

Happiness and prosperity

What's On OVINGTON



January 2005
Volume 10/1

BAZAAR BONANZA

Village support tops last year's total by over £200



Sheila, Angela and Maureen enjoy a well earned cuppa and a bite to eat. *Photo: MP 2004*

The Christmas Bazaar raised over £700 despite some scepticism about its being held on a Sunday right across the traditional family lunch time. Because it opened at 12 and closed at 3 pm the caterers expected to do better than they did but, as our picture shows, they were not downhearted. The raffle made in excess of £150 with Michelle Prothero's gift stall returning a phenomenal £132. Laura Sproston says a big thank you to all those who contributed, helped on the day and bought generously. *Details on page 6.*

Public footpath opens after years of wrangling

The footpath between Carbrooke Road at the Wood's property and College Farm on the Dereham Road was unceremoniously opened last month. The dispute dates back over 50 years with matters coming to a head in July 1999 when two of Britain's leading ramblers dressed in flack jackets confronted the owners of the land over which they claimed they had right of way. Police were called to the scene. When asked to comment, the current owner of College Farm told WOO he had referred the matter to his solicitor.

OTHER PAGES

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Parish Council Report—Crossword—Ramblings/Rod Rumsby

Wild Flower of the Month—Ted's Rain Check

Parish

council report

filed by Rod Rumsby

The Parish Council met in the convivial surroundings of The Village Hall on the evening of Nov 24th, working, in this instance, to a much abridged agenda. It was expected the discussions concerning the setting of next years budget might well extend the meeting to beyond normal bedtime for those of advancing years. The attention span of the Chairman (previously renowned as far exceeding that of the common gnat) is now considered the yardstick by which length of meetings is determined.

We were disappointed that only one member of the public put in an appearance, especially, as mentioned earlier, there was every likelihood the new budget could seriously affect the populations spending power for the whole of 2005.

The usual formalities were dealt with speedily. Mention was made of the additional "Welcome To Ovington" sign recently installed on Church Road. This sign is a private venture initiated by the Parish Council and part funded by the now defunct Ovington Golden Jubilee Committee.

The clerk read from a letter sent by the Chairman of said committee who suggested that a brass plaque be attached to the sign to indicate that the people of Ovington had contributed financially to the erection of this sign. This was agreed and the Clerk was authorised to research cost and availability of a plaque of this nature. The Chair said that there would be plenty of volunteer labour willing to affix it to the sign?

The Chair outlined the expenditure set at last years budget, which had come in less than anticipated leaving a small surplus to be carried over for next year.

The decision to support the two major institutions in the Village, i.e. Village Hall and Parish Church was reached without any physical violence, but support in the form of monetary donations, for other organisations in the Wayland area were curtailed, as it was felt that they were not of significant benefit to Ovington. Exceptions to this were The Wayland Partnership who have contributed in the form of grants to: New Path to the Parish Church, Floor repairs in the Village Hall, and funding for the Village Map. The Wayland First Response team were also considered worthy of a donation, a smidgen of self interest by your councillors was declared at this point, with pointed looks at the Chair. Also taken into

consideration were the inevitable increases in insurance and Clerks wages. A sum was also set aside for maintenance of Village property.

A further proposal for the use of surplus funds was ignored by the Chair as he felt that après bash tea and biscuits were totally unnecessary and only prompted severe indigestion late at night.

Overall the precept for next year has shown a reduction of 12% over last year. The councillors agreed that if the District & County Councils followed our lead, then our Council Tax bill next year might become affordable. There were no comments from the District Councillor present at the meeting!!

After the excitement of the budget an adjournment was taken to allow councillors to have brief rub down.

A planning application was received for the erection of a workshop at the former Cross-roads Farm, as this was the third submission in ten years and there was no change over the previous applications, it was approved.

Refusal of planning permission for holiday cottages at Rose Farm was reported by the Clerk. The siting of a dog refuse bin was discussed with various sites being suggested by councillors and the member of public. It was agreed that Breckland Council would have to be consulted as the bin was their property and they would have to agree with any new siting plans. Clerk to attend to this matter, with the Chair to investigate the means necessary to physically shift the thing should permission be granted. Dog walkers will also be consulted. Nothing if not democratic this council. (Suggestions on a post card to the editor please)

The next meeting is provisionally booked for **Wednesday January 26th at 7.30 p.m.** in the committee room of the Village Hall. Admission is free, and the entertainment value is one up on observing the evaporation rate of pigmented emulsion.

Any queries appertaining (?) to parish or council matters please contact any councillor or John Goode (clerk) 01953 889342.

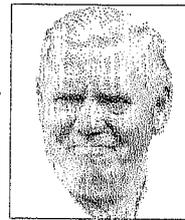
Person missing for 92 years. Has anyone got a photograph?

Mr S. Payne, researching his family history, is looking for details of James Dodman who attended Ovington School between 1905 and 1912. His family lived in Hingham and Ovington at Redhill Cottages. He is seeking a school picture which might include Mr. Dodman. Please contact him on 01366-348105. Chris Lewis 01953 882222 can scan any pictures while you wait so you won't risk losing them.

Laurence Howe

reminiscences

It is almost impossible to compare today's world with that of the war years. Today we accept and take for granted so many of life's advantages. Generations born since 1950, other than through the history books, are not expected to appreciate what we war veterans suffered. It could be said we knew no better and as the years went by and we took on more and more luxuries we came to realise just what were the deprivations we grew up with.



I recall being left a small boat on the river bank by a cousin who had joined the navy. He used it for collecting eggs from birds nesting in the reeds and, whilst it may horrify some, it did feed those whose rations were not sufficient. However one night the small boat came to grief when the Home Guard mounted a night exercise to cross the river. They placed their weapons and ammunition in the boat to keep dry but made the mistake of overloading the small vessel. As they clambered aboard it overturned and they were soaked like rats. Eventually the weapons and ammunition were recovered when the river was dredged but the little boat was never found. Perhaps it had the last laugh!

The final raid on my village took place when I was having my tea one day. I heard a train approaching our station and then, moments later, the sound of an aeroplane overhead. Thinking it was one of ours I ran into the garden to see a plane just clearing the treetops. On its side was the unmistakable German cross and its bomb bay doors were open. I could see the air gunner in the plane's front turret. He was wearing a brown leather helmet and my mother and I stood transfixed as his guns flashed and sputtered. Then with a deafening roar he was gone and moments later some bombs exploded causing women to scream and dogs to bark. Following that raid I was to leave the village to start a new life with the LNER railway in Lincolnshire.

Rod Rumsby

ramblings

Someone once asked why the standard railroad gauge (distance between rails) in the USA was 4' 8½". This seemed an exceedingly odd number. The answer was: that was the way they built them in England and it was mostly ex-pat Britons who built American Railroads.



How come the British built them like that? Because the people who built the first Railways had previously built the pre-Railway Tramways, and that was the gauge they used.

Why did they use that gauge then? Because the tramway builders used the same jigs and tools as they used for making wagons with that wheel spacing.

Okay, why then did the wagons use that particular odd wheel spacing? Well if they used a different wheel spacing the wheels had a tendency to break due to not fitting the long formed ruts in the British long distance roads.

So, who built those old rutted roads? Roman war chariots formed the original ruts which everyone had to match for fear of breaking their wagon wheels. Since the chariots were made for Imperial Rome, they were all alike in the matter of wheel spacing.

So the USA Standard Railroad gauge of 4' 8½" is derived from the original specification for an Imperial Roman war chariot, and bureaucracies live forever. So the next time you are handed a specification and are told we have always done it that way and wonder what horse's arse came up with that, you may be exactly right, because the Imperial Roman war chariots were made just wide enough to accommodate the back ends of two war horses.

Now for the twist in our story. When you see a space shuttle sitting on its launch pad there are two big booster rockets attached to the sides of the main fuel tank. These are solid rocket boosters or SRB's. The SRB's are made at a factory in Utah. The engineers who designed the SRB's would have preferred to have made them fatter but the SRB's had to be moved by railroad from the factory, but the track happens to run through a tunnel in the mountains. The SRB's had to fit through the tunnel, which is only slightly wider than the railroad track. The railroad track as you now know is as wide as two horse's behinds!!

A major space shuttle design feature was determined over two thousand years ago by the width of a horse's behind. So next time you drive slowly up behind a horse take a good look at its rump and say to yourself "man's exploration of space owes everything to this noble animal."

Resolutions

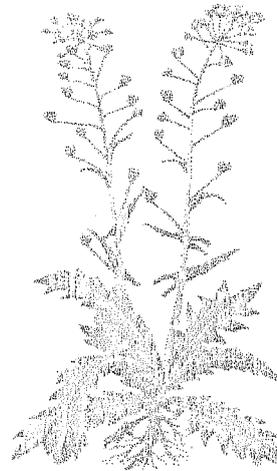
(warning – this item may challenge readers with SOHD - sense of humour deficit)

I am firmly resolved to cease sticking two fingers in the air and smile at drivers who, on a single track road, consider it their right to unconditionally force me to drive my car into a muddy quagmire in order to allow them to pass by without having to dirty up their shiny second-hand Kia-mobiles. Further more I am resolved to write to one of Breckland Council's roads team and tell her or him that the stretch of Carbrooke Road between the in-bound Ovington sign and the T junction with Caudle Springs, but for the ever decreasing thin line of patched tarmac up the middle, resembles a medieval cattle trail.

I am resolved to stop Blair bashing and support the government's proposal to levy a higher road tax on gas-guzzling 4 wheelers. Before you open your e-mail or sit down to write more vitriolic notes let me hasten to say that those who can prove the vehicle is essential for their business such as joy riding across open pasture should get a discount. The first candidates for the additional tax should be all those (mainly young to middle aged mothers with expensive hairdos) who drive their children to schools in inner London in immaculately polished and gleaming 4WD urban assault vehicles.

I am going to vehemently oppose any attempts to encourage people to patrol the streets like some alternative law enforcement officers. The fact that the sighting of a police officer in Breckland is as rare as a solar eclipse does not give one citizen the right to report another for what they consider is anti-social behaviour. This does not mean I approve of drunken louts smashing up bus shelters or mugging octogenarians. I simply detest the way some folks just can not resist reporting even the most insignificant misdemeanour. They are the sort of people who, as kids, were always running to teacher to tell her that little Connor or Kylie (or whatever the fashionable names of the

Wild flower of the month



SHEPHERD'S PURSE—A ubiquitous and successful weed found in most habitats. It likes newly disturbed ground but seldom thrives above 800 metres. The basal leaves form a rosette and the upper leaves clasp the stem which bears an erect cluster of small white petalled flowers. The flowers are self-pollinated and set abundant seed to the irritation of the keen gardener. The plant is independent of insects for pollination and so were able to colonise rapidly ground exposed by the retreating ice of the last Ice Age. It is always in flower in January. Many will remember drawing them in school botany lessons.

offenders were in those days) had called them a spotty faced moron. I know what I would have done.

Finally I am resolved to read more books this year. It is time to take more culture on board. As we approach old age we are bound to reflect on what we have achieved and what we have allowed to pass us by. Literature is the one area I wish I had allotted more time to. Of his own volition one of my children picks up a book and reads for at least half an hour each day. I read a lot when I was young – not because there was no TV in our house but simply because it was part of a child's upbringing and education. The very act of reading far surpasses any electronic way of gaining knowledge.

Diary for January

3rd	
At 1.45 pm	Bowls Club
5th	
at 7.45 pm	Garden Club
10th and 17th	
At 1.45 pm	Bowls Club
18th	
At 7.30 pm	Ladies Group
19th	
At 7.30 pm	Village Hall Comm.
20th	
At 8.00 pm	Photo-scrap
24th and 31st	
At 1.45 pm	Bowls

POST BUS SERVICE ENDS

The post-bus service was withdrawn from 31 December. *Full story next month.*

RAINFALL FIGURES FOR NOVEMBER

2004—	48 millimetres
2003—	106 millimetres
1994—	26 millimetres

If you thought November was a dry month take a look at the figures a decade ago. Even more dramatic is that last year had 4 times the 1994 rainfall. Although higher temperatures at this time of year usually means wetter weather November and early December have been comparatively rain free. Someone said the other day the worst is yet to come. I hope not!

2004— 18th/20mm—10th/9mm

2003— 23rd/27mm—1st/14mm

1994— 13th/6mm—4th/4mm

Measured and compiled by Ted Bowman

December Lottery Winners

1st—Rosemary Angell £20.. No.1

2nd—Chris Lewis £15.. No.47

3rd—Ted Bowman £5... No.35

4th—Tony Prothero £5.. No.48

If you would like to join this year's monthly draw please let Grace (31 The Street) have your £12 subscription as soon as you can with details of your name and address.

EASY CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 3 Time-saving practices (9)
- 8 Slightly open (4)
- 9 Saviour (8)
- 10 Hungers for (6)
- 13 Masonic group (5)
- 14 Ask (7)
- 15 Flying mammal (3)
- 16 Imaginary line around Earth (7)
- 17 Sweetener (5)
- 21 Rebellion (6)
- 22 Flower with tall spikes (8)
- 23 Untruthful person (4)
- 24 Feeling, perception (9)

DOWN

- 1 Called off (9)
- 2 Dangerous (9)
- 4 Severe (5)
- 5 Glowing (7)
- 6 Ship's company (4)
- 7 Layer (4)
- 11 Opinion, after examination (9)
- 12 Tract of land, district (9)
- 14 Organ of hearing (3)
- 15 Refuse to attend (7)
- 18 Statement of beliefs (5)
- 19 Specified area (4)
- 20 A long time (4)

Last month's answers –

Across:

- 1 Gallery, 7 Vogue, 8 Consult, 9 Sombre, 11 Jelly, 13 Deck, 14 Sceptre, 15 Mess, 16 First, 17 Strict, 21 Upwards, 22 Jiffy, 23 Algebra.

Down:

- 2 Adolescent, 3 List/ess, 4 Role, 5 Polo, 6 Curb, 9 Spite, 10 Reconsider, 12 Tempt, 13 Delicate, 18 Rain, 19 Cafe, 20 Opal.

The winner of last month's prize crossword was Joyce Woods who receives 2 boxes of Turkish Delight. We are looking for other sponsors of the crossword so please call Chris or Mike (882222) +(882706) if you would like to offer a prize or have any ideas.

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The editors are Chris Lewis and Mike Pemberton.

The paper is printed by The Wayland Partnership and distributed by Rod and Grace Rumsby to approximately 110 homes.

XMAS BAZAAR RESULTS

Funds raised by individual stalls were as follows:

Books £24.50. **Cakes** £77.00. **Cake Competition** £32.50.
Christmas Tree Game £14.75 **Gifts** £132.53 **Glass/China** £19.70.
Marbles £7.20. **Plants** £30.90. **Raffle** £152.00. **Refreshments** £77.65.
Sweetie Tombola £21.90. **Tombola** £102.30. **Toys** £30.70.
Grand total after Santa Clause chocolates (£3.35)= £720.28
 divided between the Village Hall and the Church = £360.14 each.

Once again thanks to everyone who contributed to the success of the Bazaar.

Would whoever made the fabulous marmalade sold at the cake stall please get in touch? Call 882706. Ed.

GRANTS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S GROUPS

Norfolk Rural Community Council administers the Local Network Fund which is a Government grant available to community groups working with children and young people who are facing some form of disadvantage. Groups can apply for funding of between £250 and £7,000.

For example this could be to support a new group or project to get started or for existing groups to expand or develop their activities.

Over £ 200,000 of grants have already been awarded by the Grants Panel since April this year.

There have been a wide variety of projects funded including youth clubs, parent and toddler groups, sports clubs, music groups, theatre groups, cycle tracks, and outdoor play equipment

Who can apply?

Community or voluntary groups focusing on children and young people up to 19. There is no requirement to be a registered charity but you will need to have a basic constitution for your group.

How can I find out more?

If you would like more information or want to discuss your project ideas contact the LNF team at the Norfolk Rural Community Council. Ring 01362 698216 or e-mail:

hifchildren@norfolkcc.org.uk

You can also visit the NRCC website at www.norfolkcc.org.uk

For a Local Network Fund application pack ring the National Call Centre on 0845 1130161.

Poem by Daphne Preece—

translation of unfamiliar words as promised.
 A bishey barney bee.....a ladybird
 Sat on a mawkin's head.....a scarecrow
 Along came a mavish.....a thrush
 Get me a mawther a young lady
 Complete with a dwile a floor cloth
Thanks Daphne. The only word in Collins' latest dictionary close to one of these is mavis meaning a song thrush. Eds.

Ovington's historic Village Hall is for hire.

For an extremely reasonable fee you can hire the hall for a day or evening. Ideal for wedding parties with Ovington's delightful old church a minute's walk away.

Call 885019 for details.

next month in *What's On*

We hoped to build a series reflecting the views of the sub-twenties who live in the village. If your children or any young person would like to write to us on this thought provoking issue please e-mail your letter to woo.letters@broveylair.com before 15 January. We start a campaign to get a public footpath from the infamous Ovington Cross to Watton. Also we will be taking a look at the state of the road between our village and Carbrooke.

Regular contributors to WOO should note that copy must be received no later than 15 January for inclusion in Febraury's edition. Please e-mail to chris.lewis@downtoearthcomputing.co.uk or deliver to Thornborough, Church Rd.