

Santon Downham News

The Parish Council Newsletter for Santon Downham Villagers

January 2014 Number 20

A Happy New Year to you all. This time for the last couple of years, we had already had considerable snow falls. What a contrast this winter has been. For what seems like weeks, we have had low pressure weather events coming in from the Atlantic. Much of the country has had gales and/or floods, but situated where we are, we have got off lightly. Having said that, as I was writing this, a 70 foot high Poplar Tree has crashed to the ground just outside my back fence. Fortunately, it fell away from my property.

I hope to see some of you at a coffee morning, or at our quiz evening in May. *Derek Toomer, Editor*

Forthcoming Events

Coffee Mornings – 12 February, 10.30am 50p

These will continue through until the first week in April. Do come along for a pleasant chat.

Don't forget to bring your own mug.



Internet image

Car Boot Sales – Sunday 2 March, 8am to 1pm

These will run through until October. Do come along to look for bargains, or to set up your own stall – only £5.

Don't miss out on the Hall Café, with its large selection of home-made cakes and delicious bacon butties.

Quiz Evening with Fish and Chips Supper – Friday 2 May, 7pm. Cost approximately £7.50

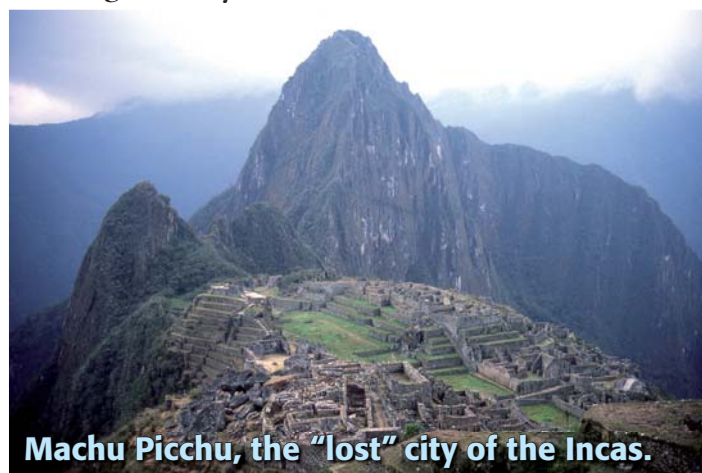
Do come along for an evening of fun and a good meal of fish and chips. Prizes of wine for the winners. Don't be shy, you can all take part for fun. Phone Sylvia on 01842 815213 to book a table.

Advanced notice

Illustrated talk about travels in Peru by Derek Toomer – Friday 17 October, 7.30pm, £2

Having given several talks about travels in Africa

over the last few years I thought it would be a good idea to look at an earlier trip to South America, in particular, Peru. This beautiful country has so much to offer. Running from the dry coastal desert, to the high Andes and down to the Amazonian basin, scenery and wildlife abound. Added to that are the ruins of one of the world's most fascinating cultures, the Incas. Do come along and share in the splendour of this amazing country.



Machu Picchu, the "lost" city of the Incas.

Village Hall – Recent Activities

Coffee Morning Workshop



Derek shows the coffee morning folk the fascinating information contained on the village website.

The village coffee mornings, held in the Village Hall, are usually very relaxed affairs, although Maggy and Phil do produce some interesting question sheets at times. These are not competitive, but just give attendees something to chat about. For example, a sheet was produced one morning with about 12 dog photos on it. These were all village pets, but whose? How well would you have done?

Towards the end of the year, there was a request to look at the village website. Even those without computers were completely absorbed by the amount of information there.

The village website address are on page 4.

Xmas Bazaar

The Xmas Bazaar, held at the beginning of December was our most successful to date. The products for sale were all of a high quality and the two rooms used were packed with stalls.



The Xmas Bazaar was a success for both the stall holders and the shoppers.

From opening time until well into the afternoon, the hall was busy with people looking for unusual gifts. Even Father Christmas (Mick Mackender) was kept busy with children.

Hopefully next year's will be as successful.

New Year's Eve Party

This was our fifth annual celebration and it must have been our most successful. With about 100 guests, the hall was throbbing and music of the appropriate genre was supplied by Mindy's Roadshow.

A splendid buffet meal was prepared by a small group of volunteers, under the excellent organisation of Sylvia.

The optional fancy dress theme was 'your favourite TV character. Someone had to come as 'Mrs Brown', but without the boys. Ray Granger and his wife Irene were voted the best fancy dress.



Ray Granger and his wife Irene are the spitting images of Mrs Brown – mole and all.



Downton Abbey Ladies – Linda Moore (left) as Lady Mary and Charlotte Vincent with her mother Joan Parrington as other members of the cast.

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Suffolk Mobile Library serves our village

You might not know it but Santon Downham is still served by Suffolk's mobile library service. Despite the recent cutbacks we are one of the stops on the county's mobile library Route 4. The library has a decent selection of books – fiction, non-fiction and children's – together with a small number of DVDs and audio books.



The library is usually driven by Kevin Lambert who's very friendly and helpful. He'll put books to one side for his regulars, order anything that he doesn't have on the shelves and always has a few recommendations if you don't know what to read next. Don't worry if you're not a member, Kevin can sort it out.

The library visits every four weeks on a Saturday morning from 10:40 to 11:00 and currently parks in front of the Club/Village Hall. For further information call Bury Mobile on 07721 879855

or Kevin directly on 07884 422762 or the main Suffolk Libraries number, 01473 584563.

It's a brilliant service and the more people who use it, the more secure its future will be.

Dates as follows for 2014: January 18th; February 15th; March 15th; April 12th; May 10th; June 7th; July 5th; August 2nd and 30th; September 27th; October 25th; November 22nd; December 20th.

Tim Kaye

Dog fouling notices

Following a number of complaints to the Parish Council (see Newsletter no. 19), several professionally made signs were purchased. Phil Hammond very kindly mounted the signs in a wooden surround and fixed them to posts. Three of these signs have now been sited on the village green.

Hopefully, with this reminder on display, dog walkers will ensure they are careful in cleaning up after their pets.



Phil Hammond with Parish Clerk Sylvia positioning one of the new dog fouling signs.

Beware! Oil thieves have targeted this area

As we are a village without a gas supply, many of us rely on oil for our heating. We are all aware how expensive this fuel is. The nature of our back gardens can mean that access is relatively easy. Between Monday 23rd and Friday 27th December, domestic fuel was stolen from a fuel tank outside a home in Santon Downham.

If you have any information that may help police with their investigation on this incident please contact 101, quoting reference number: MH/13/2232.

Please use the following link to pass useful information to Suffolk Police about any incident. <http://www.suffolk.police.uk/safetyadvice/reportacrime/tellthepolice.aspx>.

(Do not use this link to report an emergency - dial 999)

Back from the brink – our bus shelter is saved

I am sure that many of you have noticed a transformation taking place on the edge of woodland near the church. An old and dilapidated building was in danger of being naturally recycled as it succumbed to rot.

This wooden building was one of two bus shelters originally, the other one was at the south end of Hall Drive, and is a distinctive part of our village,

although not very convenient for signalling for a bus to stop. The Parish Council decide it would be a good idea to get the building repaired. Because the bus shelter is actually on Forestry land, the Parish Council first obtained permission from the Forestry Commission to repair the bus shelter.

Then along came Maggy Turner and Phil Hammond, and in a very short time, the bus shelter was transformed into beautiful, new looking building.

Well done to both of them for their superb efforts.



The splendidly restored bus shelter.

Hall window boxes – a generous donation

For several years, the hall has had two decorative window boxes at the front, currently planted with winter plants. These were kindly donated and replenished by Geoff and Jane Langley. (contd. p4)



Winter planted window boxes on the Village Hall.

Volunteer at High Lodge for the Forestry Commission

Enjoy the forest, learn new skills and meet new people. Get stuck in and help make the forest a fantastic place for people and wildlife. We currently need 'Meet and Greet' and 'Trails Ranger' volunteers.

Meet and Greet Volunteers

We are looking for people with infectious enthusiasm about the forest and the facilities we offer at High Lodge. If you enjoy talking to people and are available at weekends and bank holidays why not join the High Lodge team.

Volunteer Trails Ranger

If you are an energetic, practical person, who loves walking and cycling and are willing to help us give each visitor a high quality experience every time they visit High Lodge, then why not become a Volunteer Trails Ranger.

For more information about volunteering please see our website site www.forestry.gov.uk/highlodge-volunteer or contact Holly Berwick on 01842 816015 or email holly.berwick@forestry.gsi.gov.uk.



Dates for Your Diary

(In the Village Hall, unless stated otherwise)

2014

Wednesday 12th February	Coffee Morning	10.30am to 12 noon	50p
Sunday 2nd March	Car Boot Sale	8am to 1pm	
Wednesday 12th March	Coffee Morning	10.30am to 12 noon	50p
Wednesday 26th March	Coffee Morning	10.30am to 12 noon	50p
Sunday 6th April	Car Boot Sale	8am to 1pm	
Wednesday 9th April	Coffee Morning	10.30am to 12 noon	50p
Friday 2nd May	Quiz Night and Fish & Chip Supper	7pm	£7.50 (approx)
Sunday 4th May	Car Boot Sale	8am to 1pm	
Friday 17th October	"Andes to Amazonia" An illustrated talk about Peru by Derek Toomer	7.30pm	£2

Parish Council Meetings

(In the Village Hall)

2014

Monday 3rd February	Parish Council Meeting	7pm
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Village News

Geoff and Jane run Merrythought's Nursery off of the Brandon/Thetford road, opposite the Thetford end of the Santon Downham Road. They specialise in patio plants and hanging baskets. All their plants are of high quality. They will open for 2014 at Easter time through to July. Do pay them a visit.

Local RSPB Events

RSPB Farming and Wildlife in the Brecks, a VIP visit. Saturday 8th February. Booking essential. For more information and timings please contact thebrecks@rspb.org.uk or 01842 753732

A Date with Nature, Stupendous Starlings! 14th, 15th and 16th February. Thetford town centre. No need to book just visit us at our stand between 3pm-6pm

All things nocturnal! Night time guided walk, talks, star gazing and moth trapping. Saturday 1st and Sunday 2nd March. Great Ellingham Recreation Centre, NR17 1HZ. Booking is essential. To book contact 01842 753732 or thebrecks@rspb.org.uk

Talk on the Brecks and the RSPB. Tuesday 11th March 6:00pm- 7:30pm. United Reform Church, Thetford. IP24 2AD. Booking is essential. To book contact 01842 753732 or thebrecks@rspb.org.uk
See website - www.rspb.org.uk/events/ for more information.

There are two volunteering opportunities:

Events assistant - The role will involve assisting a member of the Brecks Team whilst running an event, for example information stalls, guided walks etc.

Brecks Photographer - We are looking for local people with fantastic pictures of the Brecks, whether it be wildlife or landscape pictures or of people out and about Brecks we'd love your pictures!

Please contact: thebrecks@rspb.org.uk or 01842 753732

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*

Santon Downham News is sponsored by Reflex Litho, Printers, St Helens Way, Thetford, Norfolk IP24 1HG, Tel: 01842 754600.
Contact them for all of your printing requirements.