

The Elsworth Chronicle



Issue No. 3

December 1991

The Elsworth Chronicle

This, the third copy of the Elsworth Chronicle, is the first to be published by the Parish Council. As such it contains the official report of the Council and is to be distributed to each home in the village. It will be noted that paper of two shades is being used; this is to distinguish the Parish Council notes and views from the remainder of the magazine which is open to contributions from parishioners and others who have ideas, views and knowledge which are not necessarily endorsed by the Council.

Contributions to the magazine are most welcome. If by chance a reader has an idea but is reluctant to put pen to paper, a call to the editor - Alan Farrow (on Elsworth 472) - or other members of the Parish Council Liaison Committee - Sue Warboys (Elsworth 548) and Penny Poole (Elsworth 500) - will bring someone with a notebook and pen. Better, of course, to have your written contribution; either way we need the involvement of readers.

The Elsworth Chronicle will be, then, in part a general magazine and in part a vehicle for liaison between the Parish Council and villagers. The endeavours of the Parish Council summarised in the Council section will hopefully be of interest and lead to reactions and ideas which, perhaps, could appear in the magazine as articles or even a letter of two. In the pages which follow it will be seen that topics range over the past, present and future. Contributions on aspects of rural life and observations on nature would add even greater breadth. Any volunteers?

Barbara Becket has had to step down from producing the Chronicle on her Word Processor. I am most grateful to her for all she has done.

A.W.F

Mrs L E Jackson at Elsworth Windmill

Residents of Elsworth could be forgiven for thinking that the Windmill at the crossroads is a relic of the distant past. However the days when it stood majestically with sails are within living memory; it was converted to a dwelling shortly before the Second World War having been a mill for grinding corn from the 19th Century. Such thoughts might well come to mind after reading a book by Mrs L E Jackson "Life in three countries: China, Jamaica and England" which contains much about her life in Elsworth.

For those who knew Mrs Jackson, the book must make fascinating reading; for those who did not, it offers an interesting glimpse into the recent past. Its pages certainly take Mr and Mrs Noble of 4 Franklins Close down memory lane as Mrs Jackson - who back in 1933 had become the first women barrister in Jamaica - writes of her dependence on Mrs Noble during her years here as house-keeper and nanny to her infant son.

The bungalow, now used to house the "Country Market" was, in fact, built to provide an adjacent home for Mr and Mrs Noble, enabling Annie to help in Mrs Jackson's house and Harold to assist on the land in his spare time. That help was required is not surprising - on the surrounding land there were some 200 hens, a few pigs, two Jersey cows to look after as well as vegetables, apples, pears, greengages and, latterly, strawberries. In addition some 20 acres were rented to grow grass and corn to feed the cows.

The windmill itself is described as a most exciting house in which to live. "Each floor had only one room, which was completely circular in shape. The walls were two feet thick and each room was smaller than the one below. The living room was on the ground floor and it was large enough to hold a piano and the usual furniture one has in a living room. There was a wooden staircase to the floor above, which was the bedroom, and a little smaller than the living room.

The staircase from that room led up to the next floor, which was Meredith's study, and was still smaller. Then there was another room above that study, which was the spare bedroom, an even smaller room. On the very top was a balcony with an iron rail all around it where one could get a marvellous view for miles around." An annex with kitchen, a bathroom and two small bedrooms was linked to the windmill by an entrance lobby to complete the home.

Mrs Jackson's words also bring a flavour of life in Elsworth during the war. Her account of jam making by the W.I. might bring back memories to some of the ladies in the village. As President of the W.I. at the beginning of the war, Mrs Jackson was instrumental in organising jam making as part of the war effort. Before rationing began villagers had been accustomed to making jam out of surplus fruit, but wartime sugar rationing of ½lb a week per person prevented this. The W.I. therefore applied for and was granted a special allocation of sugar for jam making. A large barn was the centre of activities, it being large enough to set up several primus stoves. "Members from the surrounding districts brought their surplus fruit that would only be wasted, and members took it in turns to make jam on these primus stoves. We made nearly 2,000 pounds of jam..... We had to account for every pound of jam for the sugar allocated to us, as jam was also rationed." The jam could not be distributed locally but was sold through a recognised outlet, Eaden Lilley in the case of Elsworth W.I. Plums and greengages were used for jam, while surplus pears and tomatoes were canned with the use of a machine hired from W.I. headquarters.

Mrs Jackson's book is most readable. Regretfully it is now out of print, but presumably may be obtained through a library. She writes under her Chinese name Ti Lien-Le with Mrs L E Jackson in brackets on the title pages.

A.W.F.

Mrs Jackson with Mr Noble and Nanny.



SCHOLARS AND TEACHERS II. 1870 - 1886

The year 1870 was a turning point in education. Up to that time the country was covered by a network of National Schools set up by a Church of England charity, the National Society for the Education of the Poor. They were voluntary schools paid for by subscription, and they received a small government grant. This grant was dependent on the state of the premises, attendance, and the ability of the children to pass tests in reading writing and arithmetic. During the nineteenth century controversy over the religious issue raged between the Church and Dissenters, and in 1870 new state schools were established under Forster's Education Bill. These were financed out of local rates and Government grants. School boards were set up which had the power to compel the attendance of Children between the ages of 5 and 13 years. The Bill doubled the grant to the voluntary schools, and they continued under private management to provide education, mostly in the villages.

At first the new act had no impact in Elsworth. The sole manager remained in charge, running the school with the same dismal results. Teachers came and went in rapid succession, parents withdrew their children from the age of 8 to work in the fields at seasonal times for fruit picking, pea pulling, ploughing and manure carting. The official harvest holiday was declared each year by the head teacher, but the children, particularly the older boys, would be absent from school for several days before and after the appointed dates. In 1870, the Mistress was Miss C Cook and the sole Manager was the Rector, Mr John Dobson.

Two months after Mr Forster had introduced the Bill to the house, H.M Inspector reported on Elsworth: "It is much to be regretted that the funds of the school do not admit of at least one more apprentice. It was with considerable hesitation that my Lords have paid the grant without reduction under Article 52, considering that of the twenty-one children examined in the third, fourth and fifth standards only one passed in writing and seven in arithmetic. Marked improvements will be looked for next year. The issue of the Mistress's certificate must be deferred". The cut came in 1872 when the Inspector found that there had been no improvement in arithmetic and spelling, and that the school premises were unsatisfactory. The grant was reduced by 10 per cent that year.

Changes came in 1874 when, after twenty-two years as Rector, Mr Dobson died and was succeeded by his son-in-law, George Shaw from Fen Drayton. On 11th January 1875 Mr Henry Thomas Matthews, a first class certificated teacher, took charge of the school. His wife was the sewing mistress and Susanna Knibbs the monitor. On roll were 79 children; and the weekly school fees were 6d each child in the 1st and 2nd classes for masters and tradesmen and 2d each child for journeymen and labourers (this dropped to 1d if there were more than two children in school). For infants the fee 2d was paid for everyone. Finances and attendance were Mr Matthews' chief concern, although the spectre of the reduced annual grant did recede in the early days of his office. At the end of his first year H.M. Inspector wrote: "Mr Matthews has done much during the past year to raise the character of the school". Discipline also improved greatly, Mr Matthews rarely used the cane, preferring exclusion. He had to warn boys on 19th February 1885 about "stopping near the school playing marbles after school dismissed". They did not heed his warning and next day "several boys stopped playing marbles again this morning, and among them was the boy John Lovell. I told them to take their marbles out and among them they had 54. The boy, Lovell, however, sullenly refused by his actions to take his out. I took him away and ordered him to leave the school.

Mr Matthews was master from 1875 to 1886 and although he raised the standards of work and behaviour at the start of his tenure, slowly, in spite of his efforts, school slipped back. The H.M. Inspector's report of 1884 states: "The results of the examination are not at all satisfactory and compare unfavourably even with the very poor results obtained last year. Grant to elder children reduced by one-tenth for faulty instruction in Arithmetic and Spelling". Nevertheless, there was sometimes cheer for the beleaguered Master. On the first day of the winter term in 1884 he wrote: "During the Harvest holidays the schools have been whitewashed, colour painted and thoroughly cleaned. They look very nice and healthy. I am sure that a nice-clean-bright-schoolroom has a good effect on the children" He should have added "and Teachers".

Betty Evans.

ELSWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman - John Thurley

Clerk - Liz Sim

*Council: M Broughton, R Empson, A Farrow, R Grange
V Palmer, Mrs P Poole, T Stevens, Mrs S Warboys.*

Meetings of the Parish Council are held bi-monthly in the village school, with additional meetings convened to consider planning applications and other matters of moment. Villagers are welcome to attend meetings as observers, but are not entitled to participate.

If a council is to be of benefit to those it seeks to serve it must be able to translate words into deeds; some visible signs of its endeavours are contained in the notes below.

Road Safety.

There has been much correspondence and personal contact on the matter with Cambridgeshire County Council and the ' police, particularly with regard to cars speeding through the village.

- a) Radar Checks. The warning notices in Boxworth Road proved a deterrent. Seventeen motorists were issued with fixed penalty notices and twenty-four other people warned. At the time of writing it is not known how many villagers transgressed! The police intend to repeat the checks from time to time.
- b) Village Petition. The petition relating to traffic speeding in Boxworth Road was submitted to Cambridgeshire County Council, the responsible body. We are advised that speed bumps are not considered a possibility as they could result in dangerous accidents unless allied measures are first taken to reduce the speed of traffic - e.g. road narrowing, perhaps with traffic islands. We are advised that the accident rate does not warrant priority action.

- c) Blind Bend. A request was made by the Parish Council that the junction of Church Lane and The Causeway be appraised by County Council Officers. However this has been declined as (a) road mirrors are now not favoured and (b) because there has not yet been an accident at that spot !
- d) Road Signs. Safety on the road should result from the installation of two 'bends in road' signs along Boxworth Road/Smith Street.

Frustration among residents and drivers should be lessened now that a 'Village Only' sign has been installed at the junction of Brook Street with Boxworth Road/Smith Street. A common complaint had been that many vehicles, including lorries, had inadvertently turned into Brook Street when endeavouring to head towards the A45.

Play Equipment.

The Parish Council has embarked on a rolling programme to improve and update the play equipment in the recreation ground. Some £400 has been spent to-date on new infant swings. The slide is also being modified as it no longer meets the latest British Standard regarding height. However, it is still in good condition; rather than spend a considerable sum of money on its replacement, it was decided to modify it by placing soil beneath its higher end and to bury a play pipe in the mound to give an added attraction. A group of Parish Councillors brought brawn as well as brains to the project, thus saving a considerable sum of money. We are particularly indebted to Robert Empson for supplying transport for the collection of pipes, to Malcolm Broughton for providing and operating a fork-lift, to Norman Warboys for using his J.C.B. for soil placement and to members of the Amenities sub-committee. The work remains unfinished at the moment as our supply of free soil has temporarily ceased.

Village Sign.

In 1975 the people of Elsworth contributed towards the purchase of a village sign to mark the retirement of the late J W Throssell M.B.E. who was for 54 years Clerk to the Parish Council.

During the last 16 years the sign has been renovated at least three times, but as the weather has gradually taken its toll it was felt that further attention would be required if it was to remain outside. The Parish Council therefore decided to replace it with one carved from wood, thus obviating further expensive restoration. Fred Mobbs, who made the iron framework for the original sign, has made hinges for hanging the new sign within that frame and the new sign is now in position. We are most grateful to Fred and to Malcolm Broughton who brought his fork-lift to assist the hanging.

The Brook.

Work on improving the appearance of the brook has commenced. Silt and vegetation is being removed from the bed of the stream and the section immediately upstream of the sluice gate cleared and deepened so as to create a body of water - hopefully permanent - between the banks. In addition to the aesthetic benefit, flash flooding should be reduced as water will flow more freely.

Tree Planting.

Trees ordered from South Cambridgeshire District Council have now been received and are to be planted shortly in Broad End, on the Sports club side, and in Brook Street, on the greensward upstream from the sluice. In more detail, five alder trees are destined for Brook Street and five Oak and five Cherry trees for Broad End.

Village Hall.

Some parishioners have expressed the view that Elsworth is in need of a village hall. The council is in the process of obtaining information regarding costs, loans and responsibilities, etc. so as to provide a platform for informed discussion. The views of the villagers will be sought as to (a) the need for a village hall and (b) its place among priorities. Opinions will be sought by means of a questionnaire.

Village Smell.

A strong smell wafting over the village from time to time has caused some distress among villagers. The sources are two sewage pits near the village - at Lawn Farm and Crows Nest Farm - used by Anglian Water Authority as one of many disposal points now that regulations limit off shore disposal. It is only when the pit is agitated for the use of the effluent on the land that there is emission of an unpleasant odour. The Parish Council in investigating the cause has involved the South Cambridgeshire Environmental Health Officer, who is monitoring the matter.

Odd Jottings.

Street Lighting. Any member of the public may report the failure of a street light; there is now a direct line to the street lighting section at Shire hall. (Cambridge 317723).

Views Solicited. All members of the Parish Council welcome parishioners' views either by correspondence or personal contact.

Parish Wheelchair. Anyone wishing to borrow the Parish Wheelchair should contact Ken Allchin. (Elsworth 484).

ELSWORTH SPORTS CLUB

Fixture Secretary:

Terry Stevens
4 Smith Street
Elsworth
Cambridge CB3 8HY
Tel: Elsworth 392

Secretary:

George Bosworth
10 Smith Street
Elsworth
Cambridge CB3 8HY
Tel: Elsworth 533

Treasurer:

John Upton
17 Rogers Close
Elsworth
Cambridge CB3 8JJ
Tel: Elsworth 384

Cricket success. Elsworth has every reason to be proud - league champions C.C.A. Division 2 (S) 1991.

Behind every successful team there is an efficient back room administration. Elsworth is most fortunate; a fact recognised publicly by the presentation to Fixture Secretary Terry Stevens of the 'Secretary of the Year' award. Many congratulations to the team and to Terry.

The year saw the 1st team winning ten games out of fourteen under the captaincy of Morris Circus. Those with long established roots in Elsworth will recall Morris formerly lived in Broad End; now he lives in St Ives but his loyalty remains. He is Elsworth's opening bat and still a regular bowler. His son Carl is also a credit to the family name, often opening our bowling.

Elsworth fields two teams in the C.C.A. league and occasionally will play friendly games against neighbouring villages and other sides. Some villagers have expressed an interest in the promotion of more friendly games where excellence of performance is not paramount. Any readers interested in participating should contact Terry Stevens (Elsworth 392) or George Bosworth (Elsworth 533). If there is sufficient interest, matches will be arranged for next season.

The football season is now with us. To date, Elsworth has won 5 matches, drawn 1, lost 3 and is placed 4th in the league.

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Although planning applications in total have fallen during the last 12-18 months, two important plans have been put to the district council which could have a considerable effect on this area of South Cambridgeshire.

Firstly, the planning committee have agreed a proposal from Strait Developers for a service station on the A604 at the Cambridge side of the Boxworth Road junction with the A604. This in spite of a very strong opposition from the village of Boxworth and individual objections from other villages nearby: nor could we persuade the Minister to call in the application for a public enquiry! This development will obviously impinge more on Boxworth than Elsworth, but there could be an increase of heavy traffic through both villages and therefore all objectors have written to the County Council asking for weight restrictions to be put in place before the development is too far advanced. We are awaiting the detailed plans for this proposal to see what steps the developer is taking to alleviate this particular problem. Just as an aside, no-one from the developers has made any contact with the Boxworth Parish to discuss this proposal!

Secondly, as you must be aware, a public enquiry has just started sitting to hear the four applications for an out-of-town shopping complex. The policy was incorporated in the County Council Structure Plan for the period 1986-2001, and subsequently four applications were submitted to the District Council for a shopping complex at Duxford, Abington (four Went Ways), Springfields and Slate Hall. The Minister decided to call in all these applications for his determination, after the public enquiry. South Cambs District Council, whilst questioning the necessity for such a complex, have reluctantly opted for the Slate Hall site, which along with Springfields is to the east of the A604 adjacent to Bar Hill.

K C Collett

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH



Two faithful former Church Wardens have regretfully died since the last Elsworth Chronicle was published. We mourn the passing of Vic Wright and Michael Thorogood.

With the death of Vic Wright, Elsworth Church has lost a loyal and true friend. A packed church at his funeral showed how highly he was held in the esteem of so many. Always helpful, courteous and kind, Vic's caring nature was apparent in all he undertook; the west lawn of the Church, which he kept so well, was always a joy to see and will be associated with Vic in the minds of many.

Michael was a Church Warden at Holy Trinity until he moved to Cambridge in 1978. He died suddenly and unexpectedly in Spain where he and Anne had settled after they had taken early retirement. Michael, too, did much for the Church; his active involvement in the restoration of the south porch and door is recalled in particular with gratitude.

Details of Christmas services will be found under "Dates for your Diary", in the Rector's letter and on the Church notice board. We hope to see you at the services.

FROM CAMBRIDGE TO OXFORD



Congratulations are due to Simon Thwaites of Brown's Farm on gaining a place at Oxford University at Exeter College to read mathematics. He took his place in the Autumn and by the time these notes are read he will have completed this first term.

Simon was a pupil at the village school, leaving in 1984 to attend the Perse School from which he transferred to Hills Road 6th Form College. He lists running among his interests; perhaps he will represent Oxford against the local university and we will see him on the new Cambridge track - if it ever materialises!

JUBILEE CLUB

The Jubilee club hold their meetings at Elsworth School in the Hall on the first Thursday in the month during term time when there are a variety of speakers and entertainments. We also have outings. We have had recently a talk on hand bells with a delightful demonstration of beautiful tunes; the 'Chestnut Choir' came and entertained us with their singing of some lovely old songs; Mrs Weisinger gave an illustrated talk on the Cambridge Colleges and the Gilvan Singers entertained in December. In the summer we had a very enjoyable outing to Felixstowe.

We are always very pleased to welcome new members, so do please come along. We have members from Conington, Knapwell, Boxworth as well as Elsworth.

Eileen Grange (Secretary)

ELSWORTH NATIONAL WOMEN'S REGISTER

Elsworth NWR has now been in existence for three years with the aim of offering all women the opportunity to take part in the informal discussion of a wide range of topics, both serious and light-hearted. NWR hopes to promote friendship, self-education, confidence and a better understanding of others' points of view.

We meet approximately every three weeks in member's homes and our discussions/talks have covered such topics as the day in the life of a local GP, first aid and wildlife. We also organise evenings out to the theatre, bar meals, etc. as can be seen from our current programme.

We would welcome new members to any of our meetings. Please contact either Shirley Emmerson (Elsworth 583) or Chris Roberts (Elsworth 489) for a chat. The forthcoming programme will be found under "Dates for your Diary".

ROBIN HUGHES-PARRY & ASSOCIATES

VETERINARY SURGEONS

34 HIGH STREET
LONGSTANTON
CRAFTS HILL (0954) 780027

66 HIGH STREET
COTTENHAM
COTTENHAM (0954) 52122



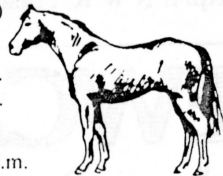
SURGERY HOURS (by appointment)

LONGSTANTON

Mon. - Sat. 8.30 - 10.30 a.m.
Mon. - Fri. 5.00 - 7.00 p.m.

COTTENHAM

Mon. - Fri. 9.00 - 10.30 a.m.
Mon., Tues., Wed., Fri. 4.30 - 6.30 p.m.
Saturday 9.00 - 11.00 a.m.



VISITS AND OTHER TIMES BY ARRANGEMENT

PETS - HORSES - FARM LIVESTOCK

24 HOUR EMERGENCY SERVICE

Stockists of Iams and Eukanuba petfoods

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

December

17th N W R Wine tasting - bring your favourite bottle of wine.
21st Football - Elsworth V Litlington Reserves at Elsworth.
23rd Carol Service 3.30 pm
24th Christmas Eve Service 11.45 pm.
25th Christmas Day Holy Communion 9.30 am.

January 1992

6th N W R Trivial Pursuit - quiz evening.
7th Jubilee Club - Members Dinner at The Poacher.
8th W I Members' Evening. Mrs Betty Evans to talk on Elsworth.
18th Football - Elsworth V Fowlmere Reserves at Elsworth.
22nd Parish Council Meeting.
28th N W R - Arachnophobia. Discussion on phobias.

February

6th Jubilee Club AGM and talk by Mrs Janet Birchall on patchwork and quilting.
8th Football - Elsworth V Castle Camps at Elsworth.
12th W I - Vic Palmer "Looking after your Heart"
15th Football - Elsworth V Sawston White Lion at Elsworth.
19th N W R Italian Evening - Members to bring Italian dish.

March

5th Jubilee Club. Illustrated talk by Miss Hersey about Lapland.
11th W.I. AGM
16th N W R "Work of a Customs & Excise Officer."
25th Parish Council Meeting.
March/April N W R Theatre visit to be arranged.

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*This Chronicle, artwork, layout and production of
original copy for publishing was produced on a
NEWCAM Personal Computer and Laser printer,
using Jetsetter Desk Top Publishing.*

Telephone Cambridge (0223) 234906.