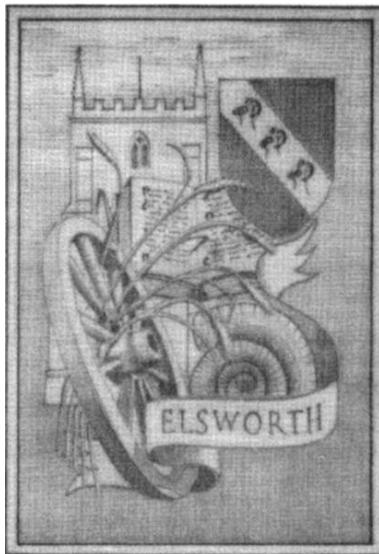


# The Elsworth Chronicle



Issue No. 5

December 1992

LETTER TO THE EDITOR



Dear Sir,

I heartily agree with Sue Warboys' letter to you regarding the ever increasing problem of dog excreta. It is high time that the matter is taken seriously as a health hazard and some concrete action taken by those concerned.

We live on the mobile home site, and even though it is only a glorified caravan, we have made it very comfortable, spending both time and money on it. We have lived here on and off for four years and live here by choice - we love Elsworth, the people are generally friendly and the area very attractive.

My concern is primarily for my toddler's health - no less than four times in the last four months, my 21 month old son has toddled into the house with stinking yellow dogs excreta on his shoes and hands, and a bewildered look on his face. It is also extremely unpleasant and stomach-churning to have to keep cleaning up other peoples dog mess from ones carpets.

We live opposite that start of the public footpath at the top of The Drift, and many dog owners regularly let their animals off the lead well before they enter the footpath opposite. They walk briskly past the animal, trying to disown it while it defecates happily on my drive. One can only assume that the attitude of these owners is well, after all, it's only a caravan - what does it matter if the two year old child who lives there gets a nasty infection? As long as Grunter gets his exercise and doesn't foul the owners garden they couldn't seem to care less.

I strongly believe that all dog owners should be responsible for disposing of their animal's excreta in a safe and socially acceptable manner. On a hot summer's day, the start of the walk up to the field is a mine-field of slowly ripening turds - the air is absolutely foul with the stench of excreta and it is not until you reach the open field that the stench is diluted. Surely this is most unpleasant for everyone who uses this area, owners and non-owners alike?

I have to say that there is a small band of local people who are considerate in this respect, but there is an increasing number of those who are not. I wonder if they would like it if their child or grand-child ran about in an area covered with infection-loaded dog turds? I very much doubt it.

Yours faithfully,

Judie Ward

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

BROAD END

The District Council are hopeful that a sheltered housing scheme can be developed behind the existing bungalows in Broad End, which could take in the bungalows at Franklins Close as well as those at Broad End. This will be dependent on resources being available to the District Council in the future, so no date or even year can be given for the beginning of the process, which will be a planning application.

DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

This has reached its final stages. The modifications to the Inspector's recommendations have been ratified by the Council and it is now on deposit for six weeks. The only change at Elsworth was the inclusion of the small holding at the end of Duncok Lane within the framework of the village. Otherwise, Elsworth remains a group village where development will normally be restricted to groups of not more than eight dwellings, or in-filling.

NEW VILLAGE ON A45 CORRIDOR

Since the Minister's decision there has been a pause of several weeks in any movement from the developers whose scheme came closest to the DoE criterion for that village. However, in the early part of September the developers for Great Common Farm indicated their intention to put forward a new application, taking into account the Minister's criticism of their first application. Their first move was to make a "presentation" to the planning committee of South Cambs., which proved to be very close to a fiasco as far as those of us who represent parishes along the A45 were concerned. Although they have reduced the size of the business park they had no positive ideas as to how "rat-running" would be controlled or even alleviated through villages adjacent to the A45. This has been one of the major concerns highlighted by the Minister.

To confuse matters still further, we understand that the developer at Swanley Wood has put in a planning application which also covers some of the land at Great Common Farm. Two development groups querying each other's pitch!

continued

SERVICE STATION AND LORRY PARK AT BOXWORTH

No development of this particular plan.

A604 UPGRADING

There is a strong presumption that the A604 will be upgraded to motorway standard when the A1/M1 link is completed, but no indication as to how that will be done. It could be by widening the A604 and having a new service road, or by a complete new motorway on another line. It does, however, explain why the lorry park project has not progressed!

Ken Collett  
October 1992

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| ELSWORTH IN THE EYES OF THE JUDGES |
|------------------------------------|

It will be recalled that last year Elsworth was judged to be the best kept small village in South Cambridgeshire in a competition organised by Cambridge Community Council. This year regrettably, Elsworth was eliminated in the first round and even the group leader, Knapwell, did not survive the second round.

Have we become slack and careless? Not in the opinion of the judges for "East Anglia in Bloom", for they have awarded Elsworth the trophy for the most improved village in East Anglia. So there it is, Elsworth has achieved the seemingly impossible of deteriorating and improving at the same time.

Comments from the "East Anglia in Bloom" judges might be found of interest. The village was praised for the lack of litter, the improvement of the brook, renewal of village signs, the improvement of the bus shelter and the repainting of the bridges. However, it was felt that greater emphasis on floral displays, both in front gardens and public areas, would greatly enhance the appearance of the village.

## ELSWORTH P.O.W. CAMP



Some fifty years ago during the war years it was by no means uncommon for German and Italian servicemen to be seen on the streets of Elsworth. Although not guests of the village by choice, they would seem to have a way of life which was in general far from unpleasant and in detail not so dissimilar from a script of 'Dad's Army'.

There are still some in the village who remember the camp well, but few have the inside knowledge possessed by Donald Gardner and George Armstrong, who were guards at the camp, George when Germans were in residence, and Donald when the Italians came to stay. George suggested that Donald should be the spokesman and the notes which follow relate to the Italian period in 1943.

Before proceeding down memory lane, the site of the camp should first be located as many in the village today might not be aware of its former existence. To locate it, merely look to the right as you enter the village from Boxworth - the small industrial site marks the spot.

Three privates, one of whom was cook, plus a corporal or sergeant constituted the arm of authority. In their care were 250 Italians categorised as being well-behaved and trustworthy. As such, they constituted part of a group sent out from the parent group at Trumpington, where some 700 - 800 prisoners were based. In addition to Elsworth, there were subsidiary camps at Bourn and Balsham from which prisoners would be sent to work without guards on local farms.

At Elsworth camp the day commenced at 6.30 a.m., not with the traditional reveille but rather with a kick on the door. Breakfast was at 7.00 a.m. and by 8.30 a.m. the prisoners were on their bicycles on the way to the farms where they were to work. Back at the camp at the end of the day, the prisoners had to be in their huts by 7.30 p.m., with 'lights out'<sup>1</sup> at 10.00 p.m. Earlier in the evening, from 7.00 p.m. to 7.15 p.m. they were allowed to listen to the radio news (in Italian).

Relationships between the Italians and their camp guards were good, but certain aspects of life in the camp might have not met with approval at Brigade headquarters, if known. It was not to be expected, for example, that the responsibility of the camp telephone might have been delegated to a prisoner - the fact that one Italian spoke very good English prompted the guards, at times, to leave the instrument in his hands while they enjoyed the

hospitality of the 'George and Dragon'! The Italians, too, took advantage of situations. On one occasion two prisoners were found in bed with ladies in Swavesey while assigned to work at a farm.

Don was at the camp for only some three or four months, but in that short time much happened in similar vein which still brings a smile to his face when recalled. He speaks of the evening when his sergeant, returning from Boxworth a little merry with drink, took a course on the wrong side of the railings by the stream east of Elsworth and plunged into the water. Then there was the occasion when the duty officer appeared at a time when joint of beef was being cooked in the prisoners' kitchen for the British army cook, which was against regulations. As the Duty officer entered the kitchen, the joint was quickly removed by Bill, the British army cook, and thrown to the Italian cook, who put it under his apron, unnoticed by the officer. Subsequently it was passed back to Bill when the officer's attention was elsewhere. All was well until later the Italian was rebuked by the officer for having grease on his uniform.

Memories of the camp and the days when Italian cyclists would emerge from the gate must be re-kindled whenever George, Don and others associated with the village at that time pass our small industrial site. The buildings appear from the exterior much as they were; missing though are the fine statues which could be seen from the road. If any reader knows what happened to the three lions and the ballerina, all framed in wire and coated with concrete, Donald and the editor would be delighted to know. Don's telephone number is (0954) 211107.



Donald when stationed at the camp with Aileen his wife  
to be



## HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

Did you hear the church bells ringing on Friday the 18th September? If so, you were witness to something that no living person had previously heard. On that day for the first time for some 150 years (that is about the time of the first British settlement in New Zealand, when Queen Victoria had only recently ascended to the throne) all four bells were rung. A short time must pass before the supports are able to take the strain of regular pealing of the four bells, but it is hoped that work will be completed by Christmas.

Music ranging from the 14th to the 20th century delighted the many people who attended the concert given by The Harborough Consort, with Michael Taylor, on the 18th October. People of Elsworth have attended the church throughout this period and before, and it seems appropriate that the money raised - £326 - should be used for restoration work on the organ.

The church is increasingly becoming a centre of note for music in the area. We are therefore delighted to announce that on Sunday 20th December Clive Baker with the 'Occasional Brass'<sup>1</sup> group are giving a concert of seasonal music and carols. Without doubt, there will be audience participation. Tickets - £5 for the concert plus £1.50 for mulled wine at The Old Chapel - will be available at village shops and at the door.

Please note that the traditional service of lessons and carols will also take place on Sunday 13th December at 3.30 p.m.

A.W.F.

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ELSWORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL

At school we're well into the new term. Each Autumn is very special as children begin their school career. I think it's probably the most exciting aspect of teaching. This September was even more interesting as we have a new teacher in Class 3, Miss Joanna Millsom.

Since I have been at Elsworth School we have been asking for cloakrooms, largely because we want changing facilities for the children. At last it's going to happen, together with an extension to the hall. The plans, drawn up by Lewis Backhouse, look very good and building should begin in early December. We look forward to showing off the results to everyone in March.

Providing the hall is intact we shall be holding our Christmas production in December. Mrs Betty Evans is already hard at work on the script to which Carol Sims will fit the music. Although we have to restrict the audience at the actual performances to parents, we love having an audience at our dress rehearsal which this year will be on the afternoon of December 8th. Please come.

Since the above notes were written, it has become clear that the hall will not be available for Christmas activities and the play will be performed to mark the opening of the hall.

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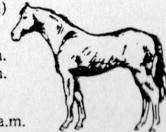
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| ELSWORTH PARISH COUNCIL |
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#### RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARISH COUNCILLORS

Prior to the Annual Parish Meeting in May, officers were elected and sub-committee membership reviewed. John Thurley was re-elected Chairman and Alan Farrow elected Vice-chairman on the resignation of Vic Palmer from that office. Vic also stood down as the parish council representative on the school Board of Governors, being replaced by Sue Warboys.

#### COMPOSITION OF SUB-COMMITTEE

Trees and Brooks: Robin Grange (convenor), Bob Empson, Malcolm Broughton, Alan Farrow.

Amenities: Terry Stevens (convenor), Penny Poole, John Thurley.

Liaison: Alan Farrow (convenor), Sue Warboys, Penny Poole.

Planning Applications: All Parish Councillors.

#### INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Representative on Elsworth Primary School Governing Board: Sue Warboys.

Emergency Planning: Malcolm Broughton.

#### ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

- A) At the instigation of the Parish Council, markings along the centre of roads have been extended. It was felt that this was particularly important between Elsworth and Boxworth, where the lack of road markings combined with the undefined road edge and dazzling from on-coming cars on the hill presented driving difficulties.
- B) Kerb stones have been placed at the bend where Smith Street becomes Rogues Lane in order to check damage on the inner side of the curve. Kerb stones have also been placed at the junction between Smith Street and Broad End to prevent further damage to the grass verge.

## ODOUR OVER ELSWORTH

Few in the village will not be aware of a rather unpleasant smell which wafts over the village from time to time from the effluent pits to the south west. As complaints have been received by councillors it is proposed to keep a register of the days on which people are discomforted so that a meaningful case may be presented should the need and demand arise. Villagers are therefore asked to notify any Councillor on days when the smell is considered unacceptable.

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| THE VILLAGE SURVEY |
|--------------------|

We are most grateful to all who took the time to complete the questionnaire contained in the May edition of the Elsworth Chronicle. Involvement in village matters in this way is of inestimable value to the Parish Council in its endeavours to make decisions which are in accordance with the wishes of Elsworth residents. A short analysis of the responses to the questionnaire is noted below, the percentage figures given relate to the number of responses submitted.

### TRAFFIC

77.8% regard speeding traffic as a major problem in the village.

53.5% consider traffic calming should be given priority treatment by the Parish Council.

71.4% are in favour of the Parish meeting the entire cost of traffic calming if the County Council cannot proceed.

ACTION There is a clear mandate to negotiate Parish funding for a scheme if the County Council cannot place Elsworth in a priority category, which is unlikely as the accident rate in Elsworth is pleasingly low. Talks are at present taking place with the officer responsible for traffic in the Cambridgeshire Constabulary.

### YOUTH CLUB

70.6% were in favour of a youth club. 32 young people were named and 31 adults indicated willingness to assist.

ACTION The matter has been put in the hands of the Community Education Officer at Swavesey who is responsible for youth activities in this area.

## VILLAGE HALL

The pattern of answers in this section of many people who put 'NO' against being more likely to use a village hall, even if cheaper, than the hall at the school, suggests that a considerable number in the village would not seek to use either. However, a greater number gave support for a village hall even if a little more expensive to hire than the school hall. Village management was clearly regarded as most important.

30.5% would not be influenced to use a village hall on the grounds of cost.

57.7% would be inclined to use the village hall even if slightly more expensive to hire if managed by a committee of villagers.

69.5% would be inclined to use the village hall in preference to the school hall if slightly cheaper to hire.

38.4% consider a hall larger than that in the school is required.

32.4% would like to use a village hall for badminton total 47 people.

OUTCOME No immediate action as the strength of feeling for this project was not as strong as for traffic calming. Clearly priorities have to be identified.

## STARTER HOMES

Eight names were given. However some were named on the basis that in five years time or so they might well wish to have a home of their own, but not necessarily in Elsworth. Of course, it may well be that former Elsworth people would like to return; if you know of any, please draw their attention to the paragraph which follows or act on their behalf.

ACTION 1) A register is to be compiled. 2) Couples wishing to press their own or the needs of others, are invited to the Old Rectory on Sunday the 20th December between 2.30 and 3.30 p.m. so that the Liaison Committee is aware of hopes and needs. Those who would like to be involved but find the date inconvenient are asked to contact members of the Liaison Committee. The Parish Council cannot build houses or provide land but it can be influential.



"Tuesday, 22 January 1901. Death of Queen Victoria," This is all the Headmaster wrote in the School Log Book on that fateful day. The school had known no other monarch and during the fifty-four years since it had been founded discipline and attendance had improved markedly, teachers were better trained, and the curriculum had been widened to include History, Geography, Object Lessons (using a lantern), Musical Drill, Drawing, Needlework, Singing, and Physical Exercises. The pupils were still using slates, however, and in March 1904 the H.M. Inspector reported "Slates should gradually be abolished. Some new maps are necessary and also pictures for object teaching, and a school museum is desirable." The attendance that spring reached a record almost in disbelief "Every child present again today. The attendance this week has been extraordinary. Not one in the Infants' Department has been absent at all. Average for the whole school 125.7 or 98.97 per cent."

Statistics such as these must have cheered him considerably, for bad weather and sickness continued to reduce numbers and the school was constantly being closed, sometimes by order of the Health Authority, on account of serious epidemics such as measles, scarlatina, whooping cough, influenza and mumps. Deaths among children were recorded bleakly: "Clara Hinson present at school Thursday. Sent home because she was unwell. Died Saturday." (15 June 1901). The Staff suffered too, and it was fortunate for Mr Billings that he was able to call upon his wife (the Sewing Mistress) and his son and daughter (Pupil Teachers) to act as supply teachers in emergencies. In October 1905 Mrs Billings applied for the post of Assistant Teacher, and it must have been a disappointment to the family when her application was turned down by the Managers. Their grounds were that "it was not advisable to have so many of the same family on the staff". This decision was recognised a week later, but the result was the same, and no other candidate had applied.

Mr Billings continued as Headmaster for another seven years and the effect of his departure in March 1912 was as if a time bomb had exploded. Three weeks after Mr Cruse, the temporary Head, had taken over there was a visit from Mr Keen, Education Secretary, who reported "Have to make greatest complaint as to discipline, i.e. noise and talking quite terrific. Children at times are diligent, but most uneven in this respect and cannot be trusted a moment." Mr Cruse did not survive long after this; on 10 June the new Headmaster, Mr Frederick John Hunting, took charge and steered the school through the First World War.





At first the war made little impact upon school life, and new heating was installed in November 1914. A further development came in the following March: "A new Manual Instruction Room has been approved by the Board of Education for teaching of Handicraft and Cookery. Premises recognised as providing accommodation for not more than 12 scholars in Handicraft and 16 in Cookery." (10 March 1915). This small building up The Causeway served the village as a Schoolroom, and later as a Community Room, until 1976, when it was demolished. Soon after it had been erected and Woodwork and Cookery classes had started there, it was requisitioned for soldiers - happily for only two days.

The needs of the army were met by recruiting farm workers, blacksmiths and wheelwrights from the villages, and the shortage of labour on the farms in the County was a serious one. Women went to work in the fields and the Education Authority passed a by-law enabling children to work in term time as well as holidays. On 5 July 1915 Mr Hunting reports "Six boys have been granted a special exemption from attendance at school, they being required to work on the land in place of those men who are serving their country". In the following year the harvest holidays had to be extended until the beginning of October "on account of the lateness of the harvest and the scarcity of labour to gather it in" (25 September 1916).

As the war progressed food shortages increased and everywhere derelict pieces of land were cultivated. In April 1917 the school created a war garden from a piece of rough ground which was worked by senior boys (over 11 years of age). Six months later, early in October, the boys missed their Woodwork classes to lift the crop of potatoes in the garden. The girls, too, were called to war service and went gathering blackberries for the use of the Army and Navy. On 9 and 10 October 178 lb were picked and dispatched to Messrs Chivers Farms jam factory at Histon. The enterprise was repeated the following year when the grand total of 1359 lb was collected in three weeks.

The Assistant Master, Mr Beaumont, was called up for military service in 1917; and the Headmaster himself was constantly absent from school attending voluntary camps and meetings of the War Savings Committee, both local, and national at the Albert Hall. An exciting call to duty for him occurred on 15 November 1917 when, as he records, "H.M. absent this afternoon having been called upon to guard an aeroplane which had come down in the village. The children were allowed to go and have a look at the machine after playtime."

Patriotic fervour in the village was whipped up on Empire Day on 24 May 1918 and the school children "spent the latter part of the morning in singing patriotic songs, saying

recitations etc and were instructed in the meaning of Empire Day. The school was closed this afternoon. An Empire Day demonstration was held this evening. The children marched in procession from the school to the Grass Field singing patriotic songs, carrying flags and bedecked with flowers. The Rev. C. W. Tibbits addressed the children on Empire Day and also presented the Medals and Bars to those who had earned them for the year ended 31 March 1917." The children were to wave their flags again on 9 October when they all went to Papworth Hall and lined up at the entrance to greet the Queen and Princess Mary, who were visiting the hospital. It was a fearfully wet day, but in spite of the rain the Cambridge Chronicle reported that "the children gave the Royal party a hearty send-off". The gloomy, dark photograph shows a line of drenched flag wavers standing by the majestic Rolls Royce with the elegant Queen under a large umbrella acknowledging the cheers.

Four weeks after this event the Armistice was signed but there were no excitements to report. The scourge of influenza had gripped the village, the death roll was high and the school had to be closed for six weeks. Celebrations came the following summer when the annual harvest holiday was "extended by one week in commemoration of the signing of the Peace Treaty". (15 August 1919). On the first anniversary of Armistice Day, at 11 o'clock in the school "all work was suspended for two minutes in order to think of the Glorious Dead. The Headmaster addressed the children on 'The League of Nations'". The Veterans of the village now would have been at their desks on that first Remembrance Day.

Betty Evans

The quotations are from Elsworth School Log Book II

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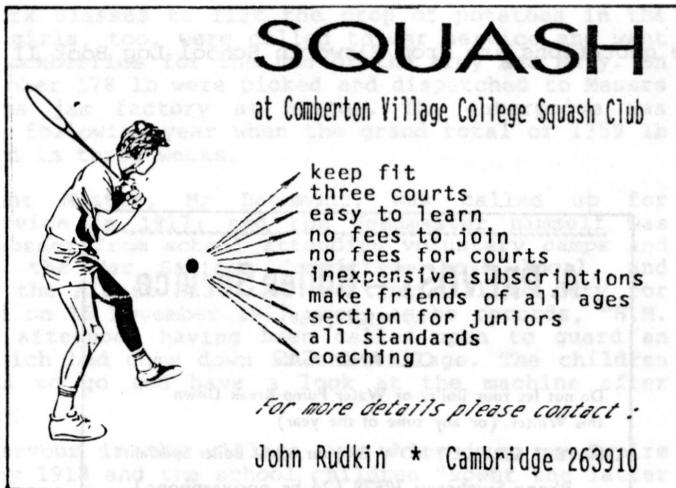
ELSWORTH SPORTS CLUB

TABLE TENNIS - ELSWORTH TOP OF THE LEAGUE

After only one season in the Hunts. Central Table Tennis League, Elsworth has become champion of Division 2. Billy Knibbs and Maurice Circus, in particular, were most successful, Billy winning 96% of his games and Maurice 89%.

CRICKET - 2ND XI TOP OF THE LEAGUE

Elsworth's first XI, after the success of the previous season when promotion was won to Division I of the C.C.A. league, found last summer more difficult and the team is now back in Division II. The second team, though, covered itself with glory, winning all its games and becoming champions of Division 7. Noteworthy among the batsmen were Michael Barnett, with an aggregate of 292 runs and Billy Knibbs with a total of 153 runs, while of the bowlers, Michael Lewis, with an average of 7.36 was the most successful.



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ELSWORTH AND KNAPWELL W.I.

At our September Meeting, we had a demonstration on glass blowing by Mr Scott. He showed us how he made various animals, bottles, lace bobkins and very kindly made three items for our raffle.

Richard Spendlove of Radio Cambridgeshire came to our October meeting. He spoke to us about his work as a Radio Producer which was very amusing and enjoyed by members and five visitors.

At our November meeting, Mrs. B. Wilbraham, dressed as Queen Victoria, gave a very informative talk on Queen Victoria's letters.

Anyone interested in either coming as a visitor or joining the W.I. please contact either Lyn Hogan (254) or Maureen Douglas (513) for details.

Lyn Hogan

ELSWORTH NATIONAL WOMEN'S REGISTER

We are a very informal group that meets in members homes about every three weeks to discuss a variety of topics chosen amongst ourselves. These vary from the light hearted to the slightly more serious but are definitely not too intellectual.

Occasionally an outside speaker is invited and recently Dr. Archer from the Papworth surgery gave us an interesting talk on the "Well Women" theme and in November Mr Gee gave a fascinating evening when he spoke on the history of classical music.

Also, sometimes joint meeting are held with other local groups which is a good opportunity to chat with other members. A very enjoyable evening recently was spent playing Trivial Pursuit with ladies from St. Ives and Hemingford Grey.

A new programme is due to be planned at the beginning of November so, if anyone is interested in more information, please just ask Chris (Tel: 489) or Shirley (Tel: 583) for details.

THE CORDELL SEWING CIRCLE



Our group was the brain-child of Rosemary Palmer, the original idea being that we should meet at her house, one afternoon a week, and do our own sewing or craft-work, and pool any skills we might have with others.

For some months this is what we did, but then we became interested in the possibility of producing a "Village Quilt". This was largely inspired by seeing the work of Janet Birchall, who is one of our members, and an enthusiastic member of a quilting group.

We discussed ideas for the type of quilt that we wanted to make, and decided to use scraps which we already had at home rather than buying special materials. Janet produced an over-all design, and in January 1991 we started on our patchwork under her instruction, and in blissful ignorance of the work involved!

The quilt has now been finished, together with a patchwork tablecloth and other small items, and we felt we would like to raffle them in aid of MAGPAS.

The group consists at present of a total of around a dozen people, of whom an average of about seven turn up each week. We meet on Thursdays at 2 p.m. and anyone who is interested is welcome to join us.

Tickets for the quilt raffle are available from Cordell Crafts. Please come and buy some and help us to make our contribution to MAGPAS a big success.

Sheila Shanks

JUBILEE CLUB

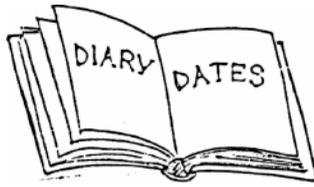
Before our summer break, 54 members and friends spent a very enjoyable day at Hunstanton.

In September we had a bingo session and in October, Dr. P. Andrews from the observatory came. We were entertained in November by the Lintonaires Concert Party which we all enjoyed very much.

For the December meeting Miss McGill will be giving a very interesting illustrated talk on India and to welcome 1993 we shall have a New Year lunch.

Everyone is very welcome to our meetings; we always have a bring a buy stall and finish up with a very nice tea.

Eileen Grange  
(Secretary)



- DECEMBER 2ND      W.I. Members Christinas Party
- DECEMBER 8TH      Elsworth School Play - Dress Rehearsal in  
the afternoon.
- DECEMBER 10TH     Jubilee Club - Illustrated talk on India  
(Miss V. McGill)
- DECEMBER 20TH     Seasonal Music and Carols - Clive Baker &  
Occasional Brass - 6.30 p.m. Holy Trinity  
Church.
- JANUARY 7TH        Jubilee Club - New Year Lunch
- JANUARY 13TH       Members Evening - Betty Evans  
Illustrated talk on Elsworth  
(Continuation) W.I.
- JANUARY 23RD       Football at Elsworth vs Barton
- JANUARY 30TH       Football at Elsworth vs Tally Ho,  
Trumpington
- FEBRUARY 10TH      Astronomy - Dr. Andrews
- MARCH 10TH         Annual Meeting W.I.
- MARCH 10TH         Football at Elsworth vs Shering Reserves
- APRIL 10TH          Foorball at Elsworth vs Elmdon