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## COUNCILLORS SING THE PRAISES OF MODEST LOCAL HEROES [Top of Page](#)

top to bottom Ron Pinna and Sue





Tracey Wilson joined the

celebrations as 'unsung heroes' received community awards

YOU and a guest are invited to a reception at South Cambridgeshire District Council Offices on Friday 3rd November, at 7.30pm. Dress – Lounge suit, said the invitation received by Ron Amsden. I was privileged to be Ron's invited guest, so we turned up at the appointed time and were announced by a red-suited toastmaster and presented to Councillor Simon Kine, current Chairman of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

Mr Kine explained that it is an annual tradition for the Chairman to gather together the people that the District Councillors meet during the course of their time in office. For the year 2000 he wanted to do something a little bit different, and so he had invited Councillors whose names fall in the first half of the alphabet to nominate some of the 'unsung heroes' from their local communities. Community spirit and self-help effort is at the heart of many of the Council's policies, and one of the Council's corporate objectives is to support community life throughout the district.

These special people, who have tirelessly worked for the love of the district and their communities, were there to be officially recognised for their individual achievements.

They were presented with a framed certificate. All recipients seemed to be very modest about their good deeds.

The nominees from our local Councillor, John Batchelor were:

Mr Ron Amsden of Linton, for his long service on two Parish Councils and for initiating the Linton News, a new Library building and the swimming pool project

Mrs Pinna Dockerill of Linton, for her service in many local organisations and help at Addenbrookes Hospital.

Mrs Sue Albrow of Hadstock, for her work with several village groups including Linton Action for Youth, Community Education and the Parish Council.

John Batchelor pointed out that he had found it very difficult to select just three names from a huge list of local people who had contributed so much of their time to help their fellow villagers.

Our other District Councillor, Joan Smith, (who was not asked to nominate anyone this year by virtue of her name being towards the end of the alphabet) agreed that this reception had only touched the tip of the iceberg, as so many good deeds are done by our fellow villagers to help the community.

## **'FLUID ON ROAD' CLUE TO CRASH** [Top of Page](#)

TRAFFIC officers investigating four separate crashes which happened on a stretch of the A1307 outside Linton on Thursday 16th November have appealed for witnesses.

Police are trying to trace the driver of a vehicle which they believe may have been leaking fluid onto the

road prior to the crashes. PC Chris Markham said that the driver may have not even known that there was a problem with their vehicle.

"Several of the drivers involved in these crashes reported that there was some type of fluid on the carriageway and it is important that we trace where this fluid came from. One woman is still in a critical condition at Addenbrookes Hospital after her Vauxhall Monterey car collided with the rear of a lorry. Both a BMW car and a Peugeot 306 car left the road and ended up in ditches, while a VW Passat collided with a verge."

Officers put out crash appeal signs on the A1307 a week after the accident, hoping to generate the information needed to piece together the circumstances surrounding the crashes.

PC Markham continued: "We do need to speak to anyone who was travelling on the A1307 between 12.30pm and 1.30pm and who either witnessed one of these crashes, or has information about them."

Anyone with information should call Bottisham Traffic Base on ☐ 01223 358966.

## **PLANNING ENQUIRY COSTS REACH £500,000** [Top of Page](#)

THE public enquiry that is reviewing objections to the District Council's development plans for South Cambridgeshire has been under way for about five months and is due to continue until March 2001. Two outstanding objections from Linton have been considered, the land bordering Fincham's Close and Emson's Close down to the river and the land lying between the ford at Horn Lane and the High Street. The owners of both sites have objected to the District Council's decision NOT to allow development of the sites for housing.

Both objections were to be heard on Tuesday 21st November but were postponed. The Horn Lane/High Street objection was due to be heard on Friday 1st December. The other objection, at the choice of the objector, was heard in private on Thursday 23rd November, when all objections were withdrawn. The District Council's decision not to allow this land for development stands.

This does not mean we are anywhere near hearing the inspector's decision. The inspector is not due to report his findings until about one year after the public enquiry finishes! So we will have to wait until March 2002 before we get a result – an even slower process than an American election.

This enquiry is estimated to have cost South Cambs rate payers the best part of £500,000. It is difficult to believe that this level of expenditure can be justified for a relatively small district such as ours. Like many other things we as councillors have no control over the process. It is a directive of central government and we are obliged to carry it out.

John Batchelor

## **PROWLER WARNING** [Top of Page](#)

I AM appealing for information as to the identity of a man reported to have been following children in Linton. The man is described as in his 40s, with grey-brown hair and a beard. He has been seen driving a white pickup-type vehicle, a white transit-type van or a white Midi-type van. He has got out of the vehicles and gone towards children on three occasions. The children, who are all aged over 11, have run away. The incidents seem to have a common denominator in that they have mostly occurred in the Symond's Lane area. No one has been arrested, and there are no suspects at the time of writing, because the police have no registration number for any of these vehicles. It is unusual for someone to have access to all these vehicles. If any vans fitting these descriptions are seen in the village, the registration numbers should be taken and the police informed immediately.

Parents should not let their children walk in the dark alone, until this man has been questioned. It is a massive assumption to say that he is trying to snatch a child but until I can identify him I will be unable to tell. Under no circumstances should any member of the public approach the man. We cannot risk an innocent individual's being accosted by a concerned adult.

PC Andy Denzey

## **The PARISH COUNCIL** [Top of Page](#)

MEMBERS of the public raised questions on the likely plans for a small development off the High Street and asked if we could ensure there were some homes for retired people. It was suspected that the size of the development, if given the go-ahead, would be too small to enforce this.

Tracey Russell updated the Council on High Street road safety. Ms Russell and John Hall were invited to be co-opted on to the traffic committee.

The replacement parts for the aerial runway at the venture playground have been ordered. The path on the recreation ground has not been cleared of mud moved there by the water board when they had problems at the pumping station.

The plans for the security fencing at the Infants School were discussed and some recommendations made but no objections. This was followed by an update from the school governor.

There were various reports on bus pass legislation due in April which will provide for free passes for those currently provided with concessionary passes.

The safety fencing at the crossing at the top of the High Street on the A1307 is going to be redesigned "when" it is hit next time, reported County Councillor Terry Bear. It was noted that signs for the recent Quilt Fair, placed at both ends of the fencing, had made it impossible for car drivers to see the traffic coming from the opposite direction. The 'keep left' signs had been changed because of a similar problem. Palmer's Close is to have extra street lamps and the tarmac repaired. Two additional road sweepers have been contracted by the district council so that roads can be swept more often.

Mrs Gyte, the new Child and Family Nurse, introduced herself and gave the Council an outline of the work she performs. She is based in the Health Centre.

The Parish Council had two applicants for the vacancy on the council: Claire Preston and John Hall. The Council co-opted Claire Preston.

**Traffic: the price of safety, page 3**

## **Fireworks raise £6,000 for local schools** [Top of Page](#)

A VERY brief pause in the wet weather brought out the crowds on November 4th with over 4,000 enjoying a spectacular bonfire and fireworks night at Linton Infants' School.

Each of the three local schools, on whose behalf the event is held, will be better off by over £2,000 once the accounts have been finalised.

A specially choreographed display left the crowd gasping, whilst most of the animals at Linton Zoo were blissfully unaware of anything out of the ordinary occurring on their doorstep.

"It's always a delicate balancing act – satisfying a demanding audience whilst minimising the impact of loud bang and bright lights on our near neighbours," explained event organiser, Graham Smith. "This year we seemed to get it about right."

Camgrain has been the event's prime sponsor for five years, during which time they have generously contributed over £4,000 – not to mention the loan of expensive equipment and skilled personnel.

There is still room for any other local company that would like to be associated with a successful fundraiser – please contact Graham on 291904 on how to get involved.

Many local voluntary groups help in the organisation of the event, most notably the ATC, Scouts and Guides, and the Fireworks Committee would like to thank them and all the others who contributed.

Believe it or not, work will soon commence on the 2001 event. If you would like to help, please contact us now.

Graham Smith 01223 291904

[gwa.smith@virgin.net](mailto:gwa.smith@virgin.net)

## **Horrors in the High Street** [Top of Page](#)

'I was on the pavement when I was struck by a large van with such force that the wing mirror was bent in. The driver did not stop'

These are some of the incidents suffered by people in the High Street

A large car transporter was parked outside the van sales at the top of Joiner's Road obscuring the view, in both directions, of the A1307. My neighbour and I asked the driver if he could remove his vehicle. He rudely said: "Not until I have finished my business."

We then very politely asked if he would then direct us out, at which point someone opened the van's door and said: "Get out immediately!"

At 9am one morning, between Mill Lane and Linton Infants School, I was forced to stand on somebody's doorstep whilst four cars drove up on the pavement to get past a bus on the other side of the road. Luckily I didn't have my daughter (age three) with me – she is still panicky after a motorbike fell with rider in the same spot months ago.

I was walking on the pavement between Mill Lane and Church Lane to collect my son from school when I was struck by a large van. I was hit with such force that the wing mirror was bent in. The driver did not stop and left me feeling shaken, but relieved that it was not my daughter (age four) who had been struck.

The milk lorry was already parked outside the Co-op as I passed by, then a second lorry pulled up in front of me and proceeded to reverse up on the path by Green Lane. This effectively blocked the path and I was forced to cross the road in-between two parked lorries (which I could not see past) with a four-year-old and a buggy!

I was walking home after taking my son to school. There were cars parked on the pavement outside the video shop so I was forced to cross to the other side of the road with my buggy. Then a bus came up the High Street and onto the path, forcing us flat against the wall. This was really dangerous as the bus was driving at me from behind.

On two occasions lorries have struck our house. After one of them ripped four tiles from our roof, I chased the driver barefoot up the High Street and took the company's name from the side of the lorry. The police were unable to do anything.

The front doorstep of my neighbour's home has been broken in half by a delivery lorry that mounted the pavement.

I returned to Linton in August after spending the two years abroad. I cannot believe how much the volume of traffic, inappropriate driving and parking has increased during peak times. It's absolutely chaotic.

A speeding car mounted the pavement to avoid a collision with a bus. I was thrown up into the air, landing on my hands and feet. The scarring from those injuries will be with me for the rest of my life. I was 10 years old! I cannot begin to explain how this has affected my life. I am now 23, this gives an example of how long the traffic has been a problem in Linton. I am not sure that it will change even if a child is killed. If you have suffered an accident or a near miss in the High Street – or you want to express a view – write to the Parish Council or to the Linton News.

## **Traffic: The Price of Safety** [Top of Page](#)

Dear Editor

Concerns about safety, highlighted by the serious incident involving Tracey Russell [Linton News, November], remind us that High Street traffic has been a long-term issue.

Following similar concerns in the early 1990s, the County Council agreed to engage outside consultants to work with a group appointed by local organisations such as the Parish Council, police and the schools to create a High Street traffic scheme.

The scheme devised was displayed in the Social Centre. Although most people who came to the exhibition supported the scheme, there was also a significant degree of dissent. Subsequently more issues were raised, and ultimately the Parish Council decided it could not approve much of the scheme. Everything then ground to a halt.

Few village residents care whose fault this false start was. However, it does show how important it is to be clear about objectives and priorities from the outset. It also means appreciating that when it comes to traffic, desirable aims are often in conflict with one another. And to make things even more complicated, conditions vary from hour to hour: congestion at 8.30am can be followed by speeding at 10.30am.

So what are our priorities? Surely pedestrian (and cyclists') safety must be the first. The second is to ensure that any scheme does not kill off trade in the High Street. The third is to protect the amenities of

residents in streets affected as far as possible. Behind these come congestion and convenience.

So where are the danger spots? Tracey's accident confirms the stretch from Green Lane to Church Lane is the most dangerous part of the High Street. However, in recent years the most dangerous parts of the village in terms of accidents have been Back Road east of the Cole's Lane junction, and the junctions of Balsham Road with Back Road and the High Street.

What if we do as some have suggested and make the High Street – and Back Road – one way between Cole's Lane and Balsham Road? Congestion and pavement mounting will be reduced, but not eliminated – a bus or lorry passing a parked vehicle will still have problems. Businesses in that part of the High Street will be affected. But most crucially, it would mean much higher speeds in the High Street and Back Road. To create a safe one-way system will inevitably require really heavy traffic calming in the High Street and Back Road, and the calming schemes which really curb fast vehicles are the ones no one likes.

The previous exercise suggests the village would simply find that level of traffic calming unacceptable. Better perhaps to concentrate on steps which will give pedestrians real protection, even at the cost of continued congestion: bollards, widened pavements, some small scale traffic calming.

The extra congestion caused by these measures could be balanced by the diversion just of eastbound buses and delivery vehicles up Coles Lane to Back Road. It would require some light traffic calming in Back Road and improvement of the Back Road/Balsham Road junction, but the accident figures show this junction probably needs attention anyway.

The other issue we must address now is whether we want 20mph limits in part of the High Street. The government requires 20mph limits to be "self-policing". That means a fairly high level of traffic calming. Once again, are we willing to pay that price?

So, hard decisions and hard choices ahead. But when the choice is between saving a child's life, or waiting a little bit longer to drive along the High Street, I have no doubt which is more important.

*Editor's note: Andrew Gore, a former Parish Council chairman and still a councillor, has asked us to make clear that the views expressed in his letter are his own and do not necessarily represent the views of the council.*

## **My Thanks for Your Kindness**     [Top of Page](#)

Dear Editor

I would like to thank everyone who gave donations in memory of my late husband Oswald – £152 went to the Salvation Army. Many thanks to all those who braved the awful weather to attend the funeral service, for all the support, cards and kindness shown to me in my sad loss. It was wonderful to know how many good friends I have.

Dear Editor

I would like to thank everyone who sent cards and donations in the memory of my late partner Tony Rickett. A cheque has been sent to Papworth Hospital Cardiac Research Fund for £295. To friends and neighbours, my sincere thanks for helping me through this sad time.

## **Barclays Change Would Make Car Menace Worse**     [Top of Page](#)

Dear Editor

Having lived in Horn Lane for the past 50 years (from the time when Mr Peppercorn delivered the milk by horse and cart, clattering over the cobblestones) I feel that I am well qualified to speak of change. None has been more disturbing than the growth of traffic, especially in the last four or five years.

There is now a very real danger to anyone emerging from Horn Lane either by foot or car. As in the days of Barclays Bank, it only needs one car or security van, parked on the pavement, to obscure the view of the traffic (usually speedy!) coming from the right.

Moreover, parked cars in the High Street mean that any traffic coming from the bypass has to veer over into the right hand lane, unspotted from Horn Lane until the very last second. Frequently there results a blockage of five or six cars to be sorted out.

The cash dispenser, however convenient for many, was an added menace – of people crossing the road from a hastily parked vehicle (often on the double yellow line) – and frequently with an appalling noise from blaring car radios which affected local residents greatly, both day and night.

Only one inhabitant in Horn Lane is without a car. Many (of necessity) have two (or more) and I am convinced that even one extra car belonging to a resident at 30 High Street [the Barclays building] would make a worrying difference.

During some parts of some days Horn Lane can be very quiet, but it can easily be blocked for hours at a time. I have taken, frequently, to parking my car outside my garage to avoid being hemmed in by day nurseries and the like. Often I have returned to find no place to park anywhere near my house if there is any activity at the United Reform Church.

Apart from the ‘extras’ like ambulances, oil deliveries, rubbish collections, etc., or a funeral or wedding at the URC, what about the necessity of postal delivery vans? And this is not taking into account, in the event of the bank’s use changing, the many post office customers whose temporary parking could easily cause an impossibly dangerous situation.

For one who has been claiming the weekly pension for the last 20 years, the idea of collecting it from a post office located on the doorstep may seem very attractive – but the advantage is far, far outweighed by the problems described above. I implore the villagers of Linton to review any proposal to move the post office to the end of Horn Lane very carefully indeed.

## **Granta Reaches within Inches of Homes** [Top of Page](#)



As Britain suffers record floods, Linton escapes serious damage

LINTON got off relatively lightly during last month’s serious flooding around Great Britain – but the Granta rose to within inches of homes in Mill Lane.

The river rose spectacularly on two occasions reaching heights of more than four and a half feet at the Mill Lane ford and breaking its banks in Leadwell Meadows and behind Camping Close. No property was damaged.

Linton’s fire station chief, Alan Baker, reported that crews were called out to the Sanger Centre at Hinxton and a group of four houses in Ashdon.

"On the Monday we worked at Ashdon from 7.30am until 12.30pm, then were at Hinxton from 5.30pm until 10.30pm. It meant a very long day." LNT

## **Musical Fare for Christmas** [Top of Page](#)

BY tradition the Linton Music Society’s Christmas concert is a choral one, given at Linton Parish Church. This year, Selwyn College Chapel Choir will be singing on Saturday 2nd December. The concert begins at 8pm at the church.

The Selwyn College Chapel Choir’s music will include Christmas favourites by Byrd, Gibbons, Howells

and Britten, as well as other well-known secular songs and carols.

Do come along and bring your friends to enjoy a happy start of the festive season. (Mince pies and wine in the interval!)

As usual, members and non-members alike are all welcome. Inquiries please to the Hon. Secretary %892157.

Tickets will be available at the door.

## **WEA Looks at Prehistoric Times** [Top of Page](#)

Linton WEA's spring term course is entitled Archaeology of Cambridgeshire. The tutor will be Alison Taylor and the course will take 10 weeks on Tuesdays from 10-11.30am, starting on 16th January at the Social Centre. The course will be looking at the development of Cambridgeshire from prehistoric times to the Middle Ages. Please contact Frances Angus on %01638 507251 for further information.

## **WI Gets Down to Crime** [Top of Page](#)

Wendy Foster, President, welcomed all members and guest Joan Coxall, WI Voluntary County Organiser, to Linton WI's November meeting. Birthday posies were made and presented by Val Spencer. The tombola at the October meeting raised £28.

A resolution selection meeting (for next year's Annual Meeting) will be held on 6th December at Quy Village Hall. It was reported that the recent Group Meeting at Abington had been well attended and that the slides on "well-dressing" had been very good.

Tricia Lewis, who had attended the Autumn Council Meeting said that WI markets were doing well.

It is planned to have a big fund-raising activity next year – a table-top sale, where table space will be sold first to members and then offered to other village organisations. It is hoped to hold this event at the Social Centre in March 2001.

The speaker for the evening was PC Ian Perry on "Personal Protection and Crime Prevention". As there were so many questions on personal protection, time ran out and it is hoped that PC Perry will be able to return at a later date to talk about crime prevention.

After refreshments, Jean Goodwin, Treasurer, spoke about the budget for next year.

Christmas Dinner for members will be held on 5th December. The following meeting will be at 7.30pm on Tuesday, 2nd January in the Social Centre. Mrs Pusskin Gowlet will give a talk entitled "A Charity Bicycle Ride in Jordan". Visitors are welcome.

## **How You Could Become the Talk of the Village** [Top of Page](#)





GRANTA Grapevine, Linton's Talking Newspaper, held its AGM at the Flaxfields Community Room in October, and the photograph shows some of the committee, two of our listeners and a 'reader' – one of a regular band of people who voluntarily put on tape the contents of the Linton News and also often help with the reverse side of the tape, which we call the magazine side. Their reward for this is a preview of the newspaper and a drink of water – though the liquid has been known on special occasions to have more of a link with our namesake!

At the end of September four of the committee attended a Talking Newspaper conference at Thurston near Bury St Edmunds. Compared with some, our set-up here in Linton is very small, both in its number of listeners and the size of the committee and helpers, but whatever the size we all believe it is a worthwhile cause. We are always on the lookout for fresh input to help make the receiving of the monthly (free) tape an experience to look forward to for our visually impaired and blind listeners.

As with any commitment, some work is involved (the three editors and secretary doing the lion's share) but we do try to make it fun too – our recent committee meeting started off with a fish and chip supper, something not tried before but voted a success!

If you were at Sainsbury's in Haverhill recently, I hope you saw the 'charity spot' with information about us. Sainsbury's has always been good to us, twice running the 'penny-back' scheme which helped considerably with our expenses. Equipment is not cheap, however small our group is. If anyone reading this would like to know more about us (we are a registered charity), please do give one of us a ring.

## **Err ... We Haven't Done Anything This Month** [Top of Page](#)

THE Linton Bowls Club has little to report this month – except to remind members about the Christmas Party at 7.30pm on Friday 15th December in the pavilion.

This is for free. No charges, but raffle prizes would be welcome.

Happy Christmas everybody.

## **ALL THE FUN OF THE FAYRE** [Top of Page](#)

A STRONG team effort from willing parents, staff and committee members, together with generous donations from a number of local businesses, paid huge dividends at the Granta Playgroup Christmas Fayre, held on 18th November.

The event was extremely well supported and enjoyed by all ages. While the children made paperweights and Christmas cards, their parents enjoyed browsing the stalls of local craftspeople.

One of the biggest attractions was a stall laden with beautifully presented girls' cosmetics which were very kindly donated by a local business. The cake stall, which began the afternoon groaning under the weight of delicious-looking home made cakes, biscuits and sweets, was bare by the end of the Fayre.

The Fayre made a profit in excess of £500—a tremendous sum. We will be able to purchase some new toys and equipment for the Toddler Groups. We would like to thank the committee, staff and everyone who contributed in any way to making the afternoon such a huge success, not least the parents and children who came and spent their money.

## **HEIGHTS ACTs UP FOR SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOL** [Top of Page](#)

LINTON Heights Music Workshop will be performing the musical 'On the Air' at 7pm on 13th December at the junior school. 'On the Air' tells the story of a group of children who take over a TV studio in a dream sequence and produce their own programme. On Monday 18th December, the school's Christmas service will be held at St Mary's, at 6.30pm.

Donations made at both these events will go towards supporting Mafumbuka Primary School in Soshanguve, the South African school which is partnered by both Linton Heights and the Infants School. The money donated will boost Mafumbuka School's funds for new classrooms, a sports ground and a vegetable garden.

## **TELEGRAPH AWARD FOR CHARITY** [Top of Page](#)

THE Alzheimer's Research Trust, formed in Linton in 1992 and now with headquarters in Great Shelford, has been selected by the Daily Telegraph as one of four charities to benefit from its Christmas Appeal. The Editorial Panel were impressed by the progress which the Trust had made in eight years and the fact that only £11 per sufferer is being spent on research into Alzheimer's disease. The Trust will be spending at least £3.5m on research projects over the next five years. The Linton fundraising branch, CAMART, has been particularly supportive and currently has an excellent range of inexpensive Christmas cards for sale.

## **ALTERNATIVE FUN FOR THE J-TEAM** [Top of Page](#)

FIFTY-seven children aged 5 to 11 came to the J-Team's Anti-Halloween party on 31st October. We made cardboard laptop computers, visited the cybercafé, enjoyed live drama and were entertained by the J-Team puppets. Children were given an e-mail address that they could write to. If you haven't sent us your e-mail yet, a reminder of our e-mail address: [jteam@xalt.co.uk](mailto:jteam@xalt.co.uk). For those who tried to buy tickets at the address on the posters, SORRY! This one is for real!

## **MEET THE LIB DEM EXPERTS** [Top of Page](#)

AS well as delivering "Focus" to every household, the local Liberal Democrats arrange various events during the year for members and supporters. The next is at 7.30pm on Thursday 14th December in the Cathodeon Community Centre when Sal Brinton, the Liberal Democrat prospective parliamentary candidate, will be assessing the performance of the present government. Sal is leader of the Liberal Democrat group on the County Council and the bursar of Selwyn College Cambridge. Her special policy areas are education and economic development. As Christmas is coming, seasonal refreshments will be on hand and there will be plenty of time for informal conversation afterwards. This is an opportunity for Linton residents who have considered lending their active support to the Liberal Democrats, or who just feel generally in tune with Liberal Democrat ideas, to find out more about the Party without making a commitment. Just turn up— there's no need to book in advance. For more information, contact the branch chairman, Andrew Gore % 891970.

## **FREE CHURCH INTERNET** [Top of Page](#)

TO mark the new Millennium, the Linton Free Church has developed its own website at [www.linton-free-church.org](http://www.linton-free-church.org)

The church can also be contacted on its email address [webmaster@linton-free-church.org](mailto:webmaster@linton-free-church.org)

## **THOSE WHO CAN, TEACH AT TWILIGHT** [Top of Page](#)

FOR the past ten years hundreds of local children have enjoyed attending a variety of activity classes which take place in their schools at the end of the school day, including art, crafts, languages, music, drama and lots of different sports. These classes are part of a programme organised by Community Education, Bur-well, Bottisham and Linton patch. The classes are usually about one hour long and run for ten weeks each term.

The success of these classes depends to a great extent on the tutors who are willing to share their enthusiasm and expertise with the children. We are always looking for more tutors.

If you have expertise in a particular subject and enjoy working with children, we would like to hear from you. For more information about becoming a Twilight Class tutor, please contact Sue Albrow at the Community Office at Linton Village College % 892400, or Samara Philpott at Burwell Community Office

## **MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR** [Top of Page](#)

LINTON News readers are reminded that all items submitted for publication must include the writer's name and a full address or telephone number. Names and addresses will be withheld at the writer's request but no anonymous material, however relevant to current local issues, will be considered for publication. Web Site readers will find peoples names have been removed from many places if you would like to get in touch please email the editor or webmaster. Post box on left

Sally Simmons

## **A COMPUTER FOR CHRISTMAS?** [Top of Page](#)

SINCE late September, over forty people have enrolled as members of the Linton Senior IT Club. A number of these come completely new to computing. Some have their own computers and either have problems they wish to sort out, or they need help on using the machine for a specific purpose. Happily, the club volunteers have been able to help in most cases and it has not cost members a penny. After Christmas, any Linton resident, and even some from further afield, can be helped in the same way if they run into difficulties.

There will be no meetings on 19th and 26th December. The club will re-open after the Christmas break on Tuesday, 2nd January, with meetings from 7 to 9pm every Tuesday evening thereafter until Easter. New members will be welcome. The club will continue to teach basics to adults of all ages, even if it is only to show how to send and receive e-mails.

Just drop in and have a chat to see if it is your scene! Present and past members who have not yet collected a membership card, please do so as soon as possible. Happy Christmas! Derek Birch

## **SAVE THE CHILDREN** [Top of Page](#)

THANK you to everyone who supported the coffee morning and sale of Christmas cards and goods in aid of Save the Children Fund on 11th November. A total of £500 was raised. Judith White

## **The Bush Telegraph** [Top of Page](#)

LOVE them or hate them, the school league tables duly arrive at the end of November each year. An army of clerks collate and check the figures and reams of paper are used to print the finished product. It is a very expensive exercise. Then the papers get in on the act and come up with their lists of top schools. Now that we are used to them, what are league tables actually for? On one level they provide general reassurance – 'our local school does OK in the league tables'. But this encompasses a great deal. At which low point would our local school's performance cease to be OK? Then there's the 'considering the catchment area' element. How many people really bear that in mind when they look at the results of a school in the lower half of the tables from a deprived urban area? Just as importantly, who asks the catchment question for schools in the upper half whose performance might in reality be mediocre? How would we cope without league tables? I suggest that parents who really wanted to know about a school's performance would visit it and ask questions. Interestingly this is what often happens at LVC, even though we are normally at or near the top of the local league table. Back in the early days of league tables, there was much more straightforward justification for all the time and expense involved. Informing parents was the secondary factor. Of prime importance was to set schools in direct competition with each other. The school's position on that list would then be the prime motivator in 'driving up standards'. There is little evidence that this has been the case in all but a small minority of schools. It does make you wonder if it's all been worth it. I'm sure the proposed 'value added' factor due to be incorporated by 2002 will make us feel more positive

about the league tables; after all they are not something we worry too much about at LVC. But then at 73% 5+ higher grades I would say that, wouldn't I! Clive Bush, Principal

## **HATS OFF TO THE GARDEN CLUB** [Top of Page](#)

IAN Pitcairn, a fruit farmer and professional in the pruning of fruit trees, gave Garden Club members and visitors a talk on this art, and turned a fairly technical subject into an informative and even amusing discussion. He briefly outlined the history and ancestry of our fruit trees, many of which originate from middle Asia north of the Himalayas, then stressed the importance of pruning.

His detailed drawings indicated just where to make those vital cuts in order to create "a tree that you can throw your hat through" which will then produce better fruit. We were given a sad reminder that more trees than necessary had been lost in the 1987 gales because lack of pruning had made them unstable. Come in party mood for the meeting on 12th December, when members' slides will be shown, followed by mince pies and Cynthia's excellent mulled wine.

## **K-CLUB WINNERS** [Top of Page](#)

THE result of the November K-Club monthly draw: 1st (£50 -No. 133); 2nd (£25 - (No. 151); 3rd (£10 - No. 331).

## **LINTON COUNTRY DIARY by Olwen Williams** [Top of Page](#)

Monday 20th November 2000 Illustrated by Maureen Williams



ON October 29th and 30th we had the worst storm of the year, with widespread flooding and trees blown down. At Ashdon, the only route out of the village meant driving through water, with all other roads blocked by fallen trees. However, this was only the start of a two-week spell when, over the UK, all existing rain records were broken. On TV, a disgruntled housewife contemplated her flooded house and complained, 'Nobody will take responsibility!' Sadly, all sorts of chickens are coming home to roost at the same time. Global warming, climatic instability, sea level rise, rivers straightened and confined, winter fields flattened and sown so that the rain runs straight off, houses built on flood plains: these are some of the causes. It is difficult to assign responsibility and, given the last month, equally difficult to ensure that flood defences are secure.

At various times in the last month, our local meadows have been under water and I wonder what happens to soil invertebrates at these times. Perhaps enough oxygen is trapped in the soil for beetles, ants, worms and others to survive. Perhaps they have to re-colonise once the water has gone. In the Ouse Washes, this problem must occur every winter, as the land between the channels may be flooded for weeks. Does anyone have an answer?

A reader enquired about the identity of a wild flower growing near his garden. Mention of a yellow dandelion-like weed reminded me of my friend's designation of DYC (damned yellow Compositae) for this group. They are described as "an exceptionally variable and difficult group," partly because of their

habit of indiscriminate hybridisation.

However, his excellent description of prickly leaf and stem, with multiple flower heads, made it most likely to be the bristly ox-tongue (*Picris echioides*) which blooms into November.

## **CAN YOU HELP THE LINTON CHESTNUTS?** [Top of Page](#)

CHESTNUTS Playgroup is looking for a supervisor to help run, organise and plan playgroup sessions. Applicants should be DPP or NVQ qualified and any further training requirements will be supported. Playgroup sessions take place at the Cathodeon Centre, 9am-12.30pm, Monday to Thursday, during term time. If you are interested in this salaried position, please contact Anya ☐ 892192. Yvonne Smithson

## **CINDERS DANCES INTO TOWN** [Top of Page](#)

CINDERELLA and the Dance to the End of Time, a colourful Christmas show suitable for all the family, is coming to Linton Village College at 7.30pm on Saturday 16th December. It is part of the Arts in Cambs on Tour (ACT) scheme and is a joint promotion with Linton Arts Forum.

This production is by the same Theatre Group who performed 'Set in Stone', which was so well received last year.

The clock is ticking... The countdown to the end of time has begun... Who knows what will happen when midnight strikes? There is only one place to be in town that night – and that's the celebration at the End of Time Club, where pop idol JJ Cool Magnus Charming will be appearing with a host of other celebrity guests. Poor young Cindy would love to be at the party, but she must stay behind to polish all the clocks in her stepfather's shop – unlike her stepsisters, Aggie and Maggie, each set on winning the heart of the mysterious pop star!

Jack Drum Arts, all the way from County Durham, present a colourful array of music, laughter, puppets and original songs. This traditional Christmas fairy tale takes a quantum leap into the twenty-first century. Tickets can be purchased from Sue Albrow at the College Community Office, ☐ 892400, from Judy Rossiter, ☐ 891383, from Linton Heights Junior School and Linton Infants School.

Tea, coffee, soft drinks and snacks will be on sale in the interval.

For further information about Arts in Cambs on Tour, contact Kate Lawrance, ☐ 01223 566205, fax: 01223 566206 or email [katelawrance@act.waitrose.com](mailto:katelawrance@act.waitrose.com).

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