

# The Elsworth Chronicle



*Holy Trinity Church*

**Issue No. 50**

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## **ELSWORTH CHRONICLE**

[Established 1990]

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### **ELSWORTH VILLAGE LUNCHES**

Happily the village lunches have recommenced following the relaxation of Covid-19 regulations. The format has returned to the form of long tables so that a feeling of togetherness pervades. The lunches have proved very popular since their inception more than ten years ago, numbers steadily rising before the lockdown to over 40 each gathering, occasionally being over 50. We are so very grateful to Karen, Paul, Nicole and staff for providing such good food and friendship for us over the years.

The booking arrangements have now changed, as many, but perhaps not all, know. Orders are not now being placed through Isobel and Alan but contact should now be directly through The George and Dragon. If you are not on their mailing list, please remedy this by telephoning 01954 267236 or through the contact details given in their advertisement in these pages. All will be made welcome - possibly a chance to chat with someone in the village only up to then known by sight.

AWF

## THE OLD BUTCHER'S SHOP

A hidden monument of 19th century Elsworth has come and is soon to go in Brook Street. Few people walking along this lane would have been aware that on the eastern side a derelict former butcher's shop existed, for it is completely overgrown by trees and shrubs. Gradually it is being exposed as the site has been acquired by a housing developer. It is in a poor condition, as would be expected, with a tree growing through its roof. On a subsequent page will be seen a photograph, taken from The Elsworth Chronicle Photographic Archives, of the old shop and the adjacent cottages. There is no trace now of these cottages, and from O.S. map evidence it would seem they were demolished in the mid 20th century.

Although it is sad to see relics of the past removed, it is not surprising in view of the condition of the shop that planning permission had been given for the old shop to be demolished. It would seem pleasing, though, that an effort is being made to respect it by endeavouring to follow its form in the reconstructed building now proposed for use as a garage. Some non-structural timbers reclaimed from the derelict building are to be incorporated it seems.

Plans, with informative diagrams, are set out in a Heritage Design and Access Statement supporting a planning application for the construction of two new houses in Brook Street - see web site address below. Readers who have sight of this document will probably be puzzled to see that the map shown in the document, purporting to be of 1821, has on it the village school, which was not built until 1847! Clearly this cannot be; an error has been made. The map shown is, in fact, not Baker's map but from another contained in 'An Inventory of Historical Monuments in the County of Cambridge Vol. I' published in 1968. The map shown there, and reproduced in the Heritage Design and Access Statement document, serves to cover monuments of note to that date. Baker's map of 1821 is of a much smaller scale, covering the whole County, and is very limited in detail. Points of the compass in the heritage document are also misleading in places.

The Old Butcher's shop was owned and run by the Knibbs family going back into the early 19th century, if not earlier. The first note to hand is from

the census of 1851 when Issac Knibbs of Brook Street was described as a butcher, and subsequent years show continuation in the family name. One of the line was the brother of the grandfather of Billy Knibbs, now of Paddock Row, but for many years of No 1 Boxworth Road where he ran the butcher's shop, as did his father and grandfather before him. Providing meat for the tables of the people of Elsworth was one aspect of service over many years to the village - another of our time is the devotion of Billy to the Elsworth Sports Club over decades. The village owes so much to his untiring work. Now the plan to retain the outward form of the old butcher's shop in Brook Street could provide a monument to a notable village family. Perhaps this will be reflected in the name chosen for the new dwelling.

<https://applications/.greatercambridgeshireplanning.org/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=QK5EQMDXKF100>

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THE OLD BUTCHER'S SHOP (on right of cottage)



**THE BUTCHER'S SHOP AS AT NOVEMBER 2021**

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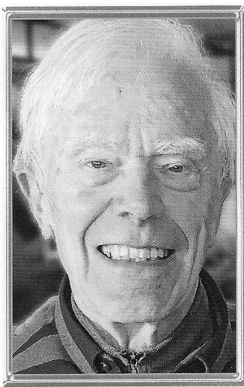
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## Obituaries

Since the last edition of the Elsworth Chronicle two parishioners of worldwide status have regrettably died. Both were professors of chemistry, both lived in Smith Street, both came to Elsworth in the early 1990s, both died in the first week of May, both were Cambridge graduates. Obituaries follow.

### **JOHN BRIDGWATER**



10 January 1938 - 2 May 2021

John moved into Turner's Cottage in Smith Street with his wife Diane in 1993 when he was appointed professor of chemical engineering at Cambridge University. He had previous knowledge of the village from the time when he was an undergraduate at St. Catharine's College when he would come to tea at No. 55 Boxworth Road, where his Tutor, Robert Evans, lived.

Some 27 years were to pass between John entering Cambridge as an undergraduate and returning as professor in Cambridge and Head of Department of Chemical Engineering. The appointment also brought renewed activity as a Fellow of St. Catharine's College, a position to which he was first elected in 1969. His achievements were notable, particularly research into particle technology; he had some

200 academic papers published. From 1997 to 1998 he was President of the Institute of Chemical Engineers. On his retirement in 2004 a symposium in his honour was held to celebrate his work. Many tributes were made to him on his death, his academic colleagues noting not only his scientific achievements and work in promoting the development of his university department, but also prominent was the reference made to his characteristic kindness to others.

John was born in Birmingham in 1938, coming to St.Catharine's College in 1956. After graduating he took a master's degree at Princeton University in the USA, which was followed by three years working for Courtaulds and then by a lectureship in Cambridge. Research in Oxford and a lectureship in that university followed and in 1980 he was appointed Professor at Birmingham University. A return to the place of his birth must have been pleasing. Professorship in Cambridge was the next move. John's sojourn at Princeton University, noted above, brought more than a master's degree; for it was there that he met his future wife, Diane. They were married in 1962 to embark on nearly 60 years of a happy family life with their two children Caroline and Eric.

Elsworth was to benefit markedly from John's experience and skill at making applications for grants when head of department in the university, a time-consuming but vital necessity. At the turn of the century Holy Trinity Church was in need of funds to repair its tower and leaking roof. Buckets were placed strategically within the building, but ingressions did not follow a constant route as water flowed along the rafters before dropping below. A substantial sum was clearly needed. Diane at that time was a church warden and John undertook the task of making appropriate applications. In total, along with other donations, some £225,000 was raised and the lead roof was renovated and the buckets happily removed.

In 2008 John and Diane moved to the West Country where their son Eric resided, settling at Portishead, near Bristol, where they enjoyed views over the broad Bristol Channel/R.Severn Estuary. Although this was to be their retirement home, it was certainly not to be a period of inactivity. John and Diane became involved in church life, John becoming a PCC member and Deanery representative; he became President of the Portishead Rotary Club, and for many years was a councillor for Relate. And then there was the continued joy of family life with its delight in being involved with their young grandson.

## Obituary

### BRIAN HARTLEY



16 April 1926 - 3 May 2021

In a moving tribute to Kathleen his wife in Issue 31 of this magazine, Brian wrote of their love for Elsworth. He recalled their association with Elsworth began back in 1976 when they purchased what is now known as Grove Cottage, at the time a pair of derelict cottages with a corrugated roof over leaking thatch, a ladder instead of stairs to No. 2 bedroom and thistles growing through the wattle and daub walls. The plan was to restore the building over the years to prepare for Brian's future retirement. With the work successfully undertaken, they moved to the village in 1992 and Brian recorded their peaceful and happy lives here. He was clearly interested in the village and its people and mentioned at one time to the editor of this magazine that he kept all the published editions of the Elsworth Chronicle.

Prior to Elsworth, Brian, Kathleen and their family had lived in Kensington, where Brian was Professor of Biochemistry at Imperial College, a position he had taken up following his work as group leader at the Laboratory of Molecular Biology [LMB], which was very much



in the news with Nobel prizes being won by Crick and Watson for DNA structure and Perutz and Kendrew for protein crystallography. Brian's specialisation was protein chemistry, in which LMB noted, in a tribute on his death, he made an outstanding contribution "with his invention of new analytic methods" and in "producing for the first time an understanding of the properties of proteolytic enzymes on a structured basis". He was later involved in creating models for the evolutionary history of enzyme families to produce ancestral trees. His work was recognised by the prestigious election as FRS in 1971.

To return to the beginning and to prominent steps in his career, Brian was born in 1926 at Rawtenstall, Lancashire, where he attended the local grammar school, becoming the first of the school's pupils to win a scholarship to Cambridge University, where he obtained a degree in organic chemistry in 1947. This was followed by research at Leeds University, where he was awarded a Ph.D. Leeds provided more than a research degree, for it was there in 1949 that he married Kathleen, whom he had met in Cambridge when they were both undergraduates. Together they had over 60 years of happy life, much of which was shared with their four children.

Brian and Kathleen returned to Cambridge from Leeds for Brian to embark on post-doctoral research at the Department of Biochemistry and in 1964 he was elected to a Fellowship at Trinity College and a Director of Studies. He became a founding member of the Medical Research Council's Laboratory, pursuing the research noted above. In 1974 Brian was appointed as professor at Imperial College, London, where among those he supervised was the future Nobel Prize winner, Greg Winter.

On retiring, Brian was able to devote more time to pursuing another of his great interests, the history of his family. He also continued with scientific work, but this was put on hold during Kathleen's incapacity during her later years as looking after her became his clear priority, only to be contemplated and resumed after her sad death.

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## ELSWORTH WALKING GROUP

Since May of this year we have managed to walk every month, so it certainly feels like we are getting back to normal. A few existing members have decided to hang up their walking boots and we have also welcomed some new walkers.

We are now gradually venturing a little further afield. On a particularly hot day in June we walked from Knapwell Church to Childerley returning to Knapwell via Birds Pasture Farm. It is always great to view the historic buildings that make up the Childerley Estate; the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Long Barn and Childerley Hall some of which dates back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

On a somewhat overcast day in August we walked from St Ives to Woodhurst and back. As we climbed away from the northern extremities of St Ives we stopped at a via Beata way station for a few moments. The via Beata is a 400 mile pilgrimage route stretching from Porthmelgan Beach, Pembrokeshire to Lowestoft, Suffolk. On entering the village of Woodhurst a pond appears on the left complete with ducks and ducklings. The main road through the village provides views of older thatched and slate roofed buildings interspersed with more modern infill buildings. One thatched cottage still has the long handled forks mounted on the front elevation, these would have been used to remove the thatch in case of fire. Turning left off the main road we returned to St Ives passing close to a large photo-voltaic panel array (a modern form of farming) situated just outside the eastern perimeter of Wyton Airfield.

For our August walk we decided to stay away from farmland due to harvesting and chose to walk around St Neots and Eaton Socon mainly along or near the river Great Ouse. This took place one week later than usual due to the St Neots Triathlon taking place on our normal walking Sunday.

The September and October walks had a common theme in that they included walking over parts of airfields. The first, was a walk in and around Gransden and Waresley Wood crossing Little Gransden airfield twice; making sure to check that no aircraft were on their final approach!

In October we commenced our walk from Everton Church, strangely for most of us a place we had not walked from before. Near the beginning of the walk from the top of Greensand Ridge we were greeted by panoramic views down across the route of an old Roman Road and Bedfordshire in general. Part of the walk was along the Roman Road which led us to Gibraltar Farm the site of Tempsford Airfield. This is famous for being used by the Special Overseas Executive (SOE) from 1942 to 1945. We stopped at Gibraltar Barn which houses a collection of memorabilia and is a memorial to the SOE and the brave people that served in this organisation. In this barn the agents would have been issued with the equipment needed to support their clandestine missions into occupied Europe.

A poignant reminder of this work is represented in the details of Violette Szabo who parachuted into France in 1944 and was subsequently captured, finally ending up in KZ Ravensbrück, where eventually she was executed on the 5<sup>th</sup> February 1945; she was only 23 years old.

We climbed back up through Woodbury Sinks then turning right into Woodbury Park before finally returning to Everton Church.

For more information about the walking group please contact:

Lyn and Tom Hogan

Tel No. 01954 267166

Email: [tom&lynhogan@pathwaysystems.co.uk](mailto:tom&lynhogan@pathwaysystems.co.uk)

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## **TO MAKE YOU SMILE - PARAPROSDOKIANS**

Paraprosdokians are figures of speech in which the latter part of a sentence or phrase is surprising or unexpected, frequently humorous.

1. Where there's a will, I want to be in it.
2. The last thing I want to do is hurt you, but it's still on my list.
3. Since light travels faster than sound, some people appear bright until you hear them speak.
4. If I agree with you, we'd both be wrong.
5. War does not determine who is right, only who is left.
6. Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit, wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad.
7. To steal ideas from one person is plagiarism, to steal from many is research.
8. Women will never be equal to men until they can walk down the side street with a bald head and a beer gut, and still think they are sexy.
9. You do not need a parachute to skydive, you only need a parachute to skydive twice.
10. I used to be indecisive, but now I'm not sure.
11. You're never too old to learn something stupid.
12. I am supposed to respect my elders, but it is getting harder and harder for me to find one now.

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## **ELSWORTH JUBILEE CLUB**

We meet on the first Thursday of the month at the Sports Pavilion in Broad End from 2.30 - 4.30.

Our speakers cover a variety of topics both informative and entertaining. We have just been entertained by a ghost hunter. Future meetings will bring 'A History of English spoons' ; 'British Comedy Greats' ; 'The Titanic - Launch to Loss'. We also enjoy outings to the seaside or historic places of interest.

Give us a go - very good company, tea and biscuits and a raffle.  
Rita Backhose Tel. 267342

## **ELSWORTH SPORTS CLUB**

With the easing of restrictions imposed due to the pandemic, local sport is gradually returning although with some it is a case of feeling your way again after an eighteen month lay-off.

The cricket season started in May with a few Covid related restrictions - teas taken outside, pavilion use restricted to toilets and regular sanitising. The Elsworth team played in Cambs Junior League, Division 5 West and finished the season in third place of the six teams competing. There were no mid-week league matches this season but a few friendly matches were played and the season ended in September with a pair's competition. In the present circumstances this should be regarded as a reasonably successful season - it certainly started well with the team winning its first two matches.

The football season is now under way, but again Elsworth hasn't a team. Swavesey Spartans Under 17 boys' and girls' teams continue to use the facility on Saturday mornings.

Table tennis practice sessions have been allowed for a few months but with a limited number of players present. The local leagues are now getting under way but with fewer teams entered due to the pandemic. In the Cambs League, play in which started on November 1<sup>st</sup>, Elsworth has entered three teams, one in each of the three divisions 1, 2, 3. The Ely League started at the beginning of October with two divisions. Elsworth has entered two teams, both in Division 1. Club and social table tennis is played when there are no league matches.

The monthly whist drives on Friday evenings have now started and perhaps soon carpet bowls as some renewed interest has been shown.

Roger Fensom [01954-267534]



## **ELSWORTH, CONINGTON AND KNAPWELL WI**

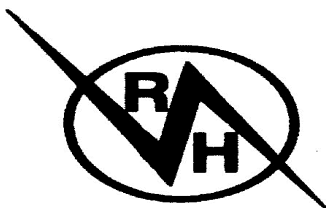
We were delighted to meet face to face for the first time since March 2020 at our Alfresco Celebration in July 2021. We met outside on a balmy evening to enjoy much needed companionship and shared food.

September 2021 saw us commence face to face indoor meetings for the first time, this time in a new venue, Elsworth Sports Pavilion. Our speaker was Beth Twite from Wood Green Animal Shelter. The charity now concentrates on cats, dogs and small pets such as rabbits and hens. Great emphasis is placed on education in the community, supporting people to keep their pets. Interestingly, one of the most difficult animals to re-home are rabbits. Wood Green now sells kits containing housing and everything needed to care for a rabbit. Another service offered is 'Ask Wood Green' where any pet owner could ask questions about their pet.

The speaker at the October meeting was a volunteer from The Cambridge Museum. As an organisation WI had played a part in the origins of the museum. In 1933 Catherine Parsons, Chair of the Cambridge Federation of Women's Institutes organised an exhibition at which each WI donated an item which was going out of fashion. This was part of the impetus to the opening of the Cambridge and County and Folk Museum in 1936, the forerunner of the present museum. Enid Porter, the longest serving curator, was an innovator collecting oral information about Cambridgeshire customs, stories and songs. The talk gave a fascinating insight into the cures available on Cambridge market, for example the sweepings from the floor of a local blacksmith were sold as a cure for anaemia!

Our WI meets on the second Wednesday of the month. New members welcome.

Helen Askew



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