

COTTENHAM 2000

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Well all the fuss has blown over and the party debris has been cleared up! The new millennium has arrived and all seems well so far. Two points are worth mentioning however, before consigning the millennium to where it belongs — history. One is the very attractive commemorative pottery pieces, which were commissioned by the Parish Council. All households in the village with children of eleven or younger will (hopefully) have received their commemorative mugs by now. In addition to the mugs, a range of other pottery pieces including plates and larger mugs are available for purchase from Peter Sanderson of the Parish Council. The pottery marks the end of a series of activities by the Parish Council to mark the Millennium. Others included the new seats on the village green, cleaning the war memorial, the new Christmas lights which extend around the whole of the village green, and making contributions towards the purchase of a new liner for the swimming pool at the

Village College and the new scout hut.

The second is to congratulate all those responsible for the excellent New Year's Eve party at the Village College. The evening was most enjoyable with excellent music being provided by the Champion Dance Band. If you did not make it to this most recent party then I am told that more conventional New Year's Eve parties at the Village College are every bit as good. So, if you enjoy a good time, then bear it in mind for next year.

And so to the future... Many of you will probably have noticed that a "For Sale" sign has gone up on the house used by Cambridgeshire ACRE on the high street (between the Post Office and the Greengrocers). The village will be sorry to see ACRE go — but space constraints mean that they need to move. However, it is the rear of this building that is familiar to many Cottenham Residents. The way-

side garden has been open to the public as a haven of peace and natural beauty for many years now. Its future is uncertain as it will probably be sold along with the house. An article inside the *Newsletter* by some of those concerned to save the Wayside Garden gives more details and contact numbers if you would like to help.

2000 looks promising for poetry in Cottenham. The highlight will be a visit by Andrew Motion, the poet laureate. Details are available inside in the poetry corner.

Finally, the end of 1999 saw the retirement, for health reasons, of The Reverend Paul Lane who has led the Baptist church in Cottenham for the last four years. I'm sure that the whole village will join me in thanking him for his dedicated service to the church and the community and wish him well in his retirement.

Eddie Murphy

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VILLAGE DIARY

January

- 28th Cottenham Gardening Club. Alpine and medicinal plants of Bhutan — land of the Thunder Dragon
28th Cottenham Seniors Club, Common Room Village College, 2:30pm: CAMTAD on the problems of deafness

February

- 1st Cambridge Osteoporosis Support Group. Social Gathering. Dry Drayton Village Hall 2:00pm to 4:00pm
3rd Cottenham Village College at 1:45—2:45pm
The Three Horseshoes, Tim Wotherspoon
4th Cottenham Village College 1:00pm to 3:30pm Half day Poetry Workshop with Chrissie Gittins
9th Cottenham WI: Franklin Gardens 7:30pm — Two Dimensions, Audio/Visual show by Roland King
10th Cottenham Village Design Group 7:30pm in the Library at Cottenham Village College Annual Meeting including discussion of waste recycling proposals for Long Drove
11th Cottenham Seniors Club, Common Room Village College, 2:30pm Expert advice on Antiques
11th Cottenham Village Society, Primary School Hall, Lamb's Lane 7:45pm Mrs L. Hopgood — Victorian Fashions onwards
12th Cottenham Village College 10:00am to 4:00pm Day long Poetry Workshop with Chrissie Gittins
17th Cottenham Village College at 1:45—2:45 pm Wimpole Hall and Home Farm, Veronica Bennett
25th Cottenham Gardening Club. Annual General Meeting and plant auc-

tion

March

- 2nd Cottenham Village College at 1:45—2:45pm Ansell's Garden Centre
3rd Cottenham Seniors Club, Lecture Room Village College, 2:30pm Illustrated talk on the history of timber framed buildings
8th Cottenham WI: Franklin Gardens 6:15 for 6:30pm — Annual Supper, History of WI Markets by Mrs Cliff, followed by AGM
10th Cottenham Village Society, Primary School Hall, Lamb's Lane 7:45pm Mrs J. Clifford — The story of Nell Gwyn
Cottenham Village College at 1:45—2:45pm Cooking, Trish Paskins
16th Cottenham Village College at 1:45—2:45 pm Sweet Charity, CVC musical
17th Cottenham Seniors Club, Common Room Village College, 2:30pm Keep fit demonstration
30th Cottenham Village College at 1:45—2:45 pm Training for the Police, Nick Percival
31st Cottenham Seniors Club, Common Room Village College, 2:30pm Benji Warwick and friends entertain

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5p per word, with all proceeds going to charity. Send advertisements and payment to the editors.

Cheques should be made payable to 'Cottenham Newsletter'

ARTICLES, DATES AND ADVERTISEMENTS.

E-mail, PC floppy disk and paper submissions are all welcome. PC floppy disks will be returned to contributorseventually! Please contact the Editors if you have any questions. Dates of events to be advertised in the next issue (No. 56) should span the last week of March and the months of April and May.



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REFLECTIONS

Does getting older make one more miserable?!! Well, it seems to for some people, but then, who knows, they may have very good reasons for being miserable. I observed all sorts of people during my taxi driving years. I noticed that old ladies who retained the most of their marbles had either never had any children, been unmarried, lived as a widow for a long time and had done work all their lives that involved numbers such as book-keeping or accountancy or doing mental arithmetic to work out prices. I also could not fail to notice that almost every elderly person who still loved life, also loved their food, doing new things, meeting new people and adventure. At this rate I ought to have a fairly good chance in life!!

As for alcohol, well... a select few friends know that it serves as an amazing remover of inhibition with me, and you may say that I suffer from a lack of that in the first place. When I am offered a drink now, people say would you like an inch of wine? I had two inches of champagne at Christmas and well... I simply find that I do not need alcohol to loosen my tongue, or to enable me to enjoy myself. In Malta, where I grew up, small children would be served alcohol with their meals and no one thought anything of it. Tiny babies who were whinging were given Maltese beer. It was quite a sight to see them fall asleep as they drank it. I have heard that in the olden days in the Fens poor families used to give their children opium drinks before bedtime. What a shocking thing to do I used to think, until one night when I had to 'babysit' for a few not so little darlings, not one of whom was tired — even at 1.30am!! My firmness and strictness are not as I

thought! I suppose it sounds terrible giving alcohol to children so wantonly, but the funny thing is that as teenagers and young people no-one seems to go out to 'get drunk' as a lot do here.

Shall I have a moan? No!! Well, it isn't really a moan, just an observation. I still don't really feel at home in England. The trouble is that I now do not feel at home in Malta either. You see, I lived there for the first seventeen years of my life and I have lived in England twenty years. I think living in different countries does us a lot of good. It enables us to see things with a wider perspective. I find that I usually get on better with

people who have lived abroad for part of their lives.

Another funny thing is that we were not allowed to have a television in our house when I was growing up. No, it was nothing to do with the government — it was my mother. She thought that we would grow up as pasty little weeds who never went out. So instead my brother and I went wild and were out of doors most of the time roaming around with a freedom which I very much doubt that a child could enjoy today. The toffs called us 'street children'!! Oh my dear!!

Moyra A. Borg

DIRECTIONS PLUS HANDBOOK

Directions Plus is the information service for disabled people and carers in Cambridge City, South Cambridgeshire and East Cambridgeshire. It has just published 10,000 copies of a 96 - page handbook that is full of local and national information for disabled adults, their families and carers. Directions Plus is affiliated to DIAL UK. The handbook was funded by the National Lottery Charities Board and the handbook was designed by David Cutting Graphics (DCG).

Two previous publications have received national recognition: *The Carers' Handbook* was cited as an example of best practice for information provision in a government report in 1999 and *A Child First* received the national 'Message Across' award.

The new handbook has information on the Disability Discrimination Act, disability rights, employment, education, technology, leisure activities, holidays, transport, housing, relationship, advo-

cacy, support organisations, carers' organisations, equipment and aids, social services, health services, benefits, grants and many other subjects.

The handbook has an internet edition which will be regularly updated. It can be found at www.directions-plus.org

The book is free. Copies may be collected from many local libraries, Citizens Advice Bureaux, the Addenbrooke's Advice Centre, the Disability Information Service Huntingdon (DISH), the Newmarket Gateopener project and the Carers Centre, Primrose Street. If you cannot collect a handbook, copies can be posted to you if you call Directions Plus, 01223 569600 or 01353 669431. For further details about Directions Plus and disability information call our advicelines, we have many publications, including handbooks, factsheets and newsletters.

Directions Plus

G B Roofing

SAVE THE WAYSIDE GARDEN

The Wayside Garden at 218 High Street has been a quiet haven for Cottenham residents since 1991. It is used primarily by parents with young children, playgroups and by the elderly and disabled (the Garden is wheelchair accessible). The Garden was carefully planned to create year-round interest and it is not only during the summer months that it is popular. The Garden is used as a lunchtime picnic spot for office workers and college students and days have been given over to arts activities including drawing, painting and music. Action days have involved many individuals and Village groups. The Garden's influence on our youngsters has been profound, developing a respect for nature and consideration for the interest and feelings of others. The Garden has been free from litter and vandalism and is a source of pride and enjoyment for the community.

Since its beginnings, and with the active encouragement of Cambridgeshire ACRE, many residents have contributed to the upkeep and success of the Garden. Plants have been given and all work has been done on a voluntary basis. Benches and other features have been donated by

businesses, individuals and the Parish Council because they believe in the Garden's benefit to Cottenham's residents. Our community has made an

We need your help to prevent this loss.

At a recent meeting of the Cottenham Parish Council unqualified support was given to the Save The Wayside Garden Action Group to do whatever it can to retain the Garden as an amenity for the Cottenham community. This support has been echoed by Cottenham Community Association and the Village Society. A letter of encouragement has been received from the Planning Director at South Cambridgeshire District Council and a meeting will take place early in the New Year between the Save The Wayside Garden Action Group, Planning and Conservation Departments of South Cambridgeshire District Council as well as our District Councillors and other interested parties.

We hope you will feel strongly enough about the possible loss of the Wayside Garden to show your support by contacting: Rod Ailes on 01954 251850, Hugh Gautrey on 01954 251886, Maurice Hopkins on 01954 250892,

investment of time and commitment to the Wayside Garden. Now because Cambridgeshire ACRE has to leave Cottenham, we are in danger of losing it.

Simone Navon on 01954 252675, or Andrew Withers on 01954 252173 AS SOON AS POSSIBLE as the sale of the house is imminent.

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WATCHING BRIEF

Any time at all – all you have to do is call

Welcome to the Watchman 24-hour helpline.

If you have a touch-tone copy of the *Cottenham Newsletter*, press star-hash-one now if you would like to know whether the Stagecoach bus you were planning to catch from the Green is ever likely to turn up.

Press star-hash-two if you wish to report a casualty as a result of a super-market trolley crash at the Co-op.

Press star-hash-three if you'd like to go fifteen rounds in the ring with the person who designed Cottenham's traffic calming scheme.

If you would like to speak to one of our customer care executives, please hold.

Vivaldi. Click, bleep.

We are sorry that all our customer care executives are currently engaged (the YTS girl who answers the phone is chatting to her fiancé in Southampton). Please hold.

Vivaldi. Click, bleep. Ring-ring.

Welcome to the Watchman 24-hour helpline...

If you wish to enjoy ten minutes of rage and frustration, just phone a 'help' line. But if you value your mental health, put the receiver down the moment you hear the first strains of Vivaldi's Four Seasons and forget whatever it was you were trying to achieve.

About-face at the Co-op

Alternatively, you may prefer to be driven mad by the people who park on the pavement outside the Co-op. The

store's management has solved the problem of people parking in the lane beside the shop by keeping the barrier locked. So now shoppers have solved the problem of not being able to park in the lane by dumping their motors on the pavement instead.

One afternoon last week Watchman observed a young mother, with a child in a buggy and another hanging on her arm, being forced to walk in the road on that blind bend because the pavement was clogged with vehicles. It was almost dark, the road was wet. It was fortunate that one of those improbably large lorries that use Cottenham as a rat-run was not passing at the time.

Watchman has a suggestion: allow shoppers to use the lane for access to the car park at the rear, where there is at least a quarter-acre of space. Provide a new rear entrance into the shop direct from the car park. There is ample room for a new access in that derelict wedge of land to the left-hand side of the building (as you look at it from the car park).

Moreover, it wouldn't cost a fortune to implement. Certainly rather less than the lives of that young mother and her babies.

The light fantastic

Well, we've survived the season of good cheer for another year. That joyous time when a man's true worth can be measured by the number of spare bulbs he has remembered to buy for the Christmas tree lights.

Watchman is glad to report he was well prepared, thanks to Clements Hardware. For the price of a couple of packs of spare bulbs (no more than £1.50) that charming young woman who works in the shop went right out of her way to ensure that the Watchman family Christmas tree would be kept

glowing with exactly the right type of bulb fitting – and the right colour.

In fact, Clements is a brilliant shop the year round. Last summer a bracket on the Watchman mowing machine sheared off, but a quick visit to Clements and a fiver got it welded up right there on the spot. A new bracket from the manufacturer would have cost £29.75 and a three-week wait.

The dictionary defines the word clement as 'mild, gentle, kind.' Here in Cottenham we have every reason to add 'helpful, friendly and jolly good value'.

Rubbishing swan lake

One benefit (the only benefit?) to the village of all that new house-building down Broad Lane is the large surface water lake, or 'lagoon', we have acquired just this side of the lode. It didn't take long for a pair of swans to take up residence, and other passing water fowl have been quick to put the lagoon on their itineraries.

The parish council has done a fine job in landscaping the area around the water's edge with benches, neatly cropped grass and a generous planting of reeds, rushes and trees. But it has been left to others to add those finishing touches that make this a truly public amenity. On our last visit at the end of the autumn we noted the addition of three empty cola tins, several crisp packets, assorted waste paper blowing around and a number of bright red wax cheese wrappers.

Yes, sorry to say, the oiks are always with us.

Watchman

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COTTENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

By the time you read this, Christmas will be over for another year and Millennium celebrations for another thousand. We hope the newly extended Christmas lights on the Green, the new Millennium seats, and the children's commemorative mugs have all made their small contribution to people's enjoyment of the festive season. By the way, it was our intention that all children up to the age of 12 should receive a free mug, and by now they should all have been delivered. If we have missed anyone, please contact Peter Sanderson on Cottenham 250836. The same applies if you would like to buy additional items. Many residents have already taken the opportunity to obtain these unique local momentos of the Millennium (including some for export!), but the order book will remain open until the end of February.

Assuming the world has not ended, as some were predicting, we must now come down to earth and consider more mundane matters. Well, perhaps not down to earth, more to pavement level — the unpleasant topic of dog fouling, which continues to be a problem, par-

ticularly in Telegraph, Corbett and Margett Streets. Clearly, we have some dog owners in the village who consider it too much like hard work to clean up after their pets. In an attempt to make it easier for people to be more considerate, we are looking at the costs and other implications of installing and emptying special bins. We will not hesitate to prosecute those involved if their identities are reported to us.

You will have noticed the new bollards recently erected at the Co-op corner. They were intended to prevent parking on the pavement and in front of residents' front doors, but some drivers clearly think they identify a new car park, and have actually managed to park behind them! Our newly appointed Beat Officer, PC Graham Whitby, has been asked to pay special attention to this area. (By the way, we would like to welcome Graham to the job — the previous appointee, PC Dave Gent, was unable to take up the post for personal reasons.)

Just to prove that very little has really changed because of the Millennium,

another "old faithful" — the ongoing problem of fly tipping in the Fen. Long Drove was actually blocked to traffic recently by piles of waste. The Environment Agency has overall responsibility for this problem, and has brought many successful prosecutions against offenders. If you see anything, or have any information, contact their local area office in Huntingdon (01480 437669) or their National Hotline (free) on 0800 807060.

COTTENHAM UNITED CHARITY ALLOTMENTS

Applications are invited for the tenancy of an allotment at Two Mill Field, Rampton Road, Cottenham.

Applicants should be resident in Cottenham and of 45 years of age or over.

Interested residents should contact the Clerk to the Trustees on 01954 250836, or in writing to 37 Broad Lane, Cottenham, Cambridge, CB4 8SW.

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JASPER KAY'S BIRD REPORT

Some extracts from my Bird Diary.

- October 20th: Lots of fieldfares on Long Drove.
October 28th: Two house martins seen in the village (very late).
November 1st: Blackcaps seen in two Cottenham gardens — probably staying for the winter. A pair of mute swans seem to have made their home on the Broad Lane Lake.
November 6th: Black headed gulls have replaced the swans in Broad Lane.
November 7th: Grey wagtail in our garden.
November 15th: Kingfisher seen near Smithy Fen bridge.
Two dead herons in Broad Lane.
November 16th: Sparrowhawk in Church Lane.
November 21st: Short-eared owl seen in Broad Lane.
November 24th: Oystercatcher in Broad Lane. Three green sandpipers near Rampton Bridge. Great spotted woodpecker at Rampton.
November 25th: Only moorhens on the Long Drove lagoon, apart from a bathing skylark. Kingfisher again between Smithy Fen bridge and Broad Lane bridge.
November 30th: Grey wagtail in Broad lane. Three green sandpipers near the river. Nearly trod on a short eared owl, which flew up from the river bank. Kingfisher caught three fish near Broad Lane. Large flocks of fieldfares in Broad Lane. Big flocks of skylarks in the fields. Plenty of lapwings too.
December 1st: Lots of fieldfares and a few redwings in Church Lane. Grey wagtail and long-tailed tits in Rampton.
December 8th: Bullfinches on Histon road.
December 9th: Green woodpecker near river at Twentypence (on telegraph pole!). Long-tailed tits by Cottenham Lode.
December 10th: Short-eared owl near Cottenham Lode.
December 11th: Lots of blackbirds around, but almost all male. The females have, no doubt, moved south in search of food and warmth (no comment!). Very few song thrushes around. Jays in Rampton Spinney.

Jasper Kay, December 1999

HIGHGATE FARM EXISTING AD

HEALTHWATCH

by David Bradley

What's breast for mum

Breast is best for baby, but might be helping mum too, according to scientists in America. They have found that when a mother breast-feeds her baby, levels of the hormone oxytocin go up and blood pressure drops. Oxytocin is the hormone that triggers the milk let-down reflex when baby starts suckling, but scientists had not until now realised it could have effects on the well-being of the mother too. The findings could explain why many mothers feel mellow and relaxed after breastfeeding.

The Breastfeeding Network can be reached on 0870 900 8787.

The return of rubella

The viral disease rubella, also known as German measles, could make a comeback if parents don't have their children vaccinated, says a leading medical scientist. Rubella usually only causes an itchy red rash and swollen glands, but if a woman comes into contact with the virus early in a pregnancy it leads to severe birth defects, such as deafness or blindness, and can even cause a stillbirth. Professor Catherine Peckham from the Institute of Child Health has seen that many parents are unduly worried about their children having the MMR vaccine for measles, mumps and rubella, and that rubella could become common again if vaccinations are not carried out. Before the MMR there were 200-300 babies born with rubella birth defects. By the mid-1990s this number was down to four. Leaflets are available on the benefits and possible risks of the MMR vaccine from most doctor's surgeries.

David Bradley is a freelance science and medical writer and can be contacted through his Elemental Discoveries website at:

<http://www.camssoft.com/elemental/>

The Letter of the Law

— By Adam James

It was a pleasant summer's evening. I was driving through a small Norfolk village when my companion noticed some 30mph signs painted on the road. "We could do with some 30mph signs painted on the roads in our village", he said, "no one drives under 40mph, and most drive faster." "I don't think they would make any difference", I replied, "those who drive above the limit do so because they know they can get away with it." "Well, it might result in a hefty fine if they are caught", he mused. "I don't think it would", I said, and then told him the following tale.

On a dark November evening I had just left a house where I had called to deliver some music to a pupil of mine. I drove off down the road on my way home, and as I was approaching a mini-crossroads, I saw out of the corner of my eye the headlights of a car. Knowing that I was on the main road I did not give it much attention, when suddenly I felt an immense impact as this car crashed into mine, thrusting my car right across a three lane road, which was fortunately deserted, until it was halted by the kerb. I had been hit by a Volkswagen Beetle, which I estimated must have been travelling at about 50 mph as it raced across the 'stop' lines at the road junction.

The impact from the front bull bars had blown out both doors and the car windows, so I was able to get out of the car without difficulty. I found that the front suspension had fallen into the road and the rest of the car looked as if it had been hit by a steamroller. Within seconds a crowd of nearby residents had emerged — one lady was even bringing a broom with which she began to sweep up the glass and other debris deposited on the road and pavement.

To my surprise, I recognised the driver of the car that had plunged into mine: he was the Deputy Headmaster of a local school, who was about to take up an appointment as Headmaster at another city school. "I'm terribly sorry — it was entirely my fault: I thought I was on the main road. I have never driven this way at night before — I was following the Headmaster of the local school and thought I had lost him. I'll see you alright with my insurance company." Just then a police car arrived, alerted by one of the residents (the substation was nearby), and the policeman came over to speak to us. Before he could say anything, the Deputy Head said: "There's no problem officer, no one has been hurt. We know each other and are exchanging insurance particulars." The policeman, pointing to the Deputy Head's forehead said, "I'm sorry sir, but you have a small cut which is bleeding and, in law, that is an

injury and that requires me to investigate the cause of the accident. I shall have to ask both of you gentlemen to make a statement." As he walked back to his car, the Deputy Head whispered to me "Don't forget, I'll see you alright whatever happens."

Because of what he had just said, and because I knew him, I was economical with the facts as the policeman took my statement. Surprisingly, I was not asked to estimate his speed, considering the distance I had been pushed. In due course, I learned that the Deputy Head would be prosecuted for failing to obey a 'STOP' sign.

It was now about 10pm and I was awaiting the arrival of the AA to tow away my wrecked car. One of the crowd who had gathered at the scene was also a teacher and she invited me to sit in her house to await the arrival of the AA. While there, and having the inevitable cup of tea, I was able to assess my injuries, which were making themselves apparent. I had a swollen right wrist, a painful right elbow, a hole the size of a 10p piece in my left shin plus sundry aches and pains around the neck area. Having heard the noise and seen the wreck the lady expressed amazement that I had survived the crash in one piece.

continued on next page

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continued from previous page

It was several months before the case against the Deputy Head came to court and by now he was a Headmaster. I was the first witness called and was asked a few relevant questions. Next was the policeman who had taken our statements, followed by the defendant. I was now watching proceedings from the public benches.

As the defendant took the witness stand, one of the magistrates, a Headmaster, declared that he knew the defendant and volunteered to withdraw from the Bench, but was dissuaded from doing so by the other magistrates who affirmed their faith in his impartiality. The defendant was uncomfortable with the questions put to him by the prosecuting counsel. Then the defence introduced a witness from the AA who had examined the junction several days after the accident. The AA man produced some photographs that showed a few bare branches of an adjacent tree obscuring the edge of the 'STOP' sign at the side of the road, and part of the 'S' missing from the 'STOP' sign painted onto the road surface. He also added that the 'STOP' lines painted at the junction with the main road were in a slight dip and might be difficult to see on a dark November evening. The prosecuting counsel said that these were trivial matters, particularly when the fact was that for over a hundred feet there were white hazard lines painted down the centre of the road. The defending counsel rose to his feet to intervene, saying such lines were

on most roads and for considerable distances. "Agreed", said the prosecuting counsel, "but they are still hazard lines and mean that there is a hazard ahead, probably a 'STOP' sign, for instance."

The case ended there and the magistrates retired to consider their verdict. They took over twenty minutes to reach a decision. In view of the 'STOP' sign at the side of the road near the junction being slightly obscured by some branches of a tree, the dip in the road which may have obscured the 'STOP' lines at the junction, and that part of the 'S' was missing from the 'STOP' sign painted on the road, they felt that these factors combined to give a slight, but nevertheless reasonable doubt that the 'STOP' signs could not be seen as clearly as they ought to be. In their view, this slight but reasonable doubt should, in the interests of justice, operate in the defendant's favour and there-

fore they would declare him 'NOT-GUILTY'.

The policeman who had taken our statements and given evidence in court was not only flabbergasted by the verdict, he was furious. He apologised to me for wasting my morning on a useless appearance in court. "I couldn't believe my ears when I heard the verdict — and neither will my Superintendent when I tell him. You were lucky you weren't killed in the accident."

What struck me most about the verdict was the importance attributed to the part of the 'S' in the 'STOP' sign being missing — a four letter word in common usage on our roads, and the fact that a Headmaster was excused for failing to interpret the word. To quote a Latin tag — 'vel caeco appareat' — "it would be obvious to the blind".

NAVAL TRIVIA

Hairy African sand-apes are called Pongos. Sailors noted the similarity of the sand-apes' colour to the rough brown uniform of the British Army, thus soldiers are known as Pongos. It was also said that soldiers did not have the opportunity to wash as frequently as sailors, thus where the Army goes the 'pong goes' with it!

Old Salt

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Poetry Corner

Cottenham 2000

The bridge at twenty pence blew down
One wild and windy day
And traffic to and from the north
Was forced another way

So in Cottenham the clock turned back
A century or more
Became a quiet peaceful place
As it had been before

For vehicles were now all banned
Forbidden to drive through
Apart from buses, taxis, bikes
And an ambulance or two

The Cows returned to graze the green
As if by a magic wand
The ducks came back to swim and feed
As water filled the pond

And sheep appeared to roam the grass
That once had been Lamb's Lane
And chickens fed in Denmark road
On scattered seeds and grain

Swallows returned to build their nests
Above Shaun's paper shop
And herons watched the peaceful scene
From the roof of the Co-op

The linnets found on the high street trees
A safe and pleasant perch
And a nightingale sang day and night
From the top of All Saints church

The traffic fumes had blown away
The air was fresh and still
The doctors' surgeries closed down
For nobody was ill

The smell of thyme and meadow flowers
Came floating on the breeze
And soon we learned to make again
The famous Cottenham cheese

Children played in the roads and streets
No danger came their way
Front doors stood open all day long
And keys were thrown away

We learned to use our bikes again
We learned to run and walk
We got to know our neighbours
Found time to stand and talk

Old men chatted on the street
Or sat by the open door
And those who hadn't smiled for years
Began to smile once more.

We knew of course it couldn't last
And "progress" loomed again
And we were shortly swallowed up
As part of Silicon Fen

Jasper Kay, December 1999

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Millennium Arts Focus — Poetry

There is a real buzz about poetry since Andrew Motion became Poet Laureate. Fen Edge Patch has won a Millennium Festival Award for:

"An evening with Andrew Motion", Friday, March 3rd, 7.30 p.m. at Cottenham Village College. Tickets: £5.00/3.00 include wine

Leading up to Andrew Motion's visit, Chrissie Gittins will be running poetry workshops. Hailed as an original and exciting voice, Chrissie is a prize winning poet with a great sense of humour and an ear for what

Short Stories & Poetry

Readers are invited to send in either original poetry or short stories for inclusion in the Cottenham Newsletter. Short stories should be no longer than 600 words. The objective should be to entertain the general readership — go on, have a go!

life sounds like. "if you can talk, you can write. Bring your voice and your memory and, by looking at some of the ideas behind Andrew Motion's poems, we will locate our own narratives and pin them down on paper".

Day School: Saturday, February 12th 10.00 a.m. - 4.00 p.m. at Cottenham Village College
£12.50/£7.50 — fees subsidised by Millennium Festival Award
Afternoon school: Fri 4th February 1.00 p.m. - 3.30 p.m. at Cottenham Village College
£5.00/£3.00 fees subsidised by Millennium Age Concern Award

To whet your appetite, here are short verses from Andrew Motion and Chrissie Gittins

To Whom It May Concern

This poem is about ice cream
has nothing to do with government
with riot, with any political scheme.

It is a poem about ice cream. You see?
About how you might stroll into a shop
and ask: *Strawberry Split. One Mivvi.*

What did I tell you? No one will die.
No licking tongues will melt like candle wax.
This is a poem about ice cream. Do not cry.

Andrew Motion

What Does Poetry Do?

It nosedives from the top of the fridge
into a bowl of rapids,

it crawls along the floor
and taps you on the knee,

it changes the colour of a room,

it puts great wheezing slices of life
into buntrays, with or without punctuation.

It manages this all by itself.

Chrissie Gittins

JOHN BURRELL GARDENING SERVICES, COPY SUPPLIED

GARDENS GALORE

Did you see Jenny Kay's article in the October/November edition of the Newsletter suggesting an Open Gardens event? Members of the Cottenham Gardeners club liked her idea of an Open Gardens Day for the Millennium and decided to take it on.

We will be looking for gardens all over the village of all shapes and sizes. The new gardens at Tenison Manor and Cottenham Chase will be of interest and so will the larger plots on the outskirts of the village. Small gardens, courtyards, vegetable plots, window boxes, pots and ponds — if it grows, let's all have a look.

If you are interested in joining this open day, which will take place in the summer, then look for more details in the next newsletter. We expect the event to take place over a weekend.

Bridget Walker (for Cottenham Gardeners Club)

COTTENHAM METHODIST CHURCH

On the first Saturday of every month we hold a Drop-In coffee morning — if you are out and about in the village why not call in for a coffee, cake and chat. As from January we will also be holding a Mini-Mart where tables can be rented for the sum of £5.00 each. Any organisation or individual can rent a table to sell whatever they wish, providing the funds raised are for charitable purposes and not individual gain. Should you wish to know more please

contact either Jenny Bramford 01954 200670, Julie Percival 01954 200854, or David Warford 01954 250523.

The premises are also available for party lets etc.

Why not join us for Morning Worship — every Sunday 10.45 am. Sunday School begins at 10.30 am (The first Sunday every month is Family Worship).

The Cottenham Mobile Warden Scheme

This scheme exists to help elderly people lead an independent life in their own homes. Full membership provides the reassurance of a daily telephone call, a weekly visit, and help and advice in times of need. Associate membership can provide help when required (e.g. during holiday periods).

Details of the scheme can be obtained from the Warden — Mrs Madeleine Bird, 34 Telegraph Street, Cottenham. Tel: 251182

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LONG DROVE WASTE RECYCLING

RUBBISH — Where should it go? To a site close to Long Drove?

Members of Cottenham Village Design Group toured the site and had a detailed explanation of the proposal in December. You will have an opportunity to hear about it at Cottenham Village College on 10th February at 7.30 p.m.

Ever increasing consumption, food and consumer packaging, building work, domestic and garden waste are features of our lives. Our throw-away society leaves us with the unenviable task of getting rid of the rubbish. The 1990 Environmental Protection Act laid down rules obliging those responsible for rubbish disposal to do it in the most effective and environmentally acceptable ways. 'Landfill', i.e. dumping waste into pits and covering it up, has until recently been the most common form of mixed waste disposal, with a 'dilute and disperse' system of handling the pollution. This has proved inadequate as quantities of waste increase. Contaminated water can leach out of landfill sites. Gases, notably methane,

are given off as the waste decays. Methane is one of the principal gases responsible for the depletion of the ozone layer. New methods of waste disposal have to be devised to deal with these escalating problems.

Dickersons, a local aggregates and waste disposal firm, established for over 70 years, has produced proposals for a comprehensive recycling plant, addressing some of the difficulties. They include landfill in sealed clay cells, environmentally sensitive reclamation of land already used for landfill, composting of organic waste and recycling glass, metal and building materials.

The site, as many of you will probably know, is between the A10 and Long Drove, just beyond the new A10 roundabout northbound to Ely. Over time a large part of the 400 acre site will be raised by about 16 metres. Dickersons are experimenting with bio-mass crops for use as fuel. There are plans to develop ponds to encourage the already prolific wildlife on the site, and tree and hedge planting form an integral part of

the proposals. In the meantime, land right up to Long Drove will be dug out and used for baled inorganic landfill. This may continue for twenty years.

The proposals will be presented by Mark Davenport of Dickersons in discussion with Sarah Clover from the Environment & Transport Department of the County Council at the Annual General Meeting of Cottenham Village Design Group, to be held on Thursday 10th February 2000 at 7.30 in the Library at Cottenham Village College. Representatives from South Cambridgeshire District Council have also been asked to attend. You are invited to ask questions and consider the environmental implications for the village. Please join the meeting. Rubbish is the business of all of us whether we like it or not - this rubbish will be very close to our doorstep. Full information is available in the Library.

Liz Cook (Cottenham Village Design Group)

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DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S NOTES

AT LAST — A SAFER HISTON ROAD IN SIGHT

After years of campaigning by local residents, councillors and Cottenham Parish Council, the Environment and Transport Area Joint Committee — a body on which both the District and County Councils are represented — has decided to put money towards a scheme which will reduce traffic speeds on Histon Road and enable the 30 mile per hour speed limit to be extended from the corner of Dunstal Field to the edge of the village at Appletree Close. The total amount of funding available, including a contribution from Cottenham Parish Council, is likely to be in the region of £23,000.

At the committee's meeting in November, members were told of the dangers of this stretch of road and of the strong support for improvements from local councillors and the Parish

Council. They also received a 101-signature petition from Histon Road residents.

The scheme will be designed by the County Council and, hopefully, there will be an opportunity for local residents and the Parish Council to be consulted. Parish Councillors have already suggested that flashing warning signs or a speed camera might be effective ways of bringing traffic speeds down.

The work on the scheme will be done sometime during the coming financial year — i.e. between April 2000 and April 2001.

WHAT FUTURE FOR THE WAYSIDE GARDEN?

The Wayside Garden which adjoins Cambridgeshire ACRE's offices at 218 High Street has been a welcome

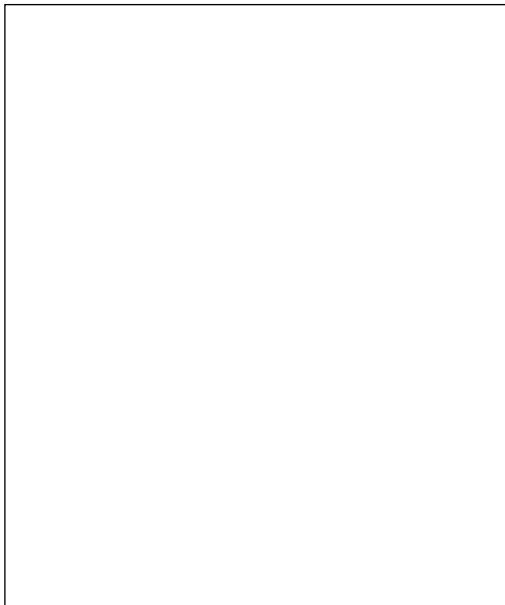
feature of Cottenham life for most of the past 10 years. A number of residents and organisations have worked to create it or donate plants and features, a number of village events have been held in it, and many more people have simply enjoyed it as an oasis of tranquillity behind the busy High Street.

Now Cambridgeshire ACRE needs to expand and acquire a larger office building and the garden looks likely to be lost with the sale of the present offices. I have supported the Parish Council and a number of local people in making representations to ACRE to see if there is some way in which the garden can be retained for the community even if the office building is sold. It remains to be seen whether ACRE will be able to find a way to take these representations on board and keep the garden for the village.

Rex Collinson, District Councillor

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NEWS FROM FEN EDGE PATCH

There's still time to join in some of our Saturday Day Schools, which offer plenty of variety, from painting, creative embroidery and mosaics, through to Fenland Flooding, Neuro-linguistic programming and Hypnosis. Our introductions to the Internet have proved so popular that we shall have to plan more than we had anticipated; so put your name on the waiting list, if you would like a place reserved for you.

Pipe dream has a varied and entertaining programme for those who enjoy coming to talks at the College on Thursday afternoons, including Wimpole Hall, Ansells Garden Centre and the Cottenham Village College production of the musical "Sweet Charity". We are hoping to organise a visit to the Millennium Dome, which would take the pain out of making your own arrangements, and offer this once-in-a-lifetime experience. Special reductions will be available for Over 60s, through our Millennium/Age Concern Award. Please contact the College for details.

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION — POPPY APPEAL 1999

Once again the Cottenham and Rampton branch of the Royal British Legion has raised in excess of £4000 for the Poppy Appeal. The final total collected was £4110.62.

The Poppy Appeal organiser, Mr Gerald Young, and the local branch wish to express sincere appreciation to the ladies who held a bazaar, the voluntary poppy collectors, the village shops, public houses, local industries and all who assisted and donated to achieve this large sum. The money has been forwarded to Royal British Legion headquarters.

CHARITY POP QUIZ

(In aid of the Milton Hospice for local, terminally—ill children)

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RETAINED FIRE-FIGHTERS — LIVING AND WORKING IN THE COMMUNITY

Did you know that you don't need to be a wholtime fire-fighter to experience that buzz of getting sent out to deal with a real emergency? You can also enjoy the satisfaction of serving your local community in a real and practical way, that can make a difference to people's lives.

Being a retained fire-fighter is something unique. It enables someone to continue with their own career, while being a valued member of a team committed to dealing with emergencies whatever the time of day or night.

Retained fire-fighters are paid an annual retaining fee, and are required to attend weekly drill nights for which payment is also made. There is also payment for attending fire calls.

For the vast majority of retained fire-fighters, fire-fighting is not their career — they may have other occupations, such as builder, secretary, mechanic, shop-keeper. Nor is it just something for men — Cottenham's Janette Richards is a junior officer having been promoted to Leading Firewoman in 1992.

The one thing that all retained fire-fighters do have in common is that they serve their community in a very special way. When their alerter goes off, they swing into action. On the fire-ground or at the scene of some other emergency to which the Fire Service has been called, there is no distinction made between the retained fire-fighters and their wholtime colleagues.

They are all trained and expected to provide the same professional standards when they are fire-fighting, or rescuing

someone from a road traffic accident or an industrial accident.

Not all retained fire-fighters are available to be on call (or provide cover) all of the time. Some are only able to provide cover at night because during weekdays they are working away from the village; for others it may be easier to be available at certain times during the day — because of work or perhaps child care arrangements. What is important is that there are sufficient men and women who are able to be part of a team to ensure that retained fire crews can continue to provide fire cover for their local areas.

You might be surprised to know that the majority of fire-fighters in Cambridgeshire are retained fire-fighters. Cambridgeshire employs 270 wholtime fire-fighters, and also has 364 retained fire-fighters.

Of the 28 fire stations in Cambridgeshire, 21 are wholly crewed by men and women who are retained fire-fighters. Of the remaining seven wholtime fire stations, four also have retained crews. During 1998/99 5443 separate emergency incidents were dealt with by retained fire crews.

There has been a Fire Station in Cottenham for over 100 years. This represents a fine tradition of service to the local community by the people who live and work in the community. This year the retained fire crew from Cottenham dealt with over 350 separate emergency incidents — an average of nearly one a day.

The range of occupations of the retained personnel at Cottenham Fire Station is

typical of many other community fire stations across Cambridgeshire and the rest of the country, and includes: a Fire Safety Officer; a computer engineer; a builder; a secretary; flower growers; a wholtime Fire-fighter; and a graphic designer, amongst others.

There are a number of prerequisites for being a retained fire-fighter. Firstly, retained fire-fighters need to live or work within 5 minutes of travelling distance from their local fire station. This is essential in order for the fire crew to be able to be on its way to deal with a fire or other emergency as soon as possible. Retained fire-fighters also need to be aged 18 or over at the time of appointment, and have good eyesight and hearing, as well as being physically fit.

If you would be interested in finding out more about becoming a retained fire-fighter — please contact the Human Resources Group at Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service Tel. (01480) 444537.

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service continually seeks to be an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications from everyone.

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Letters for publication may be sent to the Editors, and should include the name and address of the sender, although this may be omitted from publication if requested. Please keep correspondence short and topical. Please note that the Editors may use their discretion regarding publication, and their decision is final. The views expressed by correspondents and other contributors are their own and are not necessarily shared by the Editors.
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