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MAKE YOUR MARK ON THE VILLAGE [Top](#)

IT'S on. Linton Parish Council's months of hard work to encourage more residents to stand for the council are being rewarded with its first election for many years on 2nd May. At least 17 candidates will be standing—see our election special pages—and it is thought that there will be others who have not declared their intentions ahead of the official nominations period. This shows an increased community spirit at a time when many fear a decline in enthusiasm for running the village and its organisations—and it will give a big push to the efforts to win quality parish status, which attracts more money and power to decide local issues. Gill Barker, the Parish Clerk, has been organising the campaign to get more candidates to stand and she has arranged, with the enthusiastic help of councillors, a mentoring scheme to help first-time candidates get into the ways of the council. “I have been very pleased with the response,” said Ms Barker.

One South Cambs. District Council seat - currently held by John Batchelor for the Liberal Democrats - also comes up on the same day. The district faces many issues, not least the growth of the development of the entire area with the concomitant rise in traffic and demands on the infrastructure like roads, drainage, schools and medical facilities. South Cambs. council is also undergoing its biggest changes, with quality of service and costs to council taxpayers in focus. In the parish, the issues like the High Street and A1307 traffic continue and need fighting to a successful conclusion. Alongside those efforts, quality parish status will mean that the council can tackle other problems now taken on by the district or county councils. For example, instead of residents having to wait for footpath repairs, the parish council would be able to bid for the work and get them fixed more quickly. It is now important to have a good turnout at the polls to add to the pressure for quality status. LNT

CHALKING UP SOME BRIGHT IDEAS

Councillor John Batchelor (left) and Andy O'Hanlon, South Cambs Arts Development Officer, (second left) with members of Chalklands Residents'



Association Arts Project committee. Back row: June Hall and Maureen Williams; sitting: Joy Button and Jean Whitby; far right Darryl Nantais

CHALKLANDS residents are actively working towards improvements to the visual aspects of their estate. Efforts made so far by the Residents

Association have been recognised by the District Council, who have cited them as a model for other estates. Now that all essential housing works are complete or in the process of completion we have turned our attention to finer details. We are very proud of the green banks that lie at the entrance to Chalklands and last October we clubbed together to buy 1500 spring bulbs. The planting was carried out by a small band of residents and some very much appreciated help was received from a group of pupils from the Linton Heights Junior School. The Residents Association is very grateful to Cherry Fisher for coordinating this project.

We are now looking at whether an arts feature sited at the entrance to Chalklands would further enhance the estate and add to the beauty of our village. Residents put forward ideas such as redesigning the steps, railing and lamp that lead up the bank to the bungalows, a carved Chalklands sign and a water feature.

Artists Darryl Nantais and Maureen Williams, who are themselves Chalklands residents, prepared illustrations of these ideas and last month an exhibition was held for residents, members of the parish council and South Cambridgeshire District Council to give their opinion on whether the Residents Association should move forward to apply for a grant for this project.

South Cambs Arts Development Unit have offered us 50% of the cost of hosting the exhibition. The results are yet to be analysed but there was a great deal of enthusiasm and positive comment from those attending. Maureen Williams

PIED PIPER REQUIRED

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RATS have been reported in four different areas of the village recently. The SCDC Environmental Health department has been informed.

However, Linton people can assist in the efforts to rid ourselves of these rodents. Some simple rules: please do not leave cat food out of doors or feed wild birds on the ground and please do not leave rubbish bags outside until the morning of collection.

If you think you have seen a rat please report it to the Parish Office 891001 or to SCDC Environmental Health dept. direct 01223 443000. Gill Barker

ELECTIONS AT ST MARY'S

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THE Annual Parochial Church Meeting of St Mary's will be held in the Infants' School hall at 7.45pm on 11th April. There are two meetings to be held that evening. In the first anyone resident in the church parish can vote for two churchwardens. Nominations will be posted on the church door in advance and nominations can be made at the meeting itself. In the second meeting we shall be electing members of the parochial church council (PCC), the church's local governing body. One third of PCC members ret Under legislation dating back to the thirteenth century, churchwardens legally own the contents of the church itself. The freehold of the church and churchyard is vested in the incumbent and churchwardens jointly. In practice, all decisions regarding the use of the church and its contents are taken by the PCC. If anyone wants to know more about how the church is run, or wishes to join the electoral roll, please contact the current churchwardens David Parry-Smith or Glynis Younger
David Parry-Smith

DIGITAL INFO

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The new Linton News website is now available on www.linton.info. In addition to current and back issues of the paper, it has a new diary which expands the coverage we give to events and meetings. Village directory sections will be added as we work towards a new directory in electronic and magazine form. We need an additional person to help with this: if you would like to be involved in gathering the information and seeing it published as part of a wider team, please telephone John Keeble or email on jkeeble@clara.net. LNT

BUSINESS LINES UP BEHIND COLLEGE

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THE task at the end of September seemed a formidable one. Here we were about to embark on a major fundraising drive to support a very significant development for Linton Village College and suddenly the world was not the positive and optimistic place it had been a month before. September 11th cast a dark shadow over all of us and businesses were bracing themselves for some tough times. But you cannot always choose the time to move things forward and come what may we needed to persuade companies to sponsor Linton Village College's bid to become one of the country's first Business and Enterprise Specialist Schools. And that sponsorship had to be to the tune of fifty thousand pounds.
Help and support came from many directions and by Christmas we were making good progress. In fact by the middle of February the target had been reached. Things

did not stop there however and I am delighted to say that our sponsorship support is now around eighty thousand pounds. I believe this reflects a genuine interest from our business partners in what we are trying to do at the College, as well as the realisation that schools cannot go it alone if they are to keep pace with the rapid changes happening around them in the business world.

So now, after a great deal of hard work, the mammoth bid has been written and sent to the Department for Education and Skills and we await their deliberations. If we are successful in this round, we will receive £100,000 to add to our sponsorship support and will use this to improve our computer systems and create a business studies area. The total additional funding will be close to half a million pounds over the next four years so significant additional money will also be available for staffing at the College. Some resources will go to our Primary Schools and some to help small local businesses to develop further. Pegasus will lead this latter initiative. This additional resourcing will of course benefit all pupils at the College, not just those with ambitions in the business world. All along we have been very clear that the skills and qualities we are seeking to develop in our pupils are those which underpin education in its widest sense. All our sponsors agree that this is a rare chance to make a successful school even better.

Our current business partners are: ARM Limited, Granta Park plc, Millennium Pharmaceuticals Limited, Rodelia, Glanville Projects Limited, The Alper Charitable Trust, Chilford Hall Limited, Ribo Targets Limited, TWI Limited, Taylor Vinters Solicitors, NSH Consulting Limited, Carter Jonas Surveyors, Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union (Learning Fund), The Danwood Group Limited, ictnet Limited and absolutelyfabulousPR.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank them formally for giving me the time to explain the vision and then for making the commitment to support us. Clive Bush

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT Reported by GRAHAM POTTER

Parish Council's March Meetings

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AS you can well imagine from all the reports in the Linton News lately, elections are at the top of most parish councillors agendas, but beside the elections business must go on as usual. In public participation, Mr Creedy, supported by two young lads, gave the council a report on the provision of a skateboard facility. This will be put on the agenda for one of the April meetings. The council was congratulated on the new look of the Horn Lane bridge area. The Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations have got off to a shaky start with some degree of reluctance to organise any thing. This would seem to be due to the fact that everyone is wary of what other things may be planned. The Crown Public House is organising an event; there will be the official opening of the crescent of trees dedicated to the Golden Jubilee and other events on the recreation ground including an Aztecs Mini-Colts 5-a-side football event, bowls competition, and some music. Residents will be asked to bring a picnic. Since our floods in October obstructions in the river are being reported. A council member

commented on the state of our river walks and gave an update on the state of the footpath to Kingfisher Walk, repairs to which are being delayed because of uncertainty over land ownership. One of the baby swings in the adventure playground is broken. Wicksteed are to repair this. Cutting Leadwell Meadows this year is going to be a problem due to the wetness of the ground.

The council has received queries about the reopening of the pharmacy, which is lagging behind other businesses affected by the floods. The Chair reported that this was due to problems with insurance and a June reopening is planned. A new seat is to be placed at Copperfields. Dr Bear reported that the County Library service will overspend by £200,000 this year, which will mean that our own library hours will be cut. It is hoped that a speed camera will be placed near the college; the police in our area currently have a mobile version working from the back of a vehicle. Thirty-eight calls for service were received by the police during February, and 7 actual crimes were logged.

HISTORIANS BOTTLE THINGS UP

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AT the March meeting of the Historical Society, Mr Bill Wittering brought along a great variety of glass bottles which he had collected over many years. The first ones were dug up by his son in a forest in Hampshire although many more he found in his garden, because years ago there were no rubbish collections and waste was just dumped in gardens.

Glassmaking began 4,500 years ago in Egypt and Rome. Glass was blown into bottles but there was no method of smoothing the top, so any bottles with rough tops date before machinery came into use. Flat glass was blown and spun very fast so it collapsed into a flat disc—the edges were trimmed off into diamond shapes to make windows. Stained glass originated in France and a village was established to make the glass for Fountains Abbey. The village, Glasshouses, still exists.

With the discovery of mineral springs, bottles became more abundant and spring water is still bottled and sold everywhere. Our nearest spring water source is at Papworth St Agnes. Numerous devices were used to seal the bottles, including cork, rubber, marbles and screw tops.

Members were keenly interested in the show, and a warm vote of thanks was given by Iris Jeffery. Mr and Mrs Creek were thanked for their continuing organisation and running of the raffle.

The next meeting is on Tuesday 16th April when Mr Wells will tell us about Hobson's Conduit. All are welcome.

Joan Pearman

MUSIC IN A NUTSHELL

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ANNE Page's concert, The Organ in a Nutshell, is a brief guide to organ music from the 14th century to the present day including the most famous organ pieces ever (Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor and Widor's Toccata from the 5th Symphony)

as well as many surprises.

Australian-born Anne Page is a virtuoso organist whose career as a soloist has taken her all over Europe and the USA. She has a wonderfully warm and engaging performance style and is a favourite with Cambridgeshire audiences.

Anne's exploration travels through the times of the Elizabethans, the masters of Northern Europe and France to the unparalleled masterpieces of J S Bach. From the Romantic era we hear Mendelssohn and Brahms before moving through the 20th century to our own times with pieces by Arvo Pärt and Carl Rütli.

The concert will take place at 8pm on Saturday 20th April at St Mary's Church , Linton. Tickets will be available at the door or from Cambridge Arts Theatre Box Office % 01223 503333. Hugh Wood

SOCIAL CENTRE ON SHOW

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COME along to an open morning between 10am and noon on Saturday 20th April, have a coffee and view the newly refurbished Social Centre (village hall). The Centre has recently been redecorated and refitted with new tables, chairs and curtains. We hope to install new windows and to refurbish the floor completely very soon.

This village hall was built with money raised by a very dedicated number of villagers who raised funds by holding Whist Drives and Bingo sessions. It is a credit to everyone involved. The Centre is used by a large number of village groups such as the Women's Institute, Garden Club, Historical Society, Indoor Bowls Club, with Whist Drives and Bingo sessions still held regularly. It plays host to a ladies' aerobics session and to two children's dance classes every week.

The Centre is available for hire for private parties on Friday evenings and all day on Saturday with a number of weddings already booked for this year. Drop in and view the pictures on display showing how the Centre can look when decorated for a special event. The Management Committee look forward to seeing you on Saturday 20th April. Gill Barker

HOUSE TO HOUSE COLLECTION

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EVERY three seconds somewhere in the world, a child dies of hunger and illness rooted in poverty. Save The Children will be conducting a house to house collection from 28th April to 4th May. Please give generously.

Thanks to all those who attended the Ceilidh at The Manor in Balsham ñ over £500 was raised.

Judith White

TREASURES AT WI

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THERE was a large gathering of 50 members and 13 guests, including several

gentlemen, at the Open Meeting held last month.

Tricia Lewis spoke of the excellent visit organised by the Cambridge Federation of WIs to the Wallace Collection in London, where furniture, paintings and other treasures were beautifully displayed in a very fine house. We thanked Jean Goodwin for bringing a large wall hanging from WI House to be displayed during the evening. In 1988, each WI locally had contributed a panel in needlework showing their village. Margaret and Brian Wingfield have recently been researching family history with the help of a course at the WIs residential Denman College. Their very informative report was read out and they had obviously enjoyed their visit. Margaret had received a Linton WI Denman Bursary, awarded by ballot each year.

The remainder of the evening was given over to an antiques road show. Mr Barry Stevenson, of Cowlinge, showed an amazing knowledge of the very varied items brought along by members and guests. He was able to enlighten owners on many aspects of the items submitted. Intriguing articles included a puzzle jug, glove stretchers, a portable telescope and a pair of brass shoe horns.

The Annual General Meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 2nd April in the Social Centre. There will be two or three vacancies to be filled on the WI Committee. Volunteers are welcome to stand.

Anne Parry-Smith

15 Years of the Linton News

Breaking News, Building Views

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Tracey Russell, the latest Linton News recruit, records an anniversary waltz through 15 years of news with founder Ron Amsden

1987

Foul! Are Linton's Dogs Offside?

This was the very first article that the Linton News published. Ron Amsden had moved from Hadstock and joining Linton Parish Council he was shocked to find how little communication there was between the council and the parish and was determined to rectify it. The dilemma of what to do about footways fouled by dogs became the lead story and the debate continued for some issues.

Water, Water Everywhere

After the severe flooding of Linton in 1967, improvements were made to the River Cam. Experts said Linton would never be flooded again. But in June 1987, the parrot aviary at Linton zoo was devastated by flooding – £3,000 had to be urgently raised to rebuild it. July's front-page story details the grim tale of the wall of mud that engulfed the area and closed with a quote from zoo owner Len Simmons "We had another rough night last night. We turned out at 3am when we heard the rain start again. Having suffered so desperately we cannot even sleep through a June shower." As a result of this and subsequent articles the paper managed to raise £1191.70 for the Linton Zoo Disaster Fund.

The August edition lists all the reasons why we continued to be flooded – a story still continuing in the November 2001 issue.

1989

Linton's Five-Hour Blockade

Many will remember this front-page story from April as 'Linton's bank raid'. The cleaner of Barclays Bank was tied and held captive early on 16th March. Fortunately when the manager arrived he escaped to raise the alarm. Police sealed off the area. When eventually they forced an entry the cleaner was found to be the sole occupant and the safes had not been tampered with. It was later realised that around £100 was missing. The presumption was that the raiders had made their escape during the few minutes it took for the police to arrive.

Spy In The Sky?

The LN investigated the possible threat of invasion after a low flying army helicopter terrified half the village in July. It seems the pilot happened to be over Linton when he noticed an accident on the (as it was then known) A604. He stopped and hovered whilst contacting the police to see if anyone needed lifting to hospital. As this proved unnecessary his flight continued.

Hadstock Churchyard Mystery Solved

This was November's headline. Having seen a small paragraph in The Times stating

that a Greek urn, 2,000 years old, had been discovered in Hadstock churchyard, Ron Amsden's curiosity was aroused.

On visiting the Saffron Walden Museum, where it was on display, he discovered that the object was actually 5,000 years old and not a Greek urn at all. Lynn Morrison, Conservation Officer told him that it was carved out of solid marble on an island in the Aegean sea back in the Bronze Age.

Dick Fisher, whilst working for HJ Paintin in 1991, had unearthed the vessel. He was opening the tombstone of the artist Michael Ayrton for the interment of Ayrton's wife. As Ayrton was known to be interested in Aegean culture it seems obvious that it was by his agency that it had reached Hadstock churchyard.

1995-2002

Vandals, Crime and Youth Problems

A common theme over the 15 years of the Linton News has been a concern over anti-social behaviour, vandalism and the perceived threat of young people congregating on the streets. Unfortunately, apart from expressing concern and blaming the police, little practical action was taken until the Safer Linton Initiative was launched around 1995. Their professional approach led to a proper survey of concerns in the community, to an outreach project that talked to the youngsters on the streets to find out what they wanted and to the forming of Linton Action For Youth. A great example of partnership working that has since been held up as an example to others. With the active support of the police, Linton Parish Council, Safer Linton Initiative, Linton Village College and Community Education LA4Y got off the ground, thus providing the one thing the youngsters asked for: a warm, safe, no hassle place for them to go and meet their friends. The Drop-In initially was open one or two nights at the weekend at the Social Centre and the church Pavilion.

The Drop-In Centre opened on the recreation ground in December 1999, another example of community cooperation. Ciba contributed the modular building and except for £4,500 that came from the District Council the whole £23,000 cost was raised in under six months from within our own community.

LA4Y has come a long way from a project with the simple aim of getting kids off the streets, to an organisation that is delivering the bulk of the youth support and complementing many other community services that would not otherwise be available locally. It is recognised as an example of good practice and is expected to expand further as new community initiatives are piloted. Linton Action For Youth is more than just a Drop-In; it is providing a whole range of services. (Review supplied by John Batchelor.)

Swimming Pool

Another continuing feature of the paper is the fight for a swimming pool in Linton. After the fund was nearly abandoned altogether in September 1993 a questionnaire was delivered with each LN, checking that the village still supported the original idea of a community pool. Now charity status has been acquired the pool committee

is up and running once more. Getting stuck into the fundraising will begin in earnest this summer –£2 million is the figure that needs to be raised to ensure its success. If you want to get involved further please contact Tracey Wilson

Questions and answers

During the past 15 years, the Linton News has played a very strong role in running and developing our village and community.

At one level, it reports the news – but at another, it enables everyone to put forward ideas, proposals, comments and reasonably worded criticisms.

In addition, it has circulated many detailed questionnaires to ascertain residents' views on specific subjects and some of these have led to projects.

Want to find out more?

Would you like to find out more about the articles mentioned above? The first 10 years are bound and held in the library on the desk that overlooks the play area. The last five years are held at the Parish Council Office in Coles Lane, ready for binding. These can be made available to you by contacting the Parish Clerk on 891001. The last two years are available on the internet – www.linton.info.

And in addition...

The Linton News, held in community ownership by the parish council, has been growing to offer more to the community.

More pages have allowed it to give more space to village organisations and residents – it is always there to spread the word and amplify the choice of local people.

This issue contains a joint venture with the Parish Council to explain the issues involved in the forthcoming elections and give candidates a chance to put forward their views.

Past projects have included a high-quality booklet containing details and maps for local walks which, with the help of grants, was distributed free throughout our area. FIFTEEN years ago, the first issue of the Linton News arrived at all the homes in Linton. Soon after Ron Amsden (above) moved from Hadstock to Linton he decided that the village needed a newspaper carrying information about local events and activities. So he sent out a circular letter inviting anybody who was in any way interested in helping his idea to become reality to attend a meeting at his house. This was very badly attended; I think only seven people turned up. I was one of them, and now I'm the only one left who was in at the beginning.

It so happened that one of the seven, Brian Milne, had had some editorial experience, so he was promptly chosen to be our first Editor. Unfortunately after a while, he left Linton, so Ron Amsden did the job until we found somebody else.

This happened a number of times. Editors came and went and Ron filled the breach. In fact Ron did anything that needed doing. He wrote articles, recruited deliverers, often he took the proofs to be printed and collected the printed sheets, which led to the next job of collating the sheets which were in separate boxes. They had then to be counted and put into bags for the deliverers. As you might expect, Ron had a

delivery round himself.

Our first issue consisted of one and a half sheets of newsprint. We couldn't afford any more, and compared with the current issue it looks a very primitive affair. But the paper grew. The second issue had two whole sheets and now we have grown to a regular three sheets.

The larger the paper gets the more work is needed to produce it, and this, together with the passing of the years, makes heavy demands on anybody deeply involved. Eventually, Ron Amsden decided to retire, the strain was getting too great, and he could never be other than deeply involved.

He stopped coming to our regular meetings some time ago so we don't see much of him now, but he is, and always will be, The Father of the Linton News.

Ron Argent The future

YOU can make a big difference as part of the Linton News. Organisations in desperate need can be helped, such as Helping Hands which may have closed without an appeal in the paper; and news and views can be passed on to draw our community together. If you would like to find out more, please contact the editor, Sally Simmons.

PUBLICATIONS evolve or they become irrelevant to the communities they serve – and the Linton News is no exception to that rule.

The future is more challenging than ever, with the village changing at the same time as media technology.

But the central core remains the same: volunteers from the community making available a means of communication to the whole community.

Our plans for the newspaper include evolving the design to strengthen promotional support for village events and organisations, and the gradual updating of the technology we use to produce the paper.

The paper is now offered on the internet and that is already undergoing a redesign as part of the paper's major electronic expansion.

We have purchased the new international name of www.linton.info and, from this month, that will be the site for the Linton News plus a new Diary giving much more information about village events with the specific aim of helping to promote them locally and, when linked, through tourism, council and commercial sites.

The next stage will be the gradual build up of directory information and, as soon as we can find someone to undertake the work, offer a free internet link through the site (users will still have to pay their phone charges at local call rate).

A strong emphasis of the site will be the encouragement of volunteers to help run the village and its organisations.

This links with another major project: the production of a new village directory to be delivered free to everyone who receives the Linton News.

This plan is ambitious: a full-colour A4, magazine-style directory listing what we need to know about our area – from sport to transport, from shop opening times to local councillors. Finance for the project is already coming in – our problem is to

find enough people to work on it.

The Linton News has come a long way from an A4 sheet to today's 'electronic office' production and internet. But some things never change: it is still a community venture that relies on volunteers to plan, produce and deliver it.

A BEAUTIFUL WAY OF SCRATCHING A LIVING

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Maureen Williams, illustrator of the Linton Country Diary, talks about her work as a glass engraver



MY roots are well and truly in Linton soil. I was born here and my sister Pauline has managed to trace our family in Linton back to the 1700s. In fact it was my sister who started me glass engraving. About 22 years ago she gave me a simple engraving tool and said 'I thought you would be good at it'. At the time it was difficult to find anything about this art form. There were not many engravers of glass around and very little written about it. So it was

very much a case of exploring this medium for myself. It is much easier now to obtain tools made for the engraver. Engravers had to experiment and adapt tools made for other professions such as dentists drills. In recent years the Guild of Glass Engravers has done much to promote the work of engravers.

My work is mainly drill engraved with diamond coated burs and carborundum. It is usually surface or shallow intaglio engraved. Glass can create a magical effect when it is engraved beyond the surface. The areas engraved more deeply can appear to be in relief. This is intaglio engraving which is the opposite to cameo engraving.

Ninety percent of commissions I receive include lettering as they are usually ordered for special presentations and corporate awards. I make a few sketches to decide on the best style and size of lettering to complement the piece of glass. It is very important to consider the shape of the glass whilst you are creating the design. I have been told on many occasions that my pieces have been presented by or to famous people. Unfortunately, I am rarely able to obtain a photograph of the occasion. If I am asked about what I am working on at the moment I usually have to be a bit vague in my response. It wouldn't be appropriate for me to discuss details of a surprise presentation or the winner of an award before the winner has been announced.

Although I specialise in engraved glass my artistic skills lead me to many and varied interesting commissions. Many examples of my work can be seen around Linton, including the Darryl Nanta's Gallery sign, the Friends of St Mary's logo and of course the Linton News Country Diary illustrations.

My designing first starts in my sketch pad. When I have made a few sketches and arrive at a design I am happy with, I make a copy of my design and send it to a client for their approval. I engrave free hand. As one cannot rub out or paint over errors, it is always best first to mark out the basic shape of the design with a china graph pencil. Whilst it may be possible simply to trace your design on to a flat piece of glass this is not possible on a round or bulbous piece.

It is essential to wear a face mask to prevent breathing the glass dust and goggles to protect the eyes in case the worst happens. I have only had one piece of glass break whilst working on it. It gave out a loud popping sound and the glass shot out in different directions. It left me holding one small piece of glass and feeling slightly shaky. Luckily, this is very rare.

Most of my clients come directly to me but I am looking forward to working with the Darryl Nanta's Gallery which takes orders for my work.

As with all artists, it is difficult to make a living from my work. I am very grateful that I have a husband that brings in a regular wage. This takes the pressure off me but for an artist who relies totally on his or her income it can be a financial seesaw. It doesn't have to be expensive for any one to take up engraving as a hobby. It is easy to get some basic equipment for under £100. Some very good engraving tools can be purchased for under £600. But to run as a business the outlay is considerably more. I carry a large range of glassware and we all know how expensive lead crystal can be.

BUSINESSES BOUNCE BACK AFTER FLOOD

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LOCAL businesses affected by last October's flood are getting back on their feet. The Dog & Duck reopened on 28th February and the Darryl Nanta's Gallery reopened with a new exhibition on 16th March.

At Tournants, the electrical shop, refurbishment work has now started. The shop should be opening in the late spring.

Our pharmacist Deepa Bhachoo tells us that her insurance company has finally given the go ahead for refurbishment. Work is scheduled to begin on 25th March and it is hoped that the pharmacy will be back in operation by early June. Efforts to open a temporary pharmacy have been made but due to delays this is now not a viable option in the short term. The Health Centre is trying its best to supply prescriptions where it can but does not have the resources or space to be able to help all Linton residents since this would require a 50% increase in staff workload.

We all hope that building work progresses smoothly and the pharmacy and electrical shops open on schedule. Further update in the next issue.

Linton News Team

DOGS' DO, OWNERS DON'T

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Dear Editor

There seems to be a small minority of residents in the village who are unaware of the

penalties of allowing their dogs to foul the footpaths. I cannot believe they are unable to read the warning notices posted in the village or fail to see the dog waste bins placed in prominent places in the village.

For one week recently, a dog was allowed to foul in Market Lane every day and no attempt was made to remove the offending mess. Today, Saturday 16th March, four people had allowed their dogs to foul the grass in the meadow (recreation ground) and made no attempt to clean up.

As a dog owner I resent the bad name which all dog owners will be given because a few are irresponsible and anti-social.

Pamela Kenyon

PLEASE STAND AND VOTE [Top of Page](#)

Dear Editor

May I remind all those who are eligible to vote for the parish council that we are rapidly approaching the nominations and election period. We are now one of the largest parishes in South Cambs. and I would like to see us go back to the procedure where we have enough nominations to need an election.

As a previous member, Vice-Chairman and Chairman of the parish council, I would ask you to consider whether you are interested in the possibility of being associated with the well-being of our village, and if you have the time to participate in these activities.

John W. Franklin

MAUNDY MUSIC FOR FRIENDS [Top of Page](#)

THE Cambridge String Players will present a very attractive programme of music under their new Musical Director, Leon Lovett at 7.30pm on 13th April in the Church. The concert will include Bach's Double Violin Concerto and Tchaikovsky's Serenade for strings.

On the following day, Mr Peter Wright, CVO, of the Royal Almoners Office will give a talk in the Church at 3.30pm, followed by refreshments, when Maundy coins can be seen and Mr Wright will be available for questions. Royal Maundy is one of the most interesting of ancient ceremonies, still maintained today when the Queen presents Maundy money to elderly senior citizens on the day before Good Friday. All proceeds from these events will go towards maintenance of the Church building.
Margaret Clark and Bruce Conochie

GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS [Top of Page](#)

THE Parish Council has agreed to plant 20 trees in a crescent shape on the west end of the Recreation Ground to mark the Queen's Golden Jubilee. The choice of species will reflect a 'golden' theme. Individual groups will be asked if they wish to sponsor a

tree and have individual plaques attached for posterity. The Girl Guides and Garden Club are among local associations that have already indicated that they will do so. To sponsor your own tree contact Gill Barker at the Parish Office on 891001.

An Opening Ceremony will take place on the Jubilee Bank Holiday Monday. There will be a number of other events for children to participate in, and families will be asked to bring a picnic and stay and enjoy all the events. The Pavilion will be open for refreshments.

The Crown Public House is organising a fund raising Chariot Race through the village, which will also go via the Recreation ground and it is hoped to finish the afternoon with the prize giving. All children who attend the celebrations will get a commemorative medal. Further details and a full itinerary will follow in the May edition of the Linton News. LNT

HELP WITH CHILD CARE PROVISION [Top of Page](#)

ARE you looking for local childcare for your children aged between 0 and 14?

Would you like information about childminders in Linton, about a local pre-school, day nursery, out-of-school club or holiday scheme?

Do you need advice about choosing childcare, information about free early education for three and four year olds or help with calculating Working Families Tax Credit?

Are you interested in a career in childcare?

The Care and Education Partnership can help! The Partnership aims to support and develop high quality services across Cambridgeshire for children, young people and their families. It supports child-minders, pre-schools, day nurseries and out-of-school clubs in Linton with Development Worker visits; access to specialist support; help with expansion, quality assurance and much more. To find out more about the work of the Partnership, you can ring the Partnership Childcare Advisers on 01954 273372.

Opportunity Links has details of jobs and training opportunities for people interested in working in childcare. You can contact Opportunity Links by telephoning 0800 29 89 121, by e-mailing info@opp-links.org.uk or by logging onto www.opportunity-links.org.uk.

Victoria Little

HADSTOCK PRE-SCHOOL GROUP [Top of Page](#)

THANKS to funding from Hadstock Parish Council a group of mothers have started a mother and toddler group within the village, enabling pre-school babies/toddlers and their mums/carers to meet. The group provides an informal environment with crafts, free play, stories and songs in which to have fun and relax. There is also an enclosed garden for the summer months!

The group meets weekly on Thursday afternoons from 1.45 to 3.45pm in the village hall (next to the church), and welcome newcomers from around and about.

For more information contact Kay Elston

BOWLING BACK [Top of Page](#)

THE Green has now been completely re-laid after the floods and we are open for business. We are very grateful to Gill Barker for dealing with the Insurance Claim so efficiently.

The Subscription evening will be held from 6.30pm till 8.30pm on Wednesday 17th April in the Pavilion, when we hope to see all existing and prospective members.

Derek Dimmock

K-CLUB DRAW [Top of Page](#)

THE result of the March K-Club monthly draw: 1st (£50) Kate France (No. 147); 2nd (£25) Pam Richardson (No. 418); 3rd (£10) Alison Ballentine (No. 306).

SUFFERING FOR ART [Top of Page](#)

LINTON Camera Club members met on March 10th and slides were presented by John Keeble and Jim Goodall. John's pictures concentrated on life amongst unexploded bombs and minefields taken during a visit to South East Asia. Jim showed some beautiful images, mainly of scenery in the Lake District.

The group meets again at the unearthly hour of 5.30am on Sunday April 14th for a trip to the Essex coast around Tollesbury and Maldon to capture the morning light or possibly pneumonia. The Club meets on the second Sunday in the month from 11am to 1pm, usually in the Social Centre. For further information please contact John Keeble e-mail jkeeble@clara.net.

Mike Crofts

THE BUSH TELEGRAPH [Top of Page](#)

WR have a thing about testing in this country. We somehow feel that nothing has much validity unless we can test it and compare it with others. Sometimes of course this is a laudable practice and I would be the first to argue the importance of measuring success at key milestones in a child's life. I do wonder if we have become a touch obsessed, however, when I read about the proposals to add star grades to the national tests taken by eleven year olds. These we are told will help 'discriminate between the exceptional and the merely excellent'. Yes, that is what the minister said: 'merely' excellent. Time was when excellent meant the best, but then 'satisfactory' meant meeting the required standard. Now no one wants to be satisfactory and even excellent does not seem to be much good! A few years ago a certain Education Secretary said of the primary school league tables, that he was looking forward to the time when significantly more than

half the children attained above the average mark. Think about that for a second. When we allow our use of language to become so sloppy, we create confusion where we should be thinking clearly. We see that confusion now with the tendency to judge children and schools only by what we can test. Some schools in difficult circumstances already sacrifice their beliefs on the altar of the school league tables. For them, Ofsted, LEAs and sometimes parents drive this inexorably. Education and schools are about much more than this. How do you measure the support a group of children give to a bereaved friend, or the sensitivity and passion shown by fifty teenagers singing the Lachrymosa from Mozart's Requiem, or the continuing commitment to raising funds in ever more imaginative ways for our friends in Soshanguve, South Africa? All these are real examples from just two days here at LVC and each day brings more. The potential of young people far exceeds our capability to test them and we must never lose sight of the fact that such measurements of success are only snapshots of what it is to be a growing, developing and learning human being. Clive Bush, Principal

GARDEN AT YOUR PERIL [Top of Page](#)

AT the March meeting of the Garden Club we were confronted with an array of pruning tools and Richard Gant explained the specific use of each one and how to choose and maintain them. We were surprised to learn that in Mr Gant's experience as head gardener at Madingley Hall, it is not the chain saw which is responsible for most accidents but the small pruning saw. We learned the method used and correct time of year to prune the most popular shrubs and questions were asked and tales told of disasters and successes.

After the break we saw slides of the Botanic Gardens and Madingley, including views of the 60m long Hazel Nut Walk, in existence since 1849 and described as "a plant cathedral". Scaffolding is required to enable pruning of this 4m high living structure every two years and its pruned stems are turned into baskets at craft courses, or used as supports.

Mrs Alison Davies will speak on "The Drama of Northern Italian Gardens" at this month's meeting. Recent speakers have been pleased to address a good crowd, so do please join us again.

Gloria Fidler

LINTON COUNTRY DIARY by Darryl Nantais [Top of Page](#) Illustrated by Maureen Williams

I recently followed up the kind invitation to visit the garden of Rosemary and Colin behind Chapter & Verse in the High Street. The story begins one morning in February and revolves around a very old apple tree with boughs propped like a pirate with crutch underarm by an equally old post. In the cosy courtyard the tree continues a fruitful life and defies death by protection from severe weather conditions with help from some caring green fingers. To give you some idea of the ethereal location, there



are ancient flint walls near the tree in question, creating a little sun trap where a magnificent pair of kiwi plants also grow. This is interesting in itself but the report I received was that more than four-and-twenty blackbirds had gathered not in a pie but to perform stunts that amused all who witnessed their antics and bemused the resident cat. Instead of the usual territorial fracas one expects from blackbirds, these chaps (and I say chaps because I didn't see a single

female) were passive and accommodating. None of that cocky "This is my plot", it was more a case of "I love my neighbour". There was billing and singing in discordant tones as if mimicking mobile phones in groups and lines that edged and toppled like a scene from a New Year's celebration. The drunken bunch fell willy-nilly off branch tips seemingly without a care in the world. Yes, it's all reminiscent of the activities of another species common to Linton!

When I arrived I found ten already inebriated legless feathered fools flapping about with wings outstretched, no doubt to steady themselves as they attempted to gather in the tree. With territorial issues apparently resolved or even forgotten, the birds shared courteously the last portions from the rotting fallers. Now I understand that cider contains between 3 and 9 per cent ethanol, commonly known as alcohol. I never got the chance to have the fermenting fruit analysed but I presume the birds' consumption of it was responsible for their unusual behaviour!

Blackbirds, *turdus merula*, are surprisingly ingenious and adaptable which might explain their breeding success. During the time span of an hour I once observed one learn to fish from a weir. Head turned, one eye to the water and one eye as a lookout. A swift hop and a duck would scoop the fry with ease. This *Turdus merula* turned part-time kingfisher returned twelve times to pick out minnows from the Little Stour to feed its young, though you may suspect as I did that only one bird was the beneficiary of this new found skill. That bird would have been one we are waiting to hear from any day now.

Until next time, listen out for that early cuckoo from Borley Wood!

CHILDREN'S WRITER ANNE FINE TO VISIT ASHDON

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ANNE Fine, children's laureate, is coming to Ashdon Village Hall on Saturday 11th May at the invitation of Ashdon Primary School PTA.

Anne Fine is a distinguished writer for boys and girls of all ages, with over forty books to her credit. She is twice winner of the Carnegie Medal, Britain's most coveted children's literature award and has won many other awards.

For more information contact Mrs L. Smith, email lorraine.z.smith@talk21.com, or the Saffron Walden Tourist Information Centre.

MOTHERS' UNION CLOTHING SALE

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THE Mothers' Union is holding the summer nearly new children's clothes and baby equipment sale from 11.30am to 12.30pm on Saturday 4th May at the Social Centre. The vendor receives 75% of the selling price; 25% goes to Mothers' Union projects in this country and overseas. There will be lots of good quality clothing at low prices so do come and buy. Offers of help are welcome too!
For more information, please contact Sue Mudge

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