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## VILLAGE HEADING FOR 'FIRST' ELECTION [Top](#)



Derek Birch (left) and Mike Clay discussing council matters

LINTON Parish Council, trying for quality status which will win more say and a bigger budget for villagers, is set for its first election contest for decades.

Eight residents have come forward so far in response to the appeal by the council for more people to contest the seats.

If those indicating their interest go forward to seek a place on the 15-seat council, it will trigger the election – which is a first requirement of the Quality Parish Council status which would then be within grasp by the end of the year.

Parish councillors acting as mentors so far are Derek Birch, Mike Gee, Enid Bald, Andrew Gore and John Batchelor.

"I have been very pleased with the response," said Gill Barker, the Parish Clerk. "This does not stop anyone else volunteering – they can contact me at any time."

The entire council comes up for re-election – in the past it has been re-appointment because not enough people came forward to hold an election – on the first Thursday in May.

Some councillors are likely to stand down for their own reasons and the new council is expected to be a good mixture of experienced councillors and new people who can be brought on to fill the vital role of running the village.

Gill Barker 891001

# Candidates will be giving their views in a Linton News Election Special page next month

## Helping others help everyone

THE parish council has started an innovative mentoring scheme to help new members. This is an example of it in action:

Mentor: My name is Derek Birch. I have been a Parish Councillor for about 10 years but I have never been elected. All the Councillors have been in this position, all hoping that one day elections would take place.

Our Parish Clerk, Gill Barker, with the help of the Linton News, has found a number of people who would be willing to stand for election, subject to finding out more about what is involved. To this end, an experiment is being tried which has been given the name mentoring.

This involves some Parish Councillors taking under their wing these potential Councillors and letting them learn about the wide-reaching duties involved. When I was in business years ago, we used to call this system sitting next to Nellie, which was an excellent way of breaking the ice in a new job.

I am looking after one of these potential candidates, Michael Clay, who is willing to give of his time. I hope that potential candidates being mentored will succeed in kicking some of us into full-time retirement and do an excellent job for the village if everyone with a vote uses it.

Candidate: I am Mike Clay. I had recently retired when I read Gill Barker's article in the Linton News. It sparked something in me. I thought 'This is something I could do – this is a way I could give back something to the community.'

I have been living in Linton for 27 years and I have never had time before to get involved but I have taken an interest in the village issues like the High Street traffic.

Now, I feel I can offer something by helping to tackle the issues and I would like to help people around where I live in Dolphin Close by representing their views on the council.

If not enough people come forward, the council won't get quality status and that is important because it will keep more of our decisions in the village.

# DOG & DUCK AND ART GALLERY REOPEN

[\*Top\*](#)



Tracy Harrison and Bob Hackett raise their glasses to celebrate the reopening of the Dog and Duck

Tracey Russell on the latest signs of the village getting back to normal

THE Dog and Duck public house, badly damaged in October's floods, has now reopened after three months of repairs, and the Darryl Nantais art gallery is due to open again on 16th March.

Unfortunately some businesses are still closed but efforts go on to get the village back to normal.

The Dog & Duck's landlady, Tracy Harrison, said that repairs there had revealed some of the pub's history.

"We found a Daily Express stuffed into the wall dated 23rd February 1968 which was just after the last Linton flood. We were amused by the date because it is Bob the landlord's birthday. When we realised that the sports writer on this edition also shared the same name – Robert Hackett – it became a little bit spooky," said Tracy.

"Layer by layer, old wallpaper was peeled away, which I have since had made into a collage for hanging in the bar along with various newspaper copies I have obtained from the county library. I always intended to search through the history of the pub and I have found it fascinating. There have been many famous people visiting or associated with Linton in the past. Cuttings about some of these are displayed around the bar. I have also had a plaque made listing most of the landlords who have run the Dog and Duck since it changed to a public house from a butchers in 1851."

There is a new photograph album available on the bar which charts the events that happened during and after October's flood. It depicts the huge dryers that were used, the cement mixers in the bar, right down to the final touches in the redesigned dining room.

Now that most of the heart wrenching work has been completed Tracy and Bob feel that they have the pub just the way they always wanted it to be. They have kept the Tudor look and searched through auctions and sales to make sure that they have the atmosphere just right.

They have only managed to save and restore three tables and one chair but have improved the whole look of the pub tremendously. Local suppliers and workmen were used as much as possible because Tracy believes communities like ours should stick together.

The insurance claim could take up to a year to complete but Tracy and Bob are optimistic about the future.

"We feel we are coming back as friends rather than just running a business. People have been so kind, generous and thoughtful, many who were strangers before the flood happened. We really appreciate everyone's concern and hope to show this by providing a comfortable and welcoming meeting place, where people can come for more than just a drink."

With the garden and patio area next in line for a re-vamp, and craft fairs and events planned throughout the summer, Tracy and Bob are certainly keeping their heads above water.

# THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT, WI STYLE

[Top](#)

WI Members' Night is the one evening in the year when the committee are able to sit back and have the meeting run by a small band of volunteers. Guinevere Ventress, president for the evening, welcomed 50 members to the February meeting. Business was discussed and a reminder given of the Table Top sale on 16th March.

Margaret Clark, Rosemary and Ken Eason, the 'Merely Players', entertained us with an anthology of favourite poems and prose. 'The Seven Ages' took us from the womb through to old age, sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything, all very light hearted and so well performed. Joan Argent thanked them and after refreshments the raffle was drawn and a delightful evening came to an end. The next meeting is the 'Antiques Road Show' open meeting on March 5th. Unusual or interesting objects can be brought for discussion but not to be valued.

Cynthia Norris

## PARISH COUNCIL REPORT Reported by GRAHAM POTTER

### *Parish Council's February meetings* [Top](#)

THE council was given an update on the flood investigations. An application for funding for a three year project has been made by Mr Brasington, who has also been invited to give a presentation at the Annual Parish Meeting on 26th April. The chairman has attended a meeting with local flood victims. The parish clerk advised that dangerous pipes sticking up along the A1307 cycle path are the responsibility of the land owners. The repairs to the bowling green and the pavilion have begun and both will soon be back in full use.

Council showed great concern at the County Council's proposals for a 9.3% increase in their part of the rates. In a previous meeting Dr Bear had said that the increase would not bring in a corresponding increase in budget, and that in spite of a 9.3% increase there will be cuts in the library service, home care and similar. The Parish Council is to write to the County Council with reference to the library cuts, as our own library is doing so well, and to say that a decrease in County Council services is not acceptable.

As no requests for Golden Jubilee celebrations have been received, the council will plant trees at the far end of the recreation ground along the new path and river, giving local clubs, groups and individuals the opportunity to sponsor them. Linton Parish Newspapers have requested funding for a fully illustrated village directory and new website.

The council has agreed to allow Mr Harris's fair to visit the recreation ground from 15th – 20th May. Copies of the audited accounts to March 2001 are available at £3 from the parish clerk. In answer to an enquiry about disabled parking the council agreed that it would be of no use as the double yellow lines are already misused and any further restrictions would also be abused and unenforceable.

## JAZZ IN THE EVENING

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LINTON Jazz will be holding a Jazz Cabaret Evening at 7.30pm on Sunday 10th March at Linton Village College.

We are hoping to raise enough money to purchase a public address system which will be invaluable to us now we have grown into a Big Band.

We have 25 to 30 regular members, including children. We are self-supporting and the concerts we hold are our only source of income for providing new music and equipment so that we can continue.

Tickets will be available on the door or from band members. If you cannot attend could you please donate a raffle prize?

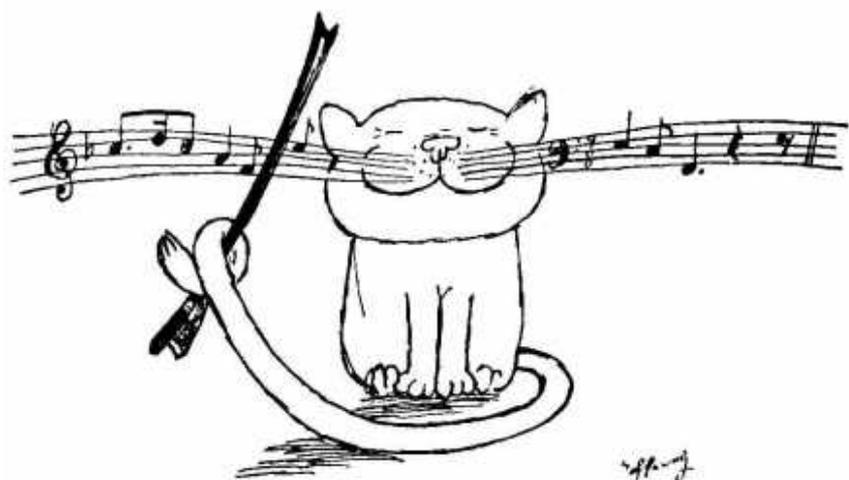
Mother's Day is on 10th March – please bring your mum for a lovely evening to finish off her special day!  
For more information or to reserve tickets, please telephone me  
Karen Sanderson

## FASHIONABLE FRIENDS [Top](#)

THE Friends of Linton Village College will be holding a fashion show at 8pm on Friday 26th April at the Village College. All items may be purchased on the night.

If any ladies with dress sizes 12-18 would like to model the garments, please phone Mandy with details. Tickets are available from me  
Mandy Crawley

## LINTON GETS CREAM OF HUMOUR [Top](#)



MANY readers will recall with great pleasure the zany cartoons and hilarious musical monologues created by the late Gerard Hoffnung. On Saturday 23rd March, Linton Music Society proudly presents The Humour of Hoffnung, an entertainment devised and presented by his wife, Annetta Hoffnung.

Her illustrated talk is a must for everyone who enjoys a good laugh. It will appeal to all ages and to the musical and unmusical alike.

The audience is treated to a wealth of Hoffnung treasures including the only film footage known to exist of his very first concerts.

Annetta is generously donating a set of prints of some of her husband's favourite drawings and these will be raffled during the evening.

Her talk takes place at 8pm at Linton Village College. Tickets are available in advance from Cambridge Arts Theatre Box Office % 503333. Some will also be available on the door but this is bound to be a popular concert so pre-booking is recommended.

Over many years Linton Music Society has brought professional musicians to Linton. We have become accustomed to a very high standard of performance, with the Melos Ensemble leading the way in the early years.

At the February concert, the string trio Ovid delighted us all with their youthful exuberance and technical brilliance blended with musical maturity, in a programme that included an exciting trio by David Matthews alongside works by Beethoven, Mozart and Schubert.

Margaret Hearn

## **'FUN' DRINKS CAN BE DANGEROUS TO YOUNG** [Top](#)

LINTON Action for Youth has an ongoing programme designed to encourage young people to take a responsible attitude towards drinking alcohol. It might be helpful to parents to know just how strong apparently inoffensive drinks like Alco Pops actually are. The examples that follow show how much alcohol there is as an equivalent number of measures of whisky.

Two bottles of Alco Pop – three shots of whisky.

One bottle of 'low alcohol' sparkling wine – six shots of whisky.

Four small cans of lager – nine shots of whisky.

These levels of alcohol can be dangerous to young, inexperienced drinkers, particularly if they are of a slight build. So please be aware that 'fun drinks' have as big a kick as spirits and can be as harmful if they are abused. Take care.

John Batchelor

## **PARISHIONERS, HERD AND SEEN, BOOST WARDEN SCHEME** [Top](#)

THE first money-raising event for the Linton Mobile Warden Scheme was held on Saturday 26th January: the table-top sale (an indoor version of a car-boot sale) was very successful, raising nearly £150. This was despite the awful weather, but helped by Linda Read's successful herding of unwary parishioners into the hall! The money raised will be used to fund the social activities that will be part of this scheme. Many thanks to all involved.

The contact with the warden and tasks that she has been performing have been of great help, especially in the aftermath of the floods and with the winter weather. We have had considerable feedback on the work of the scheme, from many in the village and not just the clients. This has been very positive.

Thanks to extra funding from Linton Parish, South Cambs District and Cambridge County councils, we have been able to extend the work of our warden to 25 hours a week. This will enable extra care to be provided within the scheme. Thanks are due for recent donations – your generosity is much appreciated. Also, local firms have been most helpful in providing gifts or donations; these will be used as auction items or as raffle prizes in events which will be publicised.

The next event will be an afternoon tea, with musical entertainment and a raffle, to be held at the Social Centre between 2 and 4pm on Wednesday 10th April . All are welcome, all ages and not just people involved with the scheme.

If you would like to know more about the scheme or have ideas for social or fund raising events, contact Gill Barker on 891001, or Enid Bald. Your contributions will be most welcome. Enid Bald

## **LESSONS IN RAISING FUNDS** [Top](#)

THERE will be a nearly new sale of children's, babies' and maternity clothes, toys, books and nursery equipment from 10.30am to 3pm on Saturday 23rd March at the Meadow School, Balsham.

All proceeds will go to Buttercups community pre-school for the purchase of numeracy teaching aids and soft play equipment. If you have any items you would like to sell, please contact Melanie Stammers on.

## **K-CLUB DRAW** [Top](#)

THE result of the K-Club February monthly draw: 1st (£50) Mrs R F Cooper (No 156); 2nd (£25) Ron Argent (No 141); 3rd (£10) Mrs C Harvey-Barnes (No 127).

## READERS WRITE [Top](#)

### MEMORIES OF ALBERT

Dear Editor

May I congratulate Darryl Nantais on his Country Diary. Something in the way he writes begs me to read the column now. I was particularly interested in his reference to Albert the Crow. When I walked my son Stephen to the Infants School, he always wanted to cross the road away from "That Bird". I was concerned about it being dangerous, so enquired at the Vet's, who knew nothing about it.

Plucking up my courage one day, I knocked on the door of the bungalow where it lived, and it hopped up to me, put its head on one side, and very clearly said "Hello!" I was so shocked at this surreal moment that I nearly ran screaming up the road. Luckily the door was answered and the boy who lived there assured me that Albert was very tame and would not be any danger to passing children. Needless to say, Stephen always stayed on that side of the road to see the crow, but it never once spoke to him!

Tracey Wilson

### My thanks [Top](#)

Dear Editor

May I through your paper say a big 'thank you' to all my family, friends and neighbours in Chalklands for all their lovely cards and get-well wishes I received while in hospital recently. And a special thank you to Linda and my Sheltered Housing friends for their kind collection. I am making very good progress. Many thanks.

June Hall

### OXFAM WALKS RESUME AFTER VIRUS RESTRICTIONS END [Top](#)

THE Oxfam Sponsored Walk is back. It will start and finish at Wimpole Hall on 19th May, going through the Eversdens, Longstowe, Hatley and Croydon, and walkers can be sponsored to tackle a route of seven, 14 or 21 miles. There will also be activities and entertainments in the marquee at Wimpole Hall.

At least 12 million children under the age of five die from poverty-related diseases every year, and 125 million do not go to school because they are poor. By supporting the walk, you can show your solidarity with children living in poverty as well as raise vital funds for Oxfam's work in more than 80 countries across the world.

For more information about the walk and sponsorship forms, please contact Ken Fletcher on 0841783 or by email [kdf@freezone.co.uk](mailto:kdf@freezone.co.uk). You can also look on our website – [www.oxfam.org.uk/walk](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/walk).

And if you would like to offer practical help – read on! We urgently need marshals to ensure safety and provide encouragement along the route and stewards to help at checkpoints. If you would like to be a marshal or steward on Sunday 19th May, please contact Jerry Carr-Brion, Marshal/Steward Co-ordinator or by email [jcarrbrion@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jcarrbrion@yahoo.co.uk).

### CHUFFED? SO IS THE COMMUNITY [Top](#)



THREE local residents have been recognised by South Cambs District Council for their outstanding contributions to the community – Claire Neville and Peter Dixon from Linton and Brian Beavis from Hildersham. Councillor Joan Smith nominated all three. They were notified by letter and invited, along with a guest, to a presentation ceremony on 25th January. There were between 40 and 50 people nominated

for awards and each was photographed with the council chairman, George Elsbury, as he presented the certificates.

"After 39 years working for the AA I'm used to helping people," said Brian Beavis. "I'm always happy to help, and I feel both surprised and honoured to have received this award."

Brian has been a Hildersham parish councillor for over 28 years, caretaker and hirer for the village hall, and general handyman around the village. He has lived in the village for over 40 years.

Brian could be on a lucky streak – in the same week that he learned about the award he also won a prize in a Radio Norfolk competition. "I'm hoping for the lottery next," he joked.

Claire Neville was completely taken aback when she found out she had been nominated. "It is nice to be acknowledged for the voluntary work that I do but I never expected to get this award," she said. "I would also like to set the record straight about the organisations that I have been involved in as I feel some of the newspaper reports were very misleading."

Claire, who came to Linton from Brinkley over 21 years ago, has served on Linton Parish Council, and been a governor at Linton Village College. She wrote the Country Diary column in the Linton News for eight years, has been a deliverer of the paper since it first appeared and generally helped the committee out from time to time. She has been a member of the WI since its formation in Linton, a committee member of the VIP group for the visually impaired and is currently chairperson of the talking newspaper, the Granta Grapevine. Claire has also been involved with many other voluntary jobs, too numerous to mention.

"Chuffed," was the response from Peter Dixon when we asked him how he felt to have received the award. "The council must have been spoilt for choice in Linton," he added, "and I would like to accept this award on behalf of everyone who gives their time so generously for voluntary community projects."

Peter is involved with LA4Y, running the K-Club monthly draw, has been involved with school PTAs, cubs and scouts and the Linton Fireworks, and been a Governor at Linton Village College. He is currently treasurer of the ATC and recently started working on the new Linton Directory.

He was unable to make it to the ceremony – so the council presented him with his certificate at his home on 13th February. Peter, never one to let an opportunity slip by, then managed to rope the chairman into making the monthly draw for the K-Club. Tracey Russell

## ATC PRESENTS AWARDS TO ITS BEST CADETS

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FRIDAY 15th February saw the Annual Awards evening of Linton's air cadet squadron. Flight Lieutenant Mark Williamson, the Squadron Commander, set proceedings in motion by introducing Air Vice-Marshal Gordon Ferg-uson CB, CBE, who addressed the cadets, parents and guests.

Four cadets – Corporals Berry and Day and Cadets Oliver and Sims – described a packed programme of achievement by the cadets of the unit. It was a real eye-opener to find out what 2523 Squadron had been up to in the last 12 months.

New cadets were enrolled by their new Chaplain, the Rev Karen Knight, making their commitment to the ATC.

The awards were presented by Flight Lieutenant, I S Davis, a young woman who pilots one of the RAF's Hercules transport aircraft. Awards were given for adventure training, aviation, shooting and sport, along with many others. A high standard of excellence was gained in all categories by cadets of the unit.

2523 (Linton) Squadron ATC parade every Tuesday and Friday evening at 7.30pm in the Youth Centre at the Village College. Young adults from the age of 13 years are welcomed.

Award winners were: Best new cadet, Benn Oliver; Drill cup and Best NCO, Corporal Cameron Berry; Aviation and Shooting cups, Cpl Michael Zimmer; Best exam result, Cdt Ben Neal; Radio operator, Cdt Mark Glendenning; Adventure training, Cdt Tom Anderson; Sports cup, Sgt Robert Cornell; Citizenship award, Cdt Andrew Gibbs; Cadet of the year, Steve Zimmer. P Acton

## WHY THE LAW OF DIMINISHING RETURNS IS AN ILLUSION

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PC Andy Denzey: 'I want to inform the public that we are there and are working at reducing crime and disorder'

Beat officer Andy Denzey tells why you do not have to see to believe

I HAVE received criticism lately about the lack of policing in Linton. I would like to address this issue and inform the public about the work that we do in the village.

On Sawston sector we cover 54 villages. There are six Community Officers who are responsible for tackling long term problems.

The villages have been divided up by the number of calls for service received at the control room and the amount of recorded crime. I am responsible for Linton, Balsham, Great Abington, Little Abington, Horseheath, Hildersham, Bartlow, Castle Camps and Shudy Camps.

I have now been the Community Beat Officer for the Linton area for two years. When I took over there was a substantial problem with youth offending and associated disorder. I have worked very hard to reduce the number of incidents involving some young people and I have had success in reducing the number of crimes committed by youths.

I work between 40 and 48 hours a week. Part of my duties involves liaising with parish councils, doing school visits and generally keeping in contact with other agencies with an interest in the villages. I also have to respond to calls for service.

If an accident is reported and I am on duty, then I am called upon to attend. Likewise with any other type of incident, such as a shoplifting, assault, burglary and so on.

I also investigate crimes which have occurred while I am off duty.

The following account of a typical arrest and subsequent work involved may go some way to explain why it is unlikely I will be seen walking the beat at the same time every day.

20.00 hours: A call is received about an assault at an address in Linton. I attend and the offender is identified as living at another address in Linton. A statement is obtained from the person assaulted.

23.00: I attend the offender's address and arrest for assault.

23.30: I arrive at Parkside police station and book the offender into custody.

Booking in an offender can take an hour and the subsequent interview will add another 30-40 minutes. If the person is going to be charged, then he is documented. This means his fingerprints, photo and DNA are taken. This usually takes about 20 minutes. He is then charged and perhaps released on bail. I then have a file to complete for court.

This means that I am unlikely to be seen walking the beat between those times, but it does not mean that I am not working.

There are other officers who will attend an incident when called, so the village is being covered while I am away.

Linton is patrolled every day – I check to see what has been going on while I have been away.

I do not get called away to demonstrations anywhere near as much as people believe. I have been called away only twice in the last three months. The rest of the time I have been working on my beat.

It is important that I deal with as much of the crime in Linton as is possible, because I have a better understanding of the long-term effects of these crimes.

This enables me to tackle crime in a proactive way to improve the quality of life for everyone living in Linton and the surrounding villages, but this all takes time.

I work very hard to police Linton and the surrounding villages, as do all the other officers who patrol the streets, often at unsocial times.

I understand why people want to see a police officer walking the streets – it reassures them that we are there. I want to inform the public that we are there, and are working at reducing crime and disorder in their areas.

I hope that I have gone some way to explaining why, when you look out of your window, you may not see a police officer standing on the street corner.

LINTON suffered more than most with burglaries and theft from motor vehicles over the Christmas period. There were four burglaries, three of which were at business premises, where the object appears to have been money.

A youth let off a fire extinguisher in the church and stole another. The same youth (I believe) lit pieces of paper feet away from a Christmas tree in the church. He will shortly be issued a Final Warning, which is not a telling off, it is an official record, involving fingerprints, photos and DNA being taken. This means any further offence will end in court.

Eggs were thrown at a house in Flaxfields, and a drunken idiot threw a snowball at a window in the High Street, breaking it.

Various vehicles were tampered with throughout December, and one was stolen.

In January there were 14 crimes reported in Linton and 35 calls for service. There were a number of burglaries where the offender climbed in open ground floor windows but took nothing.

A computer was stolen from premises in Church Lane and a mini digger taken from premises in Back Road.

Andy Denzey

## EXHIBITION WILL RELAUNCH GALLERY [Top](#)

WE are delighted to announce the relaunch of the Darryl Nantais Gallery on 16th March after repairs necessitated by the flooding in October.

A new exhibition will feature work by Darryl Nantais, Miranda Legard and Katherine Fairey. Claire Neville and Jill Bannister have generously donated watercolours by their late father Matthew George Prater (1908-2000) in support of the gallery and fellow artists.

A selection of fine art includes pottery by Des Clover and Katherine Childes, engraved glassware by Maureen Williams and a range of framed prints.

The gallery will continue its fine art framing and restoration services.

Darryl Nantais

## DOG & DUCK REOPENS [Top](#) [ARTICLE ON PAGE 1](#)

## FLOODS THAT COULD NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN [Top](#)

GARTH Collard stepped into the breach when illness prevented the speaker attending the February meeting of the Historical Society – and he gave a resumé of flooding in Linton.

There were two big floods in 1903. A hailstorm in 1913 also led to floods. In 1916 the river reached its highest level in living memory. In 1923 a cloud burst and water spout swept into the village. There were yet more floods in 1947, 1948 and 1953.

In 1968 it was reported that the church was flooded for the first time ever. In 1969 the river was cleaned out and it was said it would never flood again. During all these floods the same areas in the village were affected.

We were then treated to a slide show of photos of old Linton and the folks who lived here – many of the shop keepers, school children, football teams, pictures of King George V's coronation, the jubilee and other events.

It was suggested that an exhibition of the many photos Garth has would prompt people to remember and name some of the people in them. He was warmly thanked by Frank Appleyard and the members.

Pat Genochio confirmed that the trip to Bletchley Park would take place in the summer.

The next meeting is on Tuesday 19th March, when Mr Bill Wittering will tell the story of bottles – members are asked to bring any unusual bottles they may have.

Joan Pearman

## SPRING AT ST MARY'S CHURCHYARD [Top](#)



Early flowers brightening the winter growth at the church proved good subjects for Camera Club members last month Photograph: Mike Crofts

## **DIVE IN WITH HELP FOR THE POOL**

*[Top](#)*

THE Linton Area Pool Project Committee will be holding an Annual General Meeting at 7pm sharp on Tuesday 26th March in the bar area of Linton Village College Sports Centre, followed by a normal Committee Meeting. This will be our first AGM since achieving Charitable Status, which represents a fresh start for the whole project – if Linton and the surrounding area is to finally build a pool after more than 30 years of waiting, then we need the support of the community. There are Charitable Trusts who will contribute to projects such as this, but most of them will only do so if the community first raises funds by itself, showing local commitment to the project.

Anyone who is interested in what we are trying to achieve, and who would like to get involved in either a small or large way, is welcome to attend and have a drink with the Trustees. At the meeting afterwards we will be discussing forthcoming plans for fundraising projects. Any offers of help and suggestions will be most welcome.

For information regarding the project, please contact the Hon. Secretary, Tracey Wilson or email [TraceyWilson@Linton29.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:TraceyWilson@Linton29.freeserve.co.uk).

## **BOWLS CLUB AGM** *[Top](#)*

THE Bowls Club is holding its AGM at 7.30pm on Monday 18th March in the upstairs room in the Social Centre, Coles Lane.

Arthur Gore

## **EASTER AT FREE CHURCH** *[Top](#)*

THE Linton Free Church in Horn Lane is marking Good Friday with a March of Witness from both the URC Horn Lane and St Mary's, starting simultaneously at 11am.

On 31st March, Easter Day, we will be gathering at the top of Rivey Hill at 6.30am for a 'Sonrise Service'.

Our usual Sunday Services take place at 10.30am every Sunday with a full junior church programme and youth church work.

For further information about these events, please call . Sarah Devereux.

## **THE BUSH TELEGRAPH** [Top](#)

AS readers of this column will know, LVC embarked on a major challenge last term. We decided to take advantage of some additional government money by developing a specialism. Of the eight specialisms now available, we decided to go for Business and Enterprise because it offered real possibilities for developing the individual in all subject areas. Who could argue with a focus on problem-solving, teamwork, creative thinking, presentation skills and self confidence? These skills and qualities should, after all, underpin all we do in schools. One major issue for us was the raising of £50,000 in sponsorship from businesses in the area. In addition to this we had to complete a complex bid to the Department for Education and Skills to be submitted in mid March. I am delighted to say that the response from businesses has been very encouraging indeed. We asked for two things; the money and involvement in the College over the coming years to help us develop further as an effective and up to date organisation. Most of the companies we spoke to have offered both which means we have our sponsorship but we also have a powerful network of supporters who wish to back LVC and put their name to it. We plan a launch event in March and I will therefore be able to go public on which companies are involved in the April edition of the Linton News so watch this space. The bid will be submitted on time but the final outcome will not be known until June. Should we not be successful in this round, we will make the necessary adjustments and bid again in October.

Another success story which again involves money has been our continuing work for charity. As a result of the Link Walk and other fund raising activities, we were able to send over £3,000 to Boepathutse School in South Africa to fund the new Technology Centre there and we have more equipment ready to go. (If you know of any freight companies who could offer a free service please let me know.) Our latest charitable efforts have been directed at UNICEF which supports disadvantaged children worldwide. One Year 7 group took this campaign to heart and through their own efforts and the support of the rest of the College raised over £425 in two weeks. I am constantly encouraged and delighted by the capacity of our young people to support a cause that has inspired them. Clive Bush, Principal

## **COMMON, GARDEN OR CAR PARK?**

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HAVING a grand-mother who passed on her enthusiasm for British wildflowers when she was a child turned Peter Walker into an expert on the subject, with a particular interest in the Gamlingay Wildflower reserve.

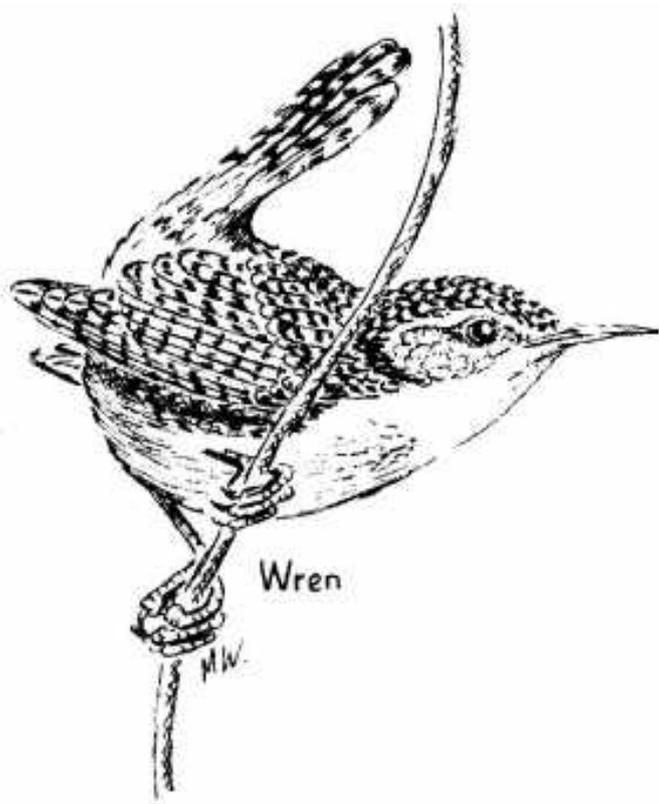
From the north of the country where harder rocks provide habitats for the most spectacular flowers to the southern lowlands which encourage the more familiar common species, there exists a profusion of colour and sometimes quirky beauty all captured on the slides accompanying Mr Walker's talk. The ladies' slipper orchid, one of the rarest plants in Britain, is guarded from thieves by tripwires and a warden but conversely, East Anglia has its own 'special' – a flowering rush with pink flowers which grows abundantly in the broads and fens.

Mr Walker travels extensively to photograph the common and unusual but on one trip to Ireland to hunt a fairly rare blue gentian, he was surprised to discover it growing alongside the car park!

The Garden Club's annual plant sale will be held on Saturday 11th May so we hope that anyone with plants to spare is busily 'potting up'. Please watch out for more details nearer the time.

This month's talk by Richard Gant will be on the Pruning of Ornamentals. We were pleased to see several visitors at the February meeting so we hope they will be happy to join us again.

Gloria Fidler



Illustrated by Maureen Williams

THERE are trops in Linton. To be more precise I mean Troglodytidae, and you don't get too many to the pound! I'm talking about a tiny winged creature that timidly flutters and weaves its way to survival amidst our sometimes reckless human activities with strimmer and saw. However, from Balsham to Bartlow and beyond you may have observed the success in recent years of the wren. These low-living birds really do stay close to the ground and thrive in dense thicket. The hedges and shrubs around St Mary's church make for good wren spotting. Early folklore ironically tells of how the wren became king of the bird world, having earned its title by clever deception. Apparently, hiding in the feathers on the eagle's back till the eagle could rise no more, the wren with a single hop flew higher than all the other birds. The truth is they never seem to fly high or very far at all, mainly hopping from twig to twig unless disturbed. Their black and brown feathers occasionally make them difficult to identify, but that short, unmistakeable erect tail gives their game of disguise away.

Winter is passing and the spring is loaded with the force of new growth. Remember the October floods? The flash of snow and hard frosts which pleasingly transformed the look of our valley for a mere few days is but a memory. The rain keeps falling though, yet dried by the March winds we await that certain scent in the air which tells us a new season has at last arrived. Don't be too hasty in thinking winter is over this year. Some remember past April snowfalls and, as they say, ne'er cast a clout till May is out! I am never sure of long fine days until I hear a lion's roar echo over Linton.

I am delighted by the number of comments I have received regarding the Linton Country Diary. I stumbled into the post, as it seemed to spill over from my work as an artist and keen observer of nature. Olwen Williams is a hard act to follow but together with the beautiful artwork supplied by Maureen Williams I shall continue my quest to reveal the secrets of Linton's natural world. Please feel free to drop me a line at 59 High Street, Linton or contact me by email: [nantais@arts46.freemove.co.uk](mailto:nantais@arts46.freemove.co.uk)

Colin and Rosemary invited me to visit their garden behind Chapter & Verse last week to observe an extraordinary event. Don't miss next month's Linton Country Diary for the strange but true story.

I end this month with an enquiry. Has anybody seen the pair of owls that once used the fallen branches across the river in the Pocket Park near the end meadow as their regular perch? Since the removal of the

branches I have not had a single owl sighting in that area. I fear the golden rule preached by my old (ex-pilot) wood-working teacher was over-looked.

‘Think before you cut lad!’ he’d bellow, and of course he knew best, swishing his crafted cane against his wooden willow leg.

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