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## LINTON IN LIGHTS

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Just one of the many houses that illuminated Linton this Christmas.

There's no need to go to London to see the lights, we have our very own display on the door-step.

Tracey Wilson investigates

TIRED of watching the same old repeats on television? Read all the books you received from your relatives? Played all the games? Run out of notches on your belt? Time to get on your feet and walk around our picturesque village, but wait until it's dark and see Linton in a different light. Many villagers have splashed out once again and decorated their houses on the outside this Christmas.

Balsham Road has its own grotto, Lonsdale has been transformed into fairyland, Chalklands has its rivals at each end of the street, not to mention Hillway, and many, many other roads. Why not see how many you can track down and maybe even let us know what you think? Plus, the exercise will do you good after all the overindulgence of the last week or so!

Tracey Wilson

## LINTON FIREWORKS - NOT A BUNDLE OF FUN



Rare Grevy's Zebra due to foal next year (photograph by Stephen Wilson)

FIREWORK nights always concern those of us who care for animals and there is only so much you can do to protect those that may be frightened or stressed by the noise or light.

At Linton Zoo we dread the annual firework display. It's not that we wish to be party poopers but the reality is that, as the crow flies, the site used is more or less just across the road from us and the combination of a wildlife breeding centre and fireworks in such close proximity is a potentially lethal mixture.

On firework night, keepers rig up standby emergency lighting for birds or diurnal animals in case they should be frightened off their roosting perches or from the security of their sleeping and nesting boxes. To some we even play loud music to lessen the impact of sudden noise from aerial firework explosions.

On one occasion, a few years ago, the weather conditions and the types of fireworks used produced a most unacceptable level of noise and light combination causing us all sorts of problems. At the end of the display I jumped in the zoo van and roared off in a raging temper to vent my anger at the organisers for their lack of consideration and concern for the zoo. After this incident our concerns were listened to and the committee's correspondence with Essex Pyrotechnics requested that the noise levels should not be increased, so there was no room for fireworks 'with attitude'.

We appreciate that the display provides entertainment for a few thousand local people and the funds raised support the local schools. For us firework night would not be such a problem if the display were staged at a site on the other side of the village. High level noise and lights at night associated with a public display will always create worries and problems for animal keepers close by, not to mention the native wildlife.

Next time you are at a display, notice the birds flying aimlessly around in the dark,

crashing into walls and fences. The RSPCA has prosecuted for lesser acts of cruelty on animals than those inflicted by firework night.

Linton Zoo has an international reputation for its good work with the breeding and maintenance of many of the world's rarest creatures. Our work is global and has been appreciated by millions of visitors since we began in 1972.

We do all we can to make the animals in our care safe and comfortable at all times and have been lucky that firework nights have passed without any really notable incidents. However, we have not yet had a newborn baby to cope with at this time; next year may be different. Bezra, our rare Grevy's Zebra is due to foal in October. There is no doubt that the fireworks committee works hard to produce the annual display, which now attracts people from far and wide. I am told that the loud explosions must be included for effect and appeal and that there is nowhere else in the village to hold such a display. But judging from the phone calls I receive pre- and post-firework night there are many people who are concerned about the display and wonder if the village is now ready for some other kind of fundraising event instead.  
Kim Simmons

LET the Linton News have your response to Kim Simmons' article, including your suggestions for alternative sites for the fireworks display.

Please write to and drop your reply in the Linton News box in the Post Office or e-mail [LNeditor@linton.info](mailto:LNeditor@linton.info).

The deadline for letters and articles is 20th January 2003. LNT

## **LINTON RESIDENT WINS SMART AWARD**

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GLENCROFT Ltd, the company owned by Linton resident Frank Domoney and his stepson, has been awarded the maximum grant in its class under the Department of Trade and Industry's SMART scheme to encourage innovation.

The SMART scheme has four different classes of award: Technology Survey; Microproject; Feasibility Study and Implementation Project, each of which provides an amount of cash and has a requirement to match funding and cover the duration of the project.

Glencroft Ltd, which has its office in St John's Innovation Centre, has won a Feasibility Study grant to fund an eight month project looking into mechanisms to allow good quality music to be delivered to mobile phones in real time.

Frank, a Software Engineer and Mobile Telephone Network Designer thought of the idea while looking for new challenges after the end of an 18 month contract to help build one of Europe's first third generation (3G) mobile networks.

Frank has helped build three mobile networks, two of them in the UK and the other in Germany as well as greatly expanding an existing network in France. His first idea for a new product died when, after he had spent three months working on the idea, he identified competition who were further ahead and better resourced. Undeterred he switched to Plan B, and started all over again.

Outside work Frank is a member of Linton Bridge Club where he enjoys playing under the watchful eye of his partner Don Austin. He already speaks six languages

and is learning Finnish! He lives in Linton overlooking the water meadow, with his wife, Lynette and their cat. Frank Domoney

## **THE PARISH COUNCIL**

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Reported by Graham Potter December Meeting

THE meeting opened with Hazel Savage introducing herself as the Senior Youth Manager, the replacement for Liz Govier at the Linton Action For Youth (LA4Y) Drop-in centre, giving an outline of how she expected things to progress. The Drop-in centre will not be open as often as in the past until early in the new year.

Reports from co-ordinators highlighted the problem of the large puddle that has formed under the pedestrian entrance to the recreation ground in Meadow Lane. This problem has not been remedied yet but will be addressed.

The area under the village sign has been redesigned and is looking much better. The new layout should now be easier to maintain.

A Councillor questioned the poor postal service that the village has been experiencing recently. The Chairman reported she had phoned the postal service (not the village Post Office) who informed her that the service should be better from Monday early December. Councillors agreed to report the matter if things do not improve.

There is a notice in the Post Office window advertising for full time deliverers but vacancies have not been advertised elsewhere.

## **COUNCIL MEETING DATES CHANGE**

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PLEASE note that for January the meeting dates of the Parish Council have changed from the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month to the second and fourth Thursdays. The next Parish Council meeting will be held at 8pm on 9th January at the Social Centre. Gill Barker

## **BANGERS AND MASHED**

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Dave Stone balancing on a banger

HOT car racing and wrecking on a very cold day ended the year for the Camera Club.

Club member Dave Stone, who spends much of his life in the world of racing and wrecking old cars, had a team of racers entered at a meeting at Mildenhall — a perfect excuse for a club awayday to photograph the people and preparations for the racing and the racing itself.

The scenes were as interesting as they were dramatic, as surprising as they were engaging ... cars that looked as though they would not even make it to the track, contestants that included Bad Mat, a very pleasant 14-year-old and a 13-year-old girl who had her doll wired to her car as a mascot.

The only really tricky thing was working out which way the cars were racing. They started off in what appeared to be the right way but then it got rather like the M25 and they all seemed to do what they liked .

The next Camera Club meeting will be an awayday, this time a winter landscapes expedition organised by Jim Goodall, on 12th January. Everyone welcome. For details about this and the club email [jkeeble@clara.net](mailto:jkeeble@clara.net).

John Keeble

## **IT CLUB GOING STRONGER THAN EVER**

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FROM now onwards the IT Club's services will be open to anyone who has a library membership card. The original Millennium grant which enabled us to launch the club was primarily to enable those of retirement age who had not had the benefit of learning the basics of computing at school, college or work to gain some basic knowledge of IT. The club is now in its third year, during which time well over a hundred local people have become members and benefited from the information they were given. Not all of them elderly, by any means.

Why do we expect a continuing interest in what the club can offer? Quite a number of people have inherited computers from their family and have no basic knowledge of how to use them. The information passed on by their young is often sketchy. The volunteers at the club have great patience and are able to take learners along at their

own pace.

Others have just been interested in learning about the Internet and how to use the machines in the library The club meets in the library on Tuesday evenings. What better time to be coached in using technology? Other interests are e-mail, offering the facility to be in instant contact with their families, however distant they are. Sending family photographs through the e-mail is a wonderful and very simple way of keeping families together. Most people know that it is possible to do this but do not know how. Both the club and the library service can help and it does not cost a penny to seek the help of either. The club opens again on Tuesday 7th January. Anyone who has had a computer or a digital camera for Christmas will be welcome to come to the Library between 7 and 9pm for help and advice on both or either. Others who would like to know about simple computing and who are too shy to come and see us are welcome to come and see what happens to others. Derek Birch

## **JUBILEE COINS STILL AVAILABLE**

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COUNCILLORS are pleased to remind you that the commemorative coin issued to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee has been so well received by residents. However, some of you are obviously having difficulty arranging to pick up the coins during office hours. Councillors will, therefore, be available on the evening of Monday 13th January between 5.30 and 7pm at the Social Centre to give out the coins. Pop in if you can. If this is awkward for you, you can still pop in during office hours – 9-12.30 Monday to Friday or 4-6pm on Monday afternoons. Gill Barker

## **HEALTH AND HAPPINESS**

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ON a cold and frosty evening the ladies of Hildersham WI welcomed Mrs Mary Ellis to the Village Hall where she gave a talk on "Health, Healing and Happiness". Through her own personal adversities Mrs Ellis became interested in Reiki Therapy – 'Dharma' founded in the early 1920s by a Dr Usui – 'An Alternative Path to Enlightenment'. After training Mrs Ellis became a Healing and Thought Field therapist. She suggested different ways of dealing with day to day difficulties both mentally and physically.

Mrs Di Arkwright, WI President, gave the vote of thanks and the ladies retired to enjoy delicious refreshments whilst discussing with enthusiasm their forthcoming Christmas dinner. Gillian Anderson

## **WI MEET NEW VICAR**

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LINTON WI held their Christmas dinner at the Village Hall on 3rd December. There were over 50 members present and three guests, Val Urwin, Chairman of the Parish Council, Mark Mills-Powell, Rector of St Mary's and Quintus Benziger, Director of Music at St Mary's School, Cambridge. After the singing of 'Jerusalem',

accompanied by Quintus Benziger on the piano, an excellent dinner was once again provided and served by J's Catering of Chatteris.

After the meal, Quintus Benziger gave an amusing revue of 'Kings and Queens in History and Fiction' with musical illustrations on the piano. The draw for a year's subscription to the WI was won by Gina Mills.

Wendy Foster, President, gave a vote of thanks to the caterers and Joan Pearman distributed Christmas cards to members. There was then a special raffle and the evening ended with the cutting of a large Christmas cake, which had been specially made for the occasion by Eileen Impey.

At the January meeting, on Tuesday, 7th January 2003 at 7.30pm, Clive Bush will speak on Linton Village College's link with a school in South Africa. All are welcome. Anne Parry-Smith 891001

## **DAMP BUT UNDEFEATED**

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Dear Editor,

I would like to thank everyone who was involved in helping to put on this year's fireworks event.

This year, more than ever before, the efforts of all the village volunteers who helped on the day and clearing up on the Sunday were invaluable. Although I have thanked them all individually, I would like to repeat my thanks to the tireless committee who worked against the odds to ensure the event was a success. The awful weather was just one of a long line of issues we had to deal with, including the prospect of having to cancel owing to planned strike action by fire fighters.

The barbecue teams and bonfire builders deserve particular mention, but without people lighting the fireworks we would not have had a show! The lighters did an amazing job and were assisted by several late volunteers who carried the fireworks out from their temporary shelter to the lighting point. Wet fireworks do not light very well, so they could not be set up in advance!

Attendance was well down at around 2350 against last year's record of 4700.

However the event did manage to continue its 13-year tradition of raising money for our local schools and we expect each school to receive around £780. This is in no small way due to the generous sponsorship we received from Camgrain and Barclays Bank via their employees' '£ for £' scheme.

Thank you to all who braved the weather to support us. We look forward to a drier evening next year.

Alan King

## **SEEING RED BEATS THE BLUES**

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Dear Editor,

Does anyone else suffer from what I have heard described as the "113 blues"? Buses late, cancelled and telephone calls, letters (not always polite!) never bring any response, other than regret for the shortage of drivers... not surprising given the

wages they are offered!

One evening I was on my knees - no, no, fatigue, not praying for the arrival of the bus, for which I had waited forty minutes - when I learnt it had been cancelled.

I saw red, called a taxi and the next day sent the receipt for the fare to the Customer Services Manager, requesting reimbursement. A cheque arrived within a few days: how many similar requests will make the owners of Stagecoach see that it would be cheaper to pay drivers a fairer wage than to reimburse irate bus users?

Reds seems to be stronger colours than blues!

Anna Newton

## **OUR THANKS**

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Dear Editor,

May I through your column thank all the people who came to my aid when I fell in the cemetery. The lady from Haverhill, the two gentlemen from Clearway who helped so much, the paramedics and ambulance men, Laurence Kidman for his kindness and help and also his late night hospital visit, the lady who brought the blanket and Barbara for her sympathy. Thank you to all those who sent cards and came to visit me in hospital. I am deeply grateful to you all.

Margaret Davis

Dear Editor,

The Brenda Wright Memorial Trophy Open Pairs competition was held at the Waggon and Horses pub on Thursday 21st November.

We would like to thank John, the landlord, for letting us hold the event and also many thanks for the superb refreshments. Thanks also to everyone for all the donations of raffle prizes.

The winners were K. Naxton and S. Wilson. The proceeds of £138 will be donated to the Macmillan Nurses.

Lesley Ashton (daughter) and Steve Wright (son)

## **REAL NAPPIES FOR A REAL WORLD**

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OVER 400 bin bags (or equivalent volume) of disposable nappies go into South Cambs' landfill site every day—that's the equivalent of two full refuse freighters.

To help cut down this huge amount, South Cambridgeshire District Council is supporting real, washable, nappies by introducing a free home trial scheme.

The free nappy trial allows parents of new babies to try out real nappies, free, for a limited period. Used nappies are then returned to local nappy mail order company, Eco-babes, for clinical laundering and re-use. This scheme allows parents to try several different types of nappy before committing to a purchase.

Tony Croft, waste minimisation officer at South Cambs District Council commented, "Recent waste statistics showed that South Cambs residents threw out the highest proportion of disposable nappies. But, real nappies are growing in popularity as more



parents become aware of the benefits of saving money, avoiding harsh chemicals and the impact of landfill on our environment.”

Tami Brown of the Cambridgeshire Real Nappy Network said, “[We are] delighted to have secured the support of South Cambridgeshire District Council in the campaign to increase use of real nappies. Modern real nappies are easy to use and economical. These are nappies for the real world.”

The free loan pack includes five different types of nappy, pants, liners, nappy bucket and full instructions. A nappy laundry service is available to deliver cotton nappies to your door and collect soiled nappies for laundering. To take part in a free real trial call the Cambridgeshire Real Nappy Network on 509837.

For more information, including a forum for buying and selling second hand nappies and a chance to ask questions visit [www.realnappy.net](http://www.realnappy.net)

For further information contact Sally Carroll, Cameron Adams and Tami Brown via the [Linton News](#).

## **‘A POWERHOUSE OF PRAYER’: GLADYS ADAMSON**

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Gladys Adamson pictured in 2001

SADLY, Gladys Adamson passed away in late November and was buried on what would have been her 99th birthday on 4th December.

Some of you may remember Gladys when she featured on the front page of the April 2001 Linton News. The story of how her eyesight was miraculously restored after a sneezing fit made headlines across the world. Gladys was quoted as saying, “It’s a miracle; it has happened for a purpose, all my life things have happened like that. I am not surprised.”

Being new to Christianity and church life myself I remember saying to some friends a few weeks earlier, “Miracles just don’t happen these days. If they did, wouldn’t they be all over the papers and TV?” So when I read Gladys’s story I couldn’t resist arming myself with some flowers and paying her a visit. I was there all afternoon

whilst Gladys filled me in on a few more miracles. (I can see all of you who know Gladys smiling knowingly at this scenario.)

Gladys and her husband Whitfield moved from the North East in the years after the Depression and set up home in Kent. Some years after this move south came an event that according to Gladys changed her life and pointed her in the direction of God. They had booked seats on a train going to Newcastle but at the last minute something prevented them from going. The train crashed and the carriage in which their seats had been booked was badly damaged. Gladys felt her life had been saved for a purpose and soon it became clear to her that she was called to a ministry of prayer and healing. So this is what she did, becoming a powerhouse of prayer, and a strength and comfort to those in need. She was a firm believer in the mysterious and miraculous power of God and many people have spoken of the healing they have received through her prayer. I like to think that the 'purpose' of Gladys having her sight restored in 2001 was to convince me and others of the power of God and prayer.

Gladys was a wonderful lady who lived life to the full, inspiring others along the way. She will be missed by us all.

Tracey Russell

## COUNTY COUNCIL IS NOT UP TO SPEED ON TRAFFIC ISSUES

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AT a recent meeting of Linton Parish Council, councillors were given an update by the Traffic Working Party of the numerous traffic issues currently being addressed, including those outstanding with the County Council.

It was immediately evident that progress in certain areas has been slow. We are currently awaiting the response of the County Council to the following issues:

- 1 Confirmation that installation of a roundabout on the A1307 at the junction with Bartlow Road is definitely on a 'Roundabout List' and at what position. Linton desperately needs a safe access for vehicles on and off the A1307. A roundabout in this position would also have a knock-on effect of reducing the volume of through traffic in the High Street and creating breaks in the traffic flow

- on the A1307 to allow safer access at adjacent junctions.
- 2 Confirmation that traffic lights at the High Street/A1307 junction are still being considered and at what position on the list.  
Traffic lights in this position would also provide the basis for allowing pedestrians a safer crossing point. It should be noted that effective speed reduction measures on the A1307 would also be required within the vicinity of pedestrian controlled lights.
  - 3 Confirmation that a one way system for HGVs in the High Street is still being considered.  
To prevent large vehicles having to pass each other in the narrow section of the High Street, a manoeuvre which can result in vehicles mounting the pavement. It should be noted that the police support this request.
  - 4 Confirmation of when measures to protect the listed building at the Coles Lane/High Street junction would be put in place.  
CC officers agreed at a meeting in July to undertake measures to help keep vehicles away from this corner, including painting additional white lines and the possible erection of priority signs. These two particular improvements would be relatively cheap and were thought therefore worth trying in the first instance.
  - 5 Confirmation that double yellow lines would be considered at the top of Joiners Road.  
To allow unhindered entry into Joiners Road thereby preventing the creation of queues on the A1307.
  - 6 Confirmation that yellow lines would be considered on the first bend in Chalkands.  
To respond to residents' requests to improve safety.
  - 7 Confirmation of the Accident Reduction Scheme proposed for outside Dalehead Foods.  
This junction is notoriously dangerous but any alteration in the road plan must not create a dangerous problem elsewhere.
  - 8 Confirmation that a Multi Modal Study for the A1307 is still being considered.  
The traffic problems on the A1307 between Cambridge and Haverhill will get progressively worse due to the continuing development of Haverhill and therefore should not be ignored any longer.

Additional traffic issues currently being explored by the TWP are:

- o The possible employment of a crossing patrol person for the safe crossing of pedestrians at the High Street/A1307 junction.
- o Safer Route(s) to School /Walking Bus Scheme to provide a safe alternative route for children to walk to school other than the High Street.
- o Survey of dropped curbs to ensure good access for the disabled.
- o Explore the possibility of prohibiting parking during peak times on the north side of the High Street in the vicinity of the junction with Mill Lane to provide a guaranteed 'pulling in' space for those vehicles travelling west - east at these busy times.
- o suggestion to make the High Street either one way or to prevent through traffic

entirely. NB: CCC have already indicated that any major alteration to traffic access would require in the first instance 100% support from those residents currently living on the High Street or roads off the High Street together with those businesses potentially affected. The Parish Council would not support any scheme which threatened the viability of existing village services, in particular the one remaining grocery store.

- o So Increasing the width of one pavement in the narrow section of the High Street.
- o Parish Transport Grants - maximum of £10,000 available.

The above list demonstrates that the Parish Council are committed as they always have been to addressing traffic/transport issues which affect the daily lives of residents. Unfortunately improvements cannot happen instantly due to funding limits. It is our intention to keep residents regularly updated regarding the progress of the above. If any resident feels there are any other traffic issues we should be concerned with at this time please contact Gill Barker, Parish Clerk 891001.

Two bids were considered on 9th December at CCC for funding from the Jointly Funded Minor Highway Improvement Scheme. To qualify for this funding, schemes will only be considered if they cost in excess of £5000 and no greater than £25000. Our first bid a request for flashing warning lights on the A1307 was accepted. Our second bid a request to re-route eastbound buses in the High Street between Coles Lane and Balsham Road was turned down.

Val Urwin

## **PETITIONING FOR SAFER ROADS**

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Rachel Cornell presented a petition on behalf of Linton Pavements are for People to the County Council on 9th December. Her speech is reprinted here.

THIS petition is made up of the best part of 350 signatures of residents and other users of the centre of Linton. People going about their normal business collected the signatures for this petition in just four days. Nobody refused to sign this petition because they didn't agree with it. We believe that feelings are now so strong about the risks to people's safety in the village that given time we could have got far more people to sign.

We believe that action must be taken regarding the traffic situation within the centre of Linton:

- o to make the pavements safe and suitable for pedestrians;
- o make it safe for pedestrians and cyclists to cross or use the road;
- o and to stop the ongoing damage to historic buildings.

Our parish council has told us that they are at a loss what to do.

Please consider what the outcome will be if the County Council does not take action immediately. There is a very high likelihood of serious pedestrian injury. There is already repeated damage to property that has stood for centuries.

In Linton we do recognise that funds are limited, but ask what money has been spent

on improving road safety within Linton in the last ten or twenty years? How much time has been spent assessing traffic at peak times? This traffic has increased considerably in the last three years.

We are always hearing about priorities but surely, for a village the size of Linton that serves a large number of rural communities with services such as health and education, it must be a priority to provide safe pavements and crossing points as well as safe access for wheelchairs and pushchairs?

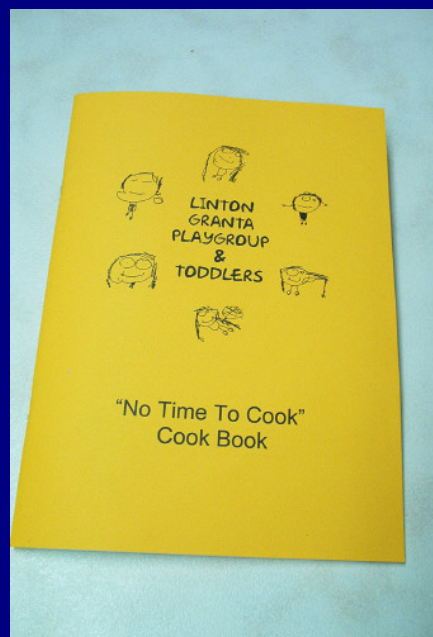
The members of the group who are parents have a duty to care for their children: surely Cambridge County Council has a duty of care to all its residents? How do we teach our children road safety when they have to share the pavements with vehicles? And not even adults can find a safe place to cross the road.

We have been lucky in the last ten years. No one has been killed, only property has been damaged. But why is Cambridge County Council not conserving our building heritage within the most historic village in the local area? And why is it not protecting vulnerable road users?

How long can you allow this to continue?

## TODDLERS COOK UP A STORM

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Fast favourites

FED up with cooking after Christmas? Then all you need is the 'No Time to Cook' Cook Book.

On sale in aid of the Linton Granta Playgroup and Toddlers, at only £2 this cook book provides you with recipes ranging from simple to incredibly simple, all taking less than ten minutes to prepare.

Parents and relatives of the children attending the groups have supplied most of the recipes, and although aimed at adults, many are favourites for children too!

The cookbook is on sale at Hale & Jacobs newsagents, the Darryl Nantais Gallery, the Post Office or from the Playgroup itself. Happy cooking and happy eating!

The Playgroup and Toddlers would also like to thank all those who supported their Christmas Fair, which raised over £500 and will be spent on completing the

refurbishment of both the playgroup room and the toddler room.

Hilary Crooks

## **KEEPING A NEIGHBOURLY EYE OPEN FOR THE ELDERLY**

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SAWSTON sector is seeking to involve as many groups as possible in identifying and supporting older people in the community. Charities like Help the Aged have been promoting the idea of care within community with their Adopt a Granny scheme. At Sawston we felt that Neighbourhood Watch groups and other members of the public could become involved in a similar scheme in a practical way.

You probably already know many older people who would benefit from a friendly neighbour. Too often we read articles of tragedies that could have been avoided had someone taken action. Obvious signs, such as milk not taken in, mail protruding from letterboxes, curtains staying shut during the day (or not being shut at night), etc...all these are reasons to call. If you normally exchange a greeting in passing with a near neighbour, then you are already on the way to keeping a neighbourly eye on him or her. The police offer various services for the elderly and vulnerable that they might not be aware of.

The Bobby Scheme is one which could be of great value to them. This is a service where home security is addressed and the necessary improvements made, e.g. new locks, peepholes, door chains, etc. A leaflet giving contact numbers is available from Sawston police station.

Although you will be aware that the Community Beat Managers are involved with response work, they are still very much concerned in crime prevention and so will be happy to give advice to all members of the community, but particularly the elderly, about domestic security.

We have various information leaflets and stickers. A very useful sticker is 'We do not buy or sell at this door'. Just call me and I will send whatever you feel would be of use.

A very useful item I have available is the 'granny boot'. This is quite simply a wooden doorstep, which the occupier places firmly under the door when someone calls. It enables the occupier to see the caller without fully opening the door, and in fact, should the caller try to push their way in, the 'granny boot' holds fast'. This again is available from me for use by older people.

Within the last few weeks the Datalink scheme has been launched. Datalink is a plastic container, which holds personal information about medication, allergies, illnesses, next-of-kin, etc. of elderly residents. The idea is that should any of the emergency services be called to their house, all the details required will be stored in a designated place (usually the fridge) and problems caused by confusion (or unconsciousness) will be overcome. These are at present available from doctor's surgeries but will soon be available through me.

My previous work with the elderly has taught me how grateful they are to find that someone cares personally about their welfare.

As this is a new initiative for the Sawston Sector, I would be very grateful for some feedback on the reactions of the people you make contact with ñ whether good, bad or indifferent! Please feel free to contact me to discuss Neighbourhood Watch and other local initiatives 358966.

Carol Wilson, Community Contact Co-ordinator

## **BROADBAND GROUP CAMPAIGN MOVES AHEAD**

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LINTON Broadband group and Invisible Networks are holding a public meeting at Linton Infants' School at 8pm on Thursday 16th January 2003. Anyone with an interest or a requirement for Broadband is welcome to come along. The Linton Broadband group hope to attract as many people to the event as possible, and the group is looking for volunteers to help deliver leaflets throughout Linton and neighbouring villages. Please contact David Seacombe or send an email to david.seacombe@perceptron.co.uk, stating where you would be able to deliver. The medium and longer terms aims of the project is to deliver broadband to all the main villages which do not have it now and will not for the foreseeable future. These include Babraham, Balsham, Bartlow, Hildersham, Little Abington, Great Abington, Abington Park, Hadstock, Horseheath, Ickleton and Hinxton. Any help or information with contacts in these other communities would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Adrian Wincles email him at Adrian.Winckles@computer.org

## **CHALKLANDS CHAIRMAN STEPS DOWN**

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NO, don't get excited: he's not descending his newly designed steps and hand rail just yet, those are still in the pipeline (or should I say scaffolding?). Darryl Nantais took over as Chairman of the Chalklands Residents' Association under the watchful eye of John Franklin in June 2002 when John took up the position of Liaison Officer with South Cambs.

Darryl is one of the founder members of the Chalklands Residents Association which has been up and running for a couple of years now. He has decided to step down as Chairman due to other commitments (writing the Linton News Country Diary to name but one) and the increase in his gallery business.

John Franklin said: 'Darryl is a great guy and has put in a huge amount of time and effort. We will miss him greatly as Chairman but he will still be on hand to help with the Arts Project and he will always make himself available if we need him.'

John is now looking forward to returning as Chairman as well as holding down his existing post of Liaison Officer.

Did you know that Chalklands has the only residents' association in the whole of the South Cambs area? Something to be proud of, wouldn't you say? Well, that's just how Darryl and the rest of the committee feel. Another 4,500 spring bulbs will be planted on the estate this year making a grand total of 6,000. The Arts Project is

working to improve the entrance to Chalklands along with an arts feature that will enhance the estate even further. A newsletter is circulated regularly to every house on the estate to keep all the residents up to date with the latest developments. A truly creative community spirit.

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## **LIB DEMS LOOK AT STANSTED**

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AT the Annual General Meeting of the Linton & District Democrats in November, the chairman, Andrew Gore, reported on a successful year for the branch, with Patrick Orme winning the Abingtons' seat and John Batchelor retaining Linton and Hildersham, both in three-cornered contests. After the formal business, during which the chairman was re-elected, with Ian Wallace elected as Vice-Chairman and Councillor Terry Bear as Secretary, the meeting discussed the proposed expansion of Stansted Airport. There was general agreement that major expansion of Stansted was wrong. The meeting also backed Liberal Democrat national policy, which questions whether massive growth in air travel is environmentally sustainable. It was agreed that air travel should be taxed in a similar way to other forms of public transport and that 'hub' airports were an outmoded idea.

The next event is the annual jumble sale at the Social Centre on 18th January. Anyone interested in joining the branch will be warmly welcomed: phone the secretary on for details.

Terry Bear

## **THE BUSH TELEGRAPH**

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NOW that Christmas is over and the long spring term has begun, it is worth looking back at the whirlwind of activity that ended last term. The details of the local government settlement received in December are still being worked out. Last year's Area Cost Adjustment channelled additional funds to local authorities with a higher than average cost of living, according to house price. Cambridgeshire did not get it whereas Hertfordshire and Essex did. The LVC budget would have been £200,000 bigger if we had been located over the next field in Essex! I am delighted to say that the Government has at last taken notice and included us in the revamped ACA giving Cambridgeshire the second largest funding increase in the country. As usual there is a downside and in Cambridgeshire's case it is a combination of the damage caused by the last 11 years of underfunding and the fact that the increase is being phased in. Add the massive overspend of Cambridgeshire Social Services (currently heading for £3m) and you can see that getting all the gains through to schools is far from guaranteed. Indeed we may well be in the difficult situation where we see a large jump in local authority funding and a need to increase the Council Tax by a substantial amount. Before you begin to fume at such a notion, remember the backlog created by those years of under funding and the fact that the present government has insisted on more initiatives and developments being taken up than



any before it - and they all cost money. Good news on the money front from last term was the agreement reached between the College, County and District Councils to fund the major redevelopment of the community sports facilities. This £900,000 project will lead to tremendous improvements at LVC. The planning permission has been obtained and work should commence in the summer. Also last term many of you may have heard of the County's plans to close four of its special schools and build two new ones on existing sites. Ours was one such site being considered, albeit at the last moment. Given the end of term and the speed of the process it was not possible to conduct the kind of public meetings we would normally have expected and, even as I write the anticipated decision has not been made. Suffice to say at this stage that staff and Governors at the College saw considerable educational and financial advantages to the proposals which is why we put forward a strong supporting case. Time will tell on that one. Meanwhile, I hope you all had a very pleasant Christmas and that the New Year brings us all peace and happiness.  
C R Bush Principal

## **GARDENS GALORE**

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YOU don't need to be a gardener to enjoy festive fare ñ in fact I didn't hear digging or planting mentioned once at the Gardening Club's December get-together. One tenacious member, Brenda Smith, managed to work out all the answers in the Christmas anagrams competition despite the indulgence of wine and mince pies. Several members showed their own slides taken in recent years of gardens in Wales, Cornwall, the Scilly Isles, Italy, and a particularly well-utilised plot here in Linton. In case anyone has any time to spare for snapping over the next few weeks, many I remind you of the subjects for the photo competition at the summer show. These are: flower(s) on a single stem, historic Cambridge, reflections, stained glass church windows and holiday scenes. For the juniors the classes are holiday scenes or pets. We wish everyone a happy New Year and look forward to seeing you at the January meeting when the 3-D slide show of Anglesey Abbey and East Runton by Eric Silk promises something a bit different.

Gloria Fidler

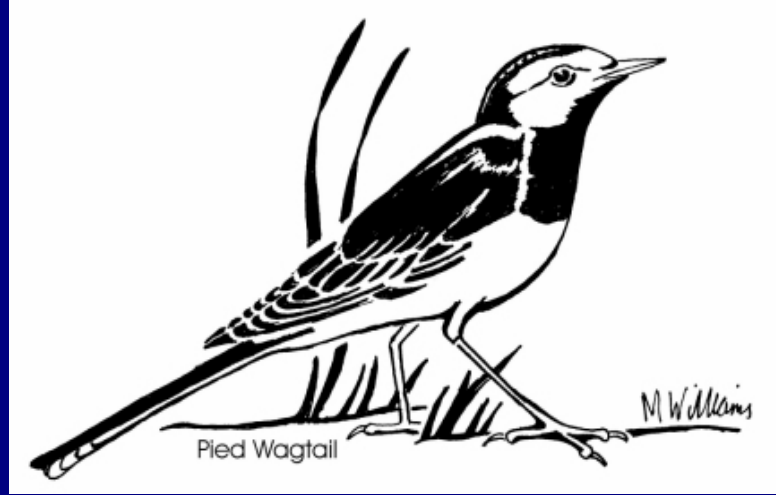
## **WEA COURSE**

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LINTON Worker's Educational Association's (WEA) spring course is called 'Fenland History'. This will start on Tuesday, 14th January 2003 and lasts for 10 weeks (18th February is half-term). The tutor is Mike Petty. The course is held in the Social Centre, Coles Lane and starts at 10am. Further information from Frances Angus. 01638 507251

## **LINTON COUNTRY DIARY** [by Darryl Nantais](#)

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Illustrated by Maureen Williams

OH Golly! it's very mild said Mrs T, and Mrs D agreed saying - 'Yes! and do you know Darryl there are birds nesting in my hedgerow'. She continued, 'you should see my mallow! Why, it's flowering as if it were June.' Now, there are over forty species of the genus *Malva* related to both cotton and hibiscus. However, this splendid specimen has beautiful purple blooms; an absolute visual delight.

Back home, I tossed a handful of dried crusts out from my kitchen window on Sunday 24th November silently speculating this pseudo-spring. Wary wagtails, sly sparrows and starlings were the first to visit, followed by a brave robin showing off his scarlet bib. During my deep thought a bright tangerine-eyed male blackbird with coat as black as the raven stopped by, staring me right in the eye. I stared at him back with equal intensity and curiosity. And so it was; when I moved my arms he bobbed on his skinny twiggy legs, cowering to the ground whilst flinching his wings. When I moved my head, his head moved but our eye to eye contact remained fixed and as steady as the aim of a chieftain tank. This blackbird with a sparkle in his eye manoeuvred himself over the largest piece of crust to make his final move of our game. With his head tilted and prize in beak he flew away.

Across the street there were others seemingly engaged in territorial combat, and what is more interesting was the display of courtship rituals taking place on the grassy banks. It seems the natural world is predominantly a world of opportunists. Younger males often woo a mature female yet I have observed in the wild how often she will return in time to the mature male bird. There are seemingly rogue males and females even amongst swans and magpies that wander, yet sooner or later return to their original mates. When weather conditions seem favourable many creatures take their chances with a successful outcome, but it can spell disaster, for in the natural law of things there is little evidence of expected human rational behaviour. Fine weather contributes in triggering hormones into action, setting off behaviour not always in the individual's interest but a gambling game for the species as a whole on a broadening of the gene pool. Already exhausted after raising one or more families a severe winter may prove too much. This year, some resident species had plumped for early hibernation despite an abundance of fruit and food for the wildlife of Linton. For the others it is a time for a feast.

'Ice in November to bear a duck, The rest of the Winter'll be slush and muck'. Well, relying on Thomas Hood's once wise words may not be such a good idea. There had been too little frost to bring down all the leaves in October although Colin may not

agree, whilst battling to keep the pathways and gullies free for the persistent rain to drain away. The fog in October would normally signify a harsh winter. The stubborn foliage, having survived the late summer winds would glow in the sunlight creating and encapsulating a golden autumnal scene, but the winds came again and stripped the trees clean. We may talk of weather patterns and cycles, but we are hurtling through space on our little blue planet at over a million miles per hour in a time that none of us has lived before! It is only natural I suppose to view and identify familiar signs left by the past and make an educated guess at what weather may come. Today, we talk of how over a hundred years ago winter meant skating on the Fens and Thames.

I wish here to pay tribute to a great lady of Linton. Mrs Adamson told me 'Yesterday is the past and you can do nothing at all about it. What matters is today, and possibly tomorrow'. Mrs Adamson, one of the oldest members of our community was going to reveal a secret, (perhaps about the weather) but passed away the other day before our date for tea and scones.

As keepers of 'garden earth' enjoy the flowering mallow, the mild mid-winter frolics and all the inimitable natural beauty in our very valuable valley, unless the signs were right and the snow has arrived!

## **K-CLUB WINNERS**

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The lucky winners of the  
K-Club December draw are:

- 1st prize (£50) Mr D W George (No. 356)
- 2nd prize (£25) Mrs R F Cooper (No. 156)
- 3rd prize (£10) Ms Nichole Hill (No. 409)

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