



The Wappenham Newsletter

Spring 2008

What's on this spring

Mar	6 th	Electric Church, 7.30pm (Helmdon)
Mar	11 th	Parish Council meeting 7.30pm (Village Hall)
Mar	30 th	United Benefice service to celebrate restoration of St Mary's clock, 11am (St Mary's)
Apr	22 nd	Parish Council meeting 7.30pm (Village Hall)
May	13 th	Parish Council Annual Assembly and AGM 7.30pm (Village Hall)
May	17 th	Plant Sale, 9.30am-12.30 (Clarissa House)
June	7 th	New Perspectives Theatre - "The Farm" (VH)
June	21 st	Safari Supper

Regular Events

Chapel Service 10.45am Sundays

Church Service 11am Sundays (St Mary's)

Infant Church 1st Sat in the month, 10am (St Mary's)

Ladies' meetings 2pm Weds (Chapel)

Table tennis team practice Sun eve (VH)

Short mat bowls Thurs 2pm (VH)



FROM THE EDITOR



Well, the Post Office and Shop are definitely here to stay, thank goodness!

As officially confirmed by the Post Office in writing. Well done Tony, Evelyn and Jane. Also, others around Wappenham are continuing eg Syresham, Greens Norton and Blakesley. So do use the facilities they provide to give it a secure future.

Thanks to our contributors, who include Penny from Colonsay, as well as Brian P, who has an especially funny incident to retell... Thanks also to our sponsors, who are Pace Fuelcare and the Bell Plantation.

I now have quite a list of people to whom I email the newsletter. I notice that in Lois Weedon, 'migrant youth' are emailed their newsletter. If anyone has any 'youth' or anyone else with connections to the village that they'd like to receive the newsletter, do send me their email address and I'll add them in. And of course there is a newsletter archive maintained by Di W on the Wappenham website: www.northantsvillages.org.uk/wappenham. Any written contributions by 'ex-pat' villagers are also welcome.

The next newsletter will be out by early June and the deadline for contributions is 10th May. Please send them to me at wappenham@tiscali.co.uk

Jane

MOBILE LIBRARY TIMES AND DATES

Greenside – 2.30-2.45pm

Dates: 17th March, 7th and 28th April, 19th May



NB: Use it or lose it! The service is under review periodically, and stops without clients get struck off the list. You can use your Northants. library card now, and order books in advance, too. There are children's books and large print as well as the usual adult fiction and non-fiction.

WIZ

Wiz is the Wappenham email contact group. To join, send an email to wappenham@tiscali.co.uk



WAPPENHAM WEBSITE

The website address is:

<http://www.northantsvillages.org.uk/wappenham> .

Send material for including on the site to

wappenham@tiscali.co.uk.

NOTICES

Roy Wilson

Our condolences to the Wilson family on Roy Wilson's death, after a short illness, on February 4th. Roy was a major contributor to local life, especially agricultural, and he will be much missed. A tribute to Roy given at his funeral by Rob G follows this page.

ROY WILSON – A TRIBUTE

One of Roy's many pearls of wisdom was "Buddy, funerals are all right, as long as you keep going to them".

Roy was born at the farm on September 8th 1933, a son to May and Charlie and a brother to Joan, 3 years his senior.

He attended Wappenham School, taught by a Miss Matthews from there progressed to Towcester Grammar School. It soon became apparent that Roy wasn't cut out for academia and several meetings took place between Roy's father and the headmaster, Mr Clarke, it was decided that perhaps Roy would be best suited working on the farm. So in 1948 his working life on the farm became full time.



Football was his great love in those early days. The pinnacle of his career was playing for Wappenham, where the home team ground was the Dairy Ground at Rectory Farm, with such wonderful names in the team as Happy Bearman, Chub Wheeler, Pimp Haynes and Nodger King, success could not be far away, and with the inclusion of a POW called Heinz, who played up front, they went on to greatness and won the South Northants Cup. Roy has a medal somewhere to prove it.

Roy was also a member of the combined Wappenham and Abthorpe Cricket Team, and on making his debut against Whittlebury, after the game he was taken to the pub for the first time, the Fox and Hounds, by Ken Abbott and introduced to beer. Ken you have an awful lot to answer for.

But as farm life became busier for Roy, sport took more of a back seat.

Roy met a local girl Christine Reeve from Silverstone and in 1958 was married and lived in the Hollies some 100yds from the farm. Daughters Jane and Sarah were born but tragically Christine died from an illness, which left Roy to bring up his young family. I know sister Joan and John Mawle played a huge part in helping Roy through those difficult days.

Rita became the new love of his life and in 1973 Roy and Rita were married. From there on Rita became the butt of many of Roy's after-dinner speeches with jokes about the 'Wife'.

David was born in 1974, who became better know as 'ar ol boy' In fact names were confusing when I first came to Wappenham as Roy was actually christened David, he called David Fred and Jane, Fan.

Roy developed interests away from the farm; it was a great surprise to us that Roy wanted to go into Masonry. It was an even greater surprise when they let him in. In 1982, he was initiated into the Beneventa Lodge, at Daventry by his great friend Fred Dixon. By 1998 he had risen through the lodge to become Worshipful Master. His Ladies night was a great occasion and his Lady that night, Rita of course, did the most fantastic job and I know what that meant to him.

At lodge meeting he was always in great demand to toast the visitors or indeed as a guest himself make the toast on behalf of the visitors. He had the knack of bringing the house down by just standing up and bringing his notes from his pocket one by one, all the jokes would have been heard before he never failed to amuse his audience.

Never to miss a practice or a meeting he would be word perfect and his little black book would go everywhere with

him. One occasion he was on the tractor whilst reading his book. He was so engrossed in his studies, he drove out of the field, through the hedge and the tractor had to be recovered out of the ditch the other side.



Roy was a committee member of the Blakesley show since 1967, I believe his role became chief barracker, as at meetings he would make life so difficult for the likes of Maurice Sekington or Norman Sheppard as they attempted to chair the meetings.

He himself taking on several roles within the committee, he was the Ladies Toilet attendant! With Rita for 10 years they were responsible for the Committee Tent. He became President and he presided over the last five Blakesley Shows. Much of Blakesley Show business was conducted at Banbury Market on Wednesday and Thursday mornings, some of the stories that come from there are legendary, but perhaps that should stay between Roy and the others involved just for now.

He was a great lover of sport and had great pleasure in following David's sport: cricket with Preston Capes and of course with Towcestrians Rugby Club. I recall in 2002, when Towcester won the Lewis Shield at Franklins Gardens and David captained the side, he was so proud that night. A great supporter of the club for many years through thick and thin, he would stand next to Doug on the touchline and his well-balanced views would boom across the pitch. I am not so sure the referees will miss him too much. When coaching the first team I used to dread the Sunday morning phone call from him telling me exactly what he thought and what I was doing wrong. He was Chairman of the Mini and Junior Section for

three years, a role he took great pleasure in, as he saw this as the development and future of his rugby club.

There are many other things he has been involved with: a Wappenham Parish Councillor for many years, several as Chairman; fund-raising at Sponne School for a rugby tour to Canada, and I could carry on. You will all have your own memories of Roy and I am sure they bring a smile to your face.

Roy's life has been so full and deep; I can only just skim the surface of the impact he made upon our community. He had a passion for everything he became involved with and it had to be done right, he loved the camaraderie and fellowship, and this boils down to one thing: he cared. He cared about his involvement and he cared about the people around him.

His love for Rita was unquestionable, they shared a very special relationship. His love enveloped Jane, Sarah and David; his grandchildren so proud to call him their Granddad, and Rita's family he considered as his own. A big man with a big personality, his sense of fun was priceless, but underneath it all was also a very sensitive and compassionate person.

As you are aware, Roy's health had not been great for some time, but all through his illness he was positive and so brave. His humour and dignity remained to the end, which was humbling to all those who saw him in those difficult final days.

There can be no better testament than what we see here today *[at the funeral]* with the family, friends and associates here to say their farewell. In your time Roy, you made your mark

with so many people, and a truly wonderful character will be so missed.

Rob George

THE WAPPENHAM TEATOWEL

A reminder that **Tea Towels** depicting Wappenham c1900 are available from:the Shop or from Di W.

Price: £5.00

Cheques payable please to:

The Friends of St. Mary's Church Wappenham

Di W

By popular demand
The Friends of St. Mary's have arranged
another

PLANT SALE

For Saturday, 17th May
2008

Between 9:30am and
12:30pm

At
Clarissa House, High
Street, Wappenham



Contributions for the sale would be
welcomed

NEW BUSES FROM WAPPENHAM!



Now that the government is giving free bus travel throughout England to the disabled and those over 60, Northants County Council is proposing several new bus services connecting villages like ours to main towns, starting in September 2008. It's an exciting proposal – 'vehicle 4' would connect Wappenham with Towcester (at last!) about 6 times a day each way, Monday to Friday. No advance booking would be necessary and the vehicles are comfortable new minibuses, with wheelchair access at the back. The way the journeys are set up now, though, has its drawbacks – the circular journey takes 50 minutes in one direction and 15 in the other!

NCC would like feedback on their proposals. To find out more, phone the NCC on 01604 654441 and ask for the Accessibility team, or email: cljwhite@northamptonshire.gov.uk.

You can also write to Accessibility - Sustainable Transport, Northamptonshire County Council, Riverside House, Riverside Way, Bedford Rd, Northampton NN1 5NX.

Given the service as proposed at present isn't quite what a Wappenham bus user would hope for (though very welcome!) it would be great if they got some response to their plans.

Jane

ANTIQUES ROADSHOW

Owing to a couple of disappointing cancellations, we are having to postpone the Antiques Roadshow event until later in the year

The Friends of St. Mary's, Wappenham

SAFARI SUPPER – ADVANCE NEWS

The 'Safari Supper' is one of the most popular events of the village calendar, and is continuing this year thanks to its new management –see below. For those who haven't been before, it involves a three-course meal with wine or soft drinks, with each course held in a different house. People are split into small groups, with the groups' members changing for each course. The whole group meets up at the end, over coffee and cheese and biscuits. It's a great way to meet new people and catch up with friends,



Lynda R first started managing this event in 1992, when it was in aid of the church restoration fund. Pam B joined her in 1998, and since then the proceeds have been split between the church and the village hall. A big thankyou to Lynda and Pam, for creating this event, persuading hosts to host, ordering wine, balancing the budget, trying to make 'tables' different every time so we get to know each other, and all the other things that make the event so successful.

The Safari Supper is now going to be organised by Amanda A and Lesley C, with proceeds going to the WRA. Thanks for taking over so we can carry on enjoying these evenings! The event will be held on June 21st, so look out for posters and the next newsletter for more details (and get your tickets early to avoid disappointment)

Anyone who would like to host a course, please contact Amanda via wappenham@tiscali.co.uk.

VILLAGE HALL NEWS

Quiz Night

A big thank you to everyone who came along to the Quiz Night on 12th January. The fish and chips seemed to go down well and the question master, as ever, kept us all in order. A grand total of £148 was raised on the night, which will help to keep the hall solvent for a little while.



A request has been made for a **family quiz** in the summer, possibly with a **barbecue** –seems like a good idea. If anyone is interested in helping to get this off the ground please give me a ring.

Theatre Group visit Wappenham

On the subject of social events in the summer we are again fortunate in having the New Perspectives Touring Company visiting Wappenham on Saturday 7th June. They will be showing an adaptation of a book by Richard Benson called 'The Farm'. This is based on a true story about how he tried to save his family farm in the Yorkshire Dales from being sold. The info I have received says; 'The Farm tells the

painful, funny uplifting story of how big business is changing the face of the English countryside forever'. Tickets will be available from the shop at the price of £6.00 for adults and £3.00 for under 16's.

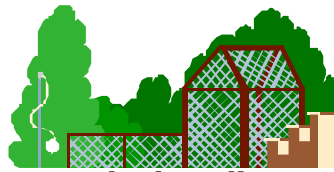
And also don't forget the hall belongs to the village, so please use it as much as possible – it's ideal for children's parties, hobby groups, sports and so much more.

Jenny S wappenham@tiscali.co.uk
Village Hall Secretary

WAPPENHAM RECREATION ASSOCIATION (WRA)

Playground

The committee continue to investigate the options for a long-term home for a playground that will provide the children of the village somewhere to play and also provide the village with an open space. The committee have made some progress and will announce potential plans when we are in a position to do so.



Should we be successful in finding a new home, we will need to undertake some significant fundraising to secure the playground and the work required to make it ready for the kids, and undertake any making good to the existing playground at the end of the lease.

We have applied and obtained some funding to purchase a swing for the playground that could be moved to any new play area.

Future event(s)

The committee will organise an event towards the summer for the kids and will give future details on this when we have decided what it will be. Hallowe'en trick or treat will be put on, as in previous years.

A sub committee of the WRA has taken on the running of the Safari Supper which will take place on 21st June: more details will be published on this.

Fete

The fete will be organised by a combined committee of the WRA, Church and Village Hall, with the money being split equally. The date has been set for **Saturday 6th September**.

We hope to increase the success the fete has had from previous years, and so raise much needed money for the 3 committees.

Your support for all of the above will be really appreciated.

Dene A wappenham@tiscali.co.uk

FRIENDS OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN WAPPENHAM

The Friends exist to look after the fabric of the Church on your behalf. We are working on two projects to improve facilities. One is to extend the currently used graveyard, which provides such a peaceful place of rest but is now almost full. The other is to make the church more welcoming to everyone by installing a servery and a WC, as in the other churches in the Astwell Benefice.

We are in the planning stages for both projects, working out realistic costs and obtaining planning permissions from the



Diocese and local authorities. Thank you to everyone who has already given their support and advice, with an especial thank you to neighbouring property owners, who have borne with our early requests for information so patiently. We will keep you posted, but in the meantime, do **please look at the plans** which will be going up shortly in church and please think how you could support them. Offers of fund-raising events are welcome and offers of funding even more so!

I am grateful to the members of the Friends: Revd Will Adams, Mrs Eliza B (representing the Parochial Church Council), Mrs Jo F, Revd Dorothy M, Mrs Sarah P, Mr Anthony T, Mrs Di W and a warm welcome to our new treasurer, Mr Alastair J.

Come and support our Plant Sale – Saturday 17th May at Clarissa House, High Street and look out for more news of other fund-raising events!

Jane M
Chair, Friends of St Mary the Virgin

LETTERS

The sun is shining and it is such a beautiful day – so different to the many rainy days we had in January. The rain and ‘high tide’ in the Brook caused problems for me at my home last July and again this January, and if it were not for wonderful friends in the village, the situation could have been so much worse.



Vanessa and Chris, Brian, Jenny and Spill, Dorothy and Richard, Malcolm, Della, David and Tammy – are now known as the ‘flood crew’. In January, these wonderful people, including Jenny and Spill’s weekend guests, came to my rescue not once, but on three different nights. In the pouring rain and into the dark small hours, the ‘crew’ unselfishly bucketed the water from the back of the cottage and twice prevented water coming in.

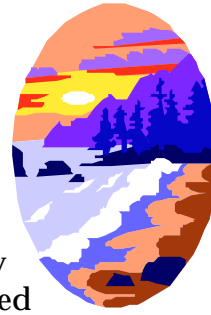
We are very lucky to live in such a lovely village as Wappenham and when genuine, wonderful ‘village spirit’ is unselfishly given it proves how wonderful the people are, too.

Thank you so much, ‘flood crew’, and thank you Brian for digging up my garden – I know it’s for the best!!

Sara W

'NOTES FROM A SMALL ISLAND'

"Well," I thought, as I stood on the top of the hill, beside the cairn and saw the sea on every side – "This really is an island!"



Colonsay is now my home. It's twelve miles long and three wide. It has a remote side (my side) next stop Canada – and a beautiful wooded side –semi-tropical because of the Gulf Stream, which is where my son Will and his family live.

I'm renting a cottage, because the little house (Cnoc na Fad) is being refurbished by Wee Donald, Big Donald, Wee Davie and Jim!

I think I've been introduced to everyone on Colonsay now (110) but they all seem to bear the same name. (I forgot Big Archie and Wee Archie.)

Since I've been here – about six weeks – we've had glorious weather – sunny – cold-ish and breezy – but my ferry last week couldn't reach us 'till Monday – so that's when you realise what island life can be like.

Everyone is welcoming because:

1. I'm Will's Ma and
2. I'm a permanent resident.

There are lots of things to get used to including no daily papers – so there's a rush when the ferry does come – and there's – surprisingly – a plentiful supply of Australian Shiraz. *[An Ozzie Whiskey Galore situation?? Ed.]*

My friends Kersten and Julia have visited Colonsay to paint, and Kersten came last October to see my intended house. She

was appalled by what had to be done and that I had cast myself away on a small island. However, it's my favourite place – it was David's too and he is now on the Primrose Path on Crispin's Head. I can walk there in half an hour.

The sheep and the Highland cattle have the cleanest rear quarters you've ever seen, since the rain is horizontal followed by a pretty good following wind!

David and I have truly found a certain peace here on Colonsay.

Penelope G

WESTON COMMUNITY PROJECT

The Weston Community Project is a renovated building next to the Baptist Chapel in Weston, operating as an independent charity. There are quite a few regular events now, including:

Tues 12.30	Lunch Club every week
2pm	Afternoon Fellowship (1st & 3rd)
alternating with:	Hobby Club. (2nd & 4th Tues.)
7pm	Art Club every week
Wed 10am - 12	Tiny Tots
2pm	WEA
Thurs 8pm	Wine Club held once a month
Sun 10.30am	Church

For more information, see the website at www.westoncp.org.uk.

The Project also has a minibus for hire, which seats 14.

Dorothy O

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Notes from the PC Chairman:

Dear All

On the first reminder I have immediately put fingers to keyboard fearing the wrath of the Editor. What else would I be doing on a Saturday evening? Actually I would probably have been mulling over something quite disturbing that has been brought to the Parish Council's attention, but more about that later.



So, straight down to business. The Housing Needs Survey: on a very cold, wet and windy morning in mid January a small party of people made up of Hilary W and myself from the PC, representatives of SNC and their housing partners, NCALC and our District Councillor, trudged up and down the village. The aim was to try and identify any areas that might be suitable for a small affordable housing development. To cut a long, wet morning short, SNC have gone away to investigate further three possible areas. I am sure you have all read the PC minutes religiously so don't need me to tell you where they are, but in case they have slipped your memory and in no particular order:

1. land adjacent to the bungalows as you leave the village heading towards Abthorpe
2. the land adjacent to the play area
3. the land adjacent to the houses on your left as you leave the village heading towards Astwell on the Helmdon Road.

This is the very first step in a lengthy evaluation process. Also to be taken into account will be the combined report and housing needs evaluation for our cluster, which includes Bradden and Slapton. I will keep you informed of any developments as they happen.

Project Pathfinder still rumbles on. The latest stumbling block is a small problem that has blown up involving a split between NCALC and ACRE or something like that, which has meant no activity in the last 3 months – no change there then. However, we will continue to be involved in the cluster project alongside Helmdon and Syresham in case something beneficial comes along.



After a quiet few months in the planning department, Wappenham residents have once again been bombarding SNC with applications. Manor Farm, Wappenham: change of use of redundant farm buildings to B1 & B2 – amended detailing was recommended for approval. 5 High Street, Wappenham: replacement of existing single storey extension plus window & door detailing was recommended for approval. Brook Cottage, 17 Brookside, was resubmitted for a two-storey extension, detached garage, replacement annexe and fencing: this was not recommended for approval. Bloxhams Barn, Wappenham Road: proposed conversion of a redundant barn to a dwelling was recommended for approval, as was The Old Barn, Priesthay Wood Farm: the removal of a Condition 4 planning constraint.

So, why have I rushed through this so quickly and what have I been mulling over?

A formal letter of complaint has been submitted to the PC asking for help if possible. The complaint follows what can only be described as pre-meditated, wilful damage of private property. Wappenham is lucky to have a readily accessible network of footpaths in and around the village. These paths are primarily over private land and, as far as we are able, walkers need to stay to the paths and only the paths. It has transpired that people are making up their own paths, and in one instance where a landowner erected a continuation of a fence to indicate 'no thoroughfare', it has been removed. I said 'premeditated' at the start of this paragraph as the fence was constructed of wire, which has been cleanly cut. I do not think that walkers routinely carry wire-cutters! Please, where reasonably possible, keep to the footpaths and do not destroy private property.

In defence of all the village walkers, I must say that the PC and our hawk-eyed footpath warden will equally hassle landowners if they are not doing their bit. You may have spotted in the PC minutes recently how quickly we reacted to some electric fencing that was not allowing appropriate access. It works both ways: if land owners want people to respect their property, then equally they have a responsibility to ensure paths are accessible. Finally, still talking footpaths, can I once again implore all dog owners to be vigilant and ensure that if your dog(s) foul the paths **PLEASE CLEAR IT UP**. If you have gone to the effort of scooping it into a bag, please take it home and not just tie it to the nearest fence, which has been reported to me on more than one occasion recently. If you have your dog walked by someone else, please make sure they also follow these rules.



I don't enjoy or like having to use my slot in the village newsletter to bring these sort of things to residents' attention, but sometimes these things need and must be said. Hopefully my bit in the summer newsletter will be more positive.

With kind regards

Paul F

RECYCLING TETRAPAK CARTONS

Now you can recycle those semi-cardboard cartons made by Tetrapak at the Farthinghoe Recycling Centre near Brackley. For more information, ring Environmental Services (SNDC) on 0845 2300 226 or see the website which is: www.southnorthants.gov.uk. (Trouble is, going there specially also wastes resources! Anyone any solutions to this? Messages via Wiz to take cartons en masse, en route to the pub?!)

“These cartons can be recycled into ..products ranging from plasterboard liner to high-strength paper bags and envelopes” say SNDC.



The Astwell Benefice

Helmdon with Stuchbury and Radstone, Syresham with Whitfield, Lois Weedon with Weston and Plumpton, and Wappenham



CHURCH NEWS

Choosing Your Battles

It is a cold February morning in 1143, and the two English armies face each other across a misty valley. Each man is hyped up to cope with the slashing and stabbing that such combat entails, feeling sick with anxiety. For four years they have been fighting, since Matilda landed in England claiming her father's throne. But, hold on! Horsemen are galloping up to the troops, calling out, "No fighting!" What has brought on this welcome news? **Lent** – and there is to be no fighting during Lent – praise God.

Since the Emperor Constantine became a Christian, military exercises were banned on Sundays and Fridays, and this was extended in the ninth century to the whole of Lent. Warfare there was but inside a person, not between people. Lent is the time when we 'do battle' against our self-centred and self-indulgent inclinations. Think of peace and the joy that can be spread when we give up our squabbles, and bickering, our gossip and point scoring. We may not fight in armed battle, but we will surely have plenty of personal demons to conquer. Roll on Lent!

A Curate for the Astwell Benefice

It is with much pleasure that I announce the appointment of Colin Simpson to the Curacy of our benefice. We welcome Colin and his wife Sandy and their son and daughter, William and Serena.

Colin is presently in his final year of theological training at Queen's Foundation for Ecumenical Theological Education in Birmingham. He is to be ordained as Deacon in Peterborough Cathedral on Sunday 6th July. Following this he and his family will take up residence in the benefice. Our hope very much is that parishioners from across the benefice will want to welcome Colin to Astwell by supporting him in Peterborough and by attending a special united service (Lois Weedon Sunday 13th July '08) to greet him and his family warmly as he embarks on his ministry with us.

Colin will serve his title for three years within the Astwell Benefice before seeking his own parish. As a deacon he will support priests in the leading of the sacraments and once ordained as priest himself in July 2009 will also undertake these services himself.

It is a delight that the diocese should see this benefice as one suitable for the training of future priests. Rural curacies are not common. I am sure that we will all do our very best to provide Colin with the secure and loving support that will enable him to develop his lifetime's ministry in the church and thereby fulfil the trust placed in us.

**Celebrating the Completion of the Church Clock:
United Astwell Benefice Service Sunday 30th March at
11am**

I must first apologise for causing the confusion concerning the date for celebrating the completion of the Church Clock. It is now going to take place in **Wappenham** on the date shown above. Do come and join us. This will afford us the opportunity to express our joy at its restoration and to give thanks to those who have worked so tirelessly to get the clock repaired as well as acknowledge the financial offerings that have made it possible.

Electric Church

We held our first Electric Church service in Syresham on Sunday 25th November '07. Electric Church is a service of the word to rock music provided by guitarists, vocalists, saxophonists and percussionists from across the Astwell Benefice. A number of folk from the parish of Lois Weedon came along and I believe much enjoyed the service finding it refreshing and uplifting. The band is presently rehearsing for its next service which will on Thursday 6th March '08 at 7.30 p.m. in the parish church in Helmdon. It is planned that this service will be recorded by BBC Radio Northampton for later broadcast. If you would like to join the group please do get in touch. Do also come along and join us on the 6th.

From the Parish Register

Marriage

Saturday 10th November '07

David & Anette (nee
Prigmore) Wilson

God bless,

Will,

The Rector, Astwell Benefice

FROM THE CHAPEL

The Hen and Chickens

Not many years ago, in our neighbouring county of Bedfordshire, a catastrophic fire raged through a farm, gutting all the barns and outbuildings. In one of those barns, several free-range hens were settled in their cosy straw beds for the night. The light of day revealed just smoking ruins doused and dampened by the fireman's hose, and tell-tale charred remains lay littered in the debris where once the barn had stood.

One hen, quite dead, a victim of the blaze, blackened but otherwise intact, lay at the farmer's feet. Was it idle curiosity which led him to turn the poor creature over with his stick? Whatever it was, he was in for an unforgettable surprise!

Sheltered beneath her wings lay nestled together several little chicks, not unmarked, but very much alive!

The inferno's full force had spent itself upon her, leaving her little brood alive and well.

Throughout this coming Easter season, and on 'Good Friday' especially, we hope to remember something similar to this, yet far more wonderful, when Jesus willingly and lovingly gave his own life that others might live, when he died on the Cross at Calvary.

One day he actually described himself as the 'mother hen' who longs to gather her chicks together under her wings, when many sadly rejected his love and the pardon which God gives to those who have turned away from him.

Every time we meet for worship we remember the love of Jesus, and pray that all our neighbours may come to experience it for themselves.

With best wishes for a Happy Easter.

Tim M

PRINCES TRUST GRANTS

The Princes Trust is giving money to assist young people aged 18-30 in rural areas who are unemployed and want to start a business. To find out more, contact Tony Round, the Trust's Area Manager, on 01604 741177 or go to the website on www.princes-trust.org.uk.

I DONT THINK I HAVE EVER BEEN SO FRIT!

This is a true story. I know it's true as it happened to me. It started on a Thursday morning about 11am. I was out on one of my litter picking walks. I had just turned round at the cottages up the Weston Road, [well, I will always think of that house as the cottages] when I saw on the grass verge yet another Scrumpy can. There's someone round here that drinks a lot of Scrumpy. So I step on to the grass verge. But unseen to me there was a hole which I put my foot in and as I had been having some problems with that knee it really wrenched it.



By the time I managed to get home it was twice the size it should be. So for the next two days I could barely put my foot to the floor. I got some freezer bags, put some ice in

them, then bound one to my knee with a long crepe bandage. Well, I thought it might be the right thing to do. By Monday I could walk with difficulty but my knee was still twice the normal size and as solid as a rock.

On Monday evening I put on another ice pack and settled down to watch a video of "Goodbye Mr. Chips", the one with Petula Clark in. This is my favourite version and as I was on my own I could have a cry in the tender bits, especially the bit where they are in the restaurant and Chips tells Catharine how much he loves the children, but they don't seem to like him. Well, that's what he thinks, sniff sniff.

Anyway, it was about 11.15p.m. when I went to bed, so I did as usual and took a pack of ice up with me so that I could strap it on while I sat on the loo. (I don't suppose you really wanted to know that, but this is a true story and this is how it went!) So I sat down and looked at my knee. It was, "B###y hell! What's happened?" The whole of the bandage was wet through with blood. It had also started to run down my leg. I very gently touched it. It felt like the side of my knee must have burst open as there was a fleshy lump that I could move very slightly. I was starting to panic. I was on my own; my leg felt like it had burst open. If there was this much outside, what was going on inside my leg? My hands were now covered in blood. Do I get an ambulance straight away? My head was thumping ten to the dozen.

At last I pulled myself together and sat back to look at it in a practical way. If it had split open it should surely hurt to touch, which it didn't, so I thought I would undo the bandage very slowly, and then if it was nasty I could re-tighten it. Very slowly I undid it. I might add I looked by now as if the mad axe man had been at me. I could now see the end of the

plastic bag. So far, nothing terrible. Where was the piece of flesh I had felt? I very gently undid some more bandage. I could now see the side of my knee and the plastic bag I had put the ice in. Just a few more turns. Now I could see the whole picture. I had sat there the whole evening with a bag of liver strapped to me!!



I have sat where I am over the years and felt relieved, but never as relieved as I did at this moment! I just flopped and laughed like an idiot!!

I at least knew what I was having for tea tomorrow! What had happened was, I never put lights on unnecessarily so as to help the old world. As I had left the living room door open, there was plenty of light to go to the freezer in the kitchen, which is a fridge freezer. As there is no light in the top part I just put my hand in and found a solid bag. Perhaps, in future, I had better have clear bags. If I had rung the Ambulance first, do you think I would have had my two minutes of fame on the telly?

Am I the only one in the village that does this sort of thing or are the others just too shy to tell us?!!

Brian P

EVER WONDERED WHAT OUR COUNTY COUNCILLOR DOES ?

Ben Smith gave us some excerpts from his 2007 diary, which are on the Wappenham website. You can access them via a link on the front page.

(Cllr Ben Smith can be contacted at Benz@btinternet.com)

FAMILY HISTORY QUERIES

Paul Russell is looking for old photographs and also memories of the current shop, particularly from the 50s and 60s, as his grandparents used to run the shop then and he would like to give some professionally copied photo/s to his father as a present. His parents were brought up in the village during this time, and have very fond memories of Wappenham. If you can help please contact Di Walsh or email wappenham@tiscali.co.uk.

Also **Bob Newitt** is looking for information about his Wappenham ancestors. His '4X grandfather' is John Newitt, born 1804-1850. He may have had father Thomas and brothers Charles and Richard. He married Alice Baylis Edmunds and they had a son William Samuel Newitt, who went to Canada, which is where Bob is now, in Ancaster, Ontario. "I find it so fascinating that Wappenham is [John] Newitt's home town and would like to learn more. ..If you could shed any more light on this, it would be greatly appreciated." - if you have any information about this, please contact Clive W or email Wiz.

VALENTINE EVENT

I would like to thank all the people who helped or donated cakes towards the Valentine charity event in Towcester. The money raised was over £1,000.00 but will probably be less once the costings, hall hire etc has been taken out.

The 10 of us who worked so hard on the Nangoli project are delighted. Martin Nangoli visits the UK in the middle of March and I will also be happy to give him all the jumpers and hats that have been knitted for his children, in fact a suitcaseful!

Dorothy O

**WAPPENHAM THEN AND NOW: HELMDON ROAD
(thanks to Olive W and David M)**



Photo from the '40s – Mrs Jones, Jean Westmacott and Mrs Eddie Brown lived in the cottages, among others Olive remembers including Mr and Mrs Bearman.

It's hard to believe the difference here today!



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Any old photos?

More old photographs of the village and village life are needed for 'Wappenham Then and Now'. Please let the Editor know if you have any. I can scan them and quickly return them to you.