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SAFETY ISSUES RAISED AGAIN AS HIGH STREET GRIDLOCK MOUNTS [TOP](#)



Esther Cornell explains why now is the time for action
IT is just over two years since a bus hit Zoe's pushchair while her mother, Tracey Russell, was taking her son to school. Tracey then started a campaign that involved a considerable amount of work which resulted in a petition being submitted to the South Cambridgeshire Traffic Committee. The resulting report recognised the problems of the village, but stated that no changes could be made to re-route the traffic as the Bartlow Road/A1307 junction was an accident black spot. The

Committee also stated that funding was unavailable to develop any long-term solutions. (The full report is available on the Linton News website). However, since the report was written it has become clear that Cambridgeshire County Council is managing to find funding to implement safety schemes and traffic management schemes in other villages while the problems that Linton residents face are not being taken seriously. Further action is required.

When the new term started in September the problems facing parents and their children were compounded by the lack of a school crossing officer. A series of near misses were reported by local residents. Although the current roadworks on the A1307 are diverting more traffic into the High Street, video evidence filmed in July shows the problems were just as severe then.

The sight of children being put in danger every day, buses reversing and buildings being hit became too much for some parents and village residents and a group attended a recent Parish Council meeting to find out what if any progress was being made. The Parish Council listened to their concerns and the public participation session was extended. The Parish Council informed the group that although they would be applying for funding to route

one of the buses on the Coles Lane/Back Road/Balsham Road loop the funding limit for this was £25,000.

However, they would be competing against every other village in South Cambs. for this money. There was little further that they could do as most matters were dealt with by Cambridgeshire County Council, although they did say that they gave the group their full support.

The problems are highlighted at peak times and it is clear that school traffic does add to the problem. But until we can provide safe routes for our children to reach school there is no way of convincing parents to walk. Many pavements are too narrow for pushchairs and wheelchairs and crossing the road in many parts of the village is hazardous. Many of the elderly have the same sentiments and feel threatened.

A member of Cambridgeshire Police visited the home of one concerned parent and viewed the photographic and video evidence. He advised that it was a traffic management problem and not purely a crossing problem. Crossing personnel are not authorised to direct traffic and with this in mind it seems obvious that a police presence is necessary when the children are going to and from school.

We must also appreciate that the High Street is part of a conservation area and the cheaper forms of traffic calming are not allowable. However, according to the Conservation department at South Cambs. District Council there is still a lot that could be done.

It is therefore time to raise the profile of Linton's traffic problems in an attempt to get something done. The subject has been an issue for over 20 years and as the village has grown the problem has just become worse. The most important requirement is making Linton safe for all pedestrians, whatever their age, and make it accessible to all.

It is time to stop looking back at what might have been, to stop speculating whose fault it was, who causes the problems or what the results may be.

Please note that a complaint by any member of this village directed to the County

Council has more impact than those made by our Parish Council.

Please complain to: Mr Alan Barnish, Chief Executive, Cambridgeshire County Council, Shire Hall, Castle Hill, Cambridge CB3 0AP, or email

Chief.executive@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Esther Cornell

"ARE LINTON'S INFANTS THE MOST UNSAFE IN BRITAIN?" [TOP](#)



IN October, ten people attended a Parish Council meeting to complain about the current chaos in the High Street. Their allotted 15 minutes stretched to an hour. The road works on the A1307, at the garage entrance, mean that traffic in the High Street has increased as people try to cut through Linton to avoid them. The situation along Back Road and Horseheath Road is horrendous. The school crossing patrol officer left in July. The search for his replacement began only in September. So far, there has been no successful applicant for the job. Even when someone is found it

will be at least six weeks before they can start, because of the security checks required. Meanwhile the school is still fighting for its promised security fencing. Are Linton's infants the most unsafe in Britain?

After Zoe's buggy was hit two years ago, I delivered, with the help of friends, letters appealing for other people's experiences and concerns to 2200 homes in Linton. I received over 80 replies, including two nasty ones maintaining that the High Street wasn't a problem and that the mothers were making a song and dance about nothing. I was more upset over these two than pleased about the rest. I read, catalogued and distributed summary copies to everyone I could think of at the County Council. I persuaded David Brace from the Highways Department to accompany me to the school. I was not disappointed by a display of buses and other vehicles mounting the pavements.

I collected 50 names on a petition that I presented to the Joint Area Environmental Committee on 5th December 2000. I was given three minutes to make a speech and apart from a letter acknowledging my speech was never directly contacted by them again, despite the Committee ordering an investigation into the High Street situation. I was co-opted onto the Parish Council Traffic Working party shortly after, only to discover in May of this year I was no longer on it.

Desperate to do something this August, before the start of the new school year, I made a formal complaint against Cambridge County Council to the Local Government Ombudsman for their failure to address pedestrian and public safety in Linton High Street. The County Council is now under investigation but to this date have not responded to the initial request for information.

Completely exasperated by the whole situation I have decided to make way for new blood. I like to think that I have run the first leg of a relay race and now I am passing on the baton not to one person but to a group of at least ten, who will have the force

to resist being fobbed off. I feel huge relief that I am not the only one feeling the burden of the desperate situation our children unknowingly face every school day.

HIGH STREET 2002: ONE WOMAN'S DIARY

[TOP](#)

FEBRUARY: A weekday, 8.40am. A van making a regular delivery at the vet's surgery reversed on the pavement and backed my 6-year-old son into a wall. When I complained to the company, a director called back, very concerned. The driver was taken off the route for a while. He is now back, regularly making the same manoeuvre, and the morning rush hour deliveries continue. Isn't it possible to make these deliveries at a different time?

March: A large Ford van clipped the back of my head with its wing mirror. I don't think the driver even realised he had done it.

July: My umbrella was torn out of my hand by a passing van in heavy rain.

October 7th: Late for school, I drove in and parked in the car park off Coles Lane. Waiting to cross to the school, a bus mounted the pavement in front of me to pass another bus coming in the opposite direction. I only just managed to pull my two children away from the wheels. If I had had one or both in a buggy, as a lot of parents do, they would have been hit because I couldn't have manoeuvred a buggy in time. That day I called the police and local newspapers.

October 14th: I parked in the High Street in order to shop at the Co-op. I came out to find that my car had been hit by a bus travelling down the High Street. Rather than stopping when she realised she had hit the car, the driver continued and scraped the full length of the vehicle. The noise was heard in the school playground. The rear bumper, electric wing mirror, two door panels and a wing were damaged and will have to be replaced. The driver's only comment: "You should have put your wing mirror in".

Karen Ennew

DON'T KEEP VILLAGE SECRETS TO YOURSELF

[TOP](#)

DO you have any good, recent village photographs, perhaps some you took at an event or just walking in the village? Cricket or football, a wedding, the traffic snarling up the High Street... anything that shows the village as it is today. And, especially, do you have any 'hidden views' of the village: the beautiful and interesting village views that are available to you but not open to casual public viewing?

If you do have such photographs, we want them to add to those being considered for a booklet showing our village. In addition, if you have ideas about what should be shown as characterising our village, please pass on those thoughts too. The booklet, expected to be printed in colour, will be delivered free to every home with the village survey questionnaires, probably during next spring. The photographs can be scanned

for computer use and returned quickly; or you could provide them as scans (either on disk or, if small enough, by e-mail). We can deal with technical quality when specific pictures are selected for printing. Four Linton Camera Club members are also taking photographs for the project, which may include an exhibition of village photographs. If you have photographs, please telephone John Keeble email jkeeble@clara.net (please do not email photographs immediately: large files are stopped at the ISP).

John Keeble

[Village Survey,](#)
[Camera Club,](#)

CAB PULLS UP IN LINTON

[TOP](#)



Eric Bowman from Citizens Advice helps a mother negotiate her return to work after maternity leave

AN outreach session is now being run in Linton by the Citizens Advice Bureau. Each Wednesday during the school term time a representative will be at the Family Resource Centre's Rock Café between 1.30pm and 3pm.

The CAB is a generalist advice agency, acting as a 'one stop shop'. This means you can discuss your situation as fully as you wish, however complex your problem or problems. Clients are interviewed by volunteer advisors who have undergone an extensive training programme. They will work to help you to identify possible courses of action that you may choose, and assist you in pursuing them. Free, independent, impartial and completely confidential advice and information is available on a range of subjects including:

- o Benefits
- o Consumer rights

- o Debt
- o Family & relationship problems
- o Housing
- o Legal issues
- o Employment

Money advice is available to clients who are experiencing debt problems or would like to know how to budget.

The bureau is a member of the Community Legal Service so the quality of its advice is regularly assessed. The bureau is happy to visit interested groups to talk about its work and to provide information on specific issues. A home visiting service is available to those clients who are unable to visit the Family Resource Centre due to disability or exceptional factors. Please telephone 01440 704012 or email bureau@haverhillcab.cabnet.org.uk for further information. LNT

PARISH COUNCIL REPORTS [TOP](#)

REPORTING difficulties have meant that we have not been able to include our regular report of the last month's Parish Council meetings. A full account of the October and November meetings will appear in the December issue of the Linton News. LNT

LUCRATIVE LEFTOVERS [TOP](#)

A LARGE audience welcomed Mrs Rachel Wroth to the Historical Society's meeting on 15th October. She gave an account of the life of college servants in the mid 18th century. Approximately 600 servants attended 400 Fellows and 1700 undergraduates. Servants were not employed or paid by the College. They had to rely on payment from the students or, in the case of cooks and gardeners, by the chef and chief gardener. There were shoe-blacks, bedmakers, gyps (male attendants), porters, coal porters, laundresses, errand boys and many more – most of whom worked for the colleges all their lives, with their children following in their footsteps. The work was very hard and tedious in general. Most lived in appalling lodgings near the colleges. Eventually some of these hovels were demolished to make room for new college buildings, and servants moved to better accommodation, part of which they rented out as lodging houses for students. Porters and their large families were accommodated in the Porters' Lodges.

The system led to much resourcefulness on the part of the head servants. The chef was in charge of buying food and so on – the Fellows had no idea of the cost of living in any case so anything 'left over' was sold off. This went on throughout the different departments, right down to the bedders and gyps who took any 'leftovers' from the students' rooms. It was noticed that when they died, some servants left quite large amounts of money from their money-making schemes over the years! By the end of the 18th century, servants were paid a wage and pension so that their reliance on payments by students ended.

Mrs Wroth asked for anyone with any information about ancestors who might have been college servants to contact her on 01223 365123.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 19th November, when Clive Paine will be talking about the development of seaside resorts in Suffolk. Joan Pearman

IS YOUR COMMUNITY GROUP LOOKING FOR SUPPORT? [TOP](#)

DID you know that all community groups in rural Cambridgeshire are eligible for free advice? Rural development charity Cambridgeshire ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England) has outreach workers who can help any community group in the county.

So whether you are hoping to create a community garden, purchase new playground equipment or set up a parents and toddlers group, we can provide you with advice on charity law, funding, legislation, insurance and many other topics. You don't have to be a registered charity and there is no charge for our time.

In the last year I have assisted community groups on a variety of topics from making village hall curtains fire retardant to completing funding application forms, and have helped community groups to gain over £60,000 worth of funding. If you would like further information please contact me on 01353 860850,

michelle.bootman@cambsacre.org.uk, or write to Cambridgeshire ACRE, 32 Main Street, Littleport, Ely, CB6 1PJ.

Michelle Bootman

COLOUR WI BEAUTIFUL [TOP](#)

MEMBERS and visitors were welcomed by Wendy Foster, President, to the October meeting. Birthday posies were made and distributed by Marjorie Blackman.

For the competition, each member was asked to enter up to three limericks beginning with the line 'There was a young man (or young woman) from (Linton)!' Members working in small groups composed several limericks, from which three were chosen.

It was decided that the WI should approach the Residents' Association of Finchams Close to canvass opinion about a bus shelter on Bartlow Road. The Parish Council has been asked if the WI can plant bulbs at the front of the Copperfields Estate. At the recent Jumble Sale at the Village Hall, the WI cake stall made £38.

The speaker for the evening was Dilly Bradford on 'Clothes and make up'. She brought along many different swatches of material and demonstrated on a volunteer that skin tone and hair colour can determine which shades suit us best. Members were asked to choose the colours that most flattered the volunteer. There were a lot of questions about make-up and wise choice of glasses. The vote of thanks was given by Clare Neville. The raffle was then drawn.

On Tuesday, 5th November Alex Todd will give an illustrated talk on 'People and Places in Papua New Guinea and Sierra Leone'. The meeting will be at 7.30pm at the

Social Centre, Coles Lane, and visitors are welcome. There will be a cake stall.
Anne Parry-Smith

DESPERATELY SEEKING MOLLY

[TOP](#)

Dear Editor,

I live in Canberra Australia. Recently I came across a diary of my great uncle John Piercy. Within that diary he made mention of a person called Evie (Evelyn Daphne) Hardwick, born in February 1905, whose mother was Ellen Hardwick. I set out to locate this person or her descendants. From my research it appears that Evie married one Richard G. Thompson in July, August or September 1931 in the district of Linton. I have also found out that they had a daughter, Molly Thompson, born in January, February or March 1933 in the district of Linton. It is possible that this lady is still living in the district of Linton but so far I have not been able to locate a marriage or if she has any other brothers or sisters.

I would be most interested to confirm these details and if Molly is still living to contact her. Perhaps some senior citizens might have a recollection of Molly and her parents?

While sending you this message may I send my warmest greetings to the residents of the village of Linton from the bush capital of Australia, Canberra.

Mike Piercy mcp2122@hotmail.com

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND THANKS

[TOP](#)

Dear Editor,

May we through your paper express our thanks to friends and families for the many cards, kindness, their presence at Mark's funeral and generous donation to the Samaritans.

Their support has given us great comfort and strength.

My family and I would like to say a big, big thank you to all you lovely people.

Lian Watkin and family

44 Chalklands

WHY NOT ONE WAY?

[TOP](#)

Dear Editor,

I travel on the 113 from Haverhill to Addenbrooke's every day and every day I see the problems in Linton High Street. Why is there a problem? An efficient one-way system with speed ramps could be introduced. This would turn your village high street into a 'safe and slow' high street. It would not spoil the character of your village and

your residents could walk through their village safely instead of giving way to vehicles.



There can be no good reason for rejecting this idea. The reason the scheme should go ahead is so that double-decker buses do not have to reverse up the road, a dangerous option when two meet head-on in a small high street packed with people. Another reason is to allow your mums the choice of walking or taking their children to school in comfort by car, which in the present circumstances seems a safer option. I witness mums trying to walk with children sometimes with an additional child in a buggy and they find it difficult to walk along a street littered with hazards which will only get worse in the winter months.

A one-way system would keep traffic moving slowly and there would still be room for cars to park on one side of the road without hampering the flow of traffic.

Delivery vans could still make their deliveries and incidents such as broken wing mirrors on parked cars might not occur. Will it take a death before someone makes a decision?

The very worst thing anyone can do, is to do nothing. The problem will not go away and the buses and delivery vans will keep on having to make dangerous manoeuvres.

Yvonne Deamer

Haverhill resident and 113 user

GRANTA PLAYGROUP DOES GREAT [TOP](#)

THE Linton Granta Playgroup was very pleased to receive an excellent Ofsted report following inspection in July. The report was very positive, and particularly commended the staff on the way children are cared for during playgroup sessions.

A very successful cake stall in Saffron Walden during October raised £104.14 for both playgroup and toddler funds. The committee and staff would like to thank all who supported the groups by making and buying the cakes. The next fundraising event is the Christmas Fair on 30th November (2-4pm) at the Social Centre.

Toddler groups run from 10-11.30am on Mondays and Tuesdays for 0-3year olds and Thursdays for children 18 months+ at the Village College – please just turn up.

There are a few places left at the playgroup: please contact Tanya Carter for more details.

Hilary Brooks

WHAT VIP REALLY STANDS FOR [TOP](#)

DID you know Linton has its own Social Group for the visually impaired? Originally instigated by Cam-sight, it is now run by local volunteers. It is referred to as VIPs in the Linton News and village diaries.

The group is usually held from 2.30 to 4.30pm on the second Tuesday of each month at the Chalklands Community Room.

So what happens? Usually a lot of happy chat, followed by a guest speaker or activity (possibly a quiz or similar) and a good cup of tea or coffee and biscuit. We make a charge of £1 per session, which entitles the member to a free raffle ticket for our regular small draw.

We are a friendly group offering the chance for the visually impaired to meet and talk with each other without feeling overwhelmed or insecure by strange surroundings.

We like members to bring a carer or driver if possible unless they are reasonably independent, but if that is not possible, there are always volunteers on hand to help during the afternoon.

In November we shall be holding an auction to raise money for our funds and in December volunteers cook a Christmas lunch for all! So if you would like to come along, or if you know someone who would like to come, please tell them about the group.

For any further information, please contact Roy Petter or Clare Neville

XMAS BAZAAR [TOP](#)

ST Mary's Church is holding a Christmas Bazaar at 2pm on Saturday 30th November in the Infants' School hall. Father Christmas will be in attendance so that each child who comes to visit him in his grotto can receive a gift. There will be a raffle and plenty of stalls for adults and children, including toiletries, mystery gifts, candles, bottles and second-hand books. Tea will be available!

MACMILLAN FUND [TOP](#)

THANKS to all who attended our Coffee Morning in aid of The Macmillan Fund. The admirable sum of £202 was raised on 27th September.

FLAXFIELDS FAYRE [TOP](#)

Our Xmas Fayre will be held at the Social Centre, Coles Lane from 1.30pm on Saturday 9th November.

Jacquie Wilson

CHURCH MUSIC [TOP](#)

LINTON Free Church is hosting a concert by the Rhys Scott Band from Bishop's Stortford at 7.30pm on Saturday 9th November in the Church Hall.

Rhys and his very talented group of musicians first performed in Linton last November at the conclusion of a very successful Youth Alpha study series for teenagers. Their very wide range of styles was well received and enjoyed by all, so we are delighted to welcome them back for a concert of well known music from the 60s, 70s and 80s. Whatever your age, there will be some music you recognise and enjoy!

Tickets are available from Rev. Alex Jacob.

Mark Newton

SINGALONG

[TOP](#)

CAMBRIDGESHIRE Libraries are pleased to announce that a new service for the under fives is to be launched at Linton Library. A story time will take place every Tuesday from 2-2.30pm from November 12th onwards. The emphasis will be on the fun and enjoyment of sharing songs, stories and rhymes. For further details please contact Linton Library 892227.

Anne Worthington

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

[TOP](#)

THE Historical Society is planning to research the social history of Linton from the 1930s onwards. If anyone can help with their reminiscences, memories or photographs of life in the village, especially during the Second World War years, please contact Pat Genochio

Joan Pearman

TEAM'S COLOURFUL NEW RECTOR

[TOP](#)



Mark Mills-Powell

ST MARY'S church is expected to be full on Wednesday 27th November for the induction of the new Rector, the Reverend Mark Mills-Powell. The service begins at 7.30pm. Everyone is welcome. Invitations will be sent to community leaders and church leaders from other denominations but the doors will be open to all. Do come and join the congregations of St Mary's and the four parishes that make up the Linton Team (Shudy Camps, Castle Camps, Horseheath and Bartlow) in welcoming their new priest. Bishop John and the Archdeacon, the Venerable Jeff Watson, will be conducting the service. Afterwards we will be holding a buffet reception in

the Infants' School hall. Again, everyone is welcome.

Father Mark Mills-Powell, 47, has a rather unusual background. An old Etonian, he met his American wife, Dana, while they were working with down-and-outs in Washington DC. They were married in 1981, and have three daughters.

Father Mark was ordained by the Bishop of Liverpool, the Rt Rev David Shepherd, and worked as a priest in Liverpool, before returning to the States for some years. More recently he has been Vicar of Basildon.

"I think we can expect someone rather special," said one of those involved in the new priest's selection. "Not only is he very tall, with red hair, so you can't miss him,

but he has a spiritual quality to him."

"A very caring person," said a member of his present congregation. "We shall miss him sorely."

We are very much looking forward to meeting our new Rector, and to the first service that he will celebrate, at 10 am on Sunday 1st December.

It has been a difficult year for St Mary's Church. Father Julian left over a year ago, just a month before the church and rectory were flooded. The church remained unheated throughout the winter. "But now we have a splendid new boiler and numbers are picking up," said Glynis Younger, Church Warden.

Elizabeth Bray

NEW COMMUNITY CO-ORDINATOR JOINS LOCAL POLICE TEAM

[TOP](#)

Community Contact Co-ordinator Carol Wilson describes her role I AM the Civilian Community Contact Officer for Sawston Sector of Cambridgeshire Police, having joined the team in January 2002. The title Community Contact Officer actually spells out the aim of the job, which is to facilitate communication between the Community Beat Managers here on Sawston Sector and the communities they serve.

There are a number of dimensions to my role, one of which is to provide greater feedback to Councils, Neighbourhood Watch groups, Countryside Watch and members of the general public about incidents and crime in their communities. To help achieve this, I send out regular newsletters, providing information about crime and local issues. I also provide a call back service to members of the public who have reported an incident and who request a call. Obviously, with the number of calls received a day, I cannot ring every person, but I do have a commitment to those who request one.

I aim to take on some of the duties of the Community Beat Manager that do not require a police presence, which enables the Community Beat Officers themselves to be more visible and pro-active in their communities. Please note, however, that you should contact Cambridgeshire police on 01223 358966 for uniformed assistance or dial 999 in an emergency.

One of my main roles is managing our local Neighbourhood Watch Schemes and since taking on this position I have become very conscious of how important Neighbourhood Watch is. There is a desire to ensure that we live in a safe community and what better way to do this than to be aware of each other's interests. One aspect of the scheme is that you actually get to know your neighbour, something that has become almost a rarity with people's busy work and social life!

Recently we acquired a mobile police station and I am part of the team that will be out and about offering a chance for the community to come and see us, tell us about issues in the village and share good news.

It is a good idea to keep an eye on the website, as well as to ask Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators to let you know when we will be around. We cannot give too

much notice of the date due to incidents that happen with no warning, where the designated Community Beat Manager might be called upon to attend. Do feel free to contact me on either 01223 407615 or mobile 07736731929, or you may send me an email at carol.wilson@cambs.police.uk

VILLAGE SURVEY MEETINGS

[TOP](#)

LINTONIANS! The Village Plan Project is proceeding apace without you! Ideas are being put forward, aspirations and problems defined, and within a few months a questionnaire for the entire village will be produced.

It is essential that you put forward your ideas now. What does the village need for the future? What problems does it suffer from? What are the options that we can put to the village in our attempt to let our community evolve?

You do not have to come to a meeting to put forward those kinds of views: you can write a short letter, fire off an email or telephone us.

The vital point is that you make your views known. If you leave it until after the survey, it will probably be too late – the Village Plan rules are such that they lock the parish council into responding to residents' wishes expressed in the survey.

Some radical suggestions have already been put forward, including moving the Infants' School to one of the other school sites to improve road safety and offer better facilities, as well as freeing the present site for some other community use.

There are many areas to consider. Are leisure facilities adequate? Is there a litter problem? With the government pressing for more development throughout the region, how should we try to position Linton? What are the options for growing traffic problems in the High Street and the A1307? Is there enough affordable housing and homes for rent generally? Do local services provide what is needed? How can we secure the future of our shops and post office? And so on ... Just think how you would like the village to be and make your views known.

A large group of residents met at the Cathodeon Centre at the end of September to start the process of community appraisal. The next meeting is due at 8pm on 27th November.

The group, split into specialist sub-groups, is trying to work out our village's options for the next 10 years. Those options will be formulated into a questionnaire to be distributed to every home. The answers to the questionnaire will be professionally analysed and the village choices will be the basis for a village plan. There is no magic wand, sadly, but this is the way forward for everyone to have more say and for the village itself to have more control over its future.

We would certainly appreciate your help, especially at this stage when basic issues are being defined and the options drawn up. Whatever your views, whatever level of help you can give, you will be welcome. For those who cannot get to our evening meetings, why not come along to tea and a chat at the Social Centre. There will be an afternoon meeting at 2.30pm on 13th November.

If you prefer to deal with matters in other ways, please contact us by post to Gill Barker, Parish Office, Coles Lane, Linton, or Judy Rossiter, 14/16 Horn Lane, Linton. Email to Judy Rossiter c/o lintonpc@btconnect.com

CAMERA CLUB MEMBERS START MIXING IT

[TOP](#)



Delayed action self-portrait (1997)
PHOTOGRAPHY is a hobby that can be enjoyed by young and old, male and female, so I guess I was a little disappointed that I was the only woman member of the Linton Camera Club. Even so, I was made very welcome at the first meeting I attended in October – and now I hope other women will come forward to join me.

The meeting gave all the members a chance to show off their talents, with photographs, slides and digital images of some of the ‘awaydays’ that had been organised for club members during the year, or just photographs taken over the last few months.

The composition and quality of images was of a very high standard, but the other members of the club expressed praise for my few efforts, and showed an interest in me and my camera, freely giving tips and advice. I have promised to carry my camera with me more often, as photo opportunities seem to turn up just when you don’t expect them.

Next month’s meeting on Sunday 10th November will be in the upstairs room at the Social Centre in Coles Lane and will focus on digital photography, something relatively new to me, and the medium I am most interested in at present. In December, the last awayday of the year will be to a car racers and wreckers meeting at Mildenhall.

New members are welcome (a few more women would be nice!). More information about the club is available from John Keeble.

Tracey Wilson

LOCAL AUTHOR HAS ROMANCE ON THE BRAIN

[TOP](#)

Hilary Green



LINTON has a budding author in its midst! By the end of the year the novel *A Small Rain* will have launched a new career for Hilary Custance, a.k.a. Dr Hilary Green.

Until ten years ago, Hilary worked in and around the village as a sculptor doing projects in schools. Then she changed career entirely to a much more scientific role researching how the brain works. Two whole classes from Linton Heights school and many other Linton children took part in the studies on mechanisms of attention which were the basis for her PhD. Hilary currently works for the Medical Research Council at the Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit in Cambridge investigating the causes

of relapse in depression.

Though working in science, Hilary's creative streak wouldn't go quietly. As an antidote to the constrictions of academic writing, she tried writing fiction, and found it so enthralling she couldn't stop.

"I finished the first draft of the novel at the same time as my PhD. If I have an idea I have to try it out, I don't think a novel is very different from a sculpture.

"This is an entirely new venture for me. I still find it difficult to describe the novel. Essentially it is an ordinary story about ordinary people. I am fascinated by the difference between the face we show to the outside world and what is going on inside. I like things to happen in a story, so the book changes gear a couple of times and there are two main stories to follow".

The story takes place over eighteen turbulent months in the life of Stella, a poetry teacher. Her husband goes missing (and is presumed dead) at the start. Her lifelines are her son Tom, playing the clarinet in an amateur orchestra, and her work in a hospice. Unknown to Stella, her favourite student, Rosheen, is the wife of Owen, the conductor of her orchestra. Stella and Owen slowly fall in love.

Music, poetry and compassion feature powerfully in this rich and absorbing novel. It explores grief and love in an unusually intimate narrative, which is both funny and moving, deep and true to life.

A Small Rain is published by Author Publications Ltd, under the Rhapsody imprint (ISBN 1 898030 73 1) and will be available through all good bookshops before Christmas. Hazel Olway

THE BUSH TELEGRAPH

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ON 3rd October I attended Sam Alper's funeral. True to form it was nothing like any I had attended before and true to form Sam kept us working hard right until the end; we all helped to re-fill the grave. Sam was an exceptional man whose contribution to business and the wider community have been written about at length elsewhere. I

would like to say something about him from the perspective of the College.

We have a piece of sculpture outside our main entrance called 'Caring'; a kind of big stone hug. Sam sculpted it after various visits to the College and conversations with students and staff. He told me that the sense of care for the individual struck him strongly in those visits and inspired him to tease the form from that enormous piece of rock. He then presented the piece to us, properly installed and it remains as an important reminder of him and his interest. His involvement did not cease there, however. He gave us many wonderful prints from the Curwen press, made financial contributions to important projects and initiated the Curwen/Chilford Arts Bursary so that each year two Year 11 students could spend a week at the Print Studio. He also sent his youngest son here.

So Sam Alper and his passion for the arts remain an integral part of College life. The sculpture and prints remind us, the bursary is now in its seventh year and we have developed close links with Sam's other dream, the Print Studio Education Centre. Through our work as a Beacon School, pupils from other schools, including all our local primary and infants' schools, have benefited from time spent there. All the above represent a legacy to be proud of, the fruits of which we hope will continue to flourish over the coming years.

While I am talking about flourishing, allow me to blow the LVC trumpet a little. I am delighted to say it is not just the visual arts where our students excel. No less than 50 have recently had their stories published after entering a national literary competition, another five held their own against Hertfordshire sixth formers in the Mace public speaking competition and due to his outstanding efforts for our link programme with South Africa, a young man from Linton has been nominated for the Diana Princess of Wales Memorial Award for services to others. And it's only half term! Clive Bush, Principal

COMFORT EATING

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THREE very welcome new members joined us for the Gardening Club AGM last month when the existing committee was re-elected to office although, sad to say, there were no offers to fill the vacant posts. Refreshments and a chance to chat followed business, with some hot selling of home made cakes and scones which disappeared before the plants. Perhaps even keen gardeners get fed up with planting when the weather gets chilly!

The November talk by Richard Revels will be about the life of butterflies and we hope that all our members will come along. The subs remain unchanged at £5 a year, so it's a bargain evening out.

Gloria Fidler

GET AWAY!

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A NEW fishing event organised by the Dog and Duck pub in Linton High Street took place on Sunday, 29th September at Little Walden. Seven anglers attended and the

winner was Andy Fosberry whose catch amounted to an impressive 31lbs 12oz. Andy was presented with a tankard by Bob Hackett, landlord of the Dog and Duck, and he also received a cash prize which he kindly donated to the Children's Ward at Addenbrookes Hospital.

It is hoped that there will be a fishing match each year so many more participants are invited!

Vera and Frank Sweeting

LINTON COUNTRY DIARY BY DARRYL NANTAIS

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Illustrated by Maureen Williams

OCTOBER 1st was bright and chilly with a whiff of winter. A few crisp brown leaves powered by a light breeze scraped their way along the High Street pavement. Behind the art gallery, ten feet high, their heads hanging low, two giant sunflowers nodded off in the autumn sun.

I began by rolling over a large rotting log expecting to find springtails, primitive insects belonging to the order Collembola but to my surprise there was nothing but a sleeping toad. Nights are now lengthening and nocturnal creatures have their day, and all manner of scary monsters arrive for Hallowe'en, marking the end of the harvest. With falling leaves and falling temperatures the witches' brew this year may lack a bit of bulk as, their little tickers slowing, many of our local newts and lizards decide on a safe and early hibernation.

Now, far be it a priority of mine to go rummaging about in the spooky annals of Linton. However, when I was asked to hear the strange story of a house on Balsham Road, curiosity got the better of me. At this place I am told time appears to go around and around, certain events repeat themselves over and over, and something

unspecified refuses to move on. The occupant of this particular house seemed unperturbed by what she describes as the "sound of somebody falling down the stairs" and it happens on about the same night in November, every year. Apparently, tables too heavy to be manoeuvred have been turned and cupboard doors left open; a classic ghost story.

An elderly Linton lady once stopped at the mill ford to greet a gentleman. For years they had simply passed and said but a few words. On this occasion however, they spoke for more than an hour. After years of only brief acknowledgement all barriers between them had broken down. They conversed with delightful and jovial openness about the seasons, horses, cats and dogs. You would be forgiven for thinking there was nothing unusual about that meeting, but two days later the gentleman was told this dear lady had passed away - three weeks previously. Now how can that be? Happy Hallowe'en.

LOCAL LOTTERY ENTERS ITS FIFTH YEAR

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OCTOBER saw the commencement of the fifth year of the K-Club, Linton's own lottery, with 329 people signing up. Prize money of £2,170 is to be distributed over the coming year, with Linton Action for Youth benefiting by £1,700 – the cash surplus generated. Numbers are slightly down this year, due possibly to the successful establishment of the Drop-In on Linton recreation ground. Many people may think all the fund-raising work has been done, but it is still important to underpin Community Fund and other grant aid with strong local support. Many thanks to all K-Club Members for your continued support, and good luck in the many prize draws yet to come.

Peter Dixon

Winners of the K-Club October monthly draw: 1st (£50) Mark Carpenter (No.061); 2nd (£25) J Gillon (No.150); 3rd (£10) Fiona Alper (No. 166).

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