

THE OVINGTON ORACLE

MAY 2006

No 5/06

Hello again,

Well Easter was pretty good wasn't it, plenty of sunshine, the gardeners all singing their hearts out. Golden daffodils sending a welcoming message to everyone coming into the village. A conspicuous absence of plastic bags in the hedgerows and drinks cans in the ditches. See, told you it would get better. Just a reminder about deadlines, if you have any items, stories, reports, etc for inclusion in the Oracle they must be with us by the deadline date as printed in each edition, or earlier if possible. Our typist is demanding overtime and costs for midnight oil (whatever that is) when being asked to squeeze another bit in just as the printing presses are starting to roll !!

MAY DIARY

1 st May	Bowls Club	1.45pm
8 th May	Bowls Club	1.45 pm
9 th May	Pre Fete Meeting	1.00pm*
10 th May	Annual Parish Meeting	7.30pm
13 th May	Pansy's Garden Open	10-12*
15 th May	Bowls Club	1.45 pm
16 th May	Ladies Pub Walk	Thompson*
18 th May	Phot Scrapbooking	8.00pm
22 nd May	Bowls Club	1.45 pm
29 th May	Bowls Club	1.45pm

To be held in the village hall except marked *

OVINGTON KEPT TIDY.

The Parish Council have asked us to give their grateful thanks to all those stalwarts who gave of their time on 1st April to help with the village litter pick. Despite an inauspicious (weather wise) start to the day, the sun shone through a few minutes before the scheduled kick off time and from then on the weather remained quite pleasant. A large quantity of rubbish was gathered up and has subsequently been passed through the various recycling processes. So many thanks to : **Bob, Chris, Danielle, Daphne, Doreen, Dave, Jill, and Mac.** Not forgetting **Grace and Maria** who provided an appetising array of good grub and warming drinks in the Village hall afterwards. Thanks go also to **Ed & Christine** and **Jeremy & Joyce** who acting independently, cleaned up their appointed areas at an earlier time. Sorry you missed out on the food guys. It is hoped you have noticed the improvements and will help us to maintain the state of tidiness in the Village in the future.

SUMMER FETE:

Will be held this year on **Saturday June 10th**. There will be a pre-fete meeting to discuss the format and / or theme for this year and to plan the arrangements. This will take place at **Laura's, Sunnyside Farm, on 9th May at 1.00 pm.** If you want to help or contribute in any way then do please come along, or if you are not able to attend the meeting, contact Laura with your ideas or offers.

Once again we shall be asking you for contributions towards the fete in the form of prizes, articles for sale or foodstuffs for the refreshments and cake stalls. A collection round the Village will take place on **Wednesday 31st May starting at 7 pm.**

Thank you.

VILLAGE HALL.

The management committee have been advised that the charges for electrical power are to be increased significantly with effect from April of this year. Therefore it has had to take the decision to increase the hire charges for the Village Hall from the current rate of £5.00 per hour to **£6.00 per hour from 1st May 2006.** There will be a 50% reduction of these rates for Village residents. Although this decision was taken reluctantly it has to be noted that the hire charges have not been increased since 1981.

CHURCH NEWS

CHURCH ROTA FOR MAY

7 th May	No service
14 th May	9am Parish Communion
Lesson	Mr. C. Springford
	Mrs. P. Westwood
Steward	Mrs. P. Lovewell
Flowers	Mrs. C. Springford
21 st May	6pm Evensong
Lesson	Mrs. P. Westwood
Steward	Mrs. P. Westwood
Flowers	Mrs. R. Rednall
28 th May	9am Parish Communion
Lesson	Mrs. A. Johnson
	Mr. D. Pritchard
Steward	Mr. D. Pritchard
Flowers	Mrs. P. Westwood

CHURCH SPRING CLEAN

Pansy & Peggy would like to thank the willing helpers who worked hard to Spring clean the Church. At the end of the clean-up the Church looked absolutely super. Your efforts are much appreciated. Thanks also to Sheila Johnson for cleaning up the grave near the Church door. We hope, Sheila, that you avoided the thorns from the brambles!

CHURCH AGM

The P.C.C. annual meeting will be held on **Thursday 27th April, at 7.30pm** at Pansy's house, 30 The Street.

OPEN AIR SERVICE

There will be an open air service with the Watton Silver Band on **Sunday 16th July at 3.00 pm**. Followed by cream teas. We look forward to seeing you, please put this date in your diary.

BOWLS CLUB.

Still meets on Monday afternoons at 1.45 pm. The new members are settling in nicely under the guidance of Dennis, who is intent on grooming them for international acclaim. Well, it would be nice to beat Watton at least. For more details contact Peggy on 884073. Or, pop along one Monday afternoon, you will be made most welcome.

GARDENING CLUB.

Although our membership remains healthy we have room for, and welcome, new members. Last months talk was by Mr John Barker about "Bees in the Garden" who, with the aid of slides, told us which garden plants would encourage the bees to visit and improve fertility.

On Saturday 13th May Pansy Westwood is opening her garden at **30 The Street from 10.00 am to 12.30 pm**, with the aim of raising funds for the club. There will be cakes and plants for sale, maybe some garden produce. Coffee, teas and refreshments will also be available. Please give Pansy your support and we look forward to seeing you there.

RAINFALL FOR MARCH

March 2006	51 mm or	2.0 inches
March 2005	35 mm or	1.4 inches
March 1996	13.5 mm or	0.5 inches

Judging by the arid state of my garden I find it hard to believe it's getting wetter. Thanks again to Ted Bowman for these readings.

LADIES GROUP

A New Ovington Dress Code?

Now summer is approaching we are all looking-out our lightweight clothing. At our meeting on 18th April, our guest speaker and Image Consultant, Michelle Cockrill, was there to advise us on *Image and Colour Importance* in our sense of dress and dashed all our previous ideas on 'looking good'! We were told to throw out any clothes more than 12 months old - so look out for Ovington ladies taking on a whole new dress code! Our thanks go to Michelle for a very interesting talk.

Our next meeting on the **16th May is the Pub Walk** that starts and finishes at The Chequers pub in Thompson. All walkers to meet at The Chequers for 6.30 pm. Dinner has been booked for 8.00pm.

Connie Springford (sec)

OVINGTON LOTTERY.

April Winners:-

£10	No 48	Laura Sproston
£ 5	No 10	Maureen Rands
£ 5	No 41	Pansy Westwood

OVINGTON BENDS. THE TRUTH.

Apart from the barely visible underside of a car, and a scattering of broken plastic, along its torturous route. (Plastic? this seems to make up a major part of today's car bodywork) The bends have not recently hit the headlines, which can't be a bad thing.

During some recent historical research I have discovered that as far back as early Roman times, around AD 69, there was trouble with traffic in the area which was eventually to become Ovington.

The Romans, as we know, were avid builders of roads, especially where they needed rapid movement of troops and provisions. Where it was considered unnecessary to provide this facility the Romans were content, with a minimum of expenditure, to utilise the existing routes of the Iceni. This tribe, which occupied our area of East Anglia had, as you may recall, suffered a rather ignominious defeat eight years prior to our story beginning, so this immediate area was considered quiet by our Roman overlords.

However they did maintain an encampment in the Saham / Threxton area, 'just in case', you understand, and this received a deal of its supplies along the road which now forms The Street in Ovington. About the same time an enterprising young man, Craneus, and his friend Frewhova had set up a facility in what was to become East Dereham, manufacturing chariots for the Roman Legions. These combined the best characteristics of the lightweight Iceni models and the sturdy, large capacity, Roman chariots and proved most popular with the long distance charioteers of the day. Roughly where the junction of The Street and Church road is now, the Romans constructed a road northwards to give access to the sunken lane which today leads to water End Farm. This provided shelter for travellers from the biting East wind which then, as now, scythed across the land.

In due course, this road was extended as far as the Chariot works to enable rapid movement of these vehicles to and fro. Craneus also repaired damaged Chariots, of which there were many, due in the main to the Romans' employment of local drivers who had previously only driven in conditions of war! So you can see the junction in Ovington became an important part of the road infrastructure of the day. Recognising an opportunity, another ex Iceni warrior, one Eccles, decided that some form of facility, a Taverna, at this junction would not only serve to refresh the travellers, charioteers and occasional legions of troops passing through, but could make him a tidy profit. Some compensation perhaps for losing his crops and most of his family during Boudicea's uprising and subsequent trouncing by the Romans.

Eccles had already gained a reputation as a brewer of a rather potent ale, guided it must be said by his buxom wife Carlsberger, who was of Danish extraction. The extraction being accomplished by Eccles' father, Big Eccles (or B' eccles for short) when his navigational skills failed him when undertaking a voyage to plunder a neighbouring tribe in Lincolnshire.

Completely uninfluenced by Roman architecture, Eccles constructed a typical Iceni roundhouse, roughly where The Old Crown now stands, realising most of his custom would come from Romans, they were after all the only ones who had coinage to pay at that time. Carlsberger had developed a light brew, coloured by the juice of blackberries to simulate the wine favoured

by their Roman customers. Eccles also planted a vineyard on the south facing slopes behind his Roundhouse, (a practice that continues to this day). As Eccles Taverna grew in repute it was not long before it became difficult to pass through the street for chariots parked indiscriminately on either side (no change there then). Roman soldiers from the camp at Threxton would march up the road in an orderly manner and stagger back to their tents in the early hours in an unorderly way. Weary and frozen travellers, sheltering in the sunken lane would stagger down for a warm up and sample the latest concoction. Chariots ordered for the continuing Roman aggression against the tribes in Wales and north of Briton, were delayed, sometimes for days, as Carlsberger perfected her ever strengthening brews.

Their clientele openly declared that it was "Probably, the finest brew in the world".

One of Eccles' best customers was a semi retired Roman engineer, Favious Maximus, previously engaged on planning the Peddars Way and lately on the new road to the chariot works. He spent most days reclining by the huge open fire blazing away in the centre of the Taverna, alternately ogling Carlsberger, and savouring her latest brew. Carlsberger used him as her taster, considering him to be the most discerning and attentive of imbibers. Too attentive in Eccles' opinion.

Sadly, there is always a fly in the ointment, or in this instance a Roman clerk based at Threxton. He reported the delays to chariot deliveries and troop absences to his Legion leader, Tacticus, who, not having savoured the delights of Eccles' establishment was inclined to view such attractions with disfavour.

Tacticus found that he had no jurisdiction over legitimately run Iceni businesses (Eccles, strangely enough, regularly paid taxes to the local Roman governor).

So Tacticus decided, upon looking at a map drawn up not surprisingly by Eccles' favourite imbibers Favious Maximus, Roman engineer supremo, that alterations to the road network in the area of the Taverna would solve his transport problem, prevent a possibly serious outbreak of alcoholic poisoning amongst his troops, and inevitably put young Eccles out of business.

To that end therefore dear old Favious was summoned from his sojourn at the hostelry, (and out of retirement) by Tacticus and instructed to proceed with planning a new road system.

Sid

(Sid continues this saga in next months Oracle)

ANDREW QUADLING.

We have the sad duty to report the sudden death on 4th April 2006 of Andrew Quadling, at the young age of 38. Andrew was born in Ovington and lived here until 2001 when he moved to Brandon with his Mother. A well attended Funeral service followed by interment took place at Ovington Church on Tuesday 18th April 2006.

PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Meeting will take place on the **10th May in the Village Hall at 7.30pm.**

This is open to all Parishioners and is your chance to air your views, comments, or complaints.

All village organisations are also invited to attend. A short report on your year's activities would be welcome.

Parish council meeting 19th April

The clerk has been asked to contact the V. Hall Man Committee to see if they can ensure the clocks in the Hall are correctly set to concur with all other clocks in Ovington!! Present were four councillors, district and county councillor and one member of the public.

Apologies were received from M. Protheroe, Minutes and matters arising were dealt with expeditiously.

Correspondence included a letter from a parishioner who was concerned about the lack of information regarding official Bus Stops in Ovington. N.C.C have designated a stop on the route to Dereham on the "Bends" side of the cross roads, this is clearly unsafe. On the return journey from Dereham, the only designated stop is at Loch Lane in Watton. With the lack of footpath along the A1075 Dereham Road this option is also unsuitable for walkers. The clerk was instructed to write to N.C.C. to ask that the matter of bus stops be clarified and amended to include a stop in both directions and in a safe location.

The clerk reported on the financial status of the Council and presented cheques for approval and signature.

There were no planning applications to consider.

The Chairman reported on the successful litter pick through the Village on 1st April (see report on page 1)

The council passed a resolution to have the inaugural AGM of the Highways Surveyors Land immediately following the Parish Council meeting. Also to authorise a transfer of funds derived from this business into a separate account.

Date of next meeting will follow on from the annual Parish Meeting on 10th May 2006.

BEWARE

On the 6th April 2006 . 'The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005' came into force. Quoting from the Defra letter on this subject. **'This act will, for the first time, allow Parish Councils to issue fixed penalty notices for littering, graffiti and fly posting offences'**

Alongside this, the act has brought into play a new system for controlling dogs,

'Dog Control Orders' .. by use of which Parish Councils will be able to make a range of orders, including the banning of dogs and requiring owners to clean up after their dog has fouled on areas of land within their Parish

Fortunately Ovington is such a well kept and law abiding village that the Parish Council has no immediate intention of availing itself of these powers, but just in case,

YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED!!!

J Goode, Clerk to the Parish Council.

TABLE TOP SALE

Our thanks to everyone who supported the sale. A good day was had by all.

DON'T FORGET

Hall bookings can be made by contacting:-

Michelle on 884544.

DEADLINE for the JUNE ORACLE is 20th MAY

Confucius, he say.

Before you criticise someone, you should walk a mile in their shoes. That way, when you criticise them you're a mile away and, you have their shoes.

Statistics.

You are more likely to be killed by a champagne cork than by a poisonous spider.

How to contact our Editorial Staff

Laura at Sunnyside Fm	889151
Christine at Saham Road	885848
Grace at 31 The Street	882246