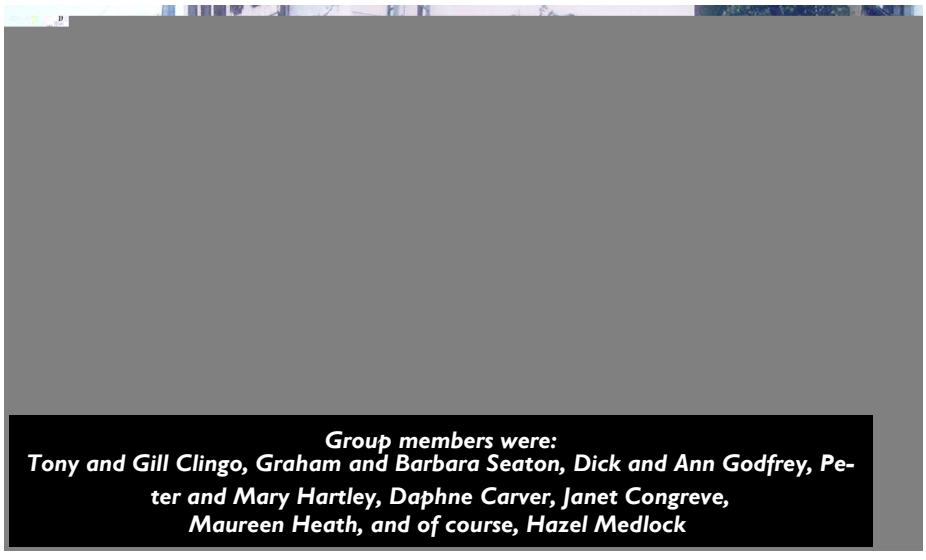

Group members were:
Tony and Gill Clingo, Graham and Barbara Seaton, Dick and Ann Godfrey, Peter and Mary Hartley, Daphne Carver, Janet Congreve, Maureen Heath, and of course, Hazel Medlock

WATCH THE BIRDIE!

By Neil Morgan

Following upon a visit from a white stork last year, Upwell has been graced by the visit of 3 parakeets within the last few weeks. One was alone, and, from the description, was probably a ring-necked parakeet, many thousands of which mass in the Richmond area of London. The other two were clearly a pair, and, given that one witness noted red patches under the wings, these were almost certainly escaped cage birds, since that description does not fit any birds normally seen in the U.K. We do see such birds occasionally, - some 7 years ago the was a Red and Blue Macaw in the high poplars along School Road. Such birds are extremely expensive to buy, and take a long time to tame or train, so it is very unlikely that they were released deliberately because of rising costs.

The ring-necked parakeets are now being seen in areas well outside London, including a few in Norfolk. Another observer noted one in March earlier this year. They were originally imported from India, as cage birds, possibly in some numbers, some time in the late 1960`s, for sale to those collectors interested. Flying free, however, they have, over the last 40 years, multiplied exponentially, so that, for example, some 7000 or more are estimated to be roosting in trees around the Esher rugby club ground! In some areas, indeed, they have reached pest status, and the noise they make, in their thousands, is unbelievable, but never forgotten!

If you see a parakeet that is pale green, with a red beak and very long tail, you probably have a ring-necked, also known as "rose-ringed" because the males also have a black band accompanying a pink band around the neck. They love seeds and are very partial to sweet chestnuts. They nest in holes in trees, lay 4 to 5 eggs in February/early March. If you do spot one, let us know, and try to get a photograph if you can!

We do have a least one pair of birds in the village which, while they are not exotic, are not of a species that you would expect to see every day. We do see barn owls, and we hear tawny owls on most nights, but this pair is of the smallest of the owl species to be found in this country. They are called "Little Owls" because they are, er.. little! They like to perch on posts, wood piles or low branches from which they can watch for their prey. Like all owls they feed on any small mammals or insects which they can manage to eat. Little owls however, also eat berries and plant material. They construct their nests in cavities, usually in trees, but quite often in holes in the roof or walls of farm buildings. They lay up to 6 eggs in nests that they have probably used for several or many years. They tend to look for prey mainly around dawn or dusk, but can be seen at other times, particularly if they are feeding young.

If then you catch sight of a small owl, averaging around 25 centimetres in height when standing erect, being white speckled above and brown streaked with white below, you are probably looking at a Little Owl! Further clues are that this owl has yellow eyes, in a head large in proportion to its body, and clear white eyebrows. They are reasonably tolerant of human presence, provide that you approach quietly, so that if you drive past one in your car, as it`s sitting on a fence post, for example, a slow pace could give you a good chance to study it. If the owl is frightened, it will bob and sway from side to side. If it flies, however, you will see that its flight is bounding, rather like a woodpecker.

We may have more than one pair in the Upwell area, so it is always worth keeping an eye on the fences and posts, particularly in our less frequented lanes and back roads. The identified pair is located on a private property, where visiting would not be appropriate, but feeding birds will wander in search of productive food sources, so a sighting is quite possible.

UPWELL VILLAGE HALL NEWS & EVENTS

By Dave Short

Our next event, a ***Car Treasure Hunt:*** Will take place on 21st August. As usual, the number of participating cars will be limited by law so early reservation of a place is essential. I expect that, as has become customary, the hunt will end at a suitable place of refreshment – An oasis in the desert of the Fens! If you wish to take part contact Neil on 01945 773865.

Harvest Dance: This will take place on 24th September, details to be advised.

Quiz Night: In response to popular demand an additional quiz night will take place on 28th October. This will probably follow Neil's well tried and tested formula which includes light refreshments and a cash bar. Full details will be announced shortly.

Pre-Christmas Craft Fair: Organised by Amanda Williams, this will take place on 6th. November and is a great opportunity to buy Christmas cards and a wide range of Christmas presents at very attractive prices. Teas, coffee, cakes and biscuits will be available. It is likely that there will also be sales of jigsaw puzzles and second hand books.

Short Mat Bowls: Following the unfortunate fire at their village hall we are pleased to welcome Three Holes as users of our bowls facilities on Friday evenings until their hall is again available. The game remains as popular as ever with our own users who see this as a social event involving humour, good natured banter and, let us not forget, tea and biccies, as well as sport.

Film Nights: The committee has heard that a nearby village stages regular film nights which prove very popular and will investigate this for the future.

Your Ideas: If you would like to see, or have ideas for particular types of event or entertainment at the hall, please contact me, Dave Short, 01945 774443 or email, davetoad@tiscali.co.uk

Maintenance:

Repairs to the concrete outside the main entrance have been carried out to ensure safe access to the hall.

Repairs to the dance floor are still under review as the Committee Chairman continues to assess the possibilities of grant aid to assist in funding this major expenditure.

Upwell Hall Committee: meets regularly and new members are always welcome. Contact Neil, 773865 or Ros, 773604.

Hall Bookings – Private Events and Functions: remember - If you wish to hire the hall or enquire about its facilities, call Dee Harrison on 01945 773735.

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MEMORIES OF MR RICHARD MERRISON

TOWN STREET RAILINGS

By Kate Cobley

After our last edition, which carried the story of the Parish Council's battle to restore the railings along Town Street in Upwell, Mr Richard Merrison sent us the most wonderful letter. I have published it here for everyone to read. Mr Merrison lives in Old Walsoken - proof that our little newsletter is read far and wide!

19th April 2011

Dear Mrs Cobley,

I noticed the story of 2 of your councillors fence repairing along the Well Creek in the West & Fens supplement of the Eastern Daily Press dated 8 April.

I think I can shed some light on who put up the fence originally and I think I can put a date on it too.

My maternal grandfather was Joe Gissing and he worked most of his life for the Isle of Ely County Council Highways Department. He started as a labourer, became steam roller driver and then gauger and he finished as foreman of the mobile gang which worked out of the council depot at Barton Road, Wisbech.

My great aunt was Visiting Officer for the Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance with Wisbech office and her patch covered most of the Isle of Ely and parts of Norfolk. In the school holidays she used to take me out (unofficially) in the government car for what we called a ride out treat. I'd be about 8 and it was the long holiday in the summer so that would be 1956. Grandad's gang was busy working on the fence and we stopped to have a few words. It was all very low tech, all hand work, hand digging holes and manhandling the posts and slotting in the rails as they worked along. I'm sure they had a gang lorry and a tractor and trailer and there were two men at either end of the work site with Stop-Go boards controlling the traffic as the road was down to single lane. I think the posts and rails were cast by Tidmans concrete works at Burdett Road Wisbech, loaded on to railway trucks at their private siding and taken down the tram line to the depots at Outwell village and Upwell terminus for the council gang to collect from the nearest station to where the work site was between Tucks/ Isle Bridge in Outwell and the Church Bridge in Upwell.

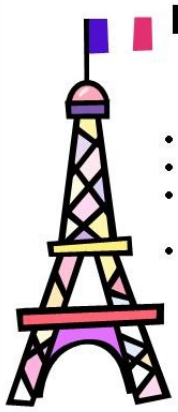
The EDP article mentioned the fence being a barrier between road and the Creek.

Some years ago I spent time reading through back copies of the local papers, including the 1940s and 50s. In those days the Well Creek was divide between Norfolk and the Isle of Ely and both villages of Outwell and Upwell had two Parish Councils each, Isle and Norfolk, and of course the rural councils were Wisbech and Marshland. These councils used to lobby their respective County Councils for works and at that time the Isle roads were poorer than Norfolk and people always said you could tell which you were in by the quality of the ride and where the boundary was. I've an idea that the Hunter-Rowes were on the RDC and the Isle Council. I think the reason the concrete fence was put up was that, as this was the A1101 main road and traffic was growing, it was not a tip top quality road surface. There was no continuous road lighting and speed came into it, there was little margin for error between going off the road and ending up in the water and a concrete fence was more solid than a wooden one would have been. As you know there is no verge to talk of along this length whereas on the Norfolk bank side there was the tramway and less traffic. As I remember it in the 1950s the Well Creek was a bit neglected. I suppose had it existed then the motorway type pressed steel barriers on wooden posts might well have gone up.

It was about 1962 when the Isle Council got swallowed up into what was known until local government reform in 1974 as the Cambs and Isle of Ely CC. And about 1988 when the Norfolk boundary moved eastwards (!) and the formerly divided villages of Outwell and Upwell were unified into Norfolk.

I can claim several associations with these matters as for some years I worked for old Bert Bond the auctioneer who had an office on Town Street (though strictly speaking it was in Outwell in grounds of his former home). Bonds sold up Tidnams concrete works. I worked jointly for Wisbech and Marshland RDCs and after 1974 for Fenland Council who bought the old Isle of Ely offices in March and as happened to many of the RDC records, old paperwork from the CC at March either got lost or destroyed.

I'd have thought through historic responsibility, Norfolk CC became owners of this Creek side fencing which clearly was paid for by the Isle Council ratepayers and passed to Cambridgeshire in 1962. It was always said that from that date the former Isle area became the poor relation of the larger County area and probably it would have been argued similarly as now that the fence was not responsibility of the later Council.



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I can think of other matters in which Norfolk CC has denied responsibility both further back and more recently on highway matters and also on roadside/ verge, watercourse bankside issues. Surely if no fence existed but one was necessary then on safety grounds it would fall to the relevant highway authority to provide such along a watercourse – isn't that why demands have been made on the Cambs CC over safety on the Sixteen Foot and Ramsey Forty Foot Drains, which are not A class roads?

My grandfather and great aunt are long since gone but I'm quite sure on what I report to you and which I hope is useful to you now or for the future.

I'm sending a copy of this letter to Outwell Council in case they are interested or want work done on the fence

Yours sincerely

Richard J H Merrison

THREE HOLES VILLAGE HALL

By Rita Cuss

I expect all the readers of this News Letter will know of the distressing fire at Three Holes Village Hall on April 14th.

This fire was directly attributed to arson, by persons unknown. Two electric cookers were stolen from the kitchen, and probably an aluminium step ladder and other metallic articles.
Contrary to some of the stories circulating it was not caused by an electric fault. The fire did not start in the kitchen but in the storeroom behind the bar.
A few days after the fire the protective fence erected on instruction of the Insurance Company was broached and some of the fire damaged scrap metal dragged outside by the Fire Brigade was stolen.
A story going round that we refused someone 's offer to take the saucepans which were subsequently stolen was a complete fiction, as we didn't have any saucepans in the first place !!!!
It has been a very frustrating time for the Committee as it has taken until early June to get the go-ahead to begin the clean up. We hope that now work has commenced it will not be too long before we see some progress. As yet no time frame has been given for completion, but the Community can be assured THREE HOLES VILLAGE HALL will be available again as soon as possible.

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CALL FOR ARTISTS

By Kate Cobley

Are you an artist that would love to have your artwork shown locally or know of a great local artist? Atelier East holds an exhibition at the Upwell Health Centre and we are currently in need of a local artist. The pictures will help to create an uplifting atmosphere in the Health Centre to make the experience for patients more enjoyable.

The Health Centre gets many visitors of over 20,000 people a year, it is the perfect place to exhibit your work and have it appreciated by many. You will be welcome to use this as an opportunity to sell your work or just hang it to help out and have it seen. Your work will be hung up from November 2011 right up until February 2012.

Don't miss your chance for this amazing opportunity to display your work! For more information and to show your interest, please contact info@atelier-east.co.uk attaching examples of some of your work that you would like to hang.

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UPWELL PLAYING FIELD NEWS & EVENTS

By Ros Shorting

It is the 'day after' Upwell Playing Field's Fun Pony Show and Gymkhana — the first (we think) for 40 years at the field. Organised by Liz Thorpe, showing classes included Best Mare, Best Gelding, Prettiest Eyes & Tail, Pony the Judge Would Like To Take Home, Young Handler 10 years and under, Junior Handler 11 – 16years and Veteran Horse/ Pony. Rosettes were awarded to 6th place and sponsored by local businesses. Overall winner of the showing classes was Georgia Godden of Nordelph seen here receiving her Supreme champion rosette from judge Holly Hitter (opposite).

Gymkhana games included post the letter, cup on a pole, ride and dismount. It is hoped to hold another Fun Pony show before the end of the summer, watch out for details on 'horsedates', facebook, local animal feed stockists or contact Liz on 01945 773466.

So what's been happening with Upwell Playing Field? We have had our AGM and are just about 'floating'.We, like all other committees, need more money coming in. We have all the usual utility bills: water, electricity, insurance, plus we have a bill for picking up litter. It costs the committee nearly a £1,000 per year for the park keeper to collect the rubbish/ litter left on the field……this is most annoying when there are three litter bins on the field and one in the children's play area. Collecting a bag from the bin is far easier and cheaper than collecting rubbish strewn all around the field and it would mean more money towards our pavilion fund! It was also decided to give the calendar one more whirl – this will be 'Olde Upwell' so if you have any photographs we could borrow please leave them at Upwell Post Office or at Spikings with your name and contact details, the details of the photograph.

Better news is….we are waiting to hear back from the Borough Council regarding plans for our proposed new pavilion. We are waiting to hear if we are to receive any money from the Lottery for the new building. We have some but obviously pavilions are not cheap. We as a committee are busy planning our events and hopefully we will see you at some of them. As ever, we are grateful for your continued support.

Now we are in the summer months, more children are out on bicycles so please be careful when entering the car park ……and yes another word regarding parking, Please **DO NOT PARK** in front of the field inner gates – particularly when there is football training on. An ambulance needs to get onto the field immediately on arrival. **ALL** regular users of the hall and field have keys to the main car park as do the Bowls Club. Please park sensibly and **NOT** leave large spaces between cars and **DO NOT** park in the hall car park when using the field. Upwell Hall are our good neighbours and it is in use every day and night of the week.

EVENTS:
July 26th 28th Childrens Sporting activities on the field and in the hall.

July 31st Sports Taster day…..Adults and children.

August 2nd and 4th Childrens Sporting activities on the field and in the hall.

August 6th Football tournament – contact Karl for further details on 07835708498.

August 7th Summer Fayre – contact Christine on 01945 774060 for further details,

August 27th Pony Show and Gymkhana.

September 4th another first…… Dog Show contact Christine on 01945 774060 for further details.

October 29th Annual Pumpkin Ball – contact Ros 01945 773604 for further details.

We have our usual raffles throughout the year. There are raffle tickets on sale now for the summer fayre, £1.00 per book in shops, first prize £50.00. All donations of prizes gratefully received.

With regard to income for the Playing Field; if every household that receives this newsletter contributed £1 to each of the three raffles (Easter, Summer and Christmas) we hold each year, the committee would benefit enormously and even more could be done for our community.

Enjoy the summer and see you at the fayre!

NEW COUNCILLOR FOCUS
MARGARET HODGSON

By Sylvie Short

"But will you be here every day?"
"Yes, I'll be here every day."

That was Margaret's response six years ago to a potential customer, reluctant to rely upon a supply of fruit and veg. that might just prove to be spasmodic. And Margaret has been true to her word, opening her shop morning and afternoon six days a week and for half a day on Sundays. As well as fruit, vegetables, newspapers and many other groceries, Margaret also serves teas and coffees, providing a warm spot for folk to congregate and chat before heading home. Her fondness for the village of Upwell and its people has prompted her to become a Parish Councillor, and she hopes that time will tell how her life experiences may be used to benefit the local community.

Margaret was born in County Durham and attended school in Hawick, Roxburghshire, before the family moved back down to Durham where she finished her schooling and got her first job as junior short-hand typist in a stockbroker's office in Newcastle. She left this job to nurse her grandmother for six months and, on returning to work, decided she wanted a new challenge so joined a micro switch company where she worked in the computer room for seven years. She then went with her parents up to North West Durham where she reverted back to secretarial work as there were no computers in that area. This was disappointing as she had enjoyed working the big IBM main frame computers, "…At a time when the discs were two handed jobs!" She recalls with a laugh.

Margaret married Mervyn, also from the North of England, forty years ago – their Ruby Wedding Anniversary is in December. They have two grown up sons and five grandchildren, all living close by, so she is fortunate in being able to see them quite frequently. She likes reading, when she gets the time, and is fond of animals, having at present four dogs, four adult cats and five kittens – quite a house full!

Margaret and Mervyn moved here twenty five years ago and, when they retire, plan to stay in the area as they feel so at home here. She is certainly very much part of our village and I am sure we all wish her well as a Councillor.

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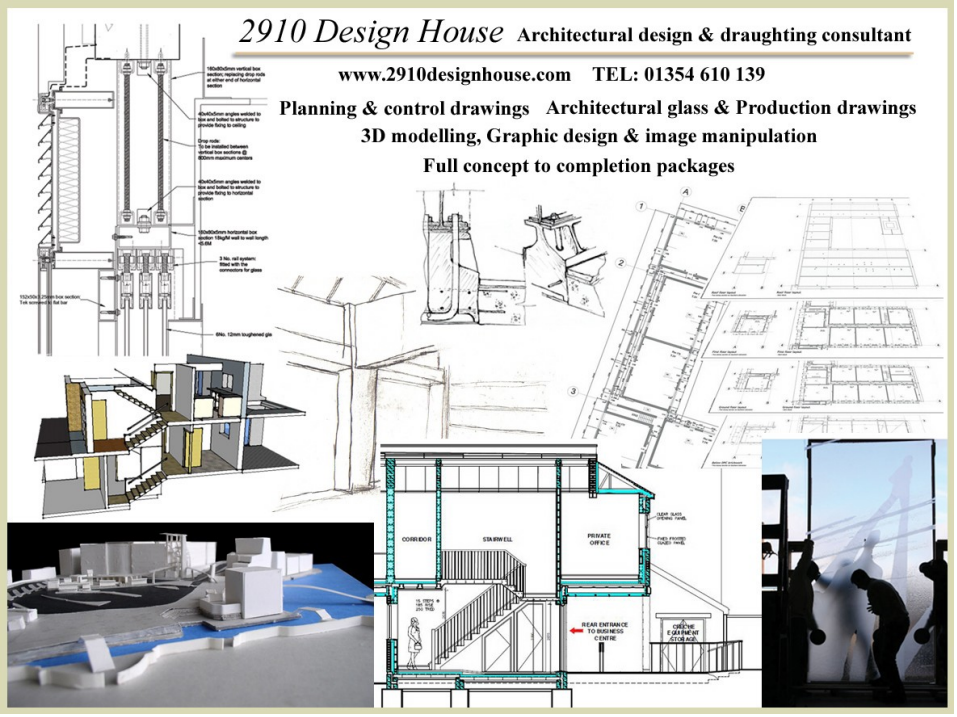

AN ODE TO ENGLISH PLURAL

Offered By David Percy—Author Unknown

We'll begin with a box, and the plural is boxes,
But the plural of ox becomes oxen, not oxes.
One fowl is a goose, but two are called geese,
Yet the plural of moose should never be meese.
You may find a lone mouse or a nest full of mice,
Yet the plural of house is houses, not hice.

If the plural of man is always called men,
Why shouldn't the plural of pan be called pen?
If I speak of my foot and show you my feet,
And I give you a boot, would a pair be called beet?
If one is a tooth and a whole set are teeth,
Why shouldn't the plural of booth be called beeth?

Then one may be that, and three would be those,
Yet hat in the plural would never be hose,
And the plural of cat is cats, not cose.
We speak of a brother and also of brethren,
But though we say mother, we never say methren.
Then the masculine pronouns are he, his and him,
But imagine the feminine: she, shis and shim!

Let's face it - English is a crazy language.
There is no egg in eggplant nor ham in hamburger;
Neither apple nor pine in pineapple.
English muffins weren't invented in England.
We take English for granted, but if we explore its paradoxes,
We find that quicksand can work slowly, boxing rings are square,
And a guinea pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig.

And why is it that writers write but fingers don't fing,
Grocers don't groce and hammers don't ham?
Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make amends but not one amend.
If you have a bunch of odds and ends and
Get rid of all but one of them, what do you call it?
If teachers taught, why didn't preachers praught?
If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat?

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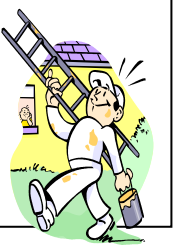

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WHEN I WAS A LAD

By Chris Crofts

Introduction by Neil Morgan

The character of a village such as Upwell is not formed or developed within a few years or even one generation. People who have always lived in or around this village will have their own memories of days gone past and, as we have been told in responses to articles in previous newsletters, they rather like having those memories stirred to recall people and places they once knew. For those who have moved into the village within the last few years, the opportunity to learn something of the history and earlier times of the village is also one to be grasped and enjoyed. People and buildings alike have their time, and their presence or absence in the course of the passing of the years inevitably contributes to how a village changes while, along with the passage of days, the village character develops. The following article is presented by Councillor Chris Crofts who, you may recall, also recorded the recollections of the late Frank Rayner in two consecutive editions of the newsletter. Here he relates in some fascinating detail, the story of his own young days, particularly concentrating on a job for which he had to travel around the village on a daily basis, noting places and characters and giving an evocative insight into the life and times in Upwell in the early 1960's. Chris writes:

When I left school I had my name down for a job at the Co-op Dairy in Wisbech [my dad worked there] but as there weren't any vacancies I filled in for a few weeks at Ralph Murfitts on Isle Road Outwell serving petrol [Regent petrol and Havoline oil]. For a few shillings more a week Jim Bowles got me a different job at the Bestjett 'Pop' firm in Wisbech [another name from the past!]. Eventually a job came up at the dairy and the milk round I was put on was with a chap called Roger Miller [who remembers Roger?]. The area we delivered milk to was the Norfolk side, as it was then [Church side], of the Well Creek. My third job and I was still only 15! I have many fond memories of our village at that time and of some of the customers we served and people we met.

In the summer months people would leave a bucket of water near the back door for us to put the milk in [not many people had fridges!] and it was not unusual for us to know where the key was so we could take the milk straight into the kitchen during the winter months because if you left it outside it would sometimes freeze in the bottles. People were a lot more trusting then. We started the round in Lowside and a few of the houses we served then have now been pulled down. There were two old cottages sideways to the road where the British Legion car park is now and on the bend by the church on Small Lode there was a terrace of 2 or 3 houses right on the roadside, making the road very narrow at that point. The Jolly Farmers pub on Small Lode was still open and the landlord was called either King or Gutteridge. I can't remember exactly.

A family I do remember is the Snowdons who lived in Lode Avenue. Mr Snowdon worked at the Metal Box factory in Wisbech and whatever shift he was on he always cycled to work. The whole family emigrated to Australia around this time and it was over 40 years later that I met their student grandson who came back to Upwell to see where his grandparents lived. He took loads of photographs to take back to his family in Australia.

After we did Listers Road [only 5 or 6 bungalows in the road then] we delivered to the Upwell Tram Station Yard. It was still operational and we saw the odd tram but it was sadly coming to the end of its days. Mike Francis was the Station Master and lived in the Station House.

We only went down Green Lane [opposite Tointons Road] on Mondays and customers were obliged to have sterilised milk because that would keep for a week. I remember Morris Hite's bungalow on the right with a host of different wood cutting equipment along the side of the lane. Sometimes he would be working at a saw bench cutting tree wood into logs with a series of belts connected to an old tractor providing the power. Apparently Morris made all his own equipment and there was a complete absence of any guards around the blades. The Health and Safety people would have had a field day! He had, people tell me, already lost one of his fingers.

Another person I remember was Mrs Crampton. She was a dear old lady and lived in a tiny cottage [now demolished] that was on the side of a field with a footpath along the dykeside that led to the lane. She used to meet me half way when I delivered her milk. It was years afterwards that I learned that Mrs Crampton was Rita Cuss's grandmother.

At the Three Holes end of New Road we turned into Croft Road and it was around here that we regularly met the postman Marcus Roberts. Part of his post round was Eximoor Farm, off the Sixteen Foot Road, and as this was about three miles there

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and back, a long way for him to bike, we took the farm's mail and the farm cottages' mail for him. I remember the people's names well because we were their milkman and postman as well! Webb, Cox and then Mike Day at Eximoor Farm. I wonder……what would the Post Office have said if they had known?

The bank of the Old River Croft on the left is sadly overgrown now but in those days some of the people who lived in the houses opposite used to use the wider parts as vegetable gardens. The Black Bull Pub, opposite the Sixteen Foot Road [now demolished] was still open and the landlord was Fred Amps. In the passage at the back of the bar there was a tray of sweets etc and this is where I spent my sixpence every day. I remember Mrs Amps needed two sticks to walk [arthritis I believe] and she struggled to get up from her chair to sell me a packet of Spangles or Refreshers…… can you still buy them?

Alan Smith was the man who did the round when Roger had his day off. In the summertime Alan used to stop for a pint of beer here and, although I was only fifteen years old, he bought me half a pint as well! So it was Alan who introduced me to appreciating a good pint of ale…..and its an appreciation that I still enjoy to this day!

The Rose and Crown was still open then [did the Judds keep it?] and further round Croft Road, so was the Black Horse [Mrs Casbon] and in the row of houses on the right Was Birds General Store. Was it a Post Office as well?

Further on, by the Baptist Chapel and Norman Nelsons Fish and Chip Shop, was Percy Walings small cottage and cobblers shop [It has only recently been demolished]. This was a regular meeting place for some of the older men of the village and they used to sit on benches smoking their pipes and cigarettes while Percy stood at the last mending shoes. I remember some of them: Len Conquest who always wore a flat cap with his hair curling up over it at the back, Alf Fuller who lived just up the road, and particularly, Bill Green. The only footwear Bill ever wore was rubber wellingtons and in the summer months he cut holes in them so his feet got some air! He also had extremely long fingernails I remember. Percy always said he was a non smoker but the place was always full of smoke so I suspect he smoked!

Next door to Percy's was a young married lady who was usually busy picking or weighing up fruit that was in season. This was my first meeting with Hazel Medlock and a few years later, we served together on the local council and various village committees.

There were two green wooden huts at the top of Workhouse Lane. Both were owned by Jack Stittle. One was full of shoes etc for sale and the other one was Jacks workshop. The Co-op issued all roundsmen with leather cash bags and when they wore a hole through Jack was the man we took them to so they could be repaired. Jack made me a leather belt once [to go with the leather jacket that I always wore in those days!] it was quite flash and had metal studs all the way round. I often wish I still had it.

The Huddlestone Arms Pub [Les Myers] was over the road and it sadly closed round about this time.

We sometimes stopped for a cup of tea with a young married lady down Workhouse Lane and she still lives there in the same bungalow to this day. I see her about the village now and again and so often refer to Mrs Pam Hubbard as 'The Lady Mayoress of Workhouse Lane'.

Modens kept the garage on the riverside and opposite where Navrady's is now was Gates grocery shop. I was at school with their son John.

A little further along School Road, we used to stop for another cup of tea on Sunday mornings with Mrs Plumb and it was years later I learned that her husband Ted was the man who played the big drum when Upwell had a brass band.

As I mentioned earlier, lots of houses we served then have sadly been demolished and none more so than in St Peters Road. There was a row of small Alms Houses in front of cemetery and all the front doors opened straight onto the footpath. One old lady…can't recall her name now but I remember that she used to put all the different tradesmen's money in separate tins and they were all lined up on her sideboard. On the lid of the milkman's tin was a taped piece of paper that said: 7 pints at 8d a pint. Total 4/8. That will confuse the under fifties!

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Another lady who I remember was Mrs Moden and all the walls in her front room were covered with dozens of photographs of her family and she knew who everyone was. I believe Mrs Moden was part of the garage family mentioned earlier. About 50 yards before the end of St Peters Road was where the Parish Rooms and a few old cottages stood. One lady who lived there I remember was Mrs Canham, because if she saw me she used to give me a sweet. [I did my best to make sure she saw me!]. Mrs Canham's son Stan was also a co-op milkman and I am sure lots of people will remember him. His nickname was Candy. It's a shame there are no regular tradesmen calling on people today. I can remember several people who we used to meet going about their business while we were on the milk round: Geoff Cragg delivering newspapers with a 28lb apple box fixed to the front of his bike to keep the newspapers in, Abe Matthews in his bread van delivering bread and cakes etc, Ron Woolner on his butcher's van, Ernie and Phyllis Fiske, sometimes being helped by Nancy Longmuir on their own milk round. [The Co-op didn't have it all their own way!] Roger would often have a chat with the roadman when we met him. I believe he used to call him Paddy but I can't remember exactly.

A character we saw occasionally was Henry Jones. Henry had some contraption that he had fixed to his bike and when it was turned upside down he could peddle away and sharpen people's knives and scissors. He always shouted out something totally irrelevant when he went past like: "Am I alright for Coventry mate?"

I well remember Brian Handsley. Brian used to bike about all over village but had a slight problem in that his behaviour was sometimes a little strange and unpredictable. When he met you for the first time he would ask you when your birthday was and the next time he saw you he would shout out the date of your birthday and clap his hands with glee when he got it right..……..and he always did get it right! Not only did he get your birthday right he would also tell you what day of the week it would fall on with uncanny accuracy! Many people will remember Brian and the unusual ability he had. I can also remember a young lad my age on Saturday mornings pulling a four wheeled cart door to door selling fruit and vegetables. And as I had ambitions to work for myself one day I used to secretly admire him. As far as I know this was the first business venture for Charles Martin. We ended the round serving the prefabs on Green Road and before we went back to the Dairy in Wisbech we always sat in Mrs Barbara Russell's kitchen every day while she kindly made us a cup of tea. Often a young married lady who lived a couple of doors away would have a cup of tea with us and for some obscure reason her rather chatty three year old daughter took to me and insisted on sitting on my lap! I remember it well, her name was Su…… no……better not say, she is a well known lady in the village now with a family of her own and she might be embarrassed ……and I wouldn't want to embarrass her……Would I?

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Your Borough Councillors Are:
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Your County Councillor Is:
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upwellpc@googlemail.com
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QUALITY PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council Meeting Dates 2011

Unless otherwise stated, all meetings will take place at Upwell Village Hall. The Press and Public are cordially invited to attend any meeting. Residents can address the Council at the start of the meeting but may only speak thereafter with the permission of the Chairman.

July

4th	Finance	6.45pm
4th	Full Council	7.30pm
20th	Environment & Parish Affairs	6.15pm
20th	Planning & Highways	7.30pm

August

1st	Finance	6.45pm
1st	Full Council	7.00pm
17th	Environment & Parish Affairs	6.15pm
17th	Planning & Highways	7.30pm

September

5th	Finance	7.00pm
5th	Full Council	7.30pm
21st	Environment & Parish Affairs	6.15pm
21st	Planning & Highways	7.30pm

NEXT EDITION

By Kate Cobley

The next edition of the newsletter will feature a historical article on the 'Perambulation of the Parish of Upwell' , written in 1714. This has been compiled by one of our new Councillors, Steven Calton.
We can also look forward to an article on the old tramway and goods yard in Upwell written by Neil Morgan as well as a return to regular features from the Parish Council, Primary School and local groups. If you are part of a local group and would like an advert or an article featuring an event or occasion—or even just have some news to share with the rest of the Parish, please contact the Clerk on the number to the left and we will do our best to make sure you are included.

PHP SCRIPTING

By Kate Cobley

If you are an experienced PHP scripter and are willing to help, the Parish Council is looking for someone to help keep its website updated.

We are looking for someone who can add pages and items to the existing website and who can commit to updating the site with news and events (details supplied) at least once a month.

This is a specialist role requiring a working knowledge of PHP and FTP skills. If you can help for just a couple of hours a month, please get in touch with me, the Clerk, on the number to the left of this article.

200 Club Draws:

May: 1st. Ticket 180, M. Groom, £25.00. 2nd. Ticket 158, Rev. A Jesson, £15.00. 3rd. Ticket 164, Miss K. Harrison, £12.00.

June, the mid-year *biggy* with an extra prize: 1st. Ticket 18, Jack Parlett, £50.00. 2nd. Ticket 92, Upwell Health Centre, £25.00. 3rd. Ticket 20, Eileen George. 4th. Ticket 58, Douglas Cousins, £10.00.