

Seventeen years of Parish Record.....

..... Community News and the Community's Views.



The ELMSWELL Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2002

..... Your Parish Matters



Young Ryan takes a break from Chrissy's Bouncy Castle to become the King of Hearts during a theatre workshop session at the Fun Factory Holiday Playscheme held over last half term at the Blackbourne -

... see centre pages

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This Month's "COMMENT"

comes from Philip Shaw of
Ashfield Road

...after 'That' meeting...

(see report page 38)

Over time, family, friends and colleagues have become more and more interested in Elmswell. Not, you understand, in our popular, well-located village with excellent access to roads and rail, its school, health centre, churches, shops and library and its vibrant clubs and societies. Rather they want to know the latest in the continuing saga of

our unfortunate parish council. The trouble is that to explain it I find myself increasingly speaking of *technical* matters. No more do I tell them of past successes (Crown Mill, the 11 acre field, the Memorial Library) and dreams (Shop Corner, Kiln Meadow or the skate-board park) but of seeming sleight of hand, misused power, bull-dozed decisions, members of the public being abused and required to leave and, worst of all, the pretence that it is all being done for our own good and we simply do not know how fortunate we are! It occurs to me that other residents, similarly having to explain these incredible happenings to outsiders, might find my technical glossary of use. Genuinely they are all words that have been used recently, either by councillors in their *council chamber* or by the growing number in the *public gallery*. That things have come to this: pathetic, isn't it?

Adjourn: put off; postpone; break off a meeting with the intention of resuming later. **Agenda:** a list of items of business to be considered at a meeting. **Amend:** make minor improvements in a text or written proposal; make better; improve. **Anarchy:** disorder, especially political or social; lack of government in a society. **Casting vote:** a deciding vote usually given by the chairperson when the votes on two sides are equal. **Chairman:** a person chosen to preside over a meeting. **Clerk:** a secretary, agent, or record-keeper of a local council. **Close:** end the day's business; limited or restricted to certain persons; hidden; secret, covered. **Committee:** a body of persons appointed for a specific function by, and usually out of, a larger body. **Council:** a body of people formally constituted and meeting regularly; the elected local administrative body of a parish. **Councillor:** an elected member of a council. **Court:** a body of persons presided over by a judge, judges, or a magistrate, and acting as a tribunal in civil and criminal cases. **Democracy:** a system of government by the whole population, usually through elected representatives. **Dictator:** a ruler with (often usurped) unrestricted authority; a domineering person. **Diktat:** a categorical statement or decree. **Draft:** a preliminary written version of a document; a rough preliminary outline of a scheme. **Exclude:** shut or keep out (a person or thing) from a place, group, privilege, etc.; expel and shut out. **Gavel:** a small hammer used for calling a meeting to order. **Member:** a person

formerly elected to take part in the proceedings of certain organisations. **Parish:** a district constituted for purposes of local government; the inhabitants of a parish. **Police:** the civil force of a state, responsible for maintaining public order. **Precept:** an order for collection or payment of money under a local rate. **Public:** of or concerning the people as a whole; open to or shared by all the people; done or existing openly; provided by or concerning local or central government; the community in general or members of the community. **SALC:** Suffolk Association of Local Councils. **Solicitor:** a member of the legal profession qualified to advise clients and instruct barristers, and represent clients in the lower courts. **Standards Board for England:** responsible for promoting high ethical standards and investigating allegations that members' behaviour may have fallen short of the required standards. **Standing Orders:** the rules governing the manner in which all business shall be conducted in a council. **Tender:** an offer, especially an offer in writing to execute work or supply goods at a fixed price. **Vice:-** next in rank to, often in the capacity of deputy or substitute for. **Vote:** a formal expression of choice or option. (Courtesy of The Concise Oxford Dictionary.)

Of the above, possibly the most important is the last one. Let's make sure that we all exercise it properly and sensibly whenever we next get the opportunity.

YOUR COMMENT INVITED... If you have a comment, a view, a statement - something to say about anything of concern to Elmswell - share it with our readers via the 'Comment' column or our 'letters to the Editor' feature c/o Goblins, Station Road Industrial Estate. Please include your name and address and a telephone contact number - our next deadline is 11th December.

The deadline for the next issue is 5.00 p.m. on **Wednesday 11 December 2002**. Copy to Goblin's office on Station Road Industrial Estate or contact our Editors: 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.

Advertising at the following rates. Please let us have an invoicing address with your copy:

Repeat ads - run for 6 months or more - per issue:

¼ page £15 ½ page £20 Full page £30

One off ads:

¼ page £18 ½ page £23 Full page £35

Payment strictly in advance.

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Repeat ads - run for 6 months or more - per issue:

¼ page £17 ½ page £22 Full page £33

One off ads:

¼ page £20 ½ page £25 Full page £38

N.B. Photographs £10 extra.

**Classified Ads: 30 words maximum
£5 cash with order.**

STOP PRESS

Those who observed, in their objections to the Parish Council's move to deny the community the chance of footbridge over the railway line, that development would continue to put pressure on road safety issues, are quickly proved to be right.

An application is before Mid Suffolk District Council for the demolition of the Mill on Station Road and the erection of 13 houses.

STOP PRESS II

Having considered facts put before Mid Suffolk District Council regarding the procedures followed by the Chairman, Vice Chairman and other Elmswell Parish Councillors, in the matter of the Parish Council's application for planning permission effectively denying the community and the possibility of a footbridge over the railway from Crown Mill, and in the knowledge that the Standards Board for England is investigating multiple complaints against certain officers and members of the Parish Council in connection with that application, the District Council Head of Corporate Services has advised objectors who sought to have him intervene that the Parish Council's planning application will be deferred until further notice.

NEW YEARS EVE

Disco

in aid of the Heart Foundation

at the Bacon Factory Social Club

8pm - 12.30pm

* FOOD * RAFFLE *

£5 per ticket

Contact Val (01359 241708) or Carol (01359 270917)

Around and About ...

HELPING HAND CLUB

Our 2002 programme is rapidly drawing to a close. Where has the year gone to? Our Club meeting on Thursday November 21st is the last ordinary meeting of this year.

Our Christmas party is on Saturday December 7th and the following Thursday Dec 12th. We have our annual carol concert (see separate advert).

Sincere thanks to Peter Clark for a superb evening's entertainment at one of our October meetings.

All of us at the Club were sorry to hear of the passing of Doris Piper, one of our long serving members. We would all like to send our deepest sympathy to Malcolm, Pat and all the family.

Until the next month.

Best wishes,

Stan



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 7.30pm

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 01284-754358.



Christmas Concert

by the Norton Salvation Army
Band and Songsters

At the Blackbourne Hall
on Thursday December 12th
at 7.30 pm

Everyone
most welcome

CATHOLIC PARISH OF OUR LADY, STOWMARKET

Parish Priest:

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

ELMSWELL CRICKET CLUB
in conjunction with Home Start

ENTERTAINMENT QUIZ



"For your next pint, who piloted Thunderbird 4?"

Questions on film, music, theatre, radio, TV, musicals,
and more...

Saturday 30 November at The Blackbourne
Entry from 7.50pm - Quiz starts at 7.45pm

£2.00 per person (max. 6 people per team)
Proceeds split between the Club and Home Start

Contact:

Doug Reed, Second Thoughts, Church Road (241009)
Graham Newman, 25 Warren Close (240846) or
David Peachey, 34 Blackbourne Road (242622)

Around and About cont'd., p25

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

TIMES OF CHRISTMAS MASSES AND OTHER SERVICES IN THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF OUR LADY, STOWMARKET

MASSES:

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (22nd December):

Anticipatory Mass on Saturday (21st December) at St. Mary's (C of E), Woolpit at 6pm.

Masses at Our Lady's, Stricklands Road, Stowmarket at 8.30am and 10.15am.

CHRISTMAS EVE (Tuesday, 24th December):

Mass at St. Mary's (C of E), Woolpit at 9pm.

Midnight Mass at Our Lady's, Stricklands Road, Stowmarket at 11.30pm (*over by 12.30am*).

CHRISTMAS DAY (Wednesday, 25th December):

Mass at St. John's (C of E), Needham Market at 8.30am.

Mass at Our Lady's, Stricklands Road, Stowmarket at 10.15am.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (CONFESSION)

(at Our Lady's, Stricklands Road, Stowmarket):

CATECHISM RECONCILIATION SERVICE (with Individual Confessions): Monday, 2nd December at 6.30pm.

PARISH RECONCILIATION SERVICE (with Individual Confessions): Thursday, 19th December at 7.30pm.

CONFESSIONS also on Tuesday, 17th December: 7.15pm until 8pm; and Saturday 21st December: 10.30am until 11.30am.

Other times by appointment: Tel: 01449-612946



PIANO LESSONS

Would you like to learn to play the piano?

Ex County Council schools accompanist (lady) has a few vacancies.

Please phone
01359 240246

ELMSWELL GARDENING CLUB

The Chairman opened the meeting by reading out a delightful letter of thanks from the Friends of Woolpit Health Centre, for the donation made from Open Gardens Day. And whilst he commented on the low turn-out, he thought that it could be directly contributed to the fact that we were in competition with the village quiz. Our guest speaker Mr Sharman from the Monksilver Nursery in Cambridgeshire gave a very interesting and in-depth talk on the variegation of plants and some of the more common causes of variegation, whether it be caused by genetic



Around and About cont'd., pg7

manipulation, or transmitted viruses. He brought with him a vast collection of variegated plants a lot of which were easily recognised by some of the more knowledgeable members, but some were more rare and least well known, and these were used to demonstrate a very technical and complex subject into lay terms, and included a lot of audience participation, which always makes the evening that much more fun and enjoyable. On conclusion of Mr Sharman's talk, the Chairman asked for a show of appreciation, and said that it was regrettable that some members had missed out, and that he would urge Hon. Sec. to try and arrange a date in the future for Mr Sharman to return.

This report will be too late on the streets to mention the AGM as that will be all done and dusted, but it would be a good

time to remind members that we have no meeting in December, and I can't work out if it's too early for the Gardening Club to wish all its members and friends that have supported us through the year, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

ELMSWELL BAPTIST CHURCH

This month our CU club will celebrate its first anniversary - I can't believe how quick the year has gone. We shall be celebrating with an anniversary celebration, I may even bring my camera so smile nicely. We continue through to December when we shall be having a fancy dress Christmas party on 17th. Unfortunately I have broken my retro sun glasses and have stopped wearing my Ipswich cap so I will need a new outfit this year. Does anyone know where I can get some clean whites, an unused bat, a beer glass, and some grease for my fingers, I think I'll go as a village cricketer (I would go as some jump leads but they may think I will start something). We have seen many new faces join us in October, welcome to you all and thanks for coming. Some even come straight from karate in their white gowns, but I obviously let them do what they like!! Although the age ranges from 5 - 12 it is a fantastic group and everyone gets on well together. Thanks to everyone that comes and makes each Tuesday such a great laugh each week.

At the beginning of December (the 2nd to be exact) the ladies group meet at 7.45pm. They will gather for their traditional Christmas nosh and natter and this year I believe they are being entertained by a singer. No, it's not me, I think this one is a professional. This night is also open to males so at last we shall be able to introduce some sport into the

SPANISH



Can you order your
"cerveza, vino y tapas?"



WHY NOT LEARN?

**Phone Andrea Alderton
in Drinkstone
on 01449 736542**

Around and About cont'd., pg7

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SPANISH



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Around and About cont'd., p89

conversations. On second thoughts, perhaps not.

Every Thursday we shall carry on with our 10 videos on the commandments at 7.30pm and our working party will meet up on 7th December from 9.30am for anyone who would like to clean, paint, decorate etc.

Our Christmas services will be held next month - more news then. I know last month I spoke about two exciting changes. Well they will happen from the new year and I will tell you then about a new beginning for the Chapel. We are all excited about it and I hope the village will benefit also.

Please feel free to support us at any of the above events and thanks to all those who continue to do so in whatever activity you join us for.

Mark

ELMSWELL LUNCHEON CLUB

The Elmswell Luncheon Club, which meets on Mondays, continues to thrive! Each week our regular members enjoy the warmth and hospitality of the Bull at Woolpit. Attendance remains high but we miss one or two who are unwell and hope to see them back soon.

Each week Club members enjoy a really good and varied meal and being 'waited on' for a change is much appreciated.

We've already reported on our two outings this year and plans are already underway for our special Christmas celebrations at the Bull.

If you are aged 55+ and are free on Mondays, why not join us? Membership is free and transport is available to and from the venue. You'll find a friendly group of people from Elmswell enjoying



themselves - and hoping their raffle ticket comes up trumps!

Our secretary Rosalie Summons will gladly give you full details, so why not 'phone her on Elmswell 240001.

ELMSWELL TODDLERS

The toddlers social events calendar will soon be reaching its climax with the Christmas party and parents night out. What a year it's been with all our parties, e.g. teddy bears picnic, barbeque, trips, e.g. Banham Zoo, Needham lakes and lots of fundraising, e.g. autumn fayre. The fundraising has ensured that the garden is ready and waiting for us to use next year.

Santa will be needing lots of help this year to wrap the presents he will be distributing



The Amenities Fayre Committee

**has recently
bought a remote
radio microphone
for use at the quiz.
It is available on
loan to any
volunteer
village group or
organisation -
tel. 241841.**



Around and About cont'd., p81 I

from his grotto, as there will be so many little guests. Hotshots disco will be on hand to provide the entertainment, which will no doubt be followed by lots of delicious party food. At a later date parents can relax informally together to a well deserved Christmas dinner. Who knows what the new year will bring but it will certainly involve a toddlers trip to ocean adventure to burn off a bit of energy after the Christmas overdrive.

If you are planning your own Christmas or birthday party, have you considered the Wesley hall as a venue? For a small additional fee you can hire toddlers small tables and chairs.

Well done toddlers quiz team members. Despite coming second they received £50 prize money in the village quiz which was kindly donated to Elmswell toddlers.

Feel you and your little ones are missing out on all the fun? Why not come and join us? We meet at the Wesley hall on Mondays from 1.30pm until 3pm and on Wednesdays from 10am until 11.30am. Sessions include craft making, music time as well as lots of toys. New mums and tots are always welcome to join in and your first visit is free. Come and give it a try

Bethan Stott, tel 245 203.

ELMSWELL CRICKET CLUB (Sponsored by Manvers Triumph)

OK, let's forget cricket and talk about quizzes. Mainly because (a) our annual 'Entertainment Quiz' is being held on November 30 in The Blackbourne (see the separate advert in this newsletter for details or contact myself, as below); and (b) because our 'Great Christmas Quiz' is now on sale, at just £1.00 (answer 100 questions about or related to Christmas - and return your sheet by January 5). Let's face it, if we're not brilliant at cricket then, for cricketers, we make a half-decent quiz team. Thousands of people take part in pub, village, and sports club quizzes every week. And we're no exception. To many, it's a daft way to pass the time. After all, who cares which of Henry VIII's wives was both a widow and a virgin when she married him? We don't know why we do it. We don't care. But we do know that the chemical symbol for Tungsten is W. Nor is quizzing fashionable or dignified. The word 'anorak' is often bandied about (though not within Mrs Brooks's hearing); and few celebrities or notables cite 'quizzes' amongst their hobbies in *Who's Who*. On a historical time perspective, quizzing is relatively new. Even 15 years ago if you walked into a



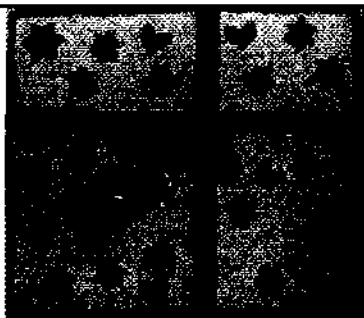
~~ Novelty Cakes! ~~

*How about something different
for Christmas*

Free Delivery within Elmswell

Jean Barker ~ 01359 241135

Cartoons ✓ Sports ✓ Animals ✓ Hobbies
Anything!...



Around and About cont'd., p212

pub and saw a man standing behind a microphone, asking questions, you'd probably have called the police. It was, after all, a time when bar billiards was still considered a dangerous innovation. If the earth's history was represented by a calendar year, then quiz culture has emerged in the time it takes to put the kettle on. Yet its origins are undoubtedly biblical. Wasn't it in Matthew 16 that Jesus asked his disciples "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" This is the first recorded instance of a 'nice easy one to start'!

Curiously, quizzing also results in you finding out what your friends and fellow players really know about ... and don't want publicising. But does that stop us? Graham Newman, for example - the Jubilee. What that man doesn't know about royalty you could write on the back

of the Queen's head on a postage stamp. Wink (David Peachey) - specialised subject: Outer Mongolian Football League Division. Three scoring records. What does this all mean? Who knows. Many have said that quiz culture is shallow. In that case, we've found our level. Quizzes make few demands on the higher intellect. Let's face it, if you wandered into The Blackbourne for our 'Entertainment Quiz' (November 30, by the way!) and saw Albert Einstein sitting in the EADS 'A' team, you'd be surprised wouldn't you? OK, so we know he's dead! But also because while he might be able to explain what's meant by $e = mc^2$, you know that when he's asked about The Dooleys, or international vehicle registration letters, or gets the question "In *Star Trek: The Next Generation* what's the name of Lt Commander Data's cat?" he's going to look as big a prat as you!

Ask people to a quiz and they'll always say something like "...but I don't know anything...". Nobody ever means it! Everyone has some sort of knowledge. It's just that sometimes they're afraid to admit it or, crucially, display it to others. It's akin to announcing in public what you do in the privacy of your own attic. The majority of folk can be gently persuaded to take part in these things (like our 'Entertainment Quiz' - November 30 - have I mentioned it?). Most of us would claim to have had a general knowledge once - at least, before the cruel vagaries of life, neglect and cheap red wine blew it away. Occasionally, especially during a hangover, you believe you can feel the brain cells dying or drifting off to someone more deserving. As they disappear, it's logical to assume that information goes with them - like your unrivalled knowledge of Greek shipping areas or

Wetherden Under Fives



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Rising 3's (age 2½-3)

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Thursdays and Fridays
9.00am - 12.30pm

A secure, happy place where learning
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We accept nursery grants.

Contact:

Sandra Gidney 07971 827522 or
Sarah Paczy 01359 242965

Around and About cont'd., pg15

shoe sizes of Stowmarket Carnival Queens 1987-2002. Of course, we know it doesn't work that way. Brain cells are certainly killed off by habitual self-indulgence but it's only relatively minor motor functions that tend to suffer - like playing cricket or how to eat pizza. 90% of the brain remains uncharted territory (9.99% in the case of some of our team members) and it is surely somewhere in that area that lies the answer to Lt. Commander Data's cat name! However, knowledge doesn't so much die as lie dormant and all you need is a quiz to awaken the parts. So how about the 'Entertainment Quiz' on November 30 (in case you'd forgotten?)? There may be no sensible reason why you know what you know - but come along and show it off anyway. And remember, there is only one cast-iron rule for quizzing; *The first answer you think of is usually the right one.* Although there's a corollary to this rule: *Sometimes it's not.* But therein lies the fun - arguing with quiz-masters, standing on chairs to see how far ahead/behind you are, and falling out with friends and relatives. Get a life... but not before you enter the 'Entertainment Quiz'.

Doug Reed, Secretary (Tel. 241009)

P.S.: Lt. Commander Data's cat was called 'Spot' - remember it, you never know when that knowledge will come in handy. Like the name of Tonto's horse. OOPS. There I go again... still, you know that one don't you Mark (Baptists)?

Elmswell C.C.: Century Club Draw
October: £15 to R Bailey (63), £10 to L Fairley (77) and £5 to B Edmonds (98).

NEWS FROM THE METHODIST CHURCH

Christmas approaches with alarming speed, or so it seems, and the next

meeting of our Tuesday Exchange Club will be our annual dinner at The Bull, Woolpit on December 17th and entertainment will follow the meal.

The speakers at the Ladies Meetings on the Tuesday prior to our dinner are: 26th - November Maureen Newcombe, 3rd December - Members meeting, 10th December - Carols and Mincepies.

Preachers planned to lead worship:
November 24th - Mrs Carol Colton.
December 1st - Mr Colin Francis. Dec 8th Revd Stephen Yelland (Holy Communion). Dec 15th Mrs Maureen Wayman. Dec 22nd Carol Service. Dec 25th at 10am - a 40 minute service conducted by Alan & Maureen Newcombe.

ELMSWELL F.C.

Sponsors: Mirror Group Newspapers.

Warm Up Top Sponsors: Energizer.

First Aid Sponsors: Euro Food Machinery (Elmswell).

Match Day Sponsors: Harris Cuffaro Nicols (Solicitors, Old Harlow, Essex).

Summer School Sponsors: Wells Stitched Embroidery (Elmswell).

1st Team Sponsors: Mirror Group Newspapers.

2nd Team Sponsors: Elmswell Fox.

(A) Team Sponsors: Wilsons Transport (Elmswell).

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

1st Team Manager: D Scase. Assistant B Barter.

2nd Team Manager: P Smith. Assistant T Warby.

(A) Team Manager: D Carter. Assistant S Beasant.



Around and About cont'd., p217

Under 14 Sponsors: Abbots Estate Agents (Manager P Case).

Match Ball Sponsor: W Jarvis (Landscaping Elmswell).

Under 11 Sponsors: D J Fishbar (Elmswell) (Manager T Ingram).

Under 10 Sponsors: Village Homes (Manager J Tuzinkiewicz).

Over 35 Sponsors: C G Finch & Sons.

Monthly Draw for October drawn by R McLaghan

No 70	D Hynard	£50
No 249	A Trickey	£35
No 351	A Gibb	£25
No 381	B Sturman	£15
No 127	M Unwin	£15

Fixtures up to 21/12/02

First team

07/12/02	Stradbroke Utd	(Away)
14/12/02	Whenaston Utd	(Home)
21/12/02	Bramford Rd Old Boys	(Away)

Reserves

07/12/02	Stradbroke Utd Res	(Home)
14/12/02	Kirston White Horse	(Away)
21/12/02	Parkside Utd	(Home)

(A) Team

07/12/02	Mindon 2000	(Home)
14/12/02	Silver Spoon	(Away)
21/12/02	Silver Spoon	(Home)

Under 11s

01/12/02	Stowmarket	(Away)
08/12/02	Abbeygate	(Home)
15/02/12	St Louis	(Away)
22/12/02	Morton Hall	(Away)

Under 14s

01/12/02	Bury Town (B)	(Home)
08/12/02	Stowmarket Town (B)	(Away)

Elmswell under 14s: 6 Stow. Falcons 2.

Elmswell played their best football of the season beating Stow Falcons 6-2. An excellent team performance started with a superb free kick from Shaun Thorrold quickly followed by an opportunist goal

by Matt Hurrell. No 3 was a thunderous 25 meter screamer from James Stepherson-Wall, Dominic Ireland took on 2 players and rifled in No 4. Andy Case clinically finished off No 5 and the rout wash finished with a well worked team move by Adam Gibbs.

Elmswell under 10s: Coddendam 1 Elmswell 9.

The first goal was scored by T Proctor followed by 4 each for Sean Morris and Sam Blowers.

First team

Player of month (September) S Smith.

Player of month (October) P Farmer
12/10/02 Saxmundham (Away) lost 5-2.
Scorers J Irvin, S Britton.

19/10/02 Wickham Market (Home) lost 8-0.

26/10/02 Murray Rangers (Home) won 3-2. Scorers D Prewer 2, L Stewart.

9/11/02 Harlsworth Town (Away) O. Cup lost 5-1.

Res 19/10/02 Walton Rangers (Home) lost 11-0.

26/10/02 Stonham Aspal (Away) drew 1-1. Scorer S Church.

2/11/02 Murray Rangers (Home) lost 4-2.
(A) Team 12/10/02 Bartons (Home) lost 7-0.

Our (A) team are still short of players so if you want a game of football on Saturday afternoons, give Barry a ring. We would be very pleased to hear from you.

Anyone wishing to join the football club please telephone Barry Hayward on (01359) 240951.

Training nights Wednesday nights Blackbourne at 18.15.

Compiled by H Mulley (01359) 240889

Around and About conf'd., p218

ST JOHN THE DIVINE, ELMSWELL **Appointment of Rector of St John the Divine**

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Revd Michael McNamara as Rector of St John's, Elmswell.

Michael is married to Jo and has a young son of 10 months named George, and they join us from a parish in Chelmsford. Hopefully Michael will be joining us in early March, but we will confirm the exact date in due course.

Valerie Rogerson & Derek Blackman,
Churchwardens

SERVICES etc., AT ST JOHN'S CHURCH

Sunday 24 November

10.30am Morning Prayer

11.30am Holy Communion

Sunday 1 December

9.30am Family Service with Music Group

10.30am Morning Prayer

11.30am Holy Communion

Saturday 7 December

10.30am Flower Arranging Demonstration

Sunday 8 December

8.00am Holy Communion

10.30am Parish Praise with Sunday School Nativity

Sunday 15 December

10.30am Holy Communion

Wednesday 18 December

7pm Village Carol Service

Sunday 22 December

10.30am Morning Prayer

11.30am Holy Communion

6.30pm Service of Nine Lessons and Carols

Sunday School in Church Room at 10.30am every Sunday except 1st in month.

St John's Church

On October 13th during the morning service we gave thanks for the witness of the South American Mission Society which for the last 150 years has worked in South America and Spain, teaching, preaching and providing medical care. Another aspect of SAMS work is translating the Bible into the various languages of the South American countries and this is work which we at St John's have supported for many years; over £400 has recently been sent to SAMS as a commitment to our continued support for their work.

The Remembrance Day service at the Parish Church was conducted by Mrs Katherine Valentine (Lady Reader); the two minutes silence was observed, representatives from the Scouts and Guides, the Parochial Church Council and the Parish Council placed wreaths on the Memorial. Laurence Binyon's words from 'For the Fallen' and the epitaph from the Kohima Memorial were spoken and we joined together in an act of dedication in which we thanked God for the sacrifices made on our behalf in times of conflict and pledged our determination, with God's help to seek to bring peace to our troubled world. On Monday 11 November at 11am the Church was open for a short time of prayer and reflection to commemorate Armistice Day.

The Friends of St John's Church - Elmswell

The concert on 18 October by the Suffolk Constabulary Male Voice Choir was well attended; commencing with 'Stout Hearted Men' the programme included the Negro Spiritualist 'Steal Away' and from Aspects of Love, 'Love Changes Everything' - the finale was the great Male Voice favourite 'Morte Criste'.

Around and About cont'd., pg 20

Refreshments followed and to conclude the evening the ladies who prepared the food and drink were serenaded by the Choir with a rendition of 'Goodnight Ladies'! We always enjoy the concerts presented by the Police Choir and hope to invite them again in the future.

ST JOHN'S CHURCH TOWER FLOODLIGHTING

For the Winter Months the lights will be on between 5.30pm and midnight. A night's floodlighting costs £5. Please make cheques payable to "ST JOHN'S CHURCH, ELMSWELL".

November 2002 Sponsorships

- 1 in memory of Sybil Thurlow
- 2 in loving memory of John Philip Parsk, a dearly loved Husband, Dad and Grandad
- 6 in memory of Dorothy May Nunn
- 7 for Laura's 2nd Birthday. Love from Nanny & Grandad, and Family
- 11 in loving memory of Ena May Clover
- 12 in memory of Thomas Henry Manning
- 13 in loving memory of Natasha Smith on her 20th Birthday
- 14 in memory of Lily Wrinch
- 15 in memory of the 10th anniversary of the death of Wally Fraser
- 26 in memory of Margery Rose Cammell
- 28 in loving memory of Amy Pleasance
- 28 in memory of Evelyn Clark

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

CLASSIFIED ADS

WANTED TO EXCHANGE - 2 bedroomed bungalow, Stowmarket option of being sheltered, need 2 bedroomed bungalow/house not sheltered, large garden. Any area. Council or Housing Ass. Tel: 01449 674619.

ELMSWELL W.I.

Another successful year for Elmswell W.I. A resume of the past 12 months showed that we have taken part in many county and village events as well as welcoming speakers and demonstrators on many subjects.

Sometimes we 'Do It Ourselves'. A Christmas party, Harvest Supper, and BBQ, as well as trying our hand at corn-craft, toy making and even bingo! Our monthly competitions from painting, cooking, knitting, craftwork and composing limericks have seen a good response from many members.

The present committee were re-elected to serve for a further year, two other members willing to join us. Unlike some other organisations, we seem to have no problem encouraging members to join the committee. We all enjoy working together. Anne Dyball will continue to chair the meetings for another year ably assisted by Barbara Barnard as Secretary and Margaret Byne as Treasurer.

After the lengthy business meeting we were able to sit back and watch Jackie Collings create some wonderful flower arrangements for Christmas, she made it all look so easy.

Next month we look forward to our Annual Christmas party and in 2003 we have an interesting and varied programme of speakers and demonstrators. Hopefully something to suit everyone.

Jeanne Crook Tel: 01359 241591

BLACKBOURNE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION.

Since a new committee was formed in July of this year, the BMA has sought to address anew some of the management problems which beset the hall at Blackbourne. This has not always been accepted as a welcome

Around and About cont'd., pg21

development by certain influential Parish Councillors who had, until that point, run the Association as an 'executive'. The appearance of an item on the Parish Council agenda - 'To discuss the management of the Blackbourne Centre and take necessary action,' prompted fears amongst BMA members that their efforts to improve the service offered at the Blackbourne might be affected. Accordingly, it was agreed that a letter should go to all councillors in advance of their meeting pointing out that:

- The Association has, for the first since it came into being, a qualified Treasurer in post. Nick Brooks is an experienced accountant who will be working from an opening balance provided by Alan Sparrow, himself highly qualified in financial affairs, towards figures which will allow for efficient financial planning and management. Members hope that, although they inherited a financial situation which had never been audited an audit will be presented to the AGM in June 2003.

- Ian Tullett has stepped up to Chairman following the resignation of Eric Buckmaster. Bob Barter has accepted the post of Vice Chairman. Each of these members has wide experience of such posts in village organisations.

- David Hollings, the leader of the scouting and guiding organisations in the village has agreed to be co-opted to the Committee following the resignation of David Abbott for personal reasons. The Little Elms Fun Factory has been invited to put forward a member to join the Committee as part of the move to include and involve more user groups.

- The lettings income of the hall has recently moved very solidly in the right direction:

	2001	2002
July	£344	£505
August	£180	£705
September	£440	£1081
Total	£964	£2291

There is every indication that this healthy trend will continue under the efforts of the current management team and that 'profitability' will improve with current planned initiatives in place.

The text of a letter sent to all Parish Councillors including these points was agreed by BMA members; Bob Barter (Football Club Appointee), Pat Catton (W.I. Appointee), Cllr Jeanne Crook (Parish Council Appointee); Peter Dow (Elected), Roy Finch (Elected), Lesley Reed (Cricket Club Appointee), and Ian Tullett (Bowls Club Appointee).



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Holiday Play Scheme

Phew! We finally opened for the October half term - it was a brilliant success - we had a 21% increase on our original budgeted figures for the week. The children loved checking out all the new toys - they enjoyed trying out the playstation, dressing up, playing football. Everyone had fun when the Theatre Workshop visited, making puppets and masks.

Our OPEN DAY was great fun for the staff, children, volunteers and visitors. We would like to thank all our visitors including: The Blackbourne Management, Amenities Association, Jane Storey, Suffolk Acre, Parish Council, PC Soon, Chrissy's Bouncy Castles and the Theatre Royal.

Does anyone have any child size tables and chairs (school style)? If so, please contact us.
Committee:
Debbie Brannick - Joy O'Doherty -
Sam Woolnough

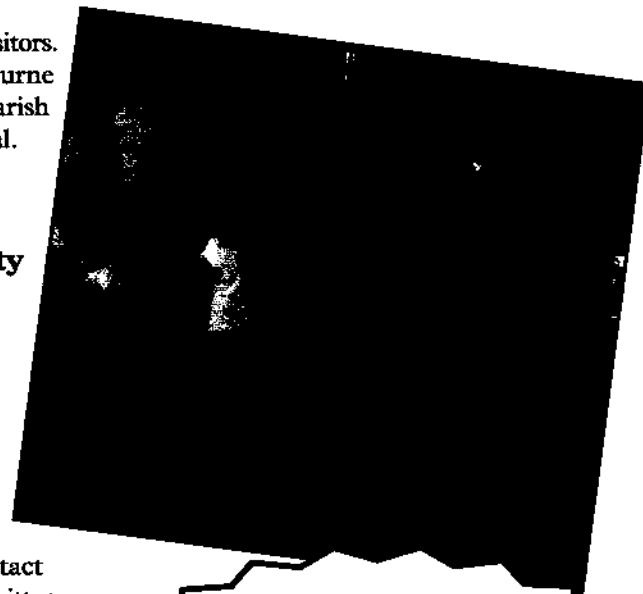
We would like to remind everyone that this is not just childcare, this is a FUN FACTORY - fun holiday activity for the children to play, do crafts, watch films, use the playstation, dress up, do puzzles and have fun.



The Christmas and New Year Holidays will have a 'Seasonal' theme and we are taking bookings now. To book or for further information please contact Debbie Brannick (244276) or Joy O'Doherty (242259) or see a committee member.

Days of Opening:

December 19th, 20th, 23rd & 2nd, 3rd, 6th & 7th January.



This is one of the quotes received from a parent:
"the staff are professional activities are plentiful and stimulating my child wanted to stay the whole day"

Letter to Editor from Mrs Bailey of Bennett Avenue

Just a quick note to say how much my son enjoyed the time he spent at Little Elms Fun Factory, and to express my appreciation of the effort that was expended in making the Fun Factory a pleasant, enjoyable experience for the children.

I personally found it of enormous help and I greatly appreciated the care that was taken of my son and the other children in providing a safe play environment.



ALAN LING

Alan Ling died recently aged 86. His contribution to our community was considerable, if largely unremarked - for he was the quietest of fiery men who trod softly, carried no big stick but made a lasting impression on all who met him.

Alan was brought up at Fox Farm, Wetherden, with his 8 natural sisters and 3 step-brothers. He had suffered from tuberculosis prior to the outbreak of war and consequently spent the war years driving a Rolls Royce as an official military chauffeur. This line of work continued under rather different circumstances as he took up lorry driving and worked for the Bacon Factory where he was soon to find promotion into various more senior posts. The garden of his house in School Avenue, where he lived with his wife Emily, was perfectly kept. Alan was, to all intents and purposes, 'of the old school'.

But, beneath his gentle, thoughtful and benign exterior, Alan was a man of strong will, of firm opinion and of resolute conviction. As a stalwart member of the Norton Salvation Army Corps, and a staunch teetotaler he might have been considered to have been so determined in his convictions as to be unwilling to entertain another way. Here lay one of Alan's main strengths, for he served on the Parish Council over the years of transition when that institution was being dragged into a more complex and demanding role than traditionally had been the case. Alan was always willing to consider the possibilities of the new, to take account of the values to be drawn from the old and to work selflessly towards the best solution. As Councillor, Vice Chairman and Chairman he helped steer Elmswell towards the end of the 20th Century as the inevitable development and its associated problems were addressed. He did it with quiet courage, often in the face of fierce opposition, with unflinching politeness and with a twinkle in his eye.

He was Promoted To Glory on 5th November at Norton where friends and colleagues from the Army paid tribute. Just one month previously he had sung 'Benediction' with the Corps choir. They sang it for him now. They read from Revelations - 'Happy at those who...die in the service of the Lord...the results of their service go with them.'

It was a joyful and uplifting occasion. It marked the overwhelming and universal respect in which Alan was held. He deserved it.



A community woodland for Elmswell?

We say YES!

Members of the Green Light Trust, a charity committed to establishing new community woodlands throughout the country, came to a meeting at the Blackbourne on October 1st to tell us about their work. Their presentation ranged from the rainforests of Papua New Guinea, to the six new groups here in Suffolk each trying to plant their own forest for future generations to enjoy. Afterwards, they put the question: were we in Elmswell prepared to work towards establishing our own community woodland???

The answer was a resounding YES, and many of those who attended that evening have now joined the new Steering Group which will take the project forward. A meeting of the new group has already been arranged to decide on an Action Plan.

At the meeting we were told of an old Native American saying: in all of your actions, you should think not of yourself, not just of the next generation - but of seven generations ahead. If we all did that, perhaps we wouldn't be in the mess we're in now.... It is certainly a very fine axiom to guide a community woodland which is just starting out.

This is a project for the whole community to enjoy and contribute to. We may not be at the planting stage yet, but there is still plenty to do - we hope to start a tree nursery soon. The Newsletter will keep everyone informed of progress and opportunities to join in.

Please contact us if you would like to know more, or have any ideas you would like to share with us.

Mary Feeney
241901



From David Barker, of School Road

Elmswell is a rapidly expanding village. It is also, at times, a very congested one, particularly at the level crossing which provides the only access across the busy railway. Here, there is a dangerous bottleneck in the centre of our village, such danger being greatly exacerbated by the traffic of heavy lorries. Indeed, that danger becomes ever greater. Even now, approximately twenty dwellings are in the process of being constructed only some twenty five yards from the crossing itself.

About five years ago, members of the Parish Council, as it was then constituted, had sufficient vision and drive to doggedly pursue the desire to preserve the last chance for a safe access over the railway particularly for the use of the young and the elderly, the most vulnerable in our village. They had the drive and guts both to negotiate hard with the developers against determined opposition and to pursue a planning appeal in the face of an initial refusal. Surprisingly, it was also necessary for them to fight off opposition from within the village in the form of ECAF (Elmswell Campaign Against the Footbridge) led, as it was, by one Ron Curry, who is now Chairman of the Parish Council. Ron Curry had a desire to defeat the proposal for personal reasons, as did most of those activists.

The grit and professionalism of those members of the Parish Councillors paid off when, on appeal, planning permission was granted by the Planning Inspector and protracted negotiations with the developers also proved so successful that not only was the land in question made available for a future crossing but the developers were persuaded to transfer ownership of the site to the Parish Council, free of any charge, in the hope and expectation that future generations would eventually benefit from the erection of a footbridge and that, in the meantime, the Parish Council would look after the interests of the village, being the result of so much hard work put in by so many.

On any objective view, one would assume that the duty of the current members of the Parish Council, as custodians of that permission for the benefit of the present and future residents of the village, would have alerted them to the requirement to ensure renewal of the permission before expiry.

However, bearing in mind that the Chairman of the Parish Council is now Ron Curry, the former leader of the vigorous campaign against the footbridge, it is perhaps unsurprising that he recently claimed that the planning permission for which so many dedicated villagers had worked so hard to achieve was allowed to lapse without the option of renewal being suggested or even mentioned to the members of the Parish Council by anyone.

Instead, a few months later, in what many outraged villagers view as an ill-judged, ill-conceived and irresponsible manner, the Parish Council under Ron Curry's direction, and without any prior consultation or justification, have decided to seek planning permission to erect a house on the site. Their actions are shameful and do not in any way reflect what is best for the village as a whole.

The application for planning permission to build a house on the land is a precursor to a 'selling of the family silver'. It must not be allowed to happen. The Planning Inspector analysed all the circumstances carefully and agreed that not only was

such a footbridge crossing desirable but that this was the last opportunity to secure a site for one.

Nothing has changed since that time save that the traffic over the level crossing has increased and will continue to increase and the dangers, particularly to the vulnerable of our society, passing over the crossing on foot, bicycles and wheelchairs and with buggies and prams, jostling for space against the ever present and ever increasing volume of heavy goods traffic will become ever greater.

It is utter madness to even contemplate selling the one piece of land which gives hope to an alleviation of these dangers. If planning permission for a house were to be granted, the green light would be given to the sale of this land which would prove disastrous for future generations. The piece of land in question is a priceless asset owned effectively on trust for the village. There is no possible justification for a house on this plot and every justification to refuse it for the greater good of the residents. The needs of the village will be met by a refusal of this application so that those in control of our assets are forced to act as custodian of them, and not to treat them as mere trifles to be traded as it takes the personal fancy of some individual members.

I have urged Mid Suffolk District Council to reject this unjustified and ill-considered application which can only serve to damage the long-term interests of the village.

From Alan Thompson, of Eastern Way

Award winning Kiln Meadow now in sorry state

At the time of this letter being written (12/11/02 5.30pm), still no decision has been made on the insurance for the Kiln Meadow Wildlife volunteers.

Firstly, many thanks to all of you who support the project and the two letters in the October Newsletter.

One note of clarification re comment by Sandra Hurrell, who "thought I was washing my hands of the site", a misunderstanding, NO WAY!

I decided to give up Lawn Bowls when the opportunity came up to take on board the site as an amenity for the village after having an open meeting in the Library on 2nd October 1995.

Since then I have worked the site with others, who are very supportive, for the love of it, and for enjoyment, for everyone.

The reason the Parish Council have given me that no progress can be made, is that they want the volunteers to draw up a contract with Anglian Water then the P.C. will pay the insurance. But, as a small group, we are not prepared to do this.

As regards the Nest Box Scheme, we lost out on the final count to "log" the British Trust for Ornithology.

Also the programme that we had put together enabling village groups to enjoy surveys and pond dipping etc had to be put off.

There will be no need for any concern by anyone as the Nest Box Scheme will carry on as wild life does not wait for humans and the benefit to the British Trust of Ornithology in their scheme to count fledglings is of great national importance.

Let's hope that someone, somewhere, will come up with the goods and all the volunteers will be back doing what they have taken on to do, with the same care and enthusiasm for the benefit of all.

Thanks again for all your support, new and old, now and in the future.

*Copy letter as sent by a concerned Elmswell resident to Mike Motteram,
County Road Safety Officer*

Teaching Children Road Safety

I was very pleased to receive your information booklet 'Teaching Children Road Safety'.

Currently we have a situation in our village that if successful will mean the end of any prospect of a safer school route for our children.

We have a site with planning approval for a footbridge to go over the railway line, providing a safe route for our children to attend school and the community centre away from the busy main road. However, the current parish council are doing everything in their power to quash this option.

I attach a letter for your information and hope this will be of some interest to you. Is there anything you can do to intervene from a road safety perspective?

I await your reply with anticipation.

(Mr Motteram's reply will be published.)

Further comment on the Parish Council's proposal to secure planning permission for a two-bedroomed house on the footbridge site at Crown Mill should go, under reference OL/123/02 TO:

**The Planning Control Manager
Mid Suffolk District Council
Council Offices
Needham Market
Ipswich
IP6 8DL**

To arrive by Friday 29th December

From Virginia Finch, of Tostock

Thank you!

Bonfire Night & Firework Display on November 5th

Colin Finch & Keith Ollett would like to thank everybody who attended their Bonfire Night & Firework Display. This event raised £200 which will be added to the next fund raiser in April in memory of Carl Finch - all proceeds to Woolpit Health Centre.

Some of you may know that this Bonfire was set alight prematurely by vandals and had to be attended to by Elmswell Fire Station. Fortunately we were able to rebuild the bonfire and still have an enjoyable evening.

We are sorry that Elmswell Fire Station were called out, but this was the fault of the vandals - this incident was also incorrectly reported in the Bury Free Press on 8.11.02. Anybody with information regarding those responsible for the above should contact the local police station.

*From Mrs Pam Harland, of Blackbourne Road
As sent to Mid Suffolk District Council*

**Planning Application, Two-Storey Dwelling, Crown Mill, Elmswell.
Reference: OL/123/02**

I have lived in the village of Elmswell for 7 years and until recently had little appreciation of the dangers created by 'the school run'. My daughter started at 'Little Elms Pre-School' this term. She has just had her 3rd birthday.

Teaching children road safety has got to be one of the most important lessons in their lives, but must I continue to do so along Ashfield/Station Road? Many heavy vehicles use this route daily and whilst they tend to observe the speed limits, their sheer size would mean that any accident would leave a small person severely injured, if not dead. In addition, it must be noted that a small proportion of the many cars using this route pay little attention to the speed limit and the potential dangers of young children walking.

There really is only one alternative for a safer route to school and that is a footbridge over the railway, linking the two housing estates. This would have a dual purpose in providing a safe route north for people attending the community centre at The Blackbourne. There is only one possible site for this and it was long and hard fought for. Please don't let our village lose this route for our young people.

I am sure you have already been made aware of the 'political' nature of this application, in that the site in question is a matter of metres away from the Parish Council Chairman's front door. It is well documented that Cllr Curry has tried everything to get our footbridge quashed since he moved to his current address.

We do not need to secure another new property - there are plenty of those in various stages of completion around the village. The Parish Council does not need to sell this land to secure funds, but to secure the resale value of some of its member's houses. I cannot think of a more blatant misuse of trust. What we do need is a safe route for our children to help secure their future.

I recently received through the post a parent's guide to road safety, jointly sponsored by Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Health Authority, in which some very depressing statistics are quoted. As a matter of interest, I am copying this letter to the County Road Safety Officer, Mike Motteram.

I would like to thank you for your consideration in this matter, and for the sake of all our village I hope you will see fit to reject this application.

From A Owen, Hon Clerk to Elmswell Poor's Land Charity

Allocation of funds to Elmswell residents

The Trustees of the Charity will meet later this month to decide on the allocation of their funds for 2002, which is normally by way of vouchers to be used in local shops. Applications are restricted to those resident in Elmswell for more than two years (pensioners, widows, widowers and other deserving cases) and application forms can be obtained from the Post Office. Those who received a voucher last year need not re-apply.



PARISH COUNCIL

...'That' Meeting...

As was widely reported in the Press - *'Inquiries made into troubled council,'* EADT 5.11.02, *'Probe into conduct of two councillors,'* BFP 8.11.02, *'Two councillors under investigation,'* EADT 11.11.02, - the Parish Council meeting held on 29th October was extra-ordinary in more sense than one.

The meeting was called by the Parish Council Chairman, Cllr Ronald Curry, to replace the ordinary meeting which should have taken place on 21st October. Cllr Curry, in apparent breach of the Council's Standing Orders and without the agreement of Council, cancelled the meeting on 21st claiming that, in the face of the Parish Clerk's sudden resignation over issues allegedly related to his handling of Council business, 'nothing was ready'. Councillors were doubly confused to receive, on the morning after the 'cancellation' the papers for the meeting for which nothing had, apparently been ready. And again, to receive various notifications from Cllr Curry cancelling the papers just received.

Over 40 members of the public attended, many obviously pledged to sit through the meeting until allowed to make a 'comment' at the end. The loss of the footbridge site seemed to be very high on their agenda. Again, Chairman Curry had cancelled all discussion of the controversial planning application which will deny the village a footbridge over the railway line from Crown Mill where he lives. They wanted to know why. There was an air of impatience and a restlessness which was aggravated by the Chairman's naturally abrasive style. Interruptions were frequent and born of genuine frustration as the procedural steamroller was wheeled out time and time again flattening councillors, public and reason alike. Undaunted, certain stalwarts demanded fair treatment. One lady, with 11 years as a serving Parish Councillor under her belt, insisted on

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moving her chair forward so that she could better hear 'the nonsense'. Cllr Curry threatened expulsion and, at his pompous Pickwickien best, informed the good lady that his reason for doing so was that she had lodged her chair 'in the Council Chamber'. The observers, now more 'audience' than 'public' guffawed helplessly. The chair stayed. The Chairman huffed and puffed. The lady remained. The audience could sense the air of impending comeuppance.

District Councillor Mrs Carol Milward (Lib. Dem.) was the only external body present to make her report and, having done so, invited questions. How, she was asked, had she enjoyed the recent opening ceremony at the Bowls Pavilion? There were gasps of disbelief when, genuinely confused, she replied that she had not been invited. The Chairman confirmed that the County Councillor, Mrs Jane Storey (Con.) had attended the ceremony, but as his personal guest. The reaction of the public suggested that the partisan nature of this arrangement was typical of the Chairman's behaviour and indicative of an attitude which is proving to be divisive in the community.

Cllr Curry was repeatedly taken to task for what are broadly accepted to be unlawful procedures. This is a common accusation at his meetings. It made no difference that, on this occasion, the observations were authoritatively and reasonably put by a local solicitor with wide knowledge of the law governing local councils and with some considerable experience of the proper workings of parish councils. The gentleman was ejected from the meeting. Despite calls from the floor to stay, he left with dignity, having asserted that the proceedings that he had seen were utterly disgraceful and that he had nothing but contempt for the way the meeting was being handled.

The accusation that the proceedings were unlawful was brought home dramatically when, with no notice on the agenda other than that there would be a report from a Working Party, the following - amongst other matters - were decided. Voting was invariably 6 in favour and 4 against, Cllr Talbot having arrived just in time to join the rout of Cllrs Burch, Edmonds, Feeney, and Reed whose reasoned arguments made little impact. By 6:4, then:

- Architects should be instructed to draw up Building Regulation plans for a new Drop-In Centre at Blackbourne and tenders for the construction should be sought - funding will come from the sale of the footbridge site.
- Architects should be instructed to draw up Building Regulation plans for a new Parish Clerk's Office and store to be tacked on to the side of the hall at Blackbourne. Funding will come from 'reserves'. It was pointed out that the majority of the Councils financial reserve was earmarked for traffic safety measures at Shop Corner. Cllr Marriott confirmed that this was so, but that, as there had been few accidents and no fatalities, there was little justification for action at Shop Corner after all. Cllr Marriott lives in Culford.
- The Parish Council should not register under the Data Protection Act.

During these proceedings, the atmosphere had become increasingly strained with frequent interruptions from the floor as the partisan nature of the 'debate' became glaringly obvious. Kiln Meadow Wildlife Area was given the same treatment. The footbridge was repeatedly raised as an issue, but no discussion was allowed. A small glee club chimed in with the words, 'And we'll all vote to-o-gether,' to the tune of a little-known Celtic ballad, whenever the predictable voting took place. Cllr Burch proposed that the vote of 6:4 be accepted as inevitable for all proposals on the agenda and that the meeting might then finish early and retire to a local hostelry.

Just one third of the way through the agenda, Cllr Curry put his proposal that, 'due to the special and confidential nature of the business to be transacted... the public be instructed to withdraw.' Cllr Clark, the Vice-Chairman, duly seconded this. 4 Councillors, led by Cllr Doug Reed, began to debate the reasons behind the expulsion of the public, given the apparently non-contentious nature of the matters due for discussion - 'the Management of the Blackbourne Centre', and, 'the situation of the Parish Clerk.' The public, too, were obviously intrigued as to why they could not be privy to the debate on such mundane matter. But Chairman Curry was not telling. There would be no debate. He would accept no points for debate. Debate would not be allowed. He had spoken. He insisted on a vote. 6:4! The public must leave.

Nobody budged. Not a flicker. Cllr Curry used the full force of his personality, the awesome power of his office and demonstrated his unique grasp of the spoken word to shoo the electors away. To no avail. In fact, the more he railed, the firmer became the resolve of the usually law-abiding citizens to express their disgust. Which they proceeded to do. 'Kremlin comes to Elmswell,' 'A disgrace to the Chair and to the Council,' 'A classic demonstration of ill manners and personal ignorance,' 'We are being railroaded by a small group under a dictator,' 'There are some good people on the council, but 3 people run it to suit themselves.' All this and more was said by various individuals in the hall. District Councillor Carol Milward took the floor to voice her opinion that the council is being run unprofessionally and that the Chairman, presiding over an absolute shambles, should stand down. She expressed her regret that the Parish Clerk had felt that she could no longer be part of the council's proceedings and had resigned - someone who, if listened to, could have made a difference.

After many minutes of more huffing and puffing, and having been shown where the real power lies, Cllr Curry closed the meeting and intimated that the outstanding matters would be dealt with at a subsequent meeting. One such outstanding matter is Cllr Clark's proposal that there be only 4 Parish Council meetings each year. Another, again from Cllr Clark, is that the public be no longer allowed to make general comment at any of them. Voting 6:4? Watch this space.

...'That' Meeting - Episode 2

On 18th November, the date set by their Standing Orders for an Ordinary Meeting, the Parish Council convened again at Blackbourne. The agenda was not that adjourned from the farcical proceedings held on 29th October. It omitted certain items, changed others and added 7 new ones. However, it was not the agenda for a new and different meeting, for it did not follow the required format. It was a muddle, but, significantly, a muddle which was organised enough to exclude all Public comment. At no stage were the electors to be heard.

Once again over 40 angry people packed the hall. One, recently retired as Parish Council Chairman in another Suffolk village, used his knowledge of procedures to offer the Council a way of averting the inevitable. He stood up before the meeting began and suggested that proceedings be postponed for a short time so that public comment and questions might be heard. It would relieve the pressure and allow for a peaceful meeting. Cllr Ronald Curry did not consult with fellow councillors. No. He began a carefully choreographed series of public warnings in anticipation of a planned masterstroke when the inevitable breakdown came. 'Typical of the arrogance which has brought us to this sorry state,'... 'Do you have the real interests of Elmswell at heart?'... the angry dialogue resumed.

Reasoning brushed aside, questions unanswered, the meeting was begun and straight into questioning from Councillors regarding the status of the meeting and the validity of the agenda. Standing orders were being ignored and very important matters therefore omitted - Cllr Mary Feeney cited the 129 items of correspondence which had disappeared without trace, including the important matter of the Council's grass cutting contractor working uninsured. Cllr Doug Reed refused to speak to his proposal, the first on the agenda, which had sought to make debate easier. On the grounds, he maintained, that the proceedings were seriously flawed there was no point in progressing the meeting. Once again Chairman Curry ruled without discussion. Once again the people boiled over, - 'is this Cllr Curry versus Elmswell?' - once again the solemn intonation requiring order or else.

Quotes for Council work. A proposal from Cllr Mrs Jeanne Crook designed to make it easier for the Council to award contracts for work, particularly of a minor nature, was agreed. Cllr Burch expressed the need for a clause preventing the allocation of work to Councillors or their families without full Council approval, but this was lost in the confusion of debate.

New streetlight at Blackbourne. Cllr Clark had, in August, put before Council a proposal for the erection of a lighting column on the footpath to the new bowls pavilion at a cost of no more than £740. The work had gone ahead, despite the

contractors having made it clear that the actual cost was £223 higher. Cllr Burch expressed concern at the amount of the overspend on an already expensive project. Cllr Reed felt that it would have been better to wait for a final and binding quote than to have pressed on with one that was wildly inaccurate. The original decision was, nevertheless, reversed by 6 votes to 4. Public comment on the poor procedures highlighted by this and other matters drew warnings from the Chair.

Bowls Club Contract. Cllr Peter Edmonds attempted to have removed from a proposed contract which will allow the Bowls Club the use of the green and the new pavilion a clause requiring the Club to, 'use its best endeavours' to help secure the £15,000 currently the subject of a County Court case between the Council and the Amenities Association. It was argued that such a clause had no place in such an agreement and that the document should have come to Council during the drafting stage rather than having been entirely the work of the Chairman. To no avail, although the inevitable symmetry of the voting was spoiled as Cllr Dick Burch abstained as a Bowls Club member - therefore 6:3.

Portakabins - disposal. The old Portakabin bowls pavilion and toilets have been allowed to deteriorate to the point where they are a liability and the Parish Clerk, prior to her own departure on 28th November, is to seek quotes for their removal.

Fewer meetings. A proposal from Cllr Clark seeks to remove the requirement for 8 'Ordinary' meetings each year, leaving the Council with just the legal minimum of 4 meetings annually - in February, May, September and November. As this proposal affects the Council's Standing Orders it was adjourned until the next Ordinary meeting which should, according to those Standing Orders take place on 16th December.

Less public comment. A further proposal from Cllr Clark seeks to remove the right of the Public to speak at the end of future Parish Council meetings, however few they may be. This, too, Councillor Curry ruled, affects Standing Orders and was

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adjourned as above. One of several public comments which peppered the proceedings reminded Cllr Clark of his election manifesto in 1999 - 'to make the local community of Elmswell a happy, united and pleasant place in which to live,' but all such reaction was ruled out of order.

Kiln Meadow. A procedural row broke out amongst Councillors when Cllr Mary Feeney refused to recognise the proposal which had been put on the agenda in her name calling for the termination of the Council's contract with Anglian Water, effectively bringing the prize-winning community wild life project to an end. Her original proposal, as submitted to the Clerk, had been much wider in scope, suggesting valid alternatives with termination as a last resort. Cllr Curry had, as is 'his right', altered the proposal to his liking. He had also withdrawn from the agenda 2 other proposals put by Cllr Feeney in an attempt to resolve the impasse in this matter. Offered the chance to withdraw her proposal, Cllr Feeney bravely stuck to her guns and refused on the ground that it was not hers to withdraw. Cllr Curry's treatment of Cllr Mrs Feeney was the last straw for several members of the public. In the ensuing harangue against his dictatorial style, ineptitude and rudeness, the Chairman gave another final warning of mass expulsion. The proposal disappeared in a welter of procedural nonsense and recrimination. Cllr Feeney then left the meeting, having properly declared a prejudicial interest, whilst Council considered her proposal to have the wildlife site professionally cut on the grounds that the neglect of many months resulting from the intransigence of the ruling group on the Council required drastic action beyond the scope of the volunteer workers. Again, Cllr Curry sought to introduce procedural nonsense to avoid progress in this important and time-sensitive matter. The proposal referred to 'advice' from Anglian Water. He had read no such advice. But the 'job needs doing,' argued the experienced voice of Cllr Dick Burch. 'Let's get it done to prevent further damage.' The public was not to be contained in its various observations regarding the abuse of power to the detriment of this valuable community activity. Somehow a vote was taken to allow quotes for the work to be sought. 'Another 3 months to wait,' it was suggested.

At this point Cllr Curry played his trump card of the evening. As Council could not, in his judgment, continue its business, he required the public to leave en masse. Councillors would 'stay for a short while', he suggested ingenuously. Further attempts were made to defuse the situation by allowing dialogue between the ruling group of Councillors and the public. Cllr Burch pointed out, more or less, that, given a chance to legitimately voice their concerns, the electors might have less to concern them. But Cllr Curry had a plan. The bowls pavilion was prepared for a private session where Council Business would continue. Unfortunately, only the chosen few were in on the secret, and, in the ensuing turmoil, several Councillors stood in the car park whilst several members of the public joined the Executive in the bowls pavilion. A sense of Mardi Gras prevailed

as various emissaries from both sides drifted between the disparate groups scattered over the site. In the confusion, the Police were called twice. 3 Police cars arrived but failed to approach the bowls pavilion on the grounds that they were unsure as to their rights in the matter. Various fruitless attempts were made to persuade Councillors to speak with the public. Inevitably the proceedings were closed - officially 'adjourned' - and the Executive retired in private session with the Police to explain what they should have done.

Next meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 2nd December at 7.30 at the Blackbourne. However, Cllrs Clark and Curry have been assured by the Suffolk Association of Local Councils following their recent 'crisis' meeting that 'There is no requirement for a public notice to be placed other than on the parish council notice board (at the Co-op)'. No doubt the public will have to be doubly aware if they are to have their rightful access to future meetings.

Peter Dow

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What's On in Elmswell ?

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

November

- 25 Soft Furnishing and Upholstery - 9.30am until 12 noon at the Blackbourne
- 26 Keep Fit for the more Mature - 10.30-11.30am at the Blackbourne
- 27 YOGA at the Blackbourne (morning)
- 14 History Group. 8pm in St John's Church Room, a talk by Gwyn Thomas from Bury Record Office on 'Suffolk War Memorials'. Members £1, Guests £2.50.
- 16 2pm, St John's Church Autumn Fair - Blackbourne
- 20 Elmswell Cricket Club AGM, 8pm in Elmswell Library
- 21 Gardening Club AGM
- 30 Entertainment Quiz - teams of up to 6 (£2 per person). Organised by Elmswell Cricket Club, 7.30pm for 7.45pm start in The Blackbourne

December

- 2, 9, 16 Soft Furnishing and Upholstery - 9.30am until 12 noon at the Blackbourne
- 3, 10, 17 Keep Fit for the more Mature - 10.30-11.30am at the Blackbourne
- 4, 11, 18 YOGA at the Blackbourne (morning)
- 7 10.30am - in St John's Church: Flower Arranging Demonstration by Anne Dyball
- 12 History Group. 8pm in St John's Church Room. 'A Georgian Christmas', an illustrated talk by Dr Pat Murrel. Members £1, Guests £2.50.
- 15 Toddlers Christmas Party
- 18 St Johns Church, 7.30pm, Village Carol Service
- 22 St Johns Church, 10.45am, Carol Service
- 25 St Johns Church, 10.00 am, Short Christmas Day Service

Tell us more - Tel 241841