

# Santon Downham News

The Parish Council Newsletter for Santon Downham Villagers

January 2016 Number 27

**H**appy New Year to you all. Many people who I have spoken to have said how quickly 2015 has passed. I know it is the British disease to talk about the weather, but I am sure that our long damp summer helped time pass quickly. And now we have a winter that doesn't want to come. Bulbs are shooting, shrubs are flowering and my grass won't stop growing! Fingers crossed for a better year's weather.

Back in 2009, the Parish Council had a change of composition and the new band were full of enthusiasm. A decision was made to produce a quarterly newsletter. I approached villager John Parrington, MD of the printers Reflex Litho. He agreed to print the newsletter for free. I have since produced 26 village newsletters. John, in the meantime, has just retired and we would like to thank him very much and wish him well in his retirement. The cost of printing the newsletters will now have to be met. We have decided to reduce the number of newsletters to three per year. The Brandon and District Rotary Club meet in part of the village hall and have close associations with the Parish. They have very generously agreed to fund the printing of the newsletter for 2016.

We hope to see many of you at some of our activities during the year. One big event will be the Queen's Birthday. Celebrations will be held throughout the country over the 10th to the 12th of June. We will be organising our own celebrations for Saturday 11th June. Some possible ideas are given below. Please come and support the celebrations. Fuller details will be given nearer the time. *Derek Toomer, Editor*

## Forthcoming Village Hall Events

### The Queen's 90th birthday celebrations – Saturday 11th of June. All day, in and around the Village Hall

It is a big day for our Queen as she celebrates her 90th birthday, having outlived our other long-reigning queen Victoria by almost a decade. It is expected that many parts of the country will be celebrating in all sorts of ways over the weekend.

The Village Hall Working Group and the Brandon and District Rotary Club are planning to have a variety of activities and events on the Saturday.

The planning is at early stage at the moment, but we do have some ideas. Some possible activities are outlined below:

A forest walk, organised by Rotary; A treasure hunt around the village or further afield; a band playing outside the village hall; an afternoon or evening hog roast/barbecue; tea party (free for villagers – tickets to be issued to villagers); a variety of games for adults and children such as sack race, egg and spoon race, can-shye (like coconut) ; raffle; the village hall will be running a bar.

These are only ideas, and some or many may not feature in our final celebrations.

We are open to other ideas, especially if we have someone who would like to run one. Get in touch with Sylvia East, Mick Mackender or Derek Toomer.

More details will be given in the next newsletter and a full programme of activities will be sent out before the celebrations. Let us hope that together we can have a celebration day to enjoy.



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## Coffee mornings continue

The popular coffee mornings, organised by Maggy Turner, were well attended in the autumn and winter. They will continue in the Village Hall until March. Do come along for an informal chat with other villagers. February's date is Wednesday 3rd. Further dates are on page 4, Dates for Your Diary **Don't forget to bring your own mug, and 50p.**



**Christmas coffee morning, lots of chatter, cakes and crackers.**

## Car Boot Sales

These will commence in April, on Sunday 3rd and will continue until October on the first Sunday of each month. See page 4 for all the other dates.



**There must be a Fabergé egg here somewhere!**

Do come along, perhaps to run your own stall. It is wise to arrive early if you are setting up a stall, as

many stall holders start very early!

If you don't want your own stall, just come and browse the items for sale. The Village Hall café will be operating, with all the usual beverages, cakes and bacon butties. I am sure that quite a number of people come just for a pleasant chat in the Hall café.

## Village Hall Quiz – Friday 6th May, at 7pm. About £7 including fish and chips supper

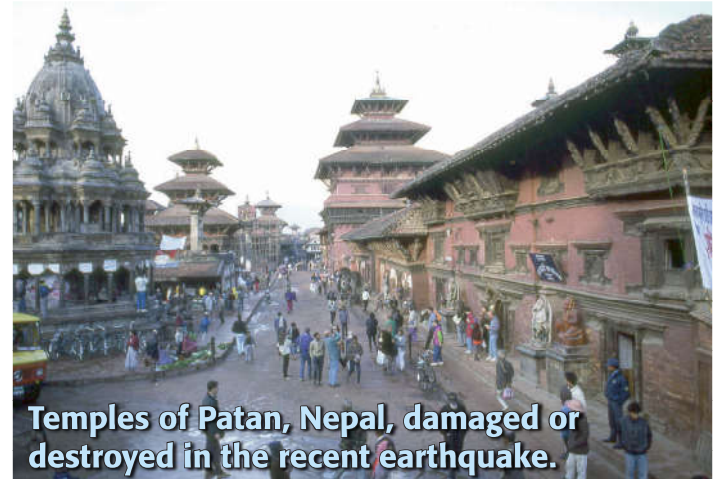
We have run an annual quiz in the village hall for a number of years. It has proved popular partly because of the excellent fish and chips. The emphasis is on an enjoyable, fun evening, so do come along and join us. We like teams of four, and if you want to reserve a table, phone Sylvia on 01842 815213.



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## Advanced notice – *In the Shadow of the Himalayas* – a talk by Derek Toomer, Friday 16 October, 7pm. £2.

Two of the accessible countries that are tucked under the Himalayas are Nepal and India. Both are culturally fascinating and scenically beautiful. Join me in a trip to these wonders – mountains, wildlife, beautiful people and of course the Taj Mahal.



**Temples of Patan, Nepal, damaged or destroyed in the recent earthquake.**

## Village Hall – Recent Activities

### St Mary's Harvest Supper

Autumn last year saw the annual harvest supper at St Mary's Church in Santon Downham. It was well attended, and participants enjoyed a cold supper with baked potatoes and a super range of deserts.

The auction of donated produce was its usual fun, overseen by our master auctioneer, Johnny.

Potential buyers bid against each other in an attempt to push the price up without ending up paying out themselves.

The fun evening raised £466 profit, with half going



**Some excellent home-grown produce being auctioned for charity by Johnny.**

to WaterAid and half to St Mary's fabric fund. Do join us this year and raise some more money for charitable causes.

### The Village Hall New Year's Party

As has become the custom, the New Year's party was a tremendous success, with over 100 people present. This year, the theme was the 50s and 60s. The superb buffet, prepared by five of the Village Hall Working Group, was appreciated by all. The music provided was from the chosen era of the 50s and 60s and encouraged large numbers to be on the dance floor all evening. What we would love is to see more villagers there.

We try to gear activities towards the villagers, so why not join us next year and see the New Year in in excellent company.



Andrew and Sue really looking the part – beautifully clad in 60s gear.

## Village News

### The new speed limit signs

I am sure that most of you have seen the speed limit signs adorning our roads. We have heard comments from some people saying "What do we want these for?" and "What a waste of money".



Well, the situation is that we have had reports from some villagers that some vehicles are not using our roads (Parish Council roads) as carefully as we would like. The Parish Council is obliged to take appropriate action. We hope the new signs, with a recommended speed limit of 15mph, will make motorists take care on our narrow tracks. 15mph should be plenty fast enough for all.

### Huge overgrown tree removed

The large *Chamaecyparis* tree that was located by the Parish owned road near the village hall was examined by tree surgeons and was deemed to be dangerous and likely to split. With the road so close by, the only solution was to have it removed. The volume of material in such trees is very surprising.



Going, going!



Gone!

### Potholes and Wear and Tear of our Village Roads

Earlier on in our Newsletter, mention was made as to why the Parish Council spent money on the signs dotted around our village and we refer specifically to the speed signs. The Parish Council own the internal roads in the village and are responsible for their upkeep. It is not an easy burden of responsibility. The Parish Council rely on the Precept raised to maintain its land and private roads, and since we are a small Village with a small Precept, it is a question of careful money management.

The wear and tear of our roads is an ongoing problem with a definite worsening through increased usage of these roads, and excessive speed on roads where speed is not necessary. The signs frankly cost peanuts in comparison to the cost of the upkeep of these roads, the overall cost was less than £400, (the labour was provided free) yet just a few potholes manually repaired, by volunteers every year, costs a minimum of £100 and a lot of personal effort. As the volunteers age, this work will fall upon the use of Contractors, which will cost far more. As an example, just one small stretch of Marks Lane



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# Dates for Your Diary

(In the Village Hall, unless stated otherwise)

2016

Wednesday 3rd February	Coffee Morning	10.30am to 12 noon	50p
Wednesday 17 February	Coffee Morning	10.30am to 12 noon	50p
Wednesday 2nd March	Coffee Morning	10.30am to 12 noon	50p
Wednesday 16th March	Coffee Morning	10.30am to 12 noon	50p
Sunday 3rd April	Car Boot Sale	8am to 1pm	
Sunday 1st May	Car Boot Sale	8am to 1pm	
Friday 6th May	Quiz Night & Fish and Chips	7pm	about £7
Sunday 5th June	Car Boot Sale	8am to 1pm	
Friday 21st October	<i>In the Shadow of the Himalayas</i> – a talk by Derek Toomer	7pm	£2

## Parish Council Meetings

(In the Village Hall)

Monday 15th February, 2016 Parish Council Meeting 7pm

## Village News

cost the Parish Council almost £4,000 some 4/5 years ago, and this stretch of the road is showing far more wear and tear than should have been expected.

The Parish Council has done well to maintain the roads, for which it has been wholly responsible, to a reasonable level. But the unpalatable fact is that this is a situation that will become untenable unless we can encourage our residents, their visitors and our supply services to take more care and consideration.

Let us all try to work together to keep our village in good condition, take care of our roads by driving carefully and with consideration. *Sylvia East, Parish Clerk, Mick Mackender, Chairman of the Parish Council*

### Breckland Club

The Breckland Club ran three very successful events towards the end of 2015 - a Quiz Night, Bingo Night, and not forgetting New Year's Eve when a good time was had by all.

The following entertainment is planned for the beginning of 2016:-

**Saturday 6th February** - Mr and Mrs Quiz Night. (How well do you know your partner?)

**Saturday 20th February** - An afternoon where we will be raising money to help a local family take their twins to Italy for further medical investigation into their condition MLD. Further details will be on the village notice boards, or contact Mandy McCreath.

**Saturday 5th March** - Quiz Night when Steve will be the quiz master. (More details later)

**Saturday 26th March** - Easter Egg Hunt (Fun for all the children)

(The Breckland Club is a membership club. Non-members are welcome as guests provided they are accompanied by a member and are signed in.)

### Village Websites

Don't forget to look at our two websites relating to the village, maintained by Tim Kaye.

[www.santondownhamcentre.co.uk](http://www.santondownhamcentre.co.uk);  
[www.santondownham.org](http://www.santondownham.org)

Photographs by *Derek Toomer*

This Newsletter is compiled and produced by *Derek Toomer (Ed)* and *Sylvia East*

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