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# The ELMSWELL Newsletter

APRIL 2001

..... Your Parish Matters

*Our Cover Picture Shows ...*



THE GRANGE, ELMSWELL

The GRANGE .... formerly the Rectory - see page 19.

Published by the Elmswell Amenities Association Reg. Charity No. 304879.  
Delivered free to every household and to businesses in the community.

## This Month's "COMMENT"

**M**aze running (or walking in our case) is an ancient rural tradition. Turf mazes were constructed on village greens and would have been used on festive occasions such as Easter and May Day to celebrate the arrival of spring. The tortuous route of

the maze was designed to be followed from the outside to the centre, a feat which demanded intense concentration. Christian monks are reputed to have followed mazes on their knees as a form of penance and meditation.

For those of you not in the know, Elmswell Maze is situated on Church Road green, next to the post box. The maze leads up to a central seat and sundial decorated with mosaics made by representatives from various village groups including the wildlife group, the Primary School, Bowls Club, W.I., etc. It is surrounded by a ring of trees carefully selected for their succession of white blossom throughout the year. It was

designed and built in 1999 by a group called Outside Arts who, at

the time, were based in the village. The project was funded by grants from the Millennium Commission and the County Council. Both the Parish Council and the Amenities Association were very supportive. The tree planting was jointly funded by Mid-Suffolk District Council and the Parish Council.  
continued ...

The Friends of Elmswell Maze invite you  
to.....

# walk the maze

led by Elmswell's own **juggling genius**



on Bank holiday Monday, May 7<sup>th</sup> at  
11.00 a.m.

Over the past few weeks The Friends have cut back the grass which had all but obscured the path in some places and have carried out annual spring maintenance on the trees. The sundial has suffered some damage as a result of vandalism and frost weathering but otherwise is in excellent condition.

We hope to develop the area further with a community crocus planting day later this year and fund raising for benches. The site is an attractive village amenity and deserves our continued support. See you on the 7th.

P.S. Anyone in the vicinity with a petrol mower who could cut the grass along the paths once a week please let us know.

The Friends of Elmswell Maze can be contacted on 240421.

*If you have a 300-500 word "Comment" on something directly related to, happening in or affecting Elmswell please submit it! Presentation unimportant - hand written is fine - simply include contact telephone number.*

*If you would like to comment on this 'comment', do write a Letter to the Editor c/o Goblins, Station Road, IP30 9HR.*

**Monica L. Carlin**

MSSCh. MBChA.

**Ruth E. Carlin**

MSSCh. MBChA.



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**The deadline for the next issue is 5.00 p.m. on Wednesday 9th May 2001.** Copy to Goblin's office on Station Road Industrial Estate or contact: Jean Barker 241135 or Peter Dow 241841.

The Amenities Association, which publishes the Newsletter, will try to find space for all contributions, regardless of any point of view expressed, if space permits and providing that they are legal and that the writer's name and address are included.

Any views expressed or implied are not necessarily condoned or supported by the Association which offers, in the Newsletter, an impartial service to the community.

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# Around and About ...

## ELMSWELL MILLENNIUM HISTORY GROUP

Over 70 people crowded into St John's church to hear **Roger Dalby** speak on the **History of Great Ashfield Airfield** last month. A formidable number if, as in Roger's case, it is your first venture into public speaking, but also a noteworthy reminder of the level of interest that this important site inspires.

Great Ashfield airfield had been operational in the First War, and the RAF were in residence during the early part of the Second War, but Roger concentrated on the period 1943-45, the time of the USAAF 385<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group.

One year earlier, on the 20<sup>th</sup> February 1942, representatives of the USAAF flew into Suffolk to prepare the way for the entry of the Americans into the 'European Theatre of Operations'. It was estimated that they would require no fewer than 75 airfields, virtually all in the east of England. The building of these airfields reached a peak in 1942/3 when one complete facility was being constructed every three days, each costing nearly one million pounds. So it was that the Great Ashfield airfield was transformed from a small grass landing strip into a massive concrete construction, the relics of which can still be seen today.

Great Ashfield became the base for some 3,000 American officers and men led by Colonel Elliot Vandevanter who at the grand age of 26 was some 5 years older than the average age of his pilots. They flew their first mission from Ashfield on 17<sup>th</sup> July 1943, and on this occasion all 21 of the heavy B-17 aircraft returned home safely. In all, the 385<sup>th</sup> flew 297 missions dropping 18,000 tons of bombs. They returned to America on 4<sup>th</sup> August 1945 having lost 400 valiant airmen. In honour of those who lost their

lives a memorial altar was erected in Great Ashfield Church where all the names of the fallen are recorded on a Roll of Honour.

Many in the audience could remember the airfield in use and the History Group would very much like to record their memories. We also hope to arrange further talks and a film show about the airfield in the future. If you feel you would like to be involved in this venture please call 240390.

The next meeting will take place on **Friday, April 27<sup>th</sup> 7.30 at The Blackbourne**, when **Clive Paine** will speak on '**Railway Mania in Suffolk**' or *The Railway went through the middle of the House*. Members £1, non Members £1.50.

## ELMSWELL GARDENING CLUB

What can you write to accurately convey the contents of Mike Scotts, supposed talk on Fuchsias, because much to the audiences pleasure Mike finds it quite easy to stray or digress on to many other subjects or experiences that both he and Lorna have enjoyed as they have gone around the County giving talks on fuchsias, or should I say beloved Fuchsias, as anyone who grows so many plants and spend all the daylight hours of summer caring for them just feel very passionate about the subject. During one of Mikes digressions he held a quiz which Mr Alex Mason won, mainly I think by default, but who cares, but after a brief show of slides showing a year in his garden, he held a workshop on taking Fuchsia cuttings which I am sure a lot of members benefited from and enjoyed very much.

The Committee have decided that this years Annual Outing will be to Blickling Hall in North Norfolk and as usual it will be on the first Saturday, August 4<sup>th</sup> 2001 the coach will be leaving from the Memorial Hall at



## **Around and About cont'd., pg3**

9.00am and returns at approximately 6.30pm, for the all inclusive price of £12.50 which covers the coach fare and access to the Hall, Gardens and the Park, it looks like another great day out in a friendly atmosphere so ring Elmswell 240347 to book your seats, as it's a first come first served arrangement, and open to all members and non-members alike.

This months competition was again won by Mrs Muriel Durham with Mrs Ruth Armstrong second, and Mrs Jean Mason third, well done to all other competitors.

Next months guest speaker will be Mrs Alison Davics whose talk will be on The Aims and activities of the National Council for the Conservation of Plants and Gardens, and the competition is for 5 Spring Flowers, and of course this will all take place at the Exchange Hall, in School Road at 8.00pm on April 19th 2001.

**RESTRICTIONS  
ON FOOTPATH  
USAGE HAVE  
BEEN REDUCED  
BY SUFFOLK  
COUNTY COUNCIL.**

**FOR THE LATEST  
INFORMATION  
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CONTACT SCC ON  
01284 - 584145**

## **ELMSWELL PTA**

The Elmswell PTA are having their Annual Race Night May 12th at the Blackbourne, doors open at 7.00pm for a 7.30pm (sharp) start. This event is open to the public but tickets are limited to 100, so please contact the school for your ticket today. The cost is £4.00 and it includes your meal, which has been partly donated by Rannochs of Haughley.

Every year we get local businesses to sponsor these races. This year our sponsor's are: **Desira Fiat Bury St Edmunds, Heart & Soul, Wells Stitched, Vision Express of Bury, Lark Valley Carriage Company, Elmswell Fish Far, Burnett & Barker Solicitors, Jill MacDonald Sugaring & Beauty, and Farthings of Newmarket.**

We ask that when you have a choice you choose these local businesses because they are helping to make the lives of your children and grandchildren happier, healthier, and more productive. You still have an opportunity to be sponsors on the night since each horse is up "for sale", the cost is £3.00 and if your horse wins, you win £15.00. Top prizes for the evening are tickets to the Royal Philharmonic in London at Royal Albert Hall, Round trip ferry trip to Holland sponsored by P&O Ferries, and many, many more wonderful prizes. Remember tickets are limited to 100, so get yours today.

## **ELMSWELL BAPTIST CHURCH**

Happy Easter, or hope you had a nice break, if you receive this after April 15th. By the time you read this we shall have had our spring clean, and you won't recognise the place. (I didn't realise the window sills were painted white!!) It's also a good job the village quiz isn't sooner either, as I should by now have had 3 wisdom teeth removed. Our services continue throughout the month, with our special services at Easter.

## Around and About cont'd., p25

Our Trailblazers will take a break for two weeks over the Easter period, and recommence on 29th April, so if you would like to join us, give us a look at the start of the new term, it's a great way for your children to begin a Sunday morning, and you to have an hours rest.

The Ladies friendship group meets on May 14th at 7.45pm for an evening of chat. (I've lost my programme, but I think I'm on safe ground by saying that). Don't worry, I know what Junes is because I am taking it - watch out.

On Tuesday 24th April at 7.30pm, we have a visit from John Smith (not a made up name), who will be talking to us about the work of missionaries abroad. We have asked him to visit us in view of a possible supporting approach between ourselves and a couple of Christians working overseas. If you think that this is something you would be interested in hearing about, please give us a look.

That's it for April, see you in May, the month with the two bank holidays in (yes), and Ipswich winning the Premiership. **Mark P.S.** (Cricket Club) you'll have to think of harder questions than that, it's obvious that the black box on aeroplanes is coloured red for danger!!!!

### ELMSWELL TODDLER GROUP



Elmswell Toddlers are looking forward to some sunshine now that the winter months are behind us - (we hope!). At the new committees inaugural meeting various days out during the summer months were planned. These include a seaside trip to Walton-on-the-Naze, a teddy bears picnic at the Blackbourne and Banham Zoo, all babies, toddlers, parents and carers are welcome, exact dates are in the 'events diary' to the back of this newsletter.

Our nearly new sale at the Wesley Hall on 17th March was a great success, thanks to

many pairs of helping hands and lots of village support. Monies raised will go towards some new toys including dressing up clothes, bean bags, a play tunnel and a parachute (!) to name but a few.

We also had a great photo shoot session in February, all the portraits were very well received and are now proudly displayed on walls and mantle pieces around the village. Tempest Photos will be at toddlers again later in the year.

Elmswell Toddlers is a really friendly group that is always keen to welcome new parents/ carers with their children. We have a range of toys and activities (these include regular craft and music sessions) to suit all ages from birth to 4 years, so do come along and join us (tea or coffee included!). We are open on Mondays 1.30 - 3.00pm and Wednesdays 10.00 - 11.30am at the Wesley Hall, School Road. For further details please contact Alex Bartholemew (01359 244692) or Sarah Mansel (01359 241857).

### SERVICES at ST JOHN'S CHURCH

#### Sunday 15 April - EASTER DAY

8.00am Holy Communion  
10.30am Family Communion  
6.30pm Songs of Praise

#### Saturday 21 April

10am COFFEE MORNING  
in the Church Room

#### Sunday 22 April

10.30am Morning Prayer  
11.30am Holy Communion

#### Sunday 29 April

10.30am Holy Communion

#### Sunday 6 May

9.30am Family Service with Music Group

10.30am Morning Prayer  
11.30am Holy Communion

#### Sunday 13 May

8.00am Holy Communion  
10.30am Parish Praise

#### Christian Aid Sunday

## Around and About cont'd., pg7

*Sunday School at 10.30am each Sunday  
except 1st Sunday in month*

### **St John's Church, Elmswell**

On **Sunday 25 March** we celebrated Mothering Sunday with many families joining in a service of thanksgiving to God for our Mothers; the children received a small posy of flowers to give to their mothers. We were very pleased to welcome so many people, including the Cubs and Brownies and their leaders, together with visitors from the village.

Our **Easter Services** are detailed above and a warm welcome is extended to anyone who would like to join us in worship at this joyful Eastertide.

During this Lenten period the **Emmaus Group** has started their meetings; these are an informal opportunity to ask those questions about the Christian way of life which we might not otherwise ask. If you

would like to join with this group, it meets on Monday evenings in the Church Room at 7.45pm and you will be made very welcome. The theme for April is 'The Way of Faith' and includes the following topics: 'Being a Christian', 'Learning to Pray' and 'Reading the Bible'.

**ARC Addington Fund** - Over the last few weeks we have raised £200 for the ARC Addington Fund; these have been donations over and above our normal weekly offerings. The Fund was originally set up by Revd Richard Addington and Canon Sally Fogden to help Suffolk farmers whose pigs were affected by the swine fever outbreak but now since the start of the foot and mouth disease epidemic the fund has been widened to cover the whole of the country and assists farmers with payments for practical things like animal feed, water, electricity, etc. If you would like to make a donation payments will be accepted at the NatWest Bank or can be sent to ARC Addington Fund, Stoncleigh, Warwickshire.

**Coffee Morning** - This will be held in the Church Room (within the Church) from 10am - 12noon on Saturday 21 April. This event is being held to raise funds for the General Church Funds.

**Christian Aid Week** approaches - the envelopes should be dropping through your letterboxes from 12 May onwards. Please give generously for Christian Aid's work throughout the world - they work in partnership with local people in many lands - not just in times of emergency but all the time, helping to raise living standards, with education, farming and many other projects. If you would like to help by delivering or collecting envelopes please contact Jean Folkard, tel: 242099. Thank you.

### **St John's Church Floodlighting**

You are invited to sponsor the floodlighting of St John's to help with the day-to-day running expenses of our parish church.

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## Around and About cont'd., pg8

You can choose to commemorate a personal event, an anniversary, or any other special occasion. Alternatively you can simply make a donation.

During April the lights will be on between 7.30pm and midnight.

A night's floodlighting costs £5 (Please make cheques payable to "ST JOHN'S CHURCH, ELSWELL").

### April 2001 Sponsorships

- 1 in memory of Rose Emma Manning's Birthday.
- 2 in memory of Douglas Kemp on his Birthday.  
Love, his Family.
- 9 in memory of Grace Rush.
- 14 in memory of Carl Finch.
- 14 in memory of Ray Borrett's Birthday.
- 23 St. George's Day, Carl Finch.
- 30 in memory of David Lakey.

All bookings and payments, please, to:- Trevor Sadler, Abbots Warren, Church Road, Elmswell (Tel: 240908).

## CATHOLIC PARISH OF OUR LADY, STOWMARKET

### Parish Priest:

Father Denys Lloyd  
The Presbytery,  
29 Lockington Road  
Stowmarket IP14 1BQ  
Tel: 01449 612946

### MASS TIMES

#### Saturdays (First Mass of Sunday)

Woolpit C of E Parish Church, 6pm

#### Sundays

Stowmarket (Our Lady's, Stricklands Road), 8.30am & 10.15am

Wattisham Airfield Church (first Sunday of each month), 12.15pm

Needham Market C of E Parish Church (second Sunday of each month), 12.15pm

#### Holy Days

Stowmarket (Our Lady's, Stricklands Road), 8am, 10am and 7pm

Weekday Services in the parish are listed at the front of the church at Our Lady's and in the weekly Newsletter. If you are unable to contact Fr Denys and need a Priest in a hurry, please telephone either 01284 754358 or 01473 741975.

The Parish Representative in your area is: Mrs Hilda Jackson, Holly Cottage, Long Thurlow, Badwell Ash IP31 3JB. Tel: 01359 259944.

## ELMSWELL TAVERNERS FOOTBALL CLUB

It's all good news from the Railway Tavern Elmswell where the football team lead Div III by four points but still have to play Rattlesden who are their only threat.

For the second successive year they have reached the K.O. cup final to be staged at Farm Meadow B.S.E. on 6th May at 2 o'clock. Besides the team bus we will be running a supporters bus which will cost £3.00 including entry into the ground. If you want to be on it either ring 240130 or 241285. Come along yourself and give them your support. Don't forget the date.

P H Jones (Club Chairman)

## CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Aidan Valentic on passing grade 4 piano examination held recently by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. Aidan is a pupil of David Brand.

Well done Aidan !



## ELMSWELL CRICKET CLUB

### Sponsored by Manvers Triumph

21 days and counting. We're almost there. That time again when wives and girlfriends give hefty sighs of resignation and head for the gin bottle while their significant others search the loft for the trusty bat which was, almost





## Around and About cont'd., pg10

inevitably, put away uncleaned - probably together with shirt, trousers and, dare we say, socks. If your luck holds, even the mice have been put off and gorged themselves on something more palatable, like your family photos or that souvenir cork place-mat from Cleethorpes that your mother just knew your life wouldn't be complete without. How anyone could not like village cricket is one of life's mind-boggling riddles. If the earth's history were compacted into a single calendar year, cricket would have grown up in the time it takes to put the kettle on. Yet in that short time, it has become a cornerstone of British cultural life. Just imagine where it would be now had, say, Eve polished the apple all those years ago and bowled a fast yorker to Adam instead of suggesting he eat it?

To the heaving mass of non-cricketers, the sport may seem a daft way to pass the time. But then what's the attraction of, what my wife calls, swimming? Is paying to immerse yourself in an extra large bath, and then propelling yourself repeatedly backwards and forwards 50 metres while swallowing loads of highly chlorinated water really fun? As far as I'm concerned, swimming is what you do to stop yourself drowning. You might, equally, ask why people love crown green bowls or Curly Wurlys or anything that has no practical value. For those of us who indulge, the village cricket match is a social ritual. We don't really know why we do it, and we don't much care. But we do know what our batting average was in each of the last six seasons and that the combined ages of those fielding on the leg side at Worlington in the last match of last year was 149.

Village cricket may not promote world peace, but it's a serious business and a peculiarly British one at that. There's nothing like it. Maybe foreigners have more important things to do (like boules

or invading neighbours), or maybe it has never occurred to them that this might be an exciting way of frittering away their valuable leisure time. Years ago I spoke to some Americans who'd been brought to a game. They couldn't believe their eyes. They'd expected rural Britain to be eccentric but had never imagined that grown men and younger equivalents would voluntarily spend hours on such a puzzling activity. "And I thought Stonehenge was weird", said one man. OK, so it has what marketing-men would call an 'image problem'. It's not glamorous. Giorgio Armani has never, to my knowledge, come up with a decent pair of cricket trousers. But in the hierarchy of hipness, while we look up to fashion designers and trip-hop sound collectives from Manchester, we can still look down on people who wear Star Trek uniforms in their spare time.



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## Around and About cont'd., p213

All the more surprising then that we have attracted money into the Club. We are indebted to Clive Manvers (Manvers Triumph of Elmswell) for his generous sponsorship. Last year he became our first-ever sponsor and that he has been kind enough to continue is a real benefit to us. We would like to express our thanks to him on behalf of everyone in the Club. Our thanks, too, to the Parish Council for agreeing to our grant-aid applications. The money will be used for a concrete base for outdoor nets (practice and coaching facility) and towards the acquisition of a much-needed roller (sadly, not the automobile type). More later about these developments.

If you'd like to see your unsung heroes in the flesh, why not come to one of our early home matches which, foot-and-mouth, rain and ageing limbs permitting are:

Sunday 6 May at 1.45pm versus Milden; and Sunday 27 May at 2.15pm versus Great Cornard.

Finally, don't forget our **Music Quiz** in The Blackbourne on Saturday 23 June. It'll be different from previous music quizzes we've had. There'll be a far broader range of questions - pop and rock, yes, but also classical, R&B, folk, and all that jazz etc. The entry fee is £2 per person with a maximum of six people per team - so if you're only one, two etc. don't hesitate and don't miss out.

**Doug Reed,**  
Club Secretary (Tel: 241009)

**P.S.** Mark, Baptists - if you got the solution to last month's question your quiz future's bright - the answer's orange. See you in June (our Music Quiz night) if not before!

### Elmswell Cricket Club Century Club Draw February

£15 R. Wilson (No.9); £10 P. Peachey (42) and £5 P. Bassett (82).

### March

£15 A. Green (12); £10 B. Edmonds (98) and £5 M. King (59).

## HELPING HAND CLUB

Despite a conflict on interests for many of our members when a Village Meeting in the Library was called for the same night, our Annual General Meeting was well attended.

A report was made on the events and activities of a successful year 2000, which also saw a rise in membership. The Treasurer presented his annual report making special mention of the donations received and the support given to our fund-raising efforts, both of which keep us financially viable.

Officers elected for 2001 are as follows:

### CHAIRMAN:

Malcolm Elliston. Tel: 244265.

### VICE-CHAIRMAN:

Stan King. Tel: 241329.



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## PIGHTLE CLOSE VILLAGE GREEN

A provisional date has been fixed for a non-statutory inquiry into our claim that the large greenspace at Pightle Close should be registered by Suffolk County Council as a Village Green.

**TUESDAY 15th MAY**

On that day, a professionally qualified Chairman will listen to the case from the developer who will, we are advised, '*advance every conceivable argument in an attempt to protect their substantial investment in this land...*' and from ourselves, people of Elmswell who have, '*a sensible and sustainable argument.*' His recommendations to Suffolk County Council will decide the issue.

Please, be ready to attend if:

- ◆ You are one of the original 20 petitioners who filled in a form
- ◆ You are one of the 31 supporters who have more recently filled in a form
- ◆ You have an interest in saving this lovely area for the village for evermore.

Letters will go to all individuals concerned and there will be wide publicity once the date is fixed.

Rex Durham 240718

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## **Around and About cont'd., pg 14**

**TREASURER/ACTING SEC:**  
Grant Elliston. Tel: 240943.

**MEMBERSHIP SEC:**  
Beth Cowle. Tel: 240597.

New members from age 55 upwards are always very welcome and you do not need to be retired to join us. A free minibus service is available for those who do not have their own transport. Please ring any of the numbers given above, (evenings and weekends are best), if you would like further details.

Arrangements have been made for a June visit to Caithness Glass at Kings Lynn, with included lunch, to be followed by a couple of hours at Hunstanton before returning home, a Mystery Trip with lunch on 28th July and an evening performance of Old Time Music Hall at Felixstowe on 8th September.

Many thanks to Stan who has booked a return visit, at his own expense, of our

old friends Tom Smith and his Group for 5th July.

The caterer and entertainment for our Christmas party have also been booked. What was that about the early bird catches the worm?

Meetings for April are on 12th and 26th and for May on 10th and 24th, all at the Blackbourne from 7pm - 9pm. We look forward to seeing you all.

**Betty (Tel: 241386)**

## **BLACKBOURNE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION**

The bookings and the projected income from the hire of the Blackbourne during the months of March and April are well up on the last year and the utilisation of the hall is continuing to increase.

The sports fields were re-opened again on 17th March following a relaxation of the Foot and Mouth regulations and the Football Club's representative has now been given a key to the Centre for the Clubs own use. In response to a request from the younger players a drinks vending machine has been installed in the changing rooms and it is proving to be very popular.

After more than six months of negotiations the Cricket Club have at long last signed the Contract to use the cricket ground and the Association will be pleased to let their representative have a key to the Centre in time for the start of the cricket season.

The Bowls Club and the Women's Institute have now appointed representatives to serve on the Management Committee and they will be made welcome at the next meeting.

The Committee is anxious to support the Village Autumn Fayre, but they are still waiting for the Amenities Association to arrange a meeting to finalise the booking details.

St John's Church - Elmswell

### **COFFEE MORNING**

**Saturday 21 April 2001**

**10am - 12 noon**

in the Church Room

Bring & Buy.  
Cakes, Plants, Books,  
Bric a Brac,  
Greetings Cards, etc.,

Proceeds to General Funds of  
St John's Church

*Everyone Welcome*

## Around and About cont'd., p217

The laminated wooden floor in the hall is lifting in several places and does not appear to be suitable for the required specified use. The Parish Council have therefore decided to approach the architect for the building, with a view to finding an acceptable solution.

For some inexplicable reason the hall was built without any opening windows and consequently there is no means of providing ventilation. However, an appropriate mechanical ventilation system designed by Ventaxia will be installed during the next few weeks to address the problem.

The surfacing to the existing car park access is also unsatisfactory and an order has been placed to have it asphalted as soon as possible.

The Association has been approached by a croquet club who would like to join us at the Blackbourne and negotiations are taking place to establish their needs before a decision is made.

The Committee is keen to see the formation of a sports club for girls at the Blackbourne and believe that now is the time to make arrangements for next season. If you want to start a new club please contact the Chairman Tony Clark @ 242331 or the Secretary Ron Curry @ 242742.

### ELMSWELL FOOTBALL CLUB

Club Sponsor - Mirror Group

Newspaper

Warm up top Sponsors -  
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Machinery (Elmswell)

Match Ball Sponsors - Rota-Rod (Bob  
Barter), Travelstop (Elmswell),  
Stowmarket Golf Club, Tulipa Gardens  
(Elmswell)

1st Team Sponsor - Mirror Group  
Newspaper



1st Team Manager - D Scase; Assistant K  
Hammond

2nd Team Sponsor - Elmswell Fox

2nd Team Manager - B Barter; Assistant  
S Harrison

Over 35s Sponsor - C G Finch & Sons

### Monthly Draw for March 2001

Drawn by Mrs G Rooke

£50	219	D Burch
£35	192	A Stiff
£25	12	B Plummell
£15	10	C Nunn
£15	165	I Speakman

### Monthly Draw for April 2001

Drawn by Rob Parish

£50	111	B Hayward
£35	181	B King
£25	274	M Forsdick
£15	318	W Cowley
£15	21	K Mayhew

### Results

March 10th: Reserves vs East Bergholt  
Home 1-1; Scorer S Tweedle

March 17th: 1st Team vs Waterside Home  
Won 2-1; Scorers P Swallow, 1 own goal

Reserves vs Coplestonians Away  
Won 3-1; Scorer S Tweedle (3)

March 24th: 1st Team vs Dennington  
Home Won 4-3; Scorers P Swallow (1), P  
Hughes (1), T Conway (2)

Reserves vs Bacton Away Lost 2-  
1; Scorer T Turnbull

Anyone wishing to join Elmswell Football  
Club please telephone B Hayward on  
(01359) 240951.

Anyone wishing to join monthly draw  
contact H Mulley on (01359) 240889.

Training Wednesday nights Grove Lane  
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## *Our Cover Picture Shows . . . .*

### **The Grange Elmswell ... formerly the Rectory.**

It is possible that a rectory stood on the site as early as 1352. Records detailing the buildings and outbuildings date from 1613. They tell us that it was extended in 1736 and in 1820 rebuilt "with brick and stone covered with tiles". Forty five years later in 1864 Rev. Luke had a new Rectory built in Gothic Tudor style nearer the church. At this time the old rectory became the Grange and passed into private hands.

More information in 'Elmswell - A Marker for the Millennium' available from New Saxon Book Shop, Elmswell Library, St John's Church and Mrs. M. Dow (240390).

The photograph is used by kind permission of Paul Peachey. Paul's collection of postcards of Elmswell, acquired by scouring auctions, specialist shops and car boots all over the country, is almost complete. The Millennium History Group is to catalogue this fascinating collection for future reference. However, he is lacking just a few cards - of the station and of the fire stations (old and new.)

If you can help, please give him a ring on 241517.

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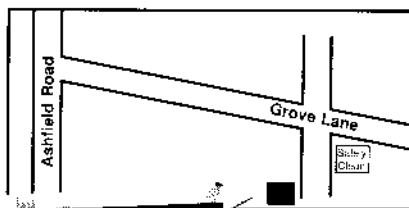
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*The following is contributed by Parish Cllr. Mrs. Mary Feeney. It was written independently and has not been altered in any way.*

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## **REPORT OF PARISH MEETING HELD IN THE LIBRARY ON MARCH 29<sup>TH</sup> 2001**

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The meeting was convened by six electors to discuss the calling of a Parish Poll asking:

**"DO YOU AGREE THAT THE VILLAGE HAS NO CONFIDENCE IN THE ELECTED OFFICERS OF THE ELMSWELL PARISH COUNCIL AND THAT THEY, COUNCILLORS MARRIOTT, CURRY AND CLARK SHOULD RESIGN?"**

Cllr Marriott, Chairman of the Parish Council, presided as the law requires. The meeting was attended by approximately 150 members of the public.

Members of the public were asked for their comments. The wide-ranging discussion is summarised under the following headings: openness, election promises, personal style, respect for local opinion, village organisations, representation, long-term vision, procedural issues, standards of conduct, getting things done, communications, and Blackbourne.

The purpose of this report is to record villagers' views for the benefit of the Parish Council so that it can take account of them and plan for future ameliorative action.

### **Openness**

- Some of those who regularly attend PC meetings are increasingly disheartened and frustrated at the way these are conducted, particularly because of a lack of openness.
- One person thought that the call for a fresh start was misplaced, since the village had made one two years ago; the present Council is the most open and democratic there has ever been - those who make criticisms are simply puppets, set up to obstruct the Council. One of the convenors of the meeting objected to this - the Council were quite wrong if they thought that people were not expressing their own views.

### **Election promises**

- Councillors have fallen short of their election promises, especially in regard to "open access", "integrity with efficiency" and "respect for local opinion". People feel let down.
- Some thought that nine councillors (now seven) had been elected as a cabale and had misled the electorate in their joint election address. Instead of openness there is confusion: objectivity has become personal bias.

### **Personal style**

- There has been unpleasantness on the part of certain councillors towards members of the public. Some referred to "spite and vindictiveness" and thought that the situation had got out of hand. It was time to draw a line under this.
- One person thought that the aggression displayed at public meetings by some supporters of the Council was unacceptable.

## **Respect for local opinion**

- There is no respect for local opinion, although this had been an election promise. Instead there is a great deal of animosity.
- The Council promised to build bridges but has broken them instead, upsetting both organisations and individuals.
- People object to councillors' authoritarian manner; they seem to have forgotten that they were elected to serve the public, not dictate to them.
- The Council does not seem to have village's interests at heart. It should be able to accept criticism and encourage people to make their views known.

## **Village organisations**

- The PC is a hindrance, rather than a help, to the many organisations within the village. Volunteers devote their time and energy to providing a valuable service to the community but meet with obstruction by the PC.
- The Sports Clubs are a credit to the village, but depend on the PC for their facilities, and have been dealt with very badly
- There seems to be a deliberate attempt to change village society. Many people who have worked hard for the village over the years feel alienated and let down
- The treatment of the Lunch Club is particularly regrettable. One person thought that their move to Woolpit had been unnecessary; he had agreed with the Council that the PC should employ a cook, but by that time the Club had been persuaded to move.

## **Representation**

- Some village representatives no longer live or work in Elmswell (County Cllr Iredale and Cllr Marriott) and some thought this wrong.
- Cllr Marriott replied that although he worked in Culford, he had a home in Elmswell and was registered as an elector here.
- Power has been concentrated in the hands of a few councillors.
- The setting up of the Blackbourne Management Association has caused much unhappiness. Although it has been set up to be at arm's length from the PC, the Council has appointed three of its own as the main members of the committee and co-opted others. It appears that the Chairman was elected by using his own casting vote.
- It is regrettable that the PC could not find one of its own members to serve as a representative on the Amenities Association, instead of appointing a member of the public.

## **Long term vision**

- The Parish Council has wide-ranging powers, but has failed to develop these.
- The Council is not proactive and there is no evidence of any long-term vision for the community.

## **Procedural issues**

- Agendas are too long and badly organised, leading to over-long meetings.
- Some matters could be dealt with more efficiently by committee.
- The minutes are deficient by comparison with other local government practice. There is no procedural method for recording public comments in the minutes, but this does not help communications.



- The PC is not making good use of its own website which is not kept up to date.
- The PC has set up a Committee to discuss matters of communication, but this was not publicised. During the meeting members of the public were asked to leave on the pretext that one item to be discussed was confidential, giving the impression that they were not welcome.
- The public have lost confidence in the Council because of the lack of communication.

### **Blackbourne**

- Why have so many village organisations withdrawn their bookings from the Blackbourne?
- The Chairman thought there had been little change, but one person said she had withdrawn and refused to pay the fees because of the attitude of the Parish Clerk.

The motion was carried. Ten electors required a Parish Poll on the question as printed in the Agenda.

The Chairman then invited members of the public to suggest further questions to be included in the poll. Two were put forward:

1. *"In view of the continuous distortion and inaccurate reporting of parish matters in the village Newsletter, should the Parish Council publish its own newsletter?"*
2. *"Should the Parish Council publish signed copies of the minutes in the Newsletter as soon as they are available?"*

There were several objections to this. Some of the ten electors who had called for the poll did not want further questions added to the one that had already been voted on and agreed. It was also suggested that these were Council matters that should be decided in the normal way at Parish Council meetings rather than being put before the entire electorate. The Chairman ruled that once the poll had been called it was quite legitimate for further questions to be added and there was no further vote.

#### *General comments on the meeting:*

The meeting provided an opportunity for villagers to put forward their views; some fundamental and very disturbing concerns were raised. Very little dialogue was apparent at the meeting itself, and since the motion was carried and the poll called, it does not appear to have solved any problems or healed any rifts. The aim of this report is to put those concerns once again before Council so that they can be discussed and acted upon. There is obviously much to do.

THE POLL WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY TAKE PLACE ON  
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THERE ARE NO POSTAL VOTES.

LOOK OUT FOR THE OFFICIAL 'NOTICE OF POLL' ON  
THE VILLAGE NOTICE BOARDS.

- Council documents should be more widely available to the public.
- The Council's tape recording policy is divisive and provocative; the tapes have never been used to clarify questions.

### **Standards of conduct**

- The council has fallen short of the Nolan principles of selflessness and integrity.
- One person was appalled by this meeting and thought it illustrated exactly why a poll was necessary. He reminded councillors of the seven basic tenets of all who serve in public life, and asked them to think in private how many marks they would score out of seven.

### **Getting things done**

- The village is still enjoying the fruits of the previous PC's achievements, but nothing has been achieved in the last two years.
- Time and energy have been wasted on pursuing a personal vendetta, instead of getting on with what the Council was elected to do. People have had enough of nothing getting done.
- The Council spends too much time talking about the past; it is becoming laughable – things need doing now. There have been many appeals to the PC on this subject, but no action, only excuses.
- The PC never initiates projects – will it take up the results of the village appraisal? The Chairman replied that the PC does fully support the appraisal and, as a result of Cllr Reed's proposal, has set up a working group to take it forward.
- Elmswell is a "tip" – roads breaking up, dogs mess everywhere, money wasted on the unusable play area at Thedwastre. The village is going downhill, but the Council is not doing anything about it.

### **Communication**

- The Newsletter offers good service. Many of the complaints expressed at this meeting have already featured in the Newsletter – it is the only forum open to people to get their views across.
- The letters page is open to all villagers, whatever their views. Many of the present PC have used the Newsletter to their own advantage. They had letters published in the Newsletter before they were elected – no one is refused, whatever their views.
- The Newsletter is often instrumental in bringing people together and helping to get things done: an example is that an individual has come forward to lend help with the possibility of a BMX cycle track, something which the PC was not prepared to take on.
- Many thought it very important that the PC should publish its report of Council proceedings in the Newsletter. There should be an official account, as is the practice in many other villages.
- Other suggestions are to have the minutes sent out with the Newsletter as a separate flyer, or if there is a problem with deadlines to publish the most recent approved minutes.
- There are many things waiting to be done in the village (e.g. the Recycling Centre, improvements to Shop Corner), but the PC never tells people what it is doing – people are kept in the dark and the Newsletter is often their only opportunity for finding things out. The Chairman replied that the PC could only report back when there was a result, so for longer term projects it would often appear that there was no progress.

# PARISH COUNCIL

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## 1. COMMITTEE MEETING

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The second meeting of the Council's 'Committee', set up to address problems of relationship with the Village, was attended by just 8 stalwart members of the public who, mindful of their having been summarily ejected on the last occasion the Committee met, said not a word.

The following matters were among those discussed;

Agendas Despite repeated requests from the public in previous meetings for an improvement on the minimalist document which, it is said, fails to inform in any meaningful way, there is to be no more information presented on Council agendas.

Public comment Despite frequent requests for a more convenient framework within which to allow the public to make their views known to Councillors at meetings, there is to be no change to the access arrangements.

Correspondence Since having been denied copies of Council correspondence, Councillors have taken to requesting that letters in which they have an interest be read out at Council meetings. This is to stop. A folder containing the month's total correspondence (in March this amounted to 103 items) will be available for all 11 Councillors to read for a full half hour prior to the monthly meeting during which time they will also have a chance to study any Planning Applications which are to be discussed.

Shorter Meetings A proposal is to go to Council limiting the length of meetings.

Minutes Minutes will not be made available either earlier or more widely than at present.

Committees & Working Groups There is no need for more Committees (to whose meetings the public are, by law, admitted) as there are some 'Working Groups' which meet in private and do not report back to Council on a regular basis. This saves money.

Web Site As soon as someone can find out how to do it, the Council's sadly out-of-date Web Site is to be closed down. Cllr Curry is to start a new one.

Newsletter Cllr Marriott recommended the Culford Newsletter as a possible model for an Elmswell Parish Council version. Cllr Curry pointed out that, for just £175 per month, the Council could have its own publication, possibly carrying advertising, delivered with one of the free newspapers which are distributed to most of the village. Cllrs Reed and Burch argued that a move in this direction would bring further resentment against the Council and be extremely divisive. The Newsletter, it was argued, is the most appropriate way forward. No decision was made.

'Customer Service Charter' Cllrs Reed and Feeney are to look into the possibility of a framework within which Council might offer a better standard of service when communicating with the public and other agencies. It was pointed out that, although the Parish Clerk spends 12 hours each week in the office, the answerphone is often on during that time as she has to go out to deliver letters or to do photocopying.

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## 2. PARISH COUNCIL

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The April Ordinary Meeting took place on the 9th at Blackbourne attended by 23 members of the public. Our correspondent noted the following items of interest among those discussed:

**Freedom of Information.** It was observed that the introduction of a 'Read File' containing all of the Council's correspondence for the month will, it was suggested, seriously restrict councillors' access to the information that they need to make informed decisions and to respond to public enquiries. The file this month contained 156 letters. It is to be available to all 11 councillors for 30 minutes prior to each meeting when all planning applications are also available for councillors to assess prior to discussion. Apart from the Chairman, Councillors are not allowed copies of letters and are no longer to see planning application papers prior to meetings.

**Footpath Closures - Foot & Mouth.** There has been concern expressed by the public that, despite Suffolk County Council's best efforts to restore the footpath network to normal use where there is no risk, paths in Elmswell remain closed. The Chairman explained that this was the result of the individual farmers claiming that there is an element of risk, despite the lack of livestock. In one case, the argument was said to be that a tractor which could have driven over sheep pasture might be used in a field over which a footpath runs. SCC are investigating these claims which are denying, in one case, any access to the Kiln Meadow Wildlife Area where the maintenance and development programme is seriously threatened. The recent success on the part of the Football Club in regaining the use of their pitches at Blackbourne by referring their case directly to the Government Ministry involved was cited as a possible way forward.

**Facilities at Blackbourne.** The Amenities Association is to be approached for money towards maintaining and developing the Council's facilities at Blackbourne. The list of projects to be funded include a new bowls pavilion, a clerk's office, a new drop in centre, a storage shed for grounds maintenance equipment, a BMX tack, an adventure playground and repairs to the car park. Cllr. Clark supported the approach as a bridge building exercise. Need, priority and costing are not to be part of the submission which does not, it was pointed out, necessarily bear relevance to the Village's views as expressed in the recent Village Appraisal.

**Recycling Centre.** Messrs A E White Surfacing Ltd of Great Finborough were awarded the contract for the construction of the new recycling centre on the Station Road Industrial Estate in the sum of £2751. An appeal by the Council for donations from local farmers, industrial concerns and village organisations towards the cost has netted £25. The existing site is to be vacated as soon as possible in the light of imminent development work on the new, bigger, library.

**Cemetery & Crown Mill Maintenance.** The Chairman, Cllr Marriott, declared an interest in this item as one of the contenders for the new contracts for this work, C D Abbott of Oxer Close, is related to him. As the law requires, he left the meeting. It was argued that the existing contractor, G Newman of Warren Close, had produced one of the few success stories for the Council over the last two years in the impeccable results he had achieved at the Cemetery. It was pointed out that the sensitivities involved and the relative complexity of the maintenance schedule required experience. Mr Abbott,

who currently cuts the Crown Mill grass, was awarded the contract for both jobs on the casting vote of the presiding chairman, Cllr Clark. The successful bids were £988 for cutting grass at Crown Mill for the year and £1968 for cemetery maintenance, a saving of £216 over Mr Newman's quote.

**Maladministration.** A formal complaint from an elector detailed two counts on which the Council has, in the complainant's opinion, not abided by the law and/or its own standing orders in the execution of council business. The Chairman, Cllr Marriott, proposed that the public be excluded for discussion on this item on the grounds of public interest. Sufficient of the councillors agreed with him and the public were instructed to withdraw.

**Parish Meeting.** Cllr Mrs Mary Feecey had tabled a report on the recent Parish Meeting. This had been called by six electors to discuss the possibility of a Parish Poll allowing the people of the village to express their lack of confidence in the elected officers of the council, Cllrs Marriott, Curry and Clark, and to ask them to resign. The Chairman, Cllr Marriott, had, unfortunately, forgotten to put the matter on the agenda. Hopes were expressed that the important issues raised by the meeting, and accurately documented in the report, will find favour for inclusion on the May agenda.

**The dwastre Close Play Area.** The site, including the new kiddies play area, is in such a sad state that Elmswell children are being taken to Woolpit to play. Quotations are to be sought for draining the site, clearing the old wheelie-bin and other fly-tipped rubbish that scar the area, and removing all of the play equipment, some already vandalised, up to Blackbourne.

**Street Cleaner.** The advertisement for a Street Cleaner, which has appeared on some village notice boards, has not proved successful. Advertisements are to be placed in the Newsletter and a local paper. Meanwhile, Mid Suffolk District Council are clearing Crown Mill and the recycling centre once a week. The ever-increasing problem on fly-tipping was discussed. No action was determined.

**Grants.** £50 each was given to Rethink Disability and Mid Suffolk Axis.

**County Councillor's Report.** A report from the retiring County Councillor, who moved away to Sussex some time ago, listed grants made to all but one of the villages in his ward under the 'Locality Budget' scheme which allowed him to allocate funds for public works. Woolpit, for example, was given £1600 towards the undergrounding of unsightly electricity supply cables. Elmswell Parish Council, although aware of the scheme, had not bid for any money. It was suggested that next year they should.

**Electoral Boundaries.** The Local Government Commission have recently sought the views of local people through their Parish Councils regarding proposals for changes in the way the ward boundaries are drawn. The recommendation regarding Elmswell was for a change from the village having its own District Councillor to a sharing of two councillors between Elmswell, Norton and Tostock. Norton Parish Council raised objections under the consultation process which drew comments from many of the Parish Councils consulted. Elmswell Parish Council did not express a view. Consultation closed on 5th March.

**Rural White Paper.** Following the recent seminar, attended by two councillors, on this very important topic which raises many opportunities of considerable possible benefit to the rural community, a report is to come to Council. It is hoped that this will include details of the new Code of Conduct for Councillors.

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*Letter to Ed from Barbara and Keith Melville of Hanover Court*

**"Dictatorial?" "Who me?"**

**M**y wife and I are very new to the area but felt compelled to attend the meeting on the 29th March.

We were not surprised at the ensuing shenanigans for we were once members of a land owning association in Essex back in the 60s. The A.G.Ms. were a good deal livelier than last nights effort.

However, there were similarities, blind indifference to other peoples views, gerrymandering, spiteful character assassination and in some cases ill concealed hatred of neighbours. All in all, a pleasant evening out.

Now make no mistake, Marriott, Curry and Clark are not of the resigning ilk. They are more your Mandleson or Vaz. "Public opinion?" "Who the Hell cares!" Marriott spelled it out at the meeting. "The Council is not bound by any decision given by a Parish Poll", unquote, He has served notice that he will not be moved until his elected term is up.

Chamberlain was but a weak and foolish man but he was a man of honour. When told to go in the name of God, he went. Sadly men of honour are as hard to find as hens teeth these days.

*Letter to Ed from Cllr Marriott, Chairman, Cllr Clark, Vice Chairman, Cllr Curry, Chairman Planning Committee, Elmswell Parish Council*

**...you deserve the truth ...**

**F**ollowing the parish meeting held on 29th March at the library we wish to let you know that a poll will be held to address three questions raised at the meeting. It is a fact that those being singled out in this vindictive way have all clearly stated their intention of not resigning from the council. The poll will therefore achieve nothing. We would like to thank those present who supported us and whom could see no benefit in the parish expending somewhere in the region of £1200 on this poll, however we live in a democratic society and the poll will go ahead. The documents supporting the agenda at the meeting were not only provocative and divisive they contain at least one lie and several more believed lies. Perhaps that is the way to communicate to you the public; but personally we believe you deserve the truth, however unpalatable that may be. In truth there are many things you deserve to know, some we are not allowed to tell you. Some will become evident in due course, some we should have told you before and we accept fully the criticism that we have not done so. An annual report will be published in May as was done last year, hopefully that will help.

*An open letter to Cllr D Marriott, Chairman of Elmswell Parish Council from Alan Thompson of Eastern Way*

**... are the public welcome at Parish Council meetings ? .....**

I am very angry and disappointed at the way the public have been treated at recent parish council meetings. As you know I come to nearly every meeting to listen to councillors and contribute to discussions. People say that my comments are positive and I'm always happy to help where possible. Yes, I did storm out of the last meeting and perhaps that was wrong. But it was out of genuine frustration. When you can't hear what's being said and can't see who's saying it, what's the point of being there. Your own comments were the last straw.

What I want to know is are the public welcome at parish council meetings or do you want a closed shop? First we're thrown out of one meeting and it was obvious we were not going to get back in as all the chairs were stacked away. Then the next time we find a new arrangement so all the public can see is the backs of heads and hear next to nothing.

Can I remind all councillors that you are only where you are because of us the public. If you're not interested in what we say then come out and say so. You can turn your back on us but we won't go away. We'll find some way to get our voice heard.

But I am a reasonable man so here's a positive suggestion to help things get back on the right track. Surely you can find a layout which suits councillors AND the public so everyone can take part. And let's have a decent agenda so everyone knows what's going on and can have their say. Then maybe we can get back to the sort of meeting where everyone can go home happy.

*Letter to Ed from Jay Cornwall of School Avenue*

**... Community destroyed ...**

So the Memorial Hall is coming down. The mighty have won, what a sad time for Elmswell, driven by egoism, motivated by greed and as we want we'll have attitude, they have torn this village apart should we all feel proud of these new facilities or shame at the way they were achieved, you judge, what happened to free speech, fair play, justice for all and respect for others, people of a different opinion have been ridiculed, the Luncheon Club hounded out of the village and worse a Memorial Hall built to honour the boys who died that we might keep the above privileges to be pounded. Might is right and can take what it wants, they died to save us from that as well, what an example to set the next generation, yes we needed new sports facilities but not at any price and in detriment to everything else, some will dismiss me as another out of touch old fool, but I can live with my principles and know that to bulldozer this memorial into the past is wrong, has this village sunk so low that any means justify the end and all for what, a village hall 1½ miles away that no one without a car or can walk that far can use and a once caring village community destroyed.

*Letter to Ed from Cllr D Marriott*

**... correct legislation ...**

**A**t the parish meeting on Thursday 29th March a member of the public was quite adamant that the correct legislation was not being applied. This led to much concern by those present despite assurances from both Cllr Tony Clark and myself that the correct legislation was being adhered to as supplied by MSDC.

I would like to bring to everyone's attention that the individual concerned has since contacted me and apologised for his statement that he accepts was incorrect, he had mistakenly referenced legislation relevant to another matter. I would like to reinforce my statement that the legislation, as applied, was correct and give the electorate my assurances that the parish meeting was carried out in full accordance with current legislation.

*Letter to Ed from John Dodds of Cross Street*

**... systematically decimated and discarded ...**

**I** was delighted to see the "Communication - Discussion Document" as propounded by Cllr Doug Reed (March Newsletter), most of which was being implemented as standard practice under the previous administration, and most of which has been systematically decimated and discarded by the present administration! Let's hope this a good omen.

*Letter to Ed from C D Abbott of Oxer Close*

**... return to the Dow hosted dictatorship ...**

**I** was glad that I made the effort to arrive at the recently called Parish meeting, unreasonable early, which was called for by six villagers who think that three particular Parish Councillors should resign. Who knows why they chose such a small venue? However, the inevitable outcome is that we are to have an expensive poll in the near future. I felt very much alone saying "my piece" that night, not just because most people were against the Council, but there were so few able to get into the library. So, I feel it is important that more people can see, word for word, my speech, (written and printed by C D Abbott at the supplied address).

"I would like to refer to this green leaflet that I assume everybody has received." (the flyer that advertised the meeting.)

"Third paragraph, I think the majority of level-headed people in this village would also like to "DO SOMETHING", but as has been mentioned on so many occasions, there seems to be a bitter and twisted person who hasn't quite grasped the meaning of "bridge building" and cowardly pulls many strings.

In this leaflet, is a call for a "fresh start". We've already had one. We have got the most democratic and open Parish Council, this village has been fortunate to have for quite some time.

However, there has been a hard-core of vocal "puppets" intent on undermining and



complicating the structured running of the council, and inevitably obstructing the projects so desired by the people of this village.

We can do without the diarrhoea we read in the newsletter, attempted boycotts, and secret plots to bring down this Council that so many of us democratically voted for to act on our behalf. They don't very often reply to the propaganda spread around, but do they need to?... I feel they should, which would give a far more balanced view. One thing I can't understand about this leaflet is the reference to "others (not us) willing to come forward". Why haven't they done just that? Who are they?

My biggest fear in this saga is that it could be the beginning of the return to the Dow hosted dictatorship of a Parish Council that we all suffered under.

I think we should forget this nonsense, save the expense that a poll will incur, and let the Parish Council do their jobs."

Unfortunately, it's too late to forget it now, but let us see how the majority feel, in the poll result. Make the effort, make your feelings known, secretly.

*Letter to Ed from John Dodds of Cross Street*

**... for God's sake do something ...**

**A**n article in the Mercury of March 23rd concerning the deaths of two young men in a car - lorry accident on September 8th 2000 criticised County Council bosses for the state of narrow country roads "which almost inevitably" led to the tragedy.

It seems that this highlights a lack of road safety in Elmswell where there is also another site, the Post Office - Co-op crossroads, where "an accident is waiting to happen".

The last Parish Council and the present one have discussed these problems without coming to any decision. A one way system was mooted but no one could decide which way this should be implemented! Positive ideas for School Road such as road humps, reduced speed limit and obvious signs such as sharp bend, accident black spot etc. should be seriously considered now.

The Post Office crossing has been dismissed glibly as "everyone knows the crossing is dangerous!", an assumption suggesting that armed with this knowledge no harm will come to anyone, a specious argument if there ever was!

Studied prescience should be prescribed.

For God's sake do something!

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*Letter to Ed from Dennis Asbury of Gardeners Walk*

**... people who run our affairs should be proud of our past ...**

**E**lmswell is not a village that should suffer from the petty squabbling that constantly accompanies our Parish Council.

There is so much to do to provide social, sporting and cultural facilities for all ages of the population. And there are so many people who have given, freely time and energy to do so. Obviously, with such a congested and growing population there will always be more to do.

Elmswell is not an overnight shanty village. It is a village that is rooted in the heart of English history. A King of England and an Abbot have stayed here, and as Elmswella we are mentioned in the Domesday Book. But Elmswell originated long before, probably in Celtic days. For over 3000 years people have lived here, Surely the people who run our affairs should be justly proud of our past and are determined to further its true progress with wisdom and integrity.

*Letter to Ed from Peter Dow of Church Road*

**... will not stand in any Parish Council by-election...**

**T**here have been numerous serious debates which have accompanied the frantic goings on surrounding the Parish Council over recent weeks.

A frequent question which arises relates to why the three Councillors, who are subject to the forthcoming vote of No Confidence, cling so resolutely to power.

It has been suggested that they do so out of a determination to exclude me from office.

In the hope that it might help to allow the people of Elmswell to reconsider the wisdom of their choice of two years ago, and in the hope of a better two years to come, I have no hesitation in giving my unequivocal and absolute guarantee that I will not stand in any Parish Council by-election which might arise in the village over the next two years.

With the petty politics out of the way, perhaps the three Councillors can better examine their actions and motives in the light, as Robert Marshall so devastatingly listed to them at the recent Parish Meeting, of their consciences in the following regards; *selflessness, integrity, objectivity, openness, honesty, leadership and humanity.*

The meeting was stunned by the challenge offered by those words. Let us hope, for the sake of our community, that the forthcoming Poll confirms that such qualities and ideals must be sought in new representatives with the vision and drive to heal the hurt.

Let us also hope that, if the Poll does go against them, Cllrs. Marriott, Clark and Curry listen to the people.

*Letter to Ed from Peter and Brigitta Edmonds of Ashfield Road*

**... no long have a mandate to serve as ...**

**Y**ou will all know that at the Parish Meeting the other week, the council's Big Three suffered a massive vote of no confidence and no longer have a mandate to serve us, if serve is the word. If life was cricket they would do the gentlemanly thing and 'walk', but there was no indication of honourable withdrawals after the vote was taken so we are left wondering. Having abided by the public's wishes at the previous Parish Meeting regarding the new library, one could be forgiven for assuming that they would do the same this time. They were very keen to determine the mood of the village on that occasion even though the outcome was not what they had hoped for. Resigning would remove the need for a £600-odd Parish poll so there's a choice for them to save us some money and salvage some pride in the process. Quotes reported in the local press seem to suggest that they intend to fight to the bitter end so it would appear that they still cannot see the writing on the wall. How many times do they have to be on the wrong end of a majority vote before they get the message, I wonder?

When David Marriott manipulated the democratic process to form the now-infamous 'gang of nine', (quite legally, by the way, but morally rather questionable) he set in motion a chain of inevitable consequences which have led us to our present parlous state. By bullying and cajoling selected candidates to stand, he kept others who wished to serve off the council and ensured himself a huge majority. This gave the council an unhealthy bias and allowed him to steam-roller through legislation with no balanced discussion. Not that the others are 'yes men'. When he says 'No'; they say 'No!' And two of them were so committed to the cause that they have baled out already - not halfway through their term - necessitating another £600 election courtesy of Mr Marriott. The bill is totting up nicely. Is that why the precept has been set so high and nothing been spent in the last two years? A survival fund?

On a lighter note, my cult hero budgie, Joey, asks to be remembered to all those kind folk who sent messages of goodwill to him - and goodwill is a rare commodity these days. Actually, he is away on a training course at the moment. He is learning how to fly in the face of public opinion!

## Beverley of Elmswell

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## Points to Ponder

### F.M.D. - Foot and Mouth Disease

Humans occasionally suffer from Hand, Foot and Mouth disease. Those affected are usually children who come into contact with certain viruses (principally Coxsackie A virus). It is usually a mild infection and **NOTHING TO DO** with the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) of animals, which is caused by Picornanaridae, genus of Aphthovirus, of which there are seven types. The Asiatic serotype O is the villain of the current epizootic believed to have arrived in frozen Argentine lamb or the Far East?

Animal Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) is a zoonosis (pronounced zoo-o-nosis) which means that it is transmissible to human beings, but it is so very, very rare that Mr Nick Brown, the Agricultural Minister was virtually correct to say that humans cannot catch it, as the last reported case in Britain was 1966 during the last epizootic. Before that in the 1830's, 3 Vet's unwisely drank raw milk from infected cows and thus proved that humans can catch it. You cannot get FMD from the pasteurised milk that the milkman delivers!

#### **So why slaughter all these herds when perhaps one or two animals have got foot and mouth disease?**

During the fortnight's incubation period (the time the sheep or cow contacts the virus to the time it comes out in the disease), the animal secretes the virus before symptoms and signs appear. So the "fit" animals in the herd are all very likely to be infectious and therefore dangerous to other noninfected susceptible animals.

#### **Why not vaccinate against FMD?**

One reason is that laboratories cannot differentiate between a vaccinated animal and a infected animal which has the disease. Moreover once you have permanently vaccinated stock you can never export animals to disease free areas. So to retain your disease free status the vaccinated animals which have been vaccinated to prevent further local spread have to be slaughtered.

#### **Where does FMD occur on a regular basis?**

The greatest risk is through legal and illegal imports of infected live animals, and contaminated meat and dairy products from infected countries. FMD viruses can live a long time in fresh, partially cooked, cured, smoked meats and inadequately pasteurised dairy products. Hence the ban of UK exports to other European countries.

The FMD virus is reputedly the most infectious germ around for animals. For human beings, small pox (variola virus) was a lethal infection. The World Health Organisation rid the world of this terrible disease by vaccination so that there are now very, very few areas where small pox could be caught nowadays. I recall the case many years ago of a person who arrived in Britain who was incubating the disease. The rash appeared, the diagnosis made and immediate transfer to an isolation hospital was arranged. Despite the stringent precautions, an innocent person some 500 yards from the hospital caught the disease and died. The virus to infect this person had had to have been windborne.

Now the foot and mouth disease viruses are just as infectious, if not more so. So why are we treated to interviews from media people just outside a farm where the disease has struck? Why the burning pyres from which the virus sails forth in the wind? Sadly there will be many questions when this epizootic is over; it seems that the lessons learned in 1967 were not heeded this time. Will the lessons of today be heeded in the next epizootic?

**John Dodds**

# What's On in Elmswell ?

To be included in our events diary make sure you send separate notification of your announcement.

## April

- 21 Annual Carl Finch Memorial Charity football match and dance. Tickets £5 from Roy.
- 21 Coffee Morning in St John's Church Room - 10am
- 23 Elmswell Toddlers meet at Woolpit Play Area (weather permitting)
- 27 Millennium History Group - 7.30pm - Blackbourne - *Railway Mania 8146 - the Ipswich to Bury line* - **Clive Paine** returns to deliver our First Anniversary Lecture

## May

- 1 Elmswell Toddlers social event for adults - well deserved drinkies at the Fox
  - 6 Kiln Meadow - Dawn Chorus (yes, we really do mean THAT EARLY - this is one for the early risers!) - **4.30am**
  - 10 Millennium History Group - *Member's evening* - A chance for members to display and discuss their own research, to swap information, or just chat - St John's Church Room
- 13-19 Christian Aid Week
- 13 St John's Church Annual Christian Aid Service, 10.30am
  - 16 Elmswell Toddlers trip to 'Playworld'

## June

- 7 Kiln Meadow - wildflower survey, 7.00pm
- 7 Elmswell Toddlers trip to 'Playworld'
- 9 Church Garden Fete - The Cedars, Warren Lane, 2pm
- 14 Millennium History Group - *Introducing the Museum of East Anglian Life* - **Miriam Stead** (Museum Director) - St John's Church Room
- 15 Friends of St John's AGM & Supper
- 17 Kiln Meadow - mowing/raking (equipment provided; gloves useful), 9.00am
- 20 Elmswell Toddlers social event for Adults - Indian meal

## June cont.

- 23 Elmswell Cricket Club: Music Quiz, 7.30pm, £2 per person, max. 6 per team

## July

- 5 Kiln Meadow - ragwort pull (bring gloves, spade), 7.00pm
- 12 Millennium History Group - *An evening visit to the Museum of East Anglian Life* - Guided tour with **Miriam Stead**. More details later
- 13 Friday - Kiln Meadow - bat watch (like the date!), 8.30pm
- 15 Elmswell Gardening Club - Open Gardens

## August

- 1 Elmswell Toddlers seaside trip to Walton-on-the-Naze
- 4 Elmswell Gardening Club annual outing to Blickling Hall
- 18 Friends of St John's Coffee Morning, Crossways, 10am
- 22 Elmswell Toddlers teddy bears picnic at the Blackbourne

## September

- 7-9 Friends of St John's Festival
- 9 St John's Annual Friends' Service, 10.30am, Preacher Mr J Andreasen
- 23 Kiln Meadow - mowing/raking (equipment provided, bring gloves), 9.00am

## October

- 6 Elmswell Sports Clubs: Sports Quiz, 7.30pm, £2 per person, max. 6 per team

## November

- 17 St John's Autumn Fair, Blackbourne, 2pm
- 17 Elmswell Cricket Club: Entertainment Quiz, 7.30pm, £2 per person, max. 6 per team

**Tell us more -  
Tel 241841**