

Santon Downham News

The Parish Council Newsletter for Santon Downham Villagers

July 2011 Number 10

In the last newsletter, I started by saying 'Spring is here'. Well, it seems that that was our summer as well. The stunted lawns of April and May have given way to lush growth, requiring quite a lot of taming. Our car boot sales have continued to grow. It's not just numbers, though. We seem to be attracting a clientele that just enjoys coming along, looking at the stalls and then coming to the hall to enjoy a beverage and a piece of home-made cake. But it's the bacon butties that have been a resounding success. Why not come along one Sunday and tuck in. *Derek Toomer, Editor*

Forthcoming Events

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee

Yes, it is a long time away yet — 2-5 June 2012 - but we have been looking at ways that we can celebrate this event in the village.

The probable day of our celebrations on Monday 4 June. Sunday 3 June will be our Jubilee car boot sale

We have thought of a whole range of possible activities, and shows such as Classic cars, Classic Motorbikes, bands, café in the hall serving cream teas, tug-of-war, Birds of Prey demonstration, refreshment stands. And for the children a range of games and activities such as bobbing for an apple, three-legged race, egg and spoon race, bouncy castle.

Your help and support needed

For this to be any sort of success, it will rely on the support and help of you, the villagers. You may have other ideas that we have not thought of. We are looking for people to participate or even take the responsibility for running an activity or group of activities.

So, would you like to be involved in helping us in any way,? Let us know - contact Sylvia on 01842 815213, or Derek on 01842 812291. We look forward to hearing from you.



Big Game and Birds of Namibia, Botswana and Zambia *New date* - Friday 7 October at 7.30pm.

A talk about his recent travels in Southern Africa by Derek Toomer. A look at the countries and their wildlife from Etosha in northern Namibia, the Okovanga panhandle in Botswana to the Victoria falls in Zambia. A truly beautiful part of the African Continent.



Quiz Evening and Fish 'n Chip Supper - Friday 14 October at 7pm. Our quizzes are aimed at making a fun evening, so why don't you get a team together, come along and tuck in to a good fish and chip supper from the Brandon Fish Bar, all for £7 (or just £2 without the supper).

Race Meeting Evening - Saturday 19 November at 7.30pm. Admission £2.



This is our first Race Meeting Evening. Come and make it a success. Join in all the fun and excitement of a 'day at the races'. If you have not been to one before, come and give it a go.

Village News

Village Hall gets a face-lift

The 'new' village hall has been standing for over six years. The timber cladding was beginning to look a little sad and worn. The Village Hall Working Group discussed what should be done about it and whether

to get someone professional in to treat it. We decided that we could save a lot of money if we did the work ourselves.

On Sunday 12 June, five of us turned up at 9am, ready to start, with three ladies preparing food and drink for

the workers.

I think it is fair to say that we all thought that this was going to be quite a lengthy task. We set to as a team, sanding and varnishing. To our amazement, we had treated the whole of the hall front and side within three hours – absolutely brilliant. Thanks to all those who helped.



This wasn't the end of the face-lift however. Geoff Langley, who runs *Merrythought Nursery* on the Thetford-Brandon road with his wife Jane, arrived with two beautifully planted window boxes. What a difference they make. Many thanks to Jane and Geoff for their kind thought.



Two sad losses

Audrey Turner 1936-2011

Audrey passed away in April after a long battle with health problems. She was engaged to 'Wink' Turner when he was working for Forestry and a bungalow became available for a married couple. So they married in 1955 and

moved in to the Potting Shed bungalow.

Audrey worked at Lakenheath, where she was in charge of some of the canteens for the children. They lived in the Potting Shed bungalow for 56 years until she passed away. She leaves her husband 'Wink' and a son – our thoughts are with them.



Don Lain 1929-2011

Don passed away in June after a short battle with cancer. Don was known to many of our villagers, always willing to stop and talk about a diverse range of topics. He was born in Trawsfyndd in Wales. Although he moved from there when he was only two, he was very proud of his roots.

Don obtained a degree in Engineering and worked in that field. When he was 40, he wanted a change of direction and completed a post-graduate course in teaching. He taught Maths and Science in Bedford School, and quickly rose to be Head of Department.

Taking retirement at the age of 61, he travelled the world with his wife Eve.

In June 1996 they both moved to Santon Downham. Eve describes it as 15 very happy years.

Our thoughts are with Eve, his wife, and their son, daughters and grandchildren.



Village News continued on p4

Spotlight on...

One of the village characters that we must look at is Edie Turner. Sadly, she is no longer with us, but memories of this character live on. Many villagers have stories about Edie, not all suitable for publication. The house where she used to live has now become part of my home. Her memory lives on with us, as we still refer to 'Edie's lounge' and 'Edie's garden'. Ed. (Thanks to many, especially Wink Turner and Ronnie Moran.)



Edie Turner

Edie Turner was the village character, the likes of which we are unlikely to see again. Anyone living in the village from the 1930s through to the end of the 20th century would have known Edie.

Early life

Edie's family did not start in Santon Downham. Originally an Elveden family, they lived in Lynford for several years, where father worked in the forest. Born about 1915, she was the last of 16 children. She was very small as a baby and wasn't expected to survive long - but she did. Her mother called her the 'runt' and carried her around on a cushion in her early days. She was put in a cardboard box to sleep. As an adult, she was only about four foot six in height.

Santon Downham residents

The family moved to Santon Downham in the early 1920s, living in part of Woodcock Cottage (now combined with the other half as my residence). By now, there were only four children living with the parents, a couple having died and the others having left home. Brothers Sid, Tom and Bert shared the house with Edie and their parents.



Edie and pet at Woodcock Cottage

She had very little schooling, her mother keeping her home to help. Edie says that she went to school in Brandon, being taken there in a horse and cart. She was illiterate for the rest of her life, but that did not stop her communicating with other villagers.

As a child in the village, she remembers playing

in the old Downham Hall, before Forestry took it over and demolished it.

She seems to have had a couple of jobs, the first one when she was 21. This was selling papers in Brandon station as people got on and off the trains. Later, she had a baking job at Lakenheath.

An interesting life

There are numerous stories about Edie and her life

in the village. She used to go into Brandon regularly, in the early days, cycling on an oversized bike. She did like the odd 'sherry'! Apparently, cycling back on the large bike after the odd bevy was something to be seen. In later years, without the bike, she frequently had to be brought home. She was said to be an excellent morel (a type of edible toadstool) finder, keeping their location a secret, and pickling them for her own use and for selling.

For a while, she enjoyed going to WI meetings where she made pastries. Most of all, she enjoyed a good sing-song. Having had her as a neighbour for several years, I can vouch for her good singing voice as she would join in with 'Songs of Praise', knowing all the words and being audible through 18 inch walls.

For much of her life, she kept pets. One cat followed another, and they were all called *Jonny*. It was Ron Hoblyn's task to bury the dead ones in her garden.

But it was the dogs that people remember. Toby was notorious, and seems to have terrorised half of the village. He was followed by Henry who tried to imitate his predecessor but was too fat and merely barked at everyone.

She stayed single all of her life, although she maintains that she enjoyed the war when the American soldiers were over here. We won't pursue that any further!

I knew her for the last few years, before she moved into a home. I was greeted everyday by this diminutive character, with a raised walking stick and an unlit cigarette in her mouth.

She was in her late 80s when she died, 76 years of which were in Woodcock Cottage. For Someone with a difficult start, she led a full and interesting life. *Derek Toomer, Ed.*



Sunday best, ready for Church

Dates for Your Diary

(In the Village Hall, unless stated otherwise)

2011

Sunday 4th September	Car Boot Sale	8am to 1pm	
Sunday 2nd October	Car Boot Sale	8am to 1pm	
Friday 7th October *New date*	<i>Big Game and Birds of Namibia, Botswana and Zambia</i> by Derek Toomer	7.30pm	£2
Friday 14th October	Quiz Night (with Fish and Chips supper)	7pm	£2/£7
Sunday 6th November	Indoor Car Boot Sale	10am to 2pm	
Saturday 19th November	Race Meeting Evening	7.30pm	£2

Village News – contd

As seen on TV – Holly's Prom

A modern trend is that when pupils finish their education they have a ball at the education establishment, arriving in some novel transport. Sixteen year-old villager, Holly Butcher chose to arrive in an Ice-cream van. This was picked up by Anglia TV and she featured in their local news programme.



Holly, looking resplendent in pink, prepares to board their novel transport with her friend.

Yet more weather records!

Santon Downham was the hottest and coldest in East Anglia in June.



Look East weatherman with June's highs and lows.

Is it a bird, is it a plane? No it's . . .

Towards the end of March, villagers might have been surprised to hear an approaching helicopter, which landed on the green. No, there was no medical emergency, it was Rotarian Brian Rutterford's own helicopter. Brian got his friend to pilot the helicopter and to give 10 minute rides for a fee which was donated to charity. Very exciting.



Up, up and away! Brian's helicopter takes off with another excited passenger.

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

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