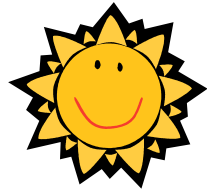


# The Wappenham Newsletter



## Summer 2011



### What's on this summer

June	1 <sup>st</sup>	Coffee Morning 10-12 (Outbuildings, Old Rectory)
June	12 <sup>th</sup>	Wappenham Open Gardens 2-5.30pm (various)
June	25 <sup>th</sup>	Barn Dance & Pig Roast 7.30pm (Village Hall)
June	29 <sup>th</sup>	Church meeting re its future 7.30pm (St Mary's)
July	6 <sup>th</sup>	Coffee Morning as before
Aug	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Coffee Morning as before

### Regular Events

*Church service & Sunday School* Sundays 11am (St Mary's)  
except for 1<sup>st</sup> Sun in month when there is Holy  
Communion at 9.30am in Lois Weedon and no  
Sunday School

*Chapel service* Sundays 10.45am

*Sunday School* Sundays 3pm (Chapel Schoolroom)

*Bible Study* Tuesdays 7.30pm (Chapel)

*Ladies' meetings* Wednesdays 2pm (Chapel)

*Bell ringing practice* Thursdays 8pm (St Mary's)

*Table tennis practice*, times vary (VH, call 861038 for details)

*Short mat bowls* Thursdays 2-4pm

*Upholstery classes* (VH) contact [wappenham@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:wappenham@tiscali.co.uk)





## FROM THE EDITOR



Thank you very much to our current newsletter sponsors, who are: Smiths Newsagents, Blakesley Show, Crofts Stores in Silverstone and Flair Fashions in Towcester.

Spring has brought a lot of village events, which have been well supported. The shop meeting was packed, with a vote taken in favour of looking into the viability of a community shop. A 'seed swap' coffee morning went well, and the first 3 'village' coffee mornings have been even better attended, and had great cakes too. Thanks to Will Adams for organising this, as well as Michael K, and the servers and cooks.

For anyone wishing to contribute to the autumn newsletter, the copy deadline is **August 10<sup>th</sup>**. Please drop off contributions to me, or email them to me via [wappenham@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:wappenham@tiscali.co.uk).  
*Jane H*

## NOTICES

**Welcome** to Sue D and Jim W and their daughter Hannah who have moved into Greenside from Finedon, and also Sue and Steve M who have also moved into Greenside. We hope you enjoy living here.



We were sad to learn of the death of David M on 5<sup>th</sup> April. A tribute to him by his son is in this issue.

There is also a moving tribute to Norah and Josh T, by Aidan. For me there is a link between this account of a farming family and the recent theatre production of 'Lark Rise to Candleford', which was also about what it was like to farm, but over 100 years ago. Haven't times changed?

## WAPPENHAM OPEN GARDENS

On Sunday 12th June - 2pm to  
5.30pm

Five gardens will be open in aid of  
the National Garden Scheme (NGS).

They are: The Laurels  
Pittams  
Stone Cottage  
Wappenham Manor  
Home Farm



The NGS charity raised £2.6m nationwide last year and  
supports:



Macmillan Cancer Support  
Marie Curie Cancer Care  
Crossroads Care  
Help The Hospices  
The Queen's Nursing Institute  
National Trust  
Gardeners Royal Benevolent  
Society

The Royal Fund For Gardeners' Children

Teas will be provided in the garden of Jane and Howard M in  
aid of St Mary's Church and the Village Hall.

We do hope you will come and enjoy the gardens and have a  
good tea!

Joanna T

# Wappenham Barn Dance



**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> June 7.30pm**

**In marquee adjacent to  
Wappenham Village Hall**

**Pig roast  
Bar serving local beers, plus lager, wine  
& soft drinks**

**Live band with caller:  
'Pandemonium'**

**Tickets £12.50, available from -  
01327 860073, 01327 860940, 01327 860625  
Or Village Hall Committee members**

## DRAMA GROUP NEWS



The Lois Weedon and Weston (and Wappenham) Drama Group have been busy performing a Murder Mystery at dinners in Lois Weedon and elsewhere. Perhaps Wappenham too? Their summer production has not yet been agreed upon, however there will be one; a local 'drama group festival' has been mooted with several groups performing plays. So look out for posters and 'Wiz' news for further details.

## MOBILE LIBRARY TIMES AND DATES



Up until the end of June, this is every 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday, at 2.30-2.45pm, at Greenside. Services are under drastic review, so dates after this are not confirmed. See a request for feedback later in the newsletter from the Council.

**Dates: 6<sup>th</sup> June, 27<sup>th</sup> June**

## WIZ

WIZ is the Wappenham email contact group. To join, send an email to [wappenham@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:wappenham@tiscali.co.uk).

## WAPPENHAM VILLAGE WEBSITE



If you would like to add something to the website, such as photos, events, articles, news items, your business details, stories, and so forth, please send the information to

[wappenham@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:wappenham@tiscali.co.uk); I will be more than happy to post your contributions.

The website address is:

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

Dianne W, Webmaster

## NORA AND JOSH T

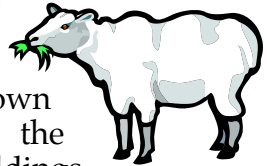
In memory of Nora T, who died 12<sup>th</sup> February 2011, and to her late husband Josh.

Nora and her husband George (Josh) farmed in the large red brick house called Wappenham Lodge Farm, set back from the road on the way to Syresham. They were my farming neighbours since I arrived at Poplars Farm in the winter of 1974. I always found them to be a jovial couple, willing to laugh at themselves and at the same time poking pleasant fun at others. Their daughters seemed to have inherited this trait.

It was not until the spring of 1975, that we actually met.

I almost got off on the wrong foot. Eileen

White asked of me a favour, which involved crossing the Tarry's fields, and on the way back we noticed a ewe on her own in trouble. We took it in the back in the Landover and approached their farm buildings



from the rear. Coming out to meet us they both asked who I was, and what did I think I was up to? When they realised how neighbourly I was being there were smiles and gratitude. Josh put his hand in his pocket and tried to reward me with 50 pence. It was refused; a pity really, as I could have used that 50 pence many times since.

Found by Nora's daughters Angela and Shirley after her death and written by Nora the following words not only provide a brief insight into Nora's early life but also what life was like during that time in local farming.

"I was born at Little London, Silverstone in 1921. I was the middle daughter of Joseph and Margaret Webb with two sisters and two brothers. My parents were farmers in Silverstone. Later we moved from Little London to Muswell Lane.

I met George T known as Josh; we were married in 1940 and went to live at Home Farm, Abthorpe. We had another farm at this time at Flore. Because petrol was rationed and as corn farmers we needed every drop, we used to cycle to Flore.



We did the harvest by binder, as there were no combines about then. We had to stack the sheaves by hand in stooks of 6 or 8.

Before I was married I worked for John Marlow. My sister Emily worked there too in the offices in Northampton.

Josh used to do a bit of contracting for the War Agriculture. He also did some contracting for Denis Rush who at that time lived at Wappenham Lodge. The War Agriculture told Mr Rush he had to milk 16 cows, and that was a lot of cows in those days. He was also instructed to plough up land and ordered to grow sugar beet and potatoes. It was wartime and a variety of food was wanted. Because Mr Rush was not farming right, they turned him out.

Denis Rush offered Wappenham Lodge to my husband and we rented it. In 1942 Mr and Mrs Rush went to live in

Abthorpe. When Josh and I moved to Wappenham Lodge, I hated it. We had no electricity and no telephone. I said I wasn't going to stay but I am still here. (Nora was to live there for 68 years!) Because we weren't sure what would happen in the future, we bought Wild House Farm near Syresham in case we had to leave Wappenham Lodge.

When Denis Rush died, Mrs Rush said that the Lodge would have to be sold. We sold Wild House Farm and bought Wappenham Lodge Farm.

One of my tasks was to milk the cows. It was all done by hand in the dark. During the war years you dare not have the light on in the cowshed. I remember one night, I was milking the cows in the dark when Bill Mawle opened the cowshed door and frightened me to death. I thought the Germans had arrived!



At that time we used to have lamps, the old Aladdin type, and the mantles would block up if you weren't careful. We had to cook too on an old black range, which we had to clean with black lead. It used to smoke and so we put a biscuit tin lid on it. In time we bought a Calor Gas cooker. There were no bathrooms or loos in the house so you had to go outside, and when I had Angela and Shirley we would light the copper to heat the water and bath them in a tin bath."

Nora's account finishes here. Josh and Nora had been married for eleven years before the girls were to come along.

Nora and Josh were of a farming generation that is now leaving us. As a farming couple, Nora's contribution was just as important as Josh's. Josh had a terrible accident in the 1950s, when ploughing. He was taken to the Oxford Radcliffe hospital and the surgeon's answer was to remove his leg. The

quality of the rest of Josh's life proved that they were wrong, but I suspect that only his agricultural language deterred them, and he kept his leg. His recuperation must have been a hard time for Nora also.

Nora and Josh followed on from a generation of farmers who were not conscripted into the wars. German farmers were conscripted, and the Russians merely murdered theirs. Both populations starved after the wars, as they had no farming skills left. This is world they existed in.

To listen to my neighbours, they had seven working days in each week, and twenty-four working hours in each day. Since I knew them, their farm had always been a livestock farm. Josh would constantly be driving past in various cattle lorries during my early days at Poplars Farm, and I'm sure Nora would be playing her part in loading and unloading livestock. They used Ashford market in Kent to trade at, and in the days before the M1 it was said that if Josh was not driving down Park Lane across London by 7.30am, he was late!



Farming was clearly Nora's passion. She kept and reared poultry and pigs and, to gain extra income to support the family, sold both eggs and cockerels in the neighbouring villages. She greatly enjoyed looking after the cattle and was very proud when in the early 1980s she and Josh won the prize for the heaviest bullock in the country.

Whereas she loved farming she was not a great enthusiast for housework. Nonetheless, Nora was by all accounts a splendid cook and Josh and the girls would be greeted with a cooked meal when either returning from school or from working on the farm. This faithfulness was only broken when Nora had to take care of her father, when he was seriously ill.

It took many long years of hard work for Nora and Josh to build up the farm. They regularly reinvested any gains they may have made by improving and updating their buildings, stock and provisions. It was indeed a labour of love. For many of you whose livelihoods are also rooted in farming, it is perhaps more possible to appreciate the devastation and despair that Nora and Josh will have felt as they watched their life's work go up in flames. In 1993 much of the farm outbuildings at Wappenham Lodge were burnt to the ground. The feelings of helplessness as all their hard work appeared to collapse around them must have been overwhelming. This sadly culminated in Josh having a stroke shortly afterwards. Nora as always rose to the occasion, and with the support of the girls, successfully nursed Josh at home, which indeed is what he wanted, until he died in 1997.

*(NB the preceding 3 paragraphs are included with the kind permission of Will Adams and are an extract from the words spoken at Nora's funeral)*

Many times I would visit them both for a cup of tea, and to mull over the hard times and farming's poor returns. They were from the post-war era when senior politicians knew about and valued farming. Unlike today's politicians, who only see the countryside as something to drive through and admire in photographs. Today's TV programmes concerning farming are a mere shallow extension of Blue Peter.

As I have said, Nora and Josh were of a generation gone; their names might be forgotten in time but maybe history will remember them.

Aidan J

## DAVID M (1932-2011)

David passed away on 5th April, less than six weeks after being diagnosed with cancer. Although only a resident of Wappenham for the last nine years, he made many friends here and will be sadly missed by many of its inhabitants. He was always happy to stop and chat to people during his walks around the village, on a wide range of interests and topics.



David was born in 1932 in Loughton, Essex. At the outbreak of the Second World War, he was evacuated to Llandudno in north Wales along with his parents and elder brother Peter. It was during his time in Wales that he lost his father to cancer, when David was just ten years old. As his father had been a Mason, the organisation arranged for David to be educated at the Royal Masonic School in Bushey, Hertfordshire, and after he left school they then paid for his studies at college in Walthamstow in north-east London. Originally signing up to study architecture, he changed course after a year to become a quantity surveyor and obtained his degree. Following his national service, which had been deferred until after his exams, he joined a firm of quantity surveyors in London where he remained all his working life, eventually becoming a partner and director of the firm, and rising to become a Fellow of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.

His work meant he often had to travel all over the world on contracts - Liberia, Libya (pre-Colonel Gadaffi), Iran (pre-Islamic Revolution) and Colombia being among the more unusual destinations. In the 1950s and 1960s when global travel was far less common than it is now, the sight of a white Englishman working abroad was unusual enough, never

mind one that took an active interest in the local way of life and wanted to immerse himself in it. However, David loved visiting new places and meeting new people to chat to them and learn about their culture. Indeed, talking to one particular girl Graciela (aka Chela) in his office in Colombia led to them marrying before the end of his two-year contract was up, upon which they both returned to England to start their new life and a family together.

On his retirement in 2002, David and Chela moved from Loughton to Wappenham to be close to their daughter Christine and her new-born son in Syresham. Over the last nine years his grandchildren Daniel and Emily have become just as familiar faces in the village as the children who live here, accompanying their "Grandad" to the shop or on walks around the village and across the fields. After a lifetime of travelling the world, David was happy to settle down and enjoy his retirement and his grandchildren in a quiet English country village, and loved his time here. His free time also allowed him to indulge in the other great passion of his later years, digital photography. Interested in the art of photography since his childhood, he embraced the new digital technology enthusiastically and with great skill. Many of his pictures appeared in the newsletter over the years, and his memory will live on in future issues, through the pictures he provided that serve as the



headings for various sections.

The news of his illness came as a great shock to him, but as with everything else in life he took it calmly and with fortitude, saying that he had had a good and long life and had no regrets. His one wish was that he could see out his days in his home rather than a hospice or clinic, and surrounded by the people he loved, and this he achieved - he was mercifully spared any serious pain for virtually the entire time, and was

able to watch television, eat chocolates, and receive visitors and chat and joke with them. His family will miss him very much, and would like to thank everyone in Wappenham for their messages of support and sympathy.

Richard M

## LETTERS

### To all our kind sponsors

On Sunday May 8<sup>th</sup> Georgia F, Olivia B and Lucy M from Wappenham all took part in 'Canter for a Cure' on their ponies Aero, Seamus and Chucky. The event was a huge success, with over 300 riders walking, trotting and cantering through the countryside on a 12-mile hack near Milton Keynes. Thank you for all the money you helped us raise. All of the money is going to a great new charity – 'Cancer + Bio-Detection Dogs'. Did you know that cancer cells release small amounts of volatile substances and that Cancer Detection Dogs are trained to identify different types of cancer from urine samples?



We raised nearly £1000, which is really fantastic – thank you very much for all your contributions.

With all our thanks  
Georgia + Aero, Olivia +  
Seamus, Lucy + Chucky

Dear Wappenham,

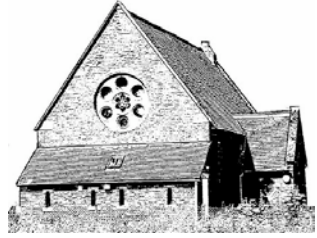
Brookside is an area of Wappenham that many of our villagers like to promenade or walk their dogs in. During the six years that I have been living here, the concrete and metal street fencing has become damaged, dangerous to traffic and an eyesore. Whilst I was driving through neighbouring Moreton Pinkney, I took the attached photograph of the lovely street furniture (fencing) that has been erected there. I have contacted the company that were responsible for the supply and fixing of this and have received a quotation for supply of the same to replace the existing. With your support I should like to take this a step further, so I am canvassing you all hoping to gain your backing when I approach whichever body that is responsible for repairs to the street.

I have attached pictures of the Moreton Pinkney street scene, and look forward to receiving your comments.

Mike L  
wappenham@tiscali.co.uk



## VILLAGE HALL NEWS



Well, for those who came along to The New Perspectives production of 'Lark Rise To Candleford' on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April, what a treat this highly talented and original theatre group had for us. The three excellent actors also happened to be versatile musicians playing instruments as diverse as the trombone, banjo, violin and penny whistle; they were also accomplished singers, able to harmonise and sing in parts unaccompanied. With only a simple backcloth and the clever use of lighting, the three actors took us through the early life of Laura Timms, reminiscing about the lives of the cottagers at Lark Rise, the salesmen who visited the hamlet and the horrors of school inspections. With only a kitchen table and wooden trunk as props, they were able to create scenes of such authenticity and colour of that you almost felt part of that village life. We are so very fortunate to be able to tap into professional theatre of this calibre, and must thank South Northants Council for continuing to subsidise live performances during these tough economic times – I know that many local authorities have ceased this type of sponsorship.

While in thanking mode, I would like to say a 'big thank you' to everyone who came along to the Village Hall Spring Cleaning weekend. Everything we had planned to do was achieved, including re-laying membrane and putting down more gravel, clearing the back of the hall of weeds and burning an accumulation of rubbish. Thanks must go to Karl, who supplied the interior paint courtesy of Brewers Ltd and the muscle, along with Dave L, and re-decorated the lower half of the walls. We still have two outstanding projects to complete before the Barn Dance. Firstly we plan to finish laying membrane and gravel at the front of the Hall

from the front door across to the tarmac path and secondly we are getting rid of the old wooden tables and aim to purchase new folding ones. I have already received a number of enquiries about the old tables, so I think we have found homes for them all without the need for another bonfire!

At the **Open Gardens** on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June, we will be working with The Friends of St Mary's to provide teas in the lovely gardens of Clarissa House, home of Jane and Howard M. Let's hope the weather is kind to us. We are hoping for a few home-made cakes, so if you feel up to the task please contact me via [wappenham@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:wappenham@tiscali.co.uk). The Village Hall will be open and the toilets available, in particular the disabled facilities with access around the back of the building.



On Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> June we will be holding another **Barn Dance**. Again David W has kindly agreed to donate a marquee plus wooden flooring and straw bales for seating. As usual this will go up at the back of the Hall. We are very thankful for David's generosity, for without this we would not be able to afford this extra facility. Rob G is running the pig roast and the committee are providing the salads – a vegetarian option will be available.

This year we have a band called Pandemonium entertaining us. They come highly recommended and are made up of three musicians plus a caller. There will be a bar run by the committee selling local ales, lager, wine and soft drinks. Tickets can be purchased from committee members and are priced at £12.50 per person.

**COME ALONG.....HAVE SOME FUN .....**  
**SUPPORT OUR VILLAGE HALL.**

And finally ..... don't forget that the deadline for photographic entries for the **Wappenham calendar** is only the end of next month. So if you have some snaps on your camera and have been meaning to send them off, don't leave it until it's too late. Jane French and other members of the Towcester Camera Club have kindly agreed to be our independent judges, so now we just need your entries. You can send them to me via [wappenham@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:wappenham@tiscali.co.uk)

If your picture is selected, you will win a free 2012 Wappenham calendar. We plan to have them on sale at the fete in September. Just right for an early Christmas present purchase!

See you at the Barn Dance.

Jenny S – Secretary  
Village Hall Management Committee

## **WAPPENHAM RECREATION ASSOCIATION (WRA)**

### **Summer Fete**

The WRA will continue to organise the fete, but with the Village Hall and St Mary's Church still involved in the raffle, obtaining prizes and selling tickets. The money raised by the raffle will again be split equally between the committees and the money from the remaining fete stalls etc would be split as in previous years, with the majority going to the WRA, with a donation to Brigadier K's charity.

The fete this year will take place on Saturday the 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2010 and will be the 7<sup>th</sup> year we have run the fete. Some thought will need to be given to the continued running of the fete to allow others to retire for a while!

## Long-term Future

We have held a meeting with Will A and Mike P of the Village Hall to review a second submission to the Church to lease a section of land above the village hall as a combined community space. It was agreed that as our approach was rejected, that the new approach should come from the Village Hall and a letter has been drafted to send to the Church and their agents.

Dene A  
Chairman WRA Committee

## PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Notes from the PC Chairman:

Dear All

OK, a bit of a change to my usual pattern: I am going to do the routine business first. Shall I start with planning? Why not.

6 High Street applied for single-storey rear extension, which the PC supported by SNC (South Northants. District Council) refused. The reasons for refusal were quite detailed, so hopefully if the applicants reapply they will have some very good guidance on what will finally get SNC sign-off.

Greens Park, Woodend, applied for an extension to an agricultural building (just in our parish); the PC supported it with SNC's verdict not yet published.



Beeches House, Greenside applied for a single-storey rear extension and conversion of a barn into living accommodation. The PC had no objection but made some comments in relation to the proposed materials to be used. We are still awaiting SNC's verdict.

Having scoured my minutes, this is all I can find since I wrote to you last - I am a little surprised, as it feels as if I have been working on planning issues for the last few weeks. Well maybe I have, but not in the traditional sense. As you know, one of the more constructive things the PC does is to try and protect the village from inappropriate developments. Don't get me started on the Village Design Statement, as SNC are still 'in the process' which, as we know, has only taken them six years so far. When we get the VDS adopted, then much of what we want to protect and develop in the village will be supplementary planning guidance, which is great. Not so great is one of SNC's most recent cost-cutting activities. This involves changes to the Council's Scheme of Delegation. In other words (and I paraphrase here) whatever the planning office want to do, they can do! They don't have to refer contested plans to the Development Control Committee; they can decide to overrule all objections and pass plans under delegated powers. Parish Councils in SNC, NCALC and CPRE are not sure of the wisdom behind this change so we intend to challenge it and see how we get on. I will keep you posted.

By the time you read this, your Parish Annual Meeting will have taken place. Many thanks to all you who attended (or gave apologies); although there were only 15 villagers the meeting was still vibrant and interesting – we missed all of those who didn't support the village meeting. Remember, this was not a PC meeting but YOUR village meeting. You get back out of the village what you put in. Importantly, you all missed an update from the Wappenham Community Shop

Action Group on how things are progressing. The Steering Group has already met on a number of occasions to agree what their aims are and how to go about identifying 'the need', 'the desire' and subsequent to this, the opportunity. I hope you will all have received their survey and have duly completed it and returned it. The survey is the first step in the process of identifying need/desire and potential viability. I am sure there will be may updates in the near future and we will attempt to keep you as well-informed as possible.

If you voted recently, you will know by the distinct lack of boxes into which you had to place a X that there were no Parish or District Councillor elections. In both instances candidates were elected unopposed. Unfortunately we only had 4 nominations for the PC, but after advertising the desire to co-opt at the PC AGM (which was straight after the Village Annual Meeting) we had three willing volunteers, so I am very pleased to report we have a full complement of Councillors. *[See end of article for names – Ed.]*

I would like to finish with some well-deserved thanks. This thanks goes to my fellow Parish Councillors. I have been on the PC 10 years now and one thing I cannot get away from is how much more work is involved now than a decade ago. Risk Assessments. Method Statements, Financial Due Diligence, Standing Orders, Insurance Profiling, Employment Law: the list goes on. All the things we have seen change and intensify in modern business apply equally to your local PC. Your Councillors work as volunteers and give their time and skills freely to try and help keep the village the sort of place we all want to live in. I know the effort they put in and I would like to thank them for all their time and hard work.

Finally, one special note of thanks needs to go to our Parish Clerk – Liz H. She has the unenviable task of not only trying to keep track on all we discuss in meetings, but also to keep

us correct on points of law, best practice, what we may and may not do and much, much more. As our roles as Councillors have become more complex, the Clerk's role has become even more involved and important. Liz does an outstanding job for your PC, and has made my role as Chairman over these past few years a more rewarding one. I would like to personally thank her for her dedication and help.

Have a great summer – they are forecasting a hot one!

With kind regards  
Paul F

**Current Parish Councillors:**

Dianne W (Chairperson)  
Paul F (Vice Chair)  
Philip K  
Hilary W  
Howard M  
David W  
Michael P

**Clerk:**

Liz H, [wappenham@stationhousehelmdon.co.uk](mailto:wappenham@stationhousehelmdon.co.uk)

**South Northants District Councillor (Washington Ward):**

Peter Davies



## **The Astwell Benefice**

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



### **CHURCH NEWS**

#### *Where do we find our wisdom?*

When we are looking for spiritual inspiration, we often assume this can only be found in the great works of the past: the Saints and holy people whose lives are an example to us all. Yet we are surrounded by wisdom, sometimes from the strangest of sources. We can listen to a popular song and from it take a thought or an idea that can feed our imaginations and serve us for meditation through the day. For example, Cole Porter's song called *Night and Day* is sung by a lover to his beloved telling them that they are aware of the loved-one's presence throughout the day and night. 'Night and day you are the one. Only you, beneath the moon, or under the sun. Whether near or far, it's no matter where you are, I think of you, night and day.' The lover goes on to describe his longing and yearning during the noise and silences of his days and what a torment his life is until their separation is ended and they can be together again.

This is not deep philosophy, but maybe it does express those feelings that we have all experienced at some time in our spiritual lives when God has seemed distant. The words from a popular song with the right sentiments for some may well lead to meditation and prayer. Perhaps if this seems a little 'way out', there is a precedent. Turn to the *Song of Songs* in the Old Testament and see how Solomon expressed his love for God.

## *From the Parish Registers*

### FUNERALS

Nora T	20 <sup>th</sup> February 2011
Doris Y	25 <sup>th</sup> February 2011
David M	20 <sup>th</sup> April 2011

## *Strictly Come Dancing Astwell Benefice Style 2011*

After last year's great success, we are now in the throes of planning our 2011 event. Syresham Village Hall and Social Club, together with the great help of Keith Watts and Adam Jeskins and their teams, provided us with the ideal location in 2010, so we shall be returning this October and November. We also hope to be able to hold the show on two evenings, thereby alleviating the disappointment of so many people who were not able to get seats last year.



I received lots of requests to take part in 2011 after the show in November last. If you would like to add your name to the list, please do get in touch with me.

## *St Mary's Coffee Monthly Mornings*

It has been a real joy to have so many folk come along on the first Wednesday in the month to the Coffee Mornings in 'The Outbuildings'. We have also been blessed by the kindness of a wide range of people so willing to help by serving and or baking cakes, and what delicious cakes they are!



As you will recall the aim is not to raise money but simply to feed back any small money we make into financing the event. If there is any money left over it will be donated to the

church's link charity, The Hope Centre and the charity, PSP (Progressive Supranuclear Palsy).  
Do join us if you can.

The Coffee Morning dates for the rest of the 2011 are:  
4<sup>th</sup> May, 1<sup>st</sup> June, 6<sup>th</sup> July, 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 7<sup>th</sup> September, 5<sup>th</sup> October, 2<sup>nd</sup> November and 7<sup>th</sup> December.

***Is the Church secure in Wappenham?  
Special Meeting  
29<sup>th</sup> June at 7.30 pm in the church***

There is seemingly no part of life that is not measured by *key indicators*. Whereas you may expect the church is a little more laid back in its approach to such matters, it also has to manage its resources effectively and so it too has key indicators at parish level: parish share and average attendance on a normal Sunday. Parish share is the financial request made on parishes by the diocese and average attendance speaks for itself.

Wappenham has struggled but just managed to meet its parish share in the past few years. Yet the present financial position and projections are not good.

Perhaps however the more worrying statistic is the attendance indicator. This now falls below the critical threshold of 2.5 % of the village population. The reasons for this are very clear. During the past six years 12 adults who were regular worshippers at church have now left the village, together with 10 children. In addition to this 5 adults who were also regular worshippers have died. This represents approximately 17% of the total population of Wappenham.

We must take heart in some ways that our problem is not greater than it is. Nonetheless, the question still remains, 'Is the church secure in Wappenham?' and the indicators would give a depressing answer.

I am very eager to discuss this further with parishioners and am offering the opportunity to do so on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June at 7.30 pm in the church. I am anxious about not using doom style language but I would not have called such a meeting if I did not think it was now very important.

Do please come along.

### *Church Youth Club*

I have been exploring the possibility of starting a Church Youth Club in Wappenham and have shared my thoughts with a number of parents and members of the Village Hall Committee. The responses have been favourable.

My proposal is that it would be monthly during school time and be held during the early evening, possibly 5.30 to 7pm or earlier.

It would however need to number of people to help run it and therefore I propose to find a way to get folk together to see if the idea is viable. If you are willing to support this proposal please do get in touch with me.

God bless,

Will    *Email:rector@astwellbenefice.co.uk*

## FRIENDS OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN

We will be carrying out what we hope are going to be minor repairs to the church roof in the next month or so. We will alert the village when the works are scheduled. If you see someone up there at any other time, please tell us!



The graveyard extension is now waiting for the autumn so that new bare-root hedging can be planted and the old hedge and fencing taken out – and then that project will be complete. Our gratitude goes to everyone who has been generous with time and funds to make this possible.

On Sunday 12 June the village opens up to the National Gardens Scheme. The Friends together with the Village Hall committee, are providing teas, on the terrace (our socially aspiring patio!) at the rear of Clarissa House with glorious views over the Northamptonshire countryside. All offers of cakes, biscuits and help on the day will be gratefully received.

Jane M  
Chair of the Friends of St Mary the Virgin Wappenham

## THE CHAPEL

### News from Slapton and Wappenham Independent Evangelical Church



Dear Friends,

We just wanted to give you a short update from the chapel.

We continue to have various preachers and pastors from all over the country visiting us each Sunday for our services in the morning at Wappenham at 10:45 and at Slapton Chapel in the evening at 18:00. We are very privileged to have the quality of people who come and share ministry with us. They are some of the most gifted preachers in the country. You are very welcome to join us. The regular congregation and members are a very warm and welcoming group of Christian people. Between 20 and 30 people regularly attend both our morning and evening services, and some travel up to 15 miles to come right here to Wappenham.

The Sunday school meets each week in the school room at the back of Wappenham chapel from 15:00 to 16:00 each Sunday afternoon. We welcome children who are ideally from 5 to 11 years old. They all share in a reading, some singing, a short prayer and various learning activities. Unfortunately last year we lost some of our regular children as the families moved away from the village. Those children who do come say how much they really enjoy themselves. Please do encourage your children to come, again they will be most welcome and will have a great time. If anyone has any questions please do ask postie Claire, who is one of the Sunday school teachers.

We have a midweek meeting on a Tuesday night at 19:30 held in the schoolroom each week. This is normally either a Bible study or a visiting missionary group from around the world.

It is a great opportunity to hear passages read from the Bible and have them explained in a clear way. We read from the Authorised Version, sometimes called the King James Bible, which is 400 years old this year. Some times we also read from the New International Version (NIV). Both Bible versions are basically translations from the original Greek and Hebrew manuscripts written just after the time of Jesus Christ. We have recently had a study entitled the Christian based on different weekly studies including: "The Christian Man", "The Christian Woman", "The Single Christian", "The Christian Family", "The Christian in the Workplace", and "The Christian and Money". All our talks are recorded; if anyone would like to borrow a free copy, please do not hesitate to ask me.

Once a month we have a Ladies' meeting, which is again held in the schoolroom on a Wednesday afternoon at 14:00. The details for this event are displayed on the noticeboard outside the chapel giving details of the visiting speaker. The meeting is always held by a lady and is for ladies only.

If anyone has any questions, please do not hesitate to ask us. Anyone, really everyone is welcome to come and join us for any of our weekly meetings.

With Best Wishes,

Richard K

– On behalf of Slapton and Wapenham Independent Evangelical Church

## HALF AN HOUR IN MAY

*Extracted from [www.aeshnacaerulea.blogspot.com](http://www.aeshnacaerulea.blogspot.com) on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2011. This is a predominantly MK-based natural history blog by Graeme W, who works for Enterprise Control Systems Ltd in Wappenham.*

I mustn't have been on a walk during my lunch break for years, but today the prospect was too tempting to ignore. The chilly easterly breeze of the last week or so had transformed into a gentler, warmer beast, a layer of cloud was taking the harshness out of the sun's glare and the opportunity to be out in the fresh air was calling to me on all frequencies.



Leaving the factory, a pleasant stroll through the village brought me to a footpath that headed across the valley. As roads and houses were left behind, the natural order began to restore itself, as the hedgerows were filled with the sounds of whitethroats (common and lesser), yellowhammers and chaffinches. From a distant copse, I could hear a blackbird singing his sweet song, whilst a chiffchaff kept up a relentless back beat.

The footpath crossed over a stream on a small wooden bridge and then headed out into a field of glowing oilseed in full bloom. As I neared the centre of this crop, the birdsong grew fainter and fainter until all I could hear was the monotonous buzzing of flies and the breeze moving softly through the flower heads. A yellow and green desert, almost devoid of diversity.

Dropping down to the river, crossed by means of a wide, sturdy bridge, the countryside came back to life and I was tempted to linger for a while and search the banks for

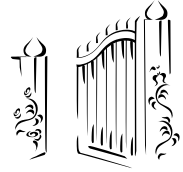


roosting dragons and damsels. Not today, unfortunately, so I had to be content with the song of a garden warbler and a glimpse of a brimstone butterfly as I crested the disused railway embankment and headed on up the other side of the valley.

The gradient was gentle, but I stopped momentarily when a shadow passed over me, turning to see a buzzard in a long, shallow glide towards a distant oak tree. Continuing on, up and up, through cereal fields yet to challenge for the skies, my route reached its highest point before turning back towards the village along a farm track. In the hedgerows here, were more yellowhammers and possibly a tree sparrow, if my ears did not deceive me.

Joining the surfaced road leading back across the valley, I returned over railway and river, to begin the steep climb back to the factory, topographically rather than metaphorically, obviously! Grateful that this part of my walk was in the shade of oak, field maple and hawthorn, and encouraged by a Willow Warbler and more Whitethroats, my destination was reached with a few minutes to spare. This allowed me to marvel at a mixed flock of birds overhead, presumably feasting on countless flies, rising in the heat of the day. Swallows, house martins, starlings and even a pied wagtail joined in the feeding frenzy, their calls following me back indoors as I returned to another world, a happier and invigorated soul.

## GARDENING NOTES



One of the things I have been doing in my garden this spring (or getting done as is mostly the case) is taking out dead shrubs. I expect many here will have done or are thinking of doing the same. Everyone I speak to about this has had their rosemary and bay bushes die on them; cistus and lonicera (the shrub related to honeysuckle) have also suffered. But I heard on Gardener's World recently that we should cut back a few branches on bay bushes and wait and see if the shrub comes back to life. Too late for me, but maybe not for you!

The bees are very much evident now, around the aquilegias, comfrey and wild flowers. I love the sounds this time of year – not just the bees, but the swallows nesting in Pat's barns next door, squeaking overhead as they swoop around the insects in the sky; the baby starlings peeping away as they hear their parents fly towards them with more food (peeps getting deeper as they grow bigger). I'm glad that I left the strip of board someone put underneath the gutter for the birds to build nests in. It's worth all the mess to see and hear all that life in the garden.



So maybe this time of year is one where, as well as weeding like mad, planting vegetables, and digging beds, (!) we should have a look at what wildlife we have in the garden and what more we want, so that we start setting up the garden with this in mind.

Wildlife ideas:

- nettles for butterflies to feed on in a spare sunny patch
- flowers and shrubs for bees and butterflies in the flowerbeds (buddleia, sedum, marjoram, honesty,

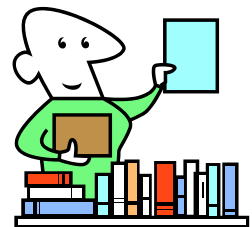
among others, are good for butterflies; something in bloom from early spring to autumn for the bees)

- shelter round water features and a handy perching shelf, so birds will feel able to bathe there, and frogs can get out of the pond and eat your slugs in peace
- have you any birds nesting? If not, where could you put nestboxes, or even a native species hedge?

Then when it's not so busy, you can put some of your plans into action!

Jane H

## MOBILE LIBRARY REVIEW



The County Council have carried out a review and are proposing to cut the mobile library service as from August 2011 from 4 routes to 2, leaving out Wappenham. The consultation for this took place in January including whether people could be moved to the home library service 'Library to You' or use a static library. The Principal Librarian, West Area, says:

"...The proposal to reduce to two mobile libraries was approved by full Council in February 2011 and we began the process of transferring some customers to the Library to You service and at the same time making sure that customers who completely rely on the mobile library will still have this service.

The new mobile library routes are based around these sole users of the service. Those customers who indicated, via our consultation or from our library data, that they actually do or

could use another static library will no longer have an allocated stop on the new routes.

We would welcome your feedback on these new routes. If you would find it helpful to have a member of staff attend your Parish Council meeting to answer any questions, we would be pleased to do so.

In order for us to consider your feedback we will need your response by **Thursday 30 June 2011**. Please respond either by post to:

Mobile Library Review

Daventry Library

North Street

Daventry Northants, NN11 4GH

Or by email to [rdavison@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:rdavison@northamptonshire.gov.uk) putting "mobile review" in the subject box.

Thank you for your assistance with this matter."

Robyn Davison  
Principal Librarian West Area

## **BUSES UNDER THREAT – HAVE YOUR SAY ABOUT ALTERNATIVES.**

This is a response from the NCC to my query about exactly what they were proposing for public transport to Wappenham.



Jane, We're looking at two different options for Wappenham. One of those is to have a CallConnect or Dial-a-Ride service that operates from Brackley. This would allow residents from Wappenham - and all of the other villages labelled with a number 6 on the map that you have seen - to phone up and

book a journey on the bus/minibus to Brackley. From Brackley you would then be able to change onto the regular public buses to go on to other places.

The other option is to operate a bus one day a week that would take people into town (most likely on market days when demand is higher). Details such as costs have yet to be finalised. During this consultation we would like to hear from people about which of those would be better and if the market day bus is preferred, which town is the preferred destination. We would then look at delivering the best scheme we can with the resources that we've got. If CallConnect is used, it will be similar to the current service in the northeast of the county. More details of that are available from <http://www.wellandcallconnect.co.uk/> and I have attached a leaflet about that scheme [*call me if you'd like a copy – Ed*].

I hope that clears up some of your questions.

Regards, Transport Planning and Development Team  
[YouChoose@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:YouChoose@northamptonshire.gov.uk)

*[NB: Consultation for the proposals was due to end on May 27<sup>th</sup> so this is for information only – Ed.]*

## **CURRENT BUSES FROM WAPPENHAM**

Every day but Sunday	7.30 to Banbury, departs Banbury 17.45
Monday	9.30 to Banbury, departs 12.30
Tuesday	10.20 to Towcester, departs 12.40
Wednesday	10.20 to Northampton, departs Northampton 13.30
Thursday	9.49 to Banbury, departs 13.30
Friday	10.20 to Brackley, departs 12.35 (Tesco) and 12.40 (Market Place)

Saturday

11.00 to Northampton, departs  
15.00

Saturday

9.00 and 12.30 to Banbury, departs  
13.40 and 16.30

BLAKESLEY & DISTRICT AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

## **BLAKESLEY SHOW**

**Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> August 2011**

Hootens Farm, Blakesley, Towcester, NN12 8RT

By kind permission of Trevor Brown and the Sheppard Family

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Further information: Liz Black, Honorary Secretary, 01327 263186

## **Croft Stores**

**Your local village store – now expanded, from July.**

- **larger chilled foods area for greater meal choice**
- **large selection of papers, magazines & cards**
- **fresh bread daily - instore & from Oliver Adams**
- **Calor Gas stockist**
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