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## BAA – WITHOUT THE HUMBUG [Top](#)



Children from Pink and Red classes at Linton Infants School were loud and lively sheep for the school's Nativity play, "The Grumpy Sheep", in December.

However, they all looked very happy to have their photograph taken. And their parents flocked to see them...

## TRAFFIC ISSUES: HOW MUCH DO WE CARE? HOW MUCH CAN WE DO? [Top](#)

Larger 30mph speed signs are to be placed at entrances to Linton under a project initiated by the Parish Council a year ago and rubber stamped recently by the South Cambridgeshire environment and transport area joint committee

THE last three issues of the Linton News have given considerable space to residents' concerns about traffic speed and congestion in the village, especially in the High Street and on the A1307.

Readers' letters continue to broaden this discussion. As Jenny Roland and Chris Griffiths write in this month's issue (page 2), the A1307 – dividing the Grip area from the main part of the village – is a proven hazard to local people.

Although there is concern about the safety of our children in the High Street, the dangers are not confined to youngsters nor to the busiest hours. Delivery lorries, buses and cars mount the pavements of our narrow streets at even the quietest times, as many dog-walkers and daytime shoppers can testify.

Individual action has an effect, as Tracey Russell's recent campaign in the village shows (page 2). More than 80 residents responded to her request for written support at her County Council appearance in December, a figure which impressed the meeting. There is every indication that a much larger proportion of Linton residents support the various suggestions for improvements to our road safety that have been published in the Linton News and talked about generally.

The risk at this stage is that people's good will, commitment and determination will dissipate if there is no established focus for action and debate on these issues.

The Linton News guarantees to publish all articles and letters concerning road safety in our village, whatever the reader's point of view – with our usual reminder that all material submitted for publication must contain the writer's full name and address (even if these are not published).

However, a monthly local publication can only do so much, just as one individual's efforts are necessarily limited. Is this the time for a new traffic action group to be formed in the village? How much extra support does the Parish Council need to maintain some forward movement on traffic management in Linton? What do you think? We look forward to your views. Sally Simmons

Readers Write, page 2

Traffic forms, page 6

## **YOU'VE HELPED TO RE-ROOF IT, NOW PLEASE USE IT! [Top](#)**

At Last! The roof has been replaced on the Social Centre—and very fine it looks, too. Five years on from when it was deemed necessary, following furious bouts of fund-raising, so many people should be thanked for their contributions. I will try to name them all but if I should omit any, please accept my apologies.

The total cost of the new roof has been in the region of £16,500. The Parish Council have donated £8,000 over four years, with South Cambs District Council adding £2,000 by way of a grant. The remaining £6,500 has come from the Social Centre's own funds and donations from private individuals. The groups who use the Social Centre on a regular basis—Mrs Pinna Dockerill (Whist Club), the Linton WI, Linton and District Gardening Club, the Linton Historical Society, Linton Carpet Bowls—have been unstinting in their fund-raising efforts. The private individuals, many of whom have not only given their hard earned cash but also their time and effort, deserve a big thank you from us all.

The Social Centre is a very valuable asset to the village and I am glad to say that bookings remain very buoyant. One of the financial mainstays is the private bookings on Friday and Saturday evenings for parties, wedding receptions, etc. The hall can accommodate up to 220 people and has a Public Entertainments licence and kitchen facilities. There is also a smaller Meeting Room, currently used by the WEA and Linton Chess Club, which can accommodate approximately 30 people.

However, as is the case with most things these days, we cannot afford to rest on our laurels. The Social Centre has to conform to the new Disabled Act by 2004. This will entail the provision of a separate disabled toilet amongst other things. So the fund-raising continues! Watch the Linton News for details of fund raising events and keep the bookings coming.

Once again, thank you to all who have made the new roof possible—and if you haven't hired or made use of the facilities at the Social Centre yet, perhaps it is time you did!

Secretary

## **FAITH TODAY: CRUX OR CRISIS [Top](#)**

IS the Church of England facing a crisis of support? In Cambridgeshire, the percentage of people going to church on a Sunday has halved in less than 12 years. Now the total is just 7 per cent.

In Linton, the actual drop has not been as dramatic but – as the Reverend Julian Thomson, Rector of St Mary's Church, points out – this disguises the underlying fall because attendance has not kept pace with population growth.

Throughout the country, smaller churches are having a difficult time just staying open and the Church of England is forever looking for new ways to keep people in the Christian faith.

Religions practised among ethnic minorities are strongly supported and growing, judged against their potential congregations, and less formal expressions of spiritual beliefs are increasingly popular. But for most Christians, the church is somewhere to go for special occasions like Christmas, weddings and funerals.

Julian Thomson surveys the current situation locally on page 3;

Jeremy Bray explains his faith on page 4;

June and John Keeble describe their visits to Chinese temples in Thailand on page 4. LNT

## **MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE RANCH** [Top](#)

AS reported in the 28th November edition of the Emmons County Record, the Linton Chamber of Commerce (North Dakota) held their third annual light up night.

One of the highlights was a parade of lighted floats. Prizes were awarded for different categories (Most Light, Most Creative, Best Theme, Best Comedy). A new feature this year was a horse-drawn wagon giving rides to people of all ages throughout the evening. Also there was a live Nativity Scene, with children lining up to have their pictures taken with Santa, and a draw for turkeys every 15 minutes.

In the same November issue of the Emmons County Record, the editor also reported on the Thanksgiving weekend that his family had enjoyed. Their Thanksgiving meal ended with the following prayer:

We come to this table today, O Lord, humble and thankful and glad.

We thank Thee first for the great miracle of life, for the exaltation of being human, for the capacity to love.

We thank Thee for joys both great and simple –

For wonder, dreams and hope;

For the newness of each day;

For laughter and song and a merry heart;

For compassion waiting within to be kindled;

For the forbearance of friends and the smile of a stranger;

For the arching of the earth and trees and heavens and the fruit of all three;

For the wisdom of the old;

For the courage of the young;

For the promise of the child;

For the strength that comes when needed;

For this family united here today.

Of those to whom much is given, much is required. May we and our children remember this. Amen.

Wise words, which I think are appropriate as we officially begin the 21st century (January 1st 2001).

The Record's editor, Allan Burke, ended with a footnote regarding the sack of oranges his wife had purchased for the Thanksgiving celebrations. On noticing that they were from Florida, he asked her to take them back and demand a recount!

Thanks to Allan for cheering me up whenever his paper comes through my door.

Family values are very important in Linton, ND and the town is clearly very close as a community.

I will continue to report snippets of their news when space in the Linton News allows.

TW

## **Our risky high street Inspection** [Top](#)

Dear Editor

I would like to thank everyone who supported my campaign for 'Safety on our Roads'. I received in excess of 80 letters from residents and visitors to Linton.

These letters were extremely useful in the preparation of my speech to support my petition to the South Cambridgeshire Environment and Transport Area Joint Committee meeting on the 5th December.

Mr David Brace, from traffic management, was sitting on this committee and I persuaded him to accompany me to school, the day before, to experience our problems first hand.

The congestion was exacerbated by the poor weather conditions. Speeding cars down Horseheath Road and poor visibility at the Balsham Road/High Street junction was noted. One delivery lorry was parked outside the Co-op thus preventing other large vehicles passing unless they mounted the pavement.

Another delivery lorry was parked on the pavement, close to the wall, between Green Lane and Mill Lane.

A postman cycled on the pavement up one side of the High Street, then returned on the other pavement.

Buses and cars were mounting the pavements in abundance. The step in the High Street, broken by a lorry,

was pointed out, as was the sign bent by several lorries outside Mill Lane.

The brewery lorry missed a house by half an inch and then drove about 20 metres along the pavement outside the school.

We were forced into the school driveway by a double decker bus driving on the pavement.

After the peak parking time had passed we observed that there were only six spaces available in the Coles Lane car park.

Mr Brace returned on Tuesday 5th December to observe pedestrians, including infant school pupils, attempting to cross the A1307 from the Grip.

As a result of my petition, the committee has launched an investigation into our traffic problems. I will attend their next meeting in three months time and update you on any progress.

If you experience any incident that you feel threatens your safety in Linton (not just the High Street) I urge you to write to: The Parish Clerk, Linton Parish Council, Social Centre, Coles Lane, Linton.

A summary of the points raised in your letters and a copy of my speech are available on application to Gill Barker, the Parish Clerk.

Although my emphasis is on children, I am campaigning for the safety of us all, regardless of route or method of travel.

TR

## **How would you like to rely on a 'sheep pen' for A1307 safety? [Top](#)**

Dear Editor,

Having recently had a meeting with David Brace from the Highways Department at Cambridgeshire County Council to discuss our problems trying to cross the A1307 at the top of Linton High Street, I was intrigued to read Terry Bear (Linton News, December) refer to the refuge island as a sheep pen.

It doesn't exactly sound like a protective area for adults and children to seek protection from speeding traffic.

He also said that the refuge would not be repaired again as it was uneconomical, which I think we would all agree with, but what is done instead? He has passed the problem onto the engineers' department, but will they bother to contact the people that actually use it? Or will they blindly spend more money on something that is equally unsuitable?

Traffic thunders through the village on this section of road at more than 40mph and no one seems to take any notice.

The problems being experienced in Linton as a whole are partly due to the unchecked speeds on this section of road. People turn off into the High Street and do not realise that they are travelling at the wrong speed for a built up area.

If I had my way the traffic on the A1307 through Linton would also have a speed restriction of 30mph, as there is just as much potential for accidents here as anywhere else in the village, if not greater, due to the volume of traffic.

We have already sent a questionnaire to residents on the south side of the A1307 and have been told by David Brace that if we had the names of all those who replied on a petition, then we too would be allowed to speak at the transport committee meeting, as Tracey Russell has just done concerning the High Street.

The questionnaire has revealed some interesting views and is much more useful than a list of names, but we will be asking people to sign a petition and will hopefully have our views recognised, as at present they do not see our point of view.

How would you feel if you were offered a sheep pen as a form of protection from the rush hour traffic on the A1307, which is bound to become worse with the building programme in Haverhill?

JR

## **ONE-WAY IS THE RIGHT WAY FOR VILLAGE [Top](#)**

Dear Editor

Everybody seems to think they know the answer to Linton's traffic problem.

A one-way system worked well when the new kerbstones were being laid, and I don't think we could improve this system.

I suggest that the High Street starting from the Green Hill end should be one way up to the fire station. This would ease the traffic outside the Infants' School and make it safer for the lollipop man and children crossing the road at this point.

So everything is going one way, easy to get to Symond's House, the Health Centre, the Co-op and to Balsham Road.

Coming down Balsham Road one could turn right to Hildersham, or turn left to the Heights school in Wheatsheaf Way.

Oh! You are thinking how do we get 'out'? Well, if coming up the High Street, branch right after the fire station and follow it along until it meets the A1307.

Now this is the crunch – at this junction there is a lot of land on each corner making it quite easy to put in a new roundabout.

This would have quite a few benefits:

- 1) Easy access out of the Horseheath Road onto A1307;
- 2) Easy access out of the Bartlow Road onto A1307;
- 3) Slowing traffic approaching Linton from Haverhill and a 40mph sign here;
- 4) At the Hadstock Road junction change the 40mph to 30mph.

Do we wait until someone is seriously injured or killed before a decision is made?

At the top of the High Street there is a 'sheep pen' which seems to be crippled every few weeks – a set of 'pedestrian lights' may be a good idea here. It could save a mum and child from injury or worse.

I know you can't please all the people all the time, but possibly we could please some of the people some of the time.

CG

## **Our chimps need your mobile phone** [Top](#)

Dear Editor

My daughter, Sylvie Briscoe (LVC and Hills Road) is working in Uganda managing a sanctuary for orphan chimpanzees. The chimps are mainly the victims of the wars in East Africa or the bush meat trade. The sanctuary is based on the island of Ngamba in Lake Victoria. It is here that young chimps are weaned, introduced to the older established chimps and taught how to cope with jungle life without the benefits of a mum to teach them how to survive. The sanctuary workers, both paid Ugandan and foreign volunteers, find it difficult to keep in touch when out in the jungle with the chimps.

If anyone is hoping to replace their mobile phone this Christmas, or if someone has a digital phone languishing in a drawer and would be happy to donate it to the Ngamba Chimpanzee Sanctuary, I would be delighted to hear from you.

They are looking for a manual typewriter too!

DB

## **Do local advertisers really care?** [Top](#)

Dear Editor

How useful to have a local newspaper giving details of local tradesmen – or it would be if it were possible to get some response.

Earlier this year, in need of some external decorating, I called one of the advertisers, leaving a full message on their answer machine. Response to date – nil.

More recently, in pursuit of somebody to undertake some non-urgent plumbing work, I called another advertiser, again leaving a message on the answer machine. Response to date – nil.

After 10 days of waiting I called another advertising plumber, and once again left a message on the answer machine. Response to date – nil.

I am loath to adopt a "name and shame" approach. Suffice to say that my business has gone elsewhere,

probably to the detriment of local tradesmen's bank balances, and certainly with considerable damage to their public relations. I wonder whether others of your readers have encountered the same indifference?  
CWA

## Should this be your letter? [Top](#)

Dear Editor

Isn't it great to have the extra recycling facility in the car park? I used to collect my junk mail, white office paper, greetings cards, etc, and recycle them in the car park at Simsbury's, Haverhill. When that collection point was taken away, my rubbish bags grew noticeably.

Now we have the new facility, I have been very exuberant about clearing out cupboards and drawers, getting rid of old Christmas and birthday cards that I thought I ought to keep, and I manage to reduce my mail delivery by over half most days.

Trouble is, I have been a bit too exuberant, and I may have inadvertently recycled a letter that should have appeared in this month's Linton News, that I had collected from the Post Office box.

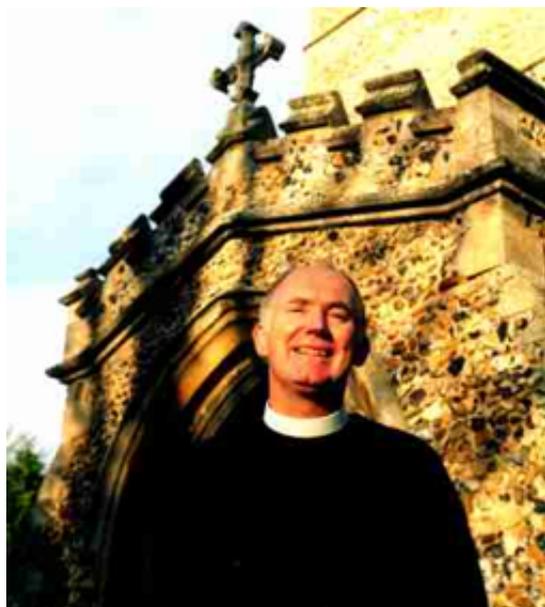
I send my sincere apologies to the author, and I am sure we will find space in the next edition if the subject is still relevant.

Yours in disgrace,

TW

Typesetter, Linton News

## Faith today, part 1: The Rev Julian Thomson on Linton's churchgoers the empty pews [Top](#)



IN 1979, 13.4% of Cambridgeshire people went to church on Sunday. Today that figure has fallen to 7%.

Nationally 3.7 million people come to church every week, and 8 million people come at least once a year. The number of children attending Sunday school has halved in the last 20 years, from 1.4 million to 700,000.

Here in Linton there is no room for complacency.

Taking the three congregations together, Anglican, Free Church (URC) and Roman Catholic, 8% of Linton people are in church each Sunday. And of that 8% a quarter are children.

Numbers have not dropped significantly since 1979, but the population of Linton has grown in the past 20 years.

So, Sunday by Sunday about 335 people (250 adults / 85 children) go to church in our village.

December is the complete exception each year however. From the Christingle Service through to the Christmas Day 4pm Family Carol Service the number of extra worshippers rises to 1,400. And that is just

St Mary's. Over the Christmas period 20% of Linton goes to church.

Do these national and local statistics provide any clue as to whether the Christian Church has a future?

Although there are notable exceptions, small rural churches are finding it more difficult to keep open, pay their annual bills (say £5,000) and find money to keep their church in reasonable repair.

Larger Anglican church communities must create sufficient depth of lay leadership and all-age work with families in order to ensure that a rising generation of people are nurtured in the Christian Faith. For without young people being taught and catching faith the Church has no future.

But the Church is not a building – the Church is the people. The church building is where they happen to meet.

I do believe that the Church must always be the servant of the people. And for the Church of England, thankfully, the

The Rev Julian Thomson: 'the Church is the servant of the people' people means the whole community.

It is my great joy, and a responsibility, which I happily share with many gifted and committed laypeople, that I am the pastor, the vicar, for everybody within the civil parish of Linton. Should that ever cease in the future it is my belief that you and I would be much the poorer.

(The national statistics are taken from the 1998 English Church Attendance Survey. The local Linton figures are ones supplied by each denomination.)

## **'We know we tread on holy ground'** [Top](#)

Faith today, part 2: What do today's worshippers get from Christianity? Jeremy Bray explains his personal reasons

ON the face of it molecular biologists are a reductionist lot. We are "nothing but" bags of genes which use us for their own purposes to propagate themselves.

Such "nothing buttery" might be taken to characterise the dominant faith of molecular genetics which is now our basic industry on this side of Cambridge.

But that conceals an excitement and enthusiasm which knows we tread on holy ground, which knows we have made a mess of the faith of our forebears and does not want to make matters worse.

Karl Rahner, the Catholic theologian who had such an influence on Vatican II, said that the incarnation, the birth and life and death of Jesus, can be brought into positive relation with the perspective of man's growing knowledge of himself and the world. There is a unity of spirit and matter which have a common origin in God.

God did not merely create the world but he himself is the perfect fulfilment of the world through his self-communication. The "divinisation" of the world and the incarnation, are two correlative factors of God's one free self-communication to the creature, the latest step in evolution which we are beginning to explore in all its aspects.

I have spent my life in the stormy cross currents of science, politics and faith, and find that faith celebrated by the community in St Mary's. It is a faith that is being fulfilled throughout the world and it is a privilege to share in it here.

## **Faith today, part 3: Worlds apart at an annual purification festival** [Top](#)

### **How Chinese gods link pain and purity**

### **The Chinese heavenly rituals looked like a Christian hell**



A pierced ma song; and,



on the procession route, a medium offers a pineapple as a symbol of good sight in body and spirit  
IN the soft, dawn downpour, the Chinese community in Phuket Town in southern Thailand was stirring, ready for another day of rituals and processions welcoming their gods and asking for a good year ahead. The food stalls outside the Bang Neow temple were already alive with Hokkien congregants, dressed in white, eating a purifying vegetarian breakfast – this was Day 4 of the nine-day Chinese Vegetarian Festival.

And, in the lifting gloom at the front of the temple, were the first of the ma song – the ‘entranced horses’ whose faces and bodies had been pierced in a ritual that lets the gods enter and take on the ills and problems of the individual and the community.

Within an hour, the temple grounds were heaving with people as the blaring discordant music frightened off the evil spirits and the heavy fragrance of incense wooed the nine emperor gods.

Within two hours, the thousands-strong Chinese community was on the streets, either in the parade or lining the route – not just as observers but as eager participants when priests, ma song and mediums gave blessings and symbolic gifts as they passed. In comparison to an English town or village, where few still look to Christianity for their needs, the fervour and sheer numbers of such events are stunning.

Almost every Chinese family and business with a property on the route had put out a shrine – the bank, 10 times the size of Linton’s Barclays, left its junior staff on duty while the senior staff waited at its shrine outside; nearby a big city centre hotel had set out a huge shrine for itself and a party of Chinese staying overnight for the procession; and along the road a tiny opticians had a modest shrine, with fruit and tea for the holy men and women, looked after by one little old woman.

We joined the Bang Neow congregants as dawn struggled against the monsoon gloom. We were welcomed into the temple and allowed to see the rituals in the three most important shrines deep in the crowded compound.

In one, offerings of flowers, candles and incense were being made; in the next, the “possessed” – the men and women taken by spirits – were being calmed and dressed in ritual clothes for the procession; and in the third, the Chinese heavenly rituals looked like Christian hell with the ma song having their faces and bodies pierced.

It was in the compound that two other rituals began: some of the “possessed” had swords and they swung them from the ground, over their shoulders and struck their own backs with the blades; and others had knives and swords, the blades of which they used to scrub their lips and tongues into a bloody foam.

Later, after the religious rituals in the town’s temples, priests walked on hot coals and young men climbed

ladders made from sharp blades. Everywhere, the people –young and old, men and women – were praising their gods and asking for good fortune in the year ahead.

Gradually, the temples had returned to their quiet dignity with the faithful making their offerings and receiving the comfort of their religion.

The vegetarian festival first began after Chinese tin miners were impressed by a touring opera company that cured itself of "jungle fevers" in 1825.

Now, walking in the quiet charm of St Mary's churchyard, the festival seems extraordinary – as do the eager crowds with their fervent belief in a religious and moral life. June and John Keeble

## **New year update on two of 2000's problem areas, We tape midnight drinkers [Top](#)**

Some months ago I wrote to the Linton News to highlight a problem with youngsters congregating at the Health Centre in the evenings. It was obvious that there was a perception that the Health Centre was a 'public building' but it is in fact private property and like anyone else the doctors take a pride in their building and the gardens and do not want them vandalised and littered.

The response to my letter was very positive indeed. In general, people were unaware of the difficulties we were facing and the effects on the morale of staff. Several parents contacted me to offer their support, should their children be involved in any way.

As readers will have noticed, we installed bollards to restrict access to the Health Centre car park. CCTV cameras have also been installed. The situation is very much improved, although youngsters do still hang around the building at night. On the occasions that we have had to view the tapes, we are always surprised at just how many youngsters sit on the doorstep drinking and smoking until midnight and beyond.

We also have great sympathy with the residents of the High Street and Coles Lane as increasingly cars are parked in the public car park with radios at full blast. The noise is such that on one occasion the GP on duty actually walked down and asked that the volume be reduced as it was impossible to consult with her patients inside the Health Centre! The volume was turned down without any fuss but clearly this must be a problem for local residents as well.

Just when we think things are improving we seem to get a weekend of mayhem. Over the weekend of 9th/10th December the can bank was overturned and all the cans were strewn around the public car park. Once again we are all extremely grateful to Colin Tofts as miraculously these were all cleared away by 8am on the following Monday morning.

Practice Manager

## **Security for children [Top](#)**

DURING 2000 we continued to have unwelcome visitors to the Infants' School, mainly after school hours. The latest damage was a smashed glass panel in an external door. CCTV cameras have been installed, giving us, and the police, visual evidence.

New plans were drawn up for our fencing proposals after consultation with the police, fire brigade, highways authority and other groups. These have passed through the Parish Council planning committee and onto the District Council. We look forward to work beginning soon.

Headteacher, Linton C.E. (Aided) Infants School

## **LOCAL HELP FOR DYSLEXIC CHILDREN [Top](#)**

BRIGHT child, dull pupil–quick thinker, slow learner–high ability, low achievement. Could it be dyslexia?

Are your children founder-ing on their reading, writing, spelling or maths skills? If

your child is in every other way bright and intelligent but just does not seem to 'get it together' when it comes to the written word or memorising in sequence, then this could

be an indicator of a dyslexic problem.

These children very easily start to feel as though they are failing because they cannot cope as well with their school work as their peer group and because of the very fact that they are perfectly intelligent, they recognise their own dilemma. "Why can't I do it when everyone else can?" "What's wrong with me?" "I'm hopeless!" is their conclusion. This is followed by a loss of self-esteem, which may then deteriorate into depression or bad behaviour.

But there really is no need for them to fail. The good news is that there is much that can be done to help and encourage them to reach their own personal potential. A combination of acceptance of the problem, common sense and relevant support can make a big difference in their lives.

The following list can be helpful as indications of possible dyslexia.

Enjoys being read to but has no interest in letters or words.

Writes letters and figures the wrong way round.

Confuses b and d, and words such as on/no.

Has difficulty remembering tables, alphabet, etc.

Leaves letters out of words or puts them into the wrong order.

Needs to use fingers or marks on the paper to make simple calculations.

Poor concentration.

Has problems understanding what he/she has read.

Takes longer than average time and tries to avoid doing written work.

Finds it hard to copy from the blackboard.

Problems processing language at speed.

Difficulty with order of days of week, months and confuses dates, times, places.

A poor sense of direction.

Difficulty dressing, tying shoelaces, ties, etc.

Is accident prone.

Cannot manage knife and fork properly.

Gets 'tied up' using long words.

Has obvious 'good' and 'bad' days.

Has a family history of reading/spelling difficulties.

Lacks confidence and has a poor self image.

Is in other ways bright and alert.

If your child has several of these symptoms then it may be worthwhile investigating further and finding out what you can do to help. I am interested in forming a dyslexia group in the Linton area. To this end I am holding a meeting at my home, 34 The Woodlands, Linton at 8pm on Friday 19th January 2001. I look

forward to meeting anyone with an interest in these young people.

## **SPICE OF LIFE FOR LINTON** [Top](#)

DECEMBER saw the opening of Linton's very own Indian Tandoori restaurant and take-away, and owner Mr Wali Ahmed was overwhelmed by the village's response.

"We never dreamt that we would attract so much business in our first week" said Mr Ahmed. "I thought Linton would respond slowly to us and that we would have to build our business up, consequently people had to wait longer for their food than we would have liked. We are now better organised and hope not to keep customers waiting in future. Generally the public's response to us has been favourable."

Free drinks were served to customers whilst they waited. Those seated in the restaurant also enjoyed free drinks all evening as the restaurant's alcohol licence had not yet been granted.

The restaurant in Bartlow Road is open daily for lunch and evening meals. There is seating available for up to 60 customers, with a waiting area and bar for customers who are collecting their food. Car parking is available at the rear and front of the restaurant.

Although he does not anticipate any problems associated with the premises, Mr Ahmed has introduced a minimum take-away order value to ensure that the restaurant does not become a local 'hanging out' point.

## **WI HEADS FOR FUN** [Top](#)

OVER 50 members and six guests, two from Abington WI and two from Balsham WI together with Mr and Mrs Read, were welcomed to the Annual Christmas Party by our President, Wendy Foster. The Social Centre looked very festive with all the decorations, including a Christmas tree. Birthday posies were made and distributed by Miriam Rixon. The Denman Bursary was won by Margaret Wingfield and the lucky ticket number draw for a year's free membership was won by Peggy Stonecliffe. Everyone then enjoyed a turkey dinner with trimmings, which was prepared and served by outside caterers. A Christmas cake, which had been made by past President Eileen Impey, was cut after the meal.

Entertainment was provided by a past headmaster of Linton Heights Junior School, Mr Read, who played carol requests on his keyboard while all joined in with the singing. The evening ended with a rendition of "Auld Lang Syne" and the raffle (with a large selection of prizes donated by Committee members) was then drawn.

The next meeting will be at 7.30pm on Tuesday, 2nd January 2001 at the Social Centre. The speaker will be Mrs Pusskin Gowlett and her talk is entitled "A charity bicycle ride in Jordan". Visitors are welcome.

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

THE result of the December K-Club monthly draw: 1st (£50) (No. 056); 2nd (£25) (No. 403); 3rd (£10) (No. 155).

## **NOT FOR THE TIM'ROUS...** [Top](#)



Piping in the haggis, supporting the church

"HE loved mankind in general, and women in particular," was said of Robert Burns.

Few poets are world famous and fewer still have filled Linton Social Centre to celebrate their anniversary with a delicious hot meal, riotous entertainment and a chance to try a wide range of the finest single malt whiskeys.

In order to accommodate more people this year, the bagpipes will be piping in the Haggis on Saturday 27th January at the Village College. The 205-year-old eulogy will be recited and each guest will come away with a renewed understanding of the unique contribution that Scotland has made to the world's ability to understand and enjoy life.

Proceeds will go to St Mary's Church.

Tickets are available from Ewen Kellar, John Organ or Liz Hunt . Liz Hunt

## **The Bush Telegraph** [Top](#)

CHRISTMAS has come and gone again with the same excitement and anticipation and the same important reinforcement of values. Christmas is about positive things like family, giving, sharing and for many, a deep religious affirmation. It is also about eating and drinking too much and, for some, wandering the streets late into the night in various states of intoxication. But then that problem is not confined to Christmas or to our village; it happens most weekends and has done so for as long as records have been kept. The ancient Greeks deplored it, the Romans condemned it and I remember my grandmother in Framlingham shaking her head as the 'louts' went noisily by the window. Things have changed, however. Those out very late are now much younger. In a late night incident in Linton before Christmas, the police were called to a disturbance in the High Street and were greeted with the shout, 'You can't touch me, I'm only fourteen'. What are we to make of this young man and his friends? On whom does blame rest? Not him, he says, and maybe he has a point, though I personally doubt it. Some people turn to the local school and wonder what on earth they teach them up there. Given that children only spend about 15% of their school years actually at school, it seems hardly reasonable to lay the blame there. After all it is not schools that bring up children, it is parents. Our 14-year-old was not out on the streets in the early hours of the morning because his school allowed or encouraged him to be. What we have to ask is what his parents, and the parents of the ten or so others who were with him, some of them girls and most of them intoxicated, thought they were doing. Some years ago, I sent a letter to all Linton parents asking them if

they knew where their son or daughter was at a certain time on a particular Friday. This was in response to an incident involving a large number of young people. Of course most parents knew that their child was upstairs in bed and probably asleep, but for many, my letter prompted some awkward questions. It made a difference and the problems ceased for a while. These days the number of young people causing a nuisance is usually fairly small (tell that to those living on the High Street!) and we are only talking about a tiny minority of our youthful population, but the effect they have is disproportionately damaging. Neither I nor any one else should have to send letters to their parents in an attempt to stir their conscience; they are parents and with that title comes some hard and serious responsibility – like it or not. Clive Bush, Principal

## **GARDENERS MULL THINGS OVER** [Top](#)

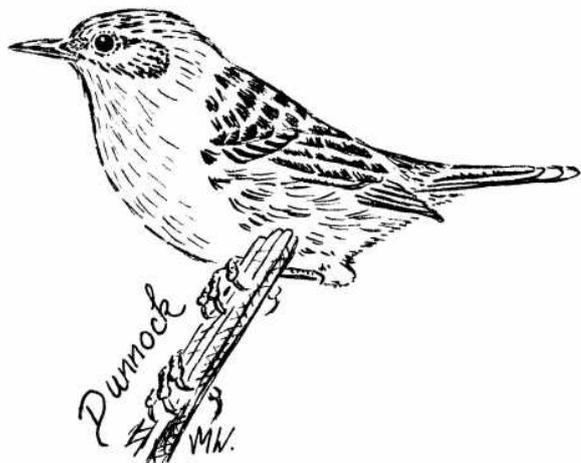
SOME say that holiday snaps are boring, but not so at the December Garden Club meeting, when views from home and abroad made us wish that we were far from rainy Linton. Club members introduced us to gardens and landscapes in Yorkshire, Norfolk, North Wales and Spain, plus a seasonal journey through a picturesque woodland in the Midlands. We were also given guidance on the show presentation of vegetables and the nurturing of sweet peas.

The mulled wine and mince pies filled a very pleasant interval followed by suggestions of local Winter Garden walks to shake off the indulgences of Christmas.

May we remind photographers, including non-members, to start thinking about their entries for the July show. The three categories will be: a flower; a tree or trees; animals. We look forward to some stunning shots.

Here's wishing all gardeners a happy and drier New Year.

## **LINTON COUNTRY DIARY by Olwen Williams** [Top](#)



Saturday 9th December 2000 Illustrated by Maureen Williams

YET more mild, wet and windy weather seems set to bring the year to an end. Apart from the mildness, this is real winter weather, with downpours of rain, fierce winds and black skies clearing suddenly to blue, flecked with driven white clouds, followed by brief periods of calm. A short excursion along paths through fields and woodland produced almost a dozen plants in full flower. Of these, only ivy is a real autumn specialist, regularly producing pollen to be spread by late flying insects before fruiting through the winter. Several of the others are described as flowering 'all year' in mild conditions, including the common weeds groundsel, dandelion, sun spurge and red dead-nettle, with white dead-nettle and hogweed generally lasting until November. However, the remainder definitely seemed to be outside their regular spring or summer flowering season, with speedwell, alkanet, feverfew and mallow all taking advantage of the unusually mild season. Is anyone out there still mowing their lawn!?

At the bird table, starlings are dominant, so that the tits sneak on to the peanut holder with one eye on the nearby roof, always ready to retreat if necessary. A squirrel fails to reach the nuts, defeated by the wire

age, but will doubtless be back to try again. Dunnocks are the lookouts for approaching cats and at any sign, issue loud warnings from the top of the tree. Rival blackbirds chase each other away from the food, but even the underdog manages to return in time. A robin approaches within a yard of the spade to investigate newly dug soil and is rewarded with a small worm. A party of eight long-tailed tits passes through the garden, swinging from branch to branch with high-pitched contact calls. So far this winter, life has been reasonably kind and the availability of food in gardens is an important resource for birds through the winter. By the time this diary is published, we will have just passed the winter solstice, so that days are short and the full moon is a welcome sight. A winter retreat to fires and food is traditional! We will be on the brink of longer days, though probably with some cold still to endure.

## **LOOK OUT FOR TRAFFIC INCIDENT FORMS** [Top](#)

ONE of the major problems highlighted at the recent Traffic Working Party meeting was the difficulty parishioners encounter in reporting any incident which may occur. As a result a proposal put forward by Tracey Russell was investigated and agreed by all as a good solution. There will shortly be available, through local shops and the Post Office, a simple form which can be filled in and left for collection. This information can then be collated on a monthly basis and used to ensure that the relevant Offices are advised as necessary. Further information on where these forms can be found will appear in the next issue of the Linton News. In the meantime, please report any incidents to the Parish Council office, Social Centre, Coles Lane, Linton, or phone % 891001.

Please note that any incident involving personal injury or criminal damage should always be reported directly to the police,

## **LIFELONG LEARNING** [Top](#)

THE spring programme containing the usual wide range of certificated and general interest courses will be delivered to your home shortly.

Term starts on Monday 15th January 2001.

Further information is available from the Community Offices at Bottisham Village College 811372; Burwell Village College 741901; Linton Village College 892400.

## **END OF THE ROAD FOR THE CHURCH PAVILION** [Top](#)

LEGEND has it that Her Majesty the Queen used our church hall loo when it stood on Peterborough Showground. The 'Anglicans' pop group used to rehearse there. Linton Chess Club have met there and many church and community groups have enjoyed the less than salubrious surroundings of the church pavilion. But now it is unsafe to use, and without considerable expense, cannot be used again.

Decisions will have to be made about its future and possible replacement in the New Year. Over £30,000 has been raised towards the future cost of a suitable replacement. We look forward to the time when Pavilion Mk II stands on the site, though it is most unlikely to receive the seal of royal approval. Julian Thomson

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