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March 1982

OUT OF REACH



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OUT OF REACH
COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

Issue No 65

EDITORIAL

March 1982

This month you will find an envelope for contributions to Dr Barnardo's Homes Annual Appeal. I do hope that you will agree with me that it is one of the most worthwhile of causes. Hopefully we have all enjoyed happy childhoods and in turn provide happy and secure homes for our children. It is a very sad fact that thousands of children, for a variety of reasons, do not have such a good start in life. These days many orphaned and abandoned children have the chance of a happy upbringing in Dr Barnardo's Homes, whereas not so many years ago they would simply have scraped an existence in the streets, or ended up in the Workhouse. I shall be calling to collect the envelopes during the first two weeks in March. If you happen to be out when I call, could you please drop them through my letterbox before the 14th March?

I am delighted that yet another anonymous contributor has this month replied to our regular anonymous contributor concerning his article last month - "An Anglo-Saxon Joke". Although there seems to be some disparity between the writers, it shows a very healthy interest in material in the magazine. Has anyone any clues to the meaning of the intriguing pseudonym "Balaena"?

I would like to extend grateful thanks to Mr Clarke of "Petals", who has very kindly offered to join our long-depleted band of typists. I am sure the regular typists will be pleased to hear this piece of news!

The Sunday School party last month was once again a great success, with slides, games and a fine spread. Newcomers to the village may not be aware that there is a children's Sunday School in the village, so I will take this opportunity to remind you that it is held every Sunday at 10.30 a.m. in the Church, and Miss Whitehead would be very pleased to welcome any new children along.

Congratulations to Anita and Ray Folkes on their Silver Wedding on March 2nd. Welcome back to the Parr family who have moved back into Ditchfield. The next Fair Meeting will be on March 11th at 8.00 p.m. in the Village Centre. There will be a Jumble Sale in the Village Centre on Saturday March 27th at 3.00 p.m.

Kay Pote

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THE INTER P T A

This short article is to remind readers of what the Inter P T A is, its connection with The Parents and Friends of Swaffham Prior School and to bring you up to date with the activities of the organisation.

The Inter P T A arose as a result of a meeting at Parkside Community School two years ago. This meeting was called because we were threatened with severe cuts in the Education budget and it was thought that parents and others would want to express their concern; they did - the meeting was very well attended.

It was decided to form a representative body for parents and guardians of children at all primary and secondary schools in the Cambridge area. Special schools are also represented and other concerned individuals also give their support. The aim was, and still is, to further the case for maintaining adequate financial provision for schools by keeping the necessary authorities aware of our concern; this is backed up by collecting data on proposed cuts, the effects of cuts imposed and by forging links with relevant bodies or persons who might be helpful in the campaign.

The Inter P T A has no party political affiliations.

Since the Inter P T A was set up, information has been collected and been circulated regularly at meetings and by post to local P T A representatives. Quarterly meetings now take place between Inter P T A committee members and members of the County Council (both county councillors and paid officers of the Education Authority). By this means views can be expressed to the council earlier and in a relatively amicable way.

Funding of the organisation is voluntary. Obviously it is costly to hire a room for meetings, pay for circulating information and to advertise the aims and action of the group. Thus all P T As are asked to contribute an amount which they feel is reasonable. Amounts vary according to the size of the school and the extent of parental concern. Swaffham Prior Parents and Friends have recently contributed £25. Part of this money will go towards the cost of preparing information leaflets for the whole of Cambridge-shire.

We hope that you, as parents and as members of the community, will agree with our concern over the need for standards of education

Continued...

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THE INTER P T A (continued)

which will provide an employable and informed work force in the future.

Members of our P T A and particularly Kay Pote and Jenny Johnson who are the representatives to the Inter P T A, would be pleased to hear your views or answer any questions.

Jenny Johnson

BOTTISHAM VILLAGE COLLEGE MUSIC SOCIETY

Friday 12th March 1982 at 8.00 p.m.

THE CAMEO SINGERS

The six members of the Cameo Singers, Joyce McColl, Gillian Mason, Janet Heron, Rosemary Johnson, Beryl Wickham and Anne Datson; are well known for their contributions to opera performances in Bottisham. The first half of our March concert will revive many memories with excerpts from operas including Carmen and The Marriage of Figaro. In the second half we are promised Brahms' Gipsy Songs and other items in a lighter vein making an evening's entertainment with something for all tastes.

Tickets £1.50 (members £1.00) at the door

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FROM THE VICAR

Be My Valentine

A recent newspaper article indicating that the production of Valentine Cards has now reached the proportions of a minor industry, with a turnover of four millions annually, led me to try to unearth the origins of this delightful, though from the male viewpoint, highly dangerous custom.

The results were interesting. The custom sadly seems in fact to have no personal connection whatever with the priest by the name of Valentine put to death for his faith just outside Rome about 269 A.D. The connection seems to be limited to the date.

Valentine died on February 14th. The 15th, however, was the date of a very ancient Roman festival, the Lupercalia, in honour of the woodland god of fertility, Faunus, otherwise known as Lupercus. Goats and a dog were sacrificed at the Lupercal, the cave on the Palatine, one of the seven hills of Rome, in which Romulus and Remus, the legendary founders of the city, were said to have been suckled by a wolf (lupus). Two young pagan priests were smeared with the blood of the sacrifice, and clad in the skins of the slain goats; they then ran a purificatory lap of honour, so to speak, round the hill, with strips of goat's hide in their hands. Women stationed themselves round the course to receive blows from these thongs, which were believed to produce fertility. The thongs were called 'februa', i.e., means of purification, and the month of the festival was called 'Februarius', our February, the month of purification. (There is a glancing reference to the idea in Shakespeare's Julius Caesar, I.ii.8-11)

This takes us a long way from Valentine Cards, so I merely slip in this information by way of bonus. But the custom of sending them will go on, however shaky its connection with St Valentine. So we might ask whether its continuation is merely one of those pieces of nonsense which help to make our life bearable, or whether there may be more to it.

Pagan customs died hard and slowly in Christian times: (this particular one wasn't finally suppressed until about 494 A.D.). Its persistence, superstition aside, seems to me one of those lingering witnesses to the blessed sanity of the natural pagan mind about the whole matter of the equality of the sexes, of which the church was fast losing sight at the end of the 5th century, and is only now seriously trying to recover.

So perhaps Valentine Cards can do even more than remind us that, behind the scenes, women finally rule the world as well as the roost: they remind the benighted male ego that they are actually channels of grace, 'the grace of life', as St Peter him-

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FROM THE VICAR (continued)

self, the married apostle, splendidly called it, giving us an equality together in Christ which has been one of the very richest fruits of Christian civilization.

May I say a warm Thank-you to those who, in response to my remarks last month about our financial commitments, have offered to contribute covenanted subscriptions. May I also thank those who have similarly increased their giving through our ordinary Sunday collections. We tend to get a little depressed by a Quota of £1200. Maybe you will take heart from the news that a friend rang the other evening to tell me that their's had now risen to £14,000.

Lenten Appeal

We have decided to give our Lenten offering this year to the Missions to Seamen, earmarked particularly for their mission stations on the East Anglian coast. I hope to be distributing envelopes before the beginning of Lent. Would you kindly give them to Mrs Joyce Harrison at Easter.

JKB

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FROM THE CHURCHES

Worship in March : St Mary's and Reach

- 7th LENT II
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (Reach)
9.30 a.m. Matins and Eucharist (St Mary's)
6.30 p.m. Evensong (Reach)
- 14th LENT III
9.30 a.m. Parish Communion (St Mary's)
11.00 a.m. Family Communion (Reach)
6.30 p.m. Evensong (St Mary's)
- 18th 7.30 p.m. Deanery Confirmation: St Mary's, Burwell
by the Bishop of Ely.
- 21st LENT IV: Mothering Sunday
9.30 a.m. Children's Eucharist (St Mary's)
11.00 a.m. Children's Eucharist (Reach)
6.30 p.m. Evensong (St Mary's)
- 25th ANNUNCIATION OF THE B V MARY
7.30 p.m. Holy Communion (St Mary's)
- 28th LENT V: PASSION SUNDAY
9.30 a.m. Parish Communion (St Mary's)
11.00 a.m. Family Communion (Reach)
6.30 p.m. Evensong (St Mary's)

NB Will you please note that we shall be transferring the children's eucharists from the 4th to the 3rd Sunday, so as to coincide with Mothering Sunday.

STAINE HUNDRED

The next meeting of the Staine Hundred - the local history society - will be on Wednesday, 7th March, when the Revd L A Marsh of Fen Ditton will talk about 'The Raising of the "MARY ROSE"'. This is a change to the details previously announced in the Society's programme. The meeting will be in the Lecture Room at Bottisham Village College at 7.30 p.m.

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Dear Editor,

It seems to have become a convention among our home-grown historians to remain anonymous; I too shall observe the convention of mystery.

I must take issue with some of the remarks in "An Anglo-Saxon Joke" in your last number. The chapel-of-ease of St Etheldreda was certainly not on Church Hill; there is good evidence to suggest it was exactly where you would expect it to be, near the old centre of West Reach, the Drying Green. The late Colin Washtell found a large quantity of dressed Barnack ragstone in the garden of "White Roses", some of it shaped as voussoirs for arches; the geometry of the stones indicated a date sometime in the Fourteenth Century. One stone - probably a corbel - was carved with the crude likeness of a face in the style of the early Fourteenth Century. Moreover, we found traces of a ground plan which would suggest a smallish, non-cruciform building - but with a crypt - abutting onto Little Lane. The name Church Hill is not particularly old - unlike Barston Drove, which name goes back to 1283 at least - and probably denotes that it was Church property.

The quarries on Church Hill have certainly removed a lot of settlement sites with the building stone. But they are unlikely to be Roman; the main period of activity was between the Twelfth and Seventeenth Centuries. Extensive settlement so far from water is in any case unlikely.

The oldest settlements in Swaffham Prior include sites on top of the scarp as well as on the Fen edge. Your contributor may not be aware of the finding of an Anglo-Saxon burial ground of the pagan period on the line of the new bypass. All the available evidence suggests that the Anglo-Saxons were quite happy to live near their departed relatives.

Two churches in one churchyard are unusual but not unparalleled elsewhere. The usual reason for this phenomenon is not doctrinal difference - this hardly existed before the Fifteenth Century - but simple piety. A village may be composed of two - or more - lordships; as these lordships increase in wealth, the holder of one may (and often did) regard it as his pious duty to give of his wealth by maintaining a priest by a rectory on the manor and building a church to the Glory of God. Until the Puritan Revolution, as is

Continued...

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known, both St Mary and SS Cyriack and Julitta had separate tithe rolls. There is also evidence that the advowsons of the two churches were owned by, respectively, the Dean and Chapter of Ely, and the holder of Anglesy Abbey - after the Reformation, a layman. This simple explanation is consistent with the facts elsewhere and is far more probable than your contributor's suggestion.

Finally, Henry of Huntingdon and Thurstan. Henry is an agreeably scandalous chronicler, but is not very trustworthy when dealing with that long-lived problem of the relations between York and Canterbury. He was openly hostile to Thurstan; other chroniclers represent Thurstan as a gentle and saintly man. I do not think the story of the interruption of Mass at Glastonbury has any bearing on relations between the Normans and the English.

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FROM THE PARENTS AND FRIENDS OF THE SCHOOL

The School Concert is being held on Tuesday 30th March
 starting at 7.15 p.m.

PLEASE COME to the EASTER EGG BINGO on Thursday, 1st April.
 This will start at 7.15 p.m. and the entrance fee is 30p. There
 will be a lucky entrance ticket, and refreshments will also be
 served.

We would be very grateful for donations of Easter Eggs -
 this is a very popular evening and the more eggs we have for prizes,
 the more fun the evening will be. EVERYBODY WELCOME.

The sponsored walk being organised to raise money for the
 Swimming Pool Fund has been arranged for Sunday, 13th June. We
 hope that parents as well as the children will find sponsors and
 take part. PLEASE - all the family keep this date free and join in.

100 Club Winners (1982)

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COUNTY COUNCIL NOTES

Good News for Ratepayers

Perhaps it is partly the Spring-like weather, but things are definitely looking better at Shire Hall than they did when I wrote last month's notes. Not only is there now optimism about keeping this year's expenditure within limits, but next year's budget is taking shape with a modest degree of optimism that would have been laughed at a few months ago.

The full County Council has yet to approve the budget, but the powerful Policy Committee has already given its approval to a request from the Education Committee to make extra funds available for two vital projects:

1. To keep the maximum number of teachers in post by adjusting their numbers only to take account of smaller numbers of pupils; and
2. to ensure that any school leaver with the necessary qualification is assured of an appropriate training course at a Technical College, or College of Further Education.

Nevertheless, the Education budget will still be a tight one and increases in the school capitation allowances will only be made from economies in other aspects of the service. However, this has been registered as one of the first priorities.

Extra cash for road repairs will also be asked for and these additions will take the proposed budget expenditure close to the "Grant Related Expenditure" ceiling prescribed by Government.

It is unlikely that the County Council will wish to exceed this ceiling and incur a heavy penalty like the one being so narrowly avoided this year.

The nett result to ratepayers will probably be a 6p increase in the county rate. This would be an increase of 5.2%, compared with an inflation rate of 12%, and reflects well on the Administration's careful housekeeping and cautious use of balances.

Locally, the county increase will be offset by the planned reduction of 6.5p in the East Cambs. District rate. Thus the precept by each Parish Council will decide whether our total rates

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