

Santon Downham News

The Parish Council Newsletter for Santon Downham Villagers
May 2010 Number 5

It's difficult to believe that it is only 12 months ago that the Parish Council, with its new mix of councillors and new Clerk to the Parish Council, embarked on a mission to encourage you, the villagers, to be involved in events and activities in the village, as well as raising funds to pay off the outstanding loans on the village hall. It has only been possible with your support, so thank you all.

I will leave it to Sylvia East, Clerk to the Parish Council, to tell you about our success. *Michael Mackender, Chairman of the Parish Council*

One year on

Wow, what a success!

What a superb year 2009/2010 has been. On behalf of our Parish Council a huge 'thank you' to all of those who have given us support, whether by volunteering or by attending our various Village Hall events during this very hectic period. With your help and support we have managed to pay off significant amounts of our outstanding loans.

We have had a variety of Village Hall run events, all of which have proven to be both enjoyable and fruitful for the funds. There are more events planned to take us through 2010, and we hope to repeat many of these events during 2011.

Our Lunch Club proved extremely popular. However, it was felt that with all the work our small team of volunteers are involved in, we had to take a break. The Lunch Club will return in the Autumn.

The Indoor Table Tops started well and grew rapidly in popularity, these will recommence in November.

We had an excellent first of the year Outside Car Boot on the 11th April. On the 2nd May our Car Boot was marred by awful weather and, although this was not exactly business as usual, we managed to turn things around on a smaller scale inside the hall. This was a mammoth task since the hall had been booked the evening before but with a team effort and brilliant spirit, the village volunteers and the pitch holders managed to save the day, so it was not a total wash out. From now until October, the Car Boots will be held on the first Sunday of every month.

The Antiques Roadshow was a success and very interesting indeed. There were a few comments made about the waiting time, so next time we will try a different system to improve upon this.

On the 16th May there is the Ride For Life

annual event and EACH have a variety of stalls and entertainments planned. Face Painting, stalls selling goods, Morris Dancing - just a few of the entertainments.

A return this year of our very successful 1940s Swing and Barbecue event is planned. Saturday, 10th July so make a note in your diary. We have not advertised yet but have already a large number of applications for tickets. This will be a stupendous night out, with some of the funds raised going to Help For Heroes. We intend to expand on the ideas used in 2009, so look out for a visit by Captain Mainwaring of the Home Guards!

A new event - Monday, 19th July there will be a Flower Arrangement Demonstration and following on from this it is hoped that there will be sufficient interest to perhaps introduce Workshops for Flower Arranging.

Another Quiz night will be held on Friday, 15th October. The last one was a sell-out so make your reservations early in order not to miss out on this very exciting evening.

There are other planned activities listed in the Dates for your Diary on page 4.

Our Parish Council, Village Hall Committee and support group are committed to the continuation of its work, which always will be to maintain the Village Hall for future generations.

We would be delighted to have more people join our happy team so, if you can help in anyway at all, please do come forward. We would welcome any offer of help, ideas, offers of cake making for our Car Boots, handcrafted items for sale at our Christmas Bazaar, items donated for the Auction, all help is appreciated.

Sylvia East, Clerk to the Parish Council

Forthcoming Events

Car Boot Sales



Bargains galore! Car boot sales on the green.

The indoor car boot sales that we started at the beginning of the year proved to be hugely successful, with sellers and buyers being very satisfied.

With the better weather, car boot sales commenced in April. They will now run through until October, on the first Sunday of each month. So come along and snap up some bargains, sell unwanted items, or just have a cup of tea or coffee and a piece of delicious home-made cake in the village hall.

1940s Evening

In 2009, we held our first big event - a 1940s Evening. It was a brilliant evening, with the hall buzzing with the sound of the Downham Market Swing Orchestra, a 28-piece brass band.

This year, we are repeating this successful evening. The Swing Orchestra will play for the whole evening and there will be a barbeque supper. Last year saw some interesting 40s fancy dress - let's see even more this year.

The evening will be on 10 July, starting at 6pm and finishing at 11pm. Tickets priced £10 will be available from Parish Councillors.

The next Quiz Night

It's a long way off, but put a note in your diaries. We will be holding another Quiz Night on Friday 15 October starting at 7pm. Our first Quiz Night, in January proved very successful and we will be including a fish and chips supper again, as this was so popular.

Don't miss it!
Saturday 10 July
6-11pm

Recent Events and Happenings

Antiques 'Road Show'



Could it be a Constable? (Probably not!)

At the end of March, we held our first Antiques evaluation evening. Well before the official start time, the hall was packed with people, clutching their prized, if not priceless possessions.

No hidden Van Gogh's or Faberge Eggs appeared, but a good evening was had by all.

Watch out for the next such event. Dig out your valuables and come along.

Sky diving Parish Officers!

Well, we did it! On Friday 16 April, Sylvia East and myself (Derek Toomer) dropped out of a plane at 11,000ft and rushed towards the ground, each in tandem with an expert.



Going up was fun

Were we nervous? No. Was it exciting? Difficult to say - it was such a unique sensation - but it was certainly exhilarating and one hell of a buzz!

We will have raised over £1,200 when we get all of the sponsorship money in.



Going down was something else!

Jeff Baker

Jeff Baker

Andrew Kedar, Church Warden tells us about the modern role of our 'Church in the Forest'.

Your church of St Mary the Virgin is now 900 years old, and has a very interesting history. However, in this edition of Santon Downham News I won't be writing about the history of the oldest building in the village. I want to tell you a little about today's church.

The Anglican (Church of England) churches of St Peter's, Brandon, St Mary's, Lakenheath, Saints Andrew and Patrick, Elveden and St Mary's Santon Downham, work together as a "Benefice". The Reverend Robert Leach is the Rector of this group of parishes, having a population of about 15,000 - only 2% of whom live in our village.

Church Services

We have a Service here at 9.30am every Sunday except the last one of each month, when the 4 congregations gather in one, or other, of the four churches. Normally, 3 or 4 Services are held here each month. Details of the Services are shown on the Notice Board by the churchyard gate, or you can call me on 01842 812985, for information.

Our average congregation on a typical Sunday is 17. There is room in St Mary's for at least 5 times as many - so, there is a place for you! Of course, on some occasions many more attend - for example, the Christmas Eve Carol Service, when the church is full. Last year, we had one Baptism, 2 weddings and 6 funerals in St Mary's. This year, there are "bookings" for 4 weddings - but none yet for funerals!

So what does this cost us?

Who pays for the church? The simple answer is "members of the congregation". The church is not subsidised in any way - we have annual bills of nearly £10,000, just to keep going, which includes Diocesan Office fees, insurance and running costs, as well as donations to charities. £10,000 was spent, easily!

Every 5 years, the building and churchyard are inspected by an architect, who gives us a list of repairs to be done.

We are obliged to pay for these repairs from our own funds. Only once were we given a Grant by an outside charity, of £3,000, in the mid 1990s. Since 1997 it has cost our church about £50,000 for repairs, including a new heating system. Today, we have another £18,000 of repairs waiting to be done (and paid for), plus another £9,000 for church internal re-decoration.

Apart from moneys given in "the collection plate" on Sundays, we have income from fund-raising (Sunday Teas, Carol Singing, etc.) and from weddings and funeral fees. Last, but not least, some kind folk have, in past years, bequeathed money to St Mary's in their Wills. This money is invested in special Church of England funds. Interest and dividends from these investments helps to keep our "little church in the forest" in good repair, and the donors names "liveth forever" in the church records.

If you are in need of a place to pray, or simply to relax, or to "think things out", there is no better place than your own parish church. It is open for you to use between 8.30 in the morning and about 5 o'clock in the evening, every day of the year. You will find peace in St Mary's church.

Better still, come to one of our Services on a Sunday - it is, after all, your church, and will only survive with your support.

(If you want to make a contribution to the upkeep of our Parish Church, please contact Andrew. Ed.)

In the next newsletter, we will have an article about the history of our delightful church.



Dates for Your Diary

(In the Village Hall, unless stated otherwise)

2010

Fri/Sat/Sun 14th/15th/16th May	Rotary/Breckland Club Beer and Cider Festival		
Sun 16th May	Ride for Life		
Friday 4th June	Annual Parish Meeting	7pm	
Sunday 6th June	Car Boot Sale	8am to 1pm	
Sunday 4th July	Car Boot Sale	8am to 1pm	
Saturday 10th July	1940s Evening	6pm-11pm	£10
Monday 19th July	Flower Demonstration <i>by Mary Griffiths</i>	7.30pm	£6
Sunday 1st August	Car Boot Sale	8am to 1pm	
Sunday 5th September	Car Boot Sale	8am to 1pm	
Sunday 3rd October	Car Boot Sale	8am to 1pm	
Friday 15th October	Quiz Night (with fish and chips supper)	7pm	£2/£6-7
Wednesday 3rd November	Lunch Club	12.30pm	£4.95
Sunday 7th November	Indoor Car Boot Sale	8am to 1pm	
Friday 12th November	Realm of the Dragon <i>Illustrated talk about China by Derek Toomer</i>	7.30pm	£2
Friday 19th November	Auction Evening	7.30pm	
Sunday 21st November	Shef's Lunch	12.30pm	
Sunday 27th November	Xmas Bazaar	10am to 5pm	

Tragedy averted

Early one February morning, Anne Birkitt, ex-Clerk to the Parish Council was having a shower, when she was suddenly aware of sparks and smoke coming from the shower equipment. Quick action and a quick response brought the fire brigade. Fire was taking hold in the loft space, but was quickly brought under control by the firemen.

Husband Ron, ex-Chairman of the Parish Council, said that damage was limited to a few roof timbers and that the insurance company would cover it. A lucky escape.



Still damping down after the roof fire.

Thetford Youth day

Hosted by 1109 Squadron ATC

Saturday 29th May 8am – 6pm

At Kilverstone next to Thetford Garden Centre
Arena events; BBQ; Quad Bikes; Donkey
Rides; Craft Stalls; Car Boot Sales; Beer Tent;
Dog Show and much more

Anyone interested in holding a stall or participating in the arena contact Michaela on 01842 755197

Village websites

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

www.santondownhamcentre.co.uk;

www.santondownham.org

Photographs by *Derek Toomer*

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

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