



RONNIE REINDEER COMES TO ST MARGARET S.E WITH SANTA
AND RICHARD THE REINDEER HANDLER

SOUTH ELMHAM COMMUNITY NEWS

ISSUE NO. 221

FEBRUARY - MARCH

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SOUTH ELMHAM COMMUNITY NEWS

February - March 2021

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NEXT COPY DEADLINE MARCH 7TH

*The views and comments printed herein are not necessarily the views of
the Editor or this publication*

EDITORIAL

Wishing everyone, a healthy New Year, light is glinting at the end of the tunnel, not very brightly and it's a long tunnel, but it is there and getting brighter. Vaccine is here, but to get everyone vaccinated is a massive and lengthy undertaking. Please follow the CORVID guidelines for others if not yourself.

GPC

The Grouped Parish Council met in a Zoom meeting on November 17th. District Councillor Judy Cloke advised the council on parking developments. Hopefully signs should become clearer and more straightforward. Grange Road flooding had improved since the drain had been kept clear by the treatment works employees. An increase of 10% in the Precept was proposed and passed. The Precept has not been increased for several years, although other costs have.

GPC continued...

It was thought prudent to have a small increase now than a large one in the future. Following a meeting with the Suffolk Highways Community Engineer in Flixton, 2 options to calm traffic were discussed, but to clarify the facts a Traffic survey is necessary, this action was passed. Thank you to Andrew Gilham for having the Flixton ditch cleaned out. There had been a Covid 19 socially distanced meeting on the Amentity Green at St Margaret S.E, to discuss the preservation of the Oak tree for which a quote had been received and accepted. Also a socially distanced meeting with Peter Aldous MP, to update him on the UK power's progress in the area, concerns were raised and Mr Aldous would take these up with the company.

Next meeting Jan 18th 2021

HELP

if you need help with shopping, transport, prescriptions or anything else, please contact your Parish councillor. They can help by contacting one of many individuals or organisations who will provide help during these troubled times. Many local businesses deliver, anything from groceries to pet food.

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Rodney Mulhearn	01986 782409
Daniel Johnson	01986 782207

St Cross

Libby ffrench-Mullen	07597 300112
John Sanderson	07958 793298
Ian Noakes	01986 782292

Flixton

Ken Warnes	01986 892629
David Mann	01986 894562
Julie Hinsley	01986 893159
Justin Skinner	01986 891002

VACCINATIONS

As I understand, it helps if you have your NHS number when you are called, this will be on any prescription or NHS communication.



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MOLE

It's been wet, most of the Waveney Valley has endured prolonged flooding, many vehicles left marooned in the water and in some places such as Ditchingham and Bungay houses were inundated with muddy water. Homersfield at one time was an island. Sally Remblance's brother Dennis Riches, who lives in Beccles, recieved a call for help from a Homersfield resident, who had run out of supplies, he then unable to 'walk on water' to reach them, had to walk through the swirling waters. Brilliant, well done Den. Congratulations to 'upper' Homersfield on their Christmas lights, raising the spirits in these challenging times. Still in the same district, I hear an electric organ has been delivered, is this for a budding 'Elton John'? Up at St James, Bernard Crockford has been corresponding with the Eastern Daily Press, questioning whether it was wise in these social distancing times to allow Father Christmas access to every property in the land and instead of sliding down the chimney, he would have to leave presents on the back door step. At St Margaret S.E we welcome the Cooks and Scott and Scarlett, we hope you enjoy 'village life'. Still in St Margaret S.E, the winners of the Christmas 'Village' raffle for a meal for 2 were Sandra and Rodney Mulhearn, unfortunately due to present restrictions this will have to be in the future. The winner of the Jean and Sam Earl cup for St Margaret S.E Community Person of 2020 was Molly Smith, congratulations.

Sadly we say 'Good Bye' to long term resident Diane Cox who has passed away, another character moved on. The Waveney was in full flood so part time resident Annabelle Turner came for a swim in the Beck instead. I gather it was cold! A Christmas card was sent to every household in St Margaret S.E and St Nicholas, from the Village Hall with a raffle ticket and news of Santa's visit. There was no Village Christmas party, but Santa didn't let that stop him. With Ronnie the reindeer and handler, they visited the village and St Nicholas, many turned out to see the 'Old' gentleman (See Front Cover). Children had been presented with their presents safely beforehand. The Carol service commenced from the Village Hall with a few carols sung outside, before proceeding to the church where we listened to readings and Carols from Kings Cambridge. Singing the last one outside the church porch, all superbly lead by Rev Leon Collyer.

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Thank you for dying on the cross for me to
set me free from my sins. Please come into
my life and fill me with the Holy Spirit and
be with me forever.
Thank you Lord Jesus, Amen

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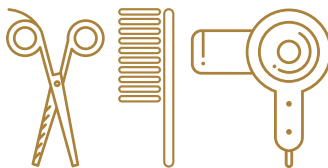
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Mole continued...

Fortunately at St Margaret S.E we are lucky enough to have Peter (Foreman) Copeman keeping the water flowing, regularly seen in the bottom of a ditch mud flying of his spade, thank you! Down at Flixton the floods caused havoc with St Mary's close to being flooded, when the blocked grill was cleared. There were 4 car tyres causing the blockage, whoever chucked them in there, not the most intelligent act. Sadly Flixton farmer Peter Hinsley also passed away, another son of the soil.

FROM THE TRACTOR CAB

There was a water hen on the lawn yesterday, probably looking for somewhere dry, although it could have been after the food the sparrows thrown off the table. The heavy rain and flooding puts a strain on animals as well as humans. It's a mystery how a day after the floods recede on the marshes, the moles are already at work, do they sit in their tunnels with scuba gear? The alternative is to vacate the area and return as the water recedes, although wouldn't the worms, their main food, have drowned and the tunnels collapsed? Moles usually breed February to May and can tolerate high levels of carbon dioxide which is useful if you live in poorly ventilated tunnels, because their blood cells have a special form of hemoglobin. The females are known as sows and the males boars and a group is called a labour. Although a group is rare as apart from mating they are solitary animals. The birds have trouble flying in this wet weather, as the rain makes their feathers wet and heavy, which is why some times they can be seen hanging their wings out to dry. As I write, three more water hens have turned up this time to check the cattle haven't left any meal.

HOMERSFIELD

Ian Bunting

Very sadly, Ian died just before Christmas after a long battle with cancer. He moved into Homersfield with his family at the age of 8 weeks. He had seen the village change through the closing of the bridge to traffic and the subsequent decline of his father's garage and then houses built on the petrol pump forecourt. He worked for many years at Howard Rotavator in Harleston and then, after it closed, at St Peter's Brewery. He will be much missed for his humour and cheery optimism.



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Homersfield - Comfort and Joy Christmas Carols

It was brilliant that so many people from the village and some from further afield came to sing carols around the village on December 22nd. Reverend Leon started with a rousing welcome and opening prayer and then we alternated carols and readings. The torches supplied by Gail lit the procession from outside the Black Swan to the Green, along to Barnfield, up Church Lane and to the particularly beautifully lit Square before returning to outside the Black Swan. It was good when people came out of their houses to sing with us or just to listen. Everyone was very sensible maintaining their distance and grouping only in bubbles. The Saints Benefice had a gift bag for every family full of goodies. Thank you to Reverend Leon and everyone who came and sung and to those who put a little something in the collection tin.

A very different 'Carol Service' – a light in a very dark year.

St Mary's PCC

In these unfamiliar times with escalation of the pandemic and the current President in the White House (in January 21) and events on 6th Jan at Capitol Hill, Washington, we are likely to be feeling deep uncertainty with democracy and fairness threatened. It must be time to heed the scientists and health professionals and act like we have the Covid 19 virus and keep away from each other. This doesn't mean that we should not be compassionate and empathetic and keep a sense of community spirit alive in our villages. It is more important than ever to be considerate and look at things from others perspective. This should help us to get along for as long as Lockdown persists.

Sarah

ST PETER

With "The Donald" doing his best to keep covid out of the news we have had a funny old start to the year. Despite the flooding and the fog and the cold, there are worse places to be locked down. It's difficult not to look back, though in a rose-tinted way, at the lovely sunny days the last time we were properly confined to barracks. The bike is feeling a little unloved, though in favour of walking at the moment as I've been told road excursions are very painful. We ended 2020 with a very enjoyable carol service where fortunately I was not allowed to sing. I didn't take it personally though and the small choir made an incredibly good job of it. The congregation were not let off singing duties entirely, as we all joined in with the last hymn outside in the churchyard.

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It was good to do something almost normal. Well done to James for getting the star to work and putting it up on the church.

The church has done doubly well out of the 49 club, winning both December and January as the numbers have not been issued. If you would like a number to join in, please speak to Pamela.

Jez has been busy on charity fundraising, collecting old phones, games consoles, etc. for recycling for Cancer Research UK. This happily coincided with us having a loft clear out and the people of St Peter dug deep. £154.56 was raised from the collection at St Peter. A collection was also held in the Rumburgh area and so there will be more to add to that total. It is likely there will be collections in other areas in the future, so watch this and other spaces.

Wildlife is out in force this year. We have had deer eating the corn left out for ground feeding birds with moorhen, pheasants, pigeons, doves, crows, magpies, rabbits and squirrels queuing up. It's been an odd year with the moorhen. Usually in the autumn they have a big scrap and drive the young away so we are left with 2 or 3. This year will still have a gang of over a dozen who spend most of the day chasing each other around. It looks like the Serengeti when we open the curtains in the morning.

The other day I saw a barn owl fly across the garden, the first for many years. I also saw a cormorant for the first time around here. I suppose they will soon be standing drying their wings next to our fishpond. At least they might keep the heron away.

I thought I would end this time with an observational challenge. An honourable mention next time to the first person who notices after I have cut Carol's lockdown hair. Shouldn't be difficult. Here's to a better 2021.

FLIXTON

HAPPY NEW YEAR !! Now for the 2021 Hokey Kokey

We're out ... well the lights are. Another nice blackout (or two) designed to maybe bring back candle lit dinners at home or possibly candle lit feasts as you rush to eat anything that was rapidly defrosting in your freezers.

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CHURCH SERVICES WHILST ALLOWED MASKS PLEASE

Rev Leon Collyer 01986781345

24/1/21	Holy Communion	10.00am	St Peter
	Evening Prayer	3.00pm	St Cross
31/1/21	Holy Communion	10.00am	St Michael
	Evening Prayer	3.00pm	Flixton
7/2/21	Holy Communion	10.00am	St John
	Evening Prayer	3.00pm	Ilk St Margaret
14/2/21	Holy Communion	10.00am	St James
	OUTDOOR	3.00pm	St Margaret S.E
21/2/21	Holy Communion	10.00am	St Lawrence
	Evening Prayer	3.00pm	Homersfield
28/2/21	Holy Communion	10.00am	Rumburgh
	Evening Prayer	3.00pm	St Peter
7/3/21	Holy Communion	10.00am	St Cross
	Evening Prayer	3.00pm	St Michael
14/3/21	Holy Communion	10.00am	Flixton
	OUTDOOR	3.00pm	St John

21/3/21	Holy Communion	10.00am	Ilk St Margaret
	Evening Prayer	3.00pm	St James

PALM SUNDAY

28/3/21	Holy Communion	10.00am	St Margaret S.E
	Evening Prayer	5.00pm	St Lawrence

EASTER SUNDAY

4/4/21	Holy Communion	10.00am	Homersfield
	EVENING PRAYER	5.00pm	Rumburgh

These services are liable to change due to Government instruction.

However it is hoped to broadcast a live service on this link
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7296061906?pwd=eFZ6VFFlbUITV-VhZQ0NjMnZ5d2VPQT09>

Meeting ID: 729 606 1906

Passcode: saints

In addition, I would like to propose a more informal gathering on zoom for anyone who would like to look at a section of Scripture, discuss what it means for us and perhaps pray together. I think that simple ways to connect together are really important in such times.

My initial thought is for a weekday evening at 8.00pm. I suggest this Tuesday, the link would be the same as above.

If you need any help over the coming weeks and you think I might be able to help, please get in touch.

Praying for us all!



Flixton, continued...

And **we're in** ... with Covid 19 spreading like wild fire it seems that self control and social distancing isn't in the nature of many of our population, so locking us up is the next best thing until vaccinations have protected the more vulnerable. It's good to hear that one of our residents, James Cracknell, is now out of hospital and his time in an ICU. Reading his account of his struggle and the pressure on our NHS should make even the most foolish of us want to comply with any regulations aimed at controlling the spread of the virus. Unfortunately, I don't witness much care or thoughtfulness when I'm forced to enter a shop or even walking along a town street. There are many directions that we can all point the finger of blame at but the mirror is a useful start point.

And **we're out**... because most of the rest of the Planet knows we aren't committed to stopping the spread of Covid 19, they've stopped us travelling to their countries.

And **we're in** ... OK, so that was around Christmas when the Waveney Valley flooded to levels not seen for many years.

It was sad to see the effect that the floods had on residents of neighbouring villages and towns. The flooding brought out the best and the worst of human nature, with people being rescued and cars being pushed out of deep water and then others using their lorries or jacked up 4x4s to cause mayhem.

It's the closest water has come to flooding our home, so I had to take a pick axe to the grass bank in The Street in order to drain the excess water away. Thanks to Phil from the Buck, who can always be relied on to lend a hand. We managed to get the bulk of the flood water away.

I have to say that much of Flixton's flooding could well have been prevented if the Environment Agency carried out proper maintenance. Residents may have noticed that the beck alongside The Street was cleared during this summer. NOT by the Environment Agency but by Phil and a mate.

The flooding in The Street wasn't due to excess water. It was due to blocked drains because SCC Highways Department won't clear the drains in The Street. Four have been blocked for at least the 26 years I have lived here.

Pete Wallis *a local carpenter*

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Emergency Planning

The flooding around Christmas has reminded me of a couple of meetings Terry Hunt and myself attended regarding the usefulness of community emergency planning. The idea of having in place a basic support process, utilising equipment and skills which already exist in the community seemed completely logical to Terry and myself. The idea was subsequently presented to the Group Parish Council. It was rejected. It feels to me like it's time for a rethink. I here snow is on the way.

The Buck

Don't forget, if you can't get out to the shops for food, Phil is still doing take away meals.

Don't forget, if you have any news for the village let me know on 896828, *Pete Maddar-Smith*

100 CLUB WINNERS

NOVEMBER

1st. Marie Lambert
2nd. Kelly Softley
3rd. Helen Aldous

DECEMBER

1st. Kelly Softley
2nd. Roy Heaton.
3rd. Lara Hunt

ST JAMES

My apologies for failing to publish St James contribution in the last edition

CHURCH NEWS

We had a wonderful carol service in the village on 15 December. About 28 stalwarts assembled at the village hall armed with warm coats, torches and lanterns and we sang our way to the church where we had the traditional readings and prayers. The choir sang a couple of carols At the end we trooped out to sing 'Hark the Herald" in the churchyard. It was thoroughly enjoyable and did us all good! It was lovely to do something normal. We also had a service on Christmas morning which was well attended and a joyful occasion. We also sang a carol outside at the end which was good fun and very poignant.

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St James, continued...

The church is looking very smart now it's been decorated and it has been proposed we get the pews polished, as a finishing touch. The cost will be about £1,200 and we have already had a contribution. If you feel this would be a good idea and you'd like to help, contributions can be sent to Rachel Ritchie at Abbey Farm. Cheques made payable to St James PCC. It would be lovely to get this done this year but if not, in the near future. As things stand at the moment the church will remain open and services will go ahead with all the necessary precautions.

Best wishes for 2021.

Rachel Ritchie

HALL AND VILLAGE NEWS

Unfortunately, the hall is now closed for events yet again until restrictions are relaxed. As soon as anything is possible be assured we will let you know.

The photo competition produced high quality entries as usual and democratic voting produced some winners. In the adult category, Jane Bastow came first, Gideon Mclean second, followed by Rachel Ritchie and Peter Jermy. Harry Andrews was placed first in the children's with all the rest coming joint second.

Entries for the Christmas tree decorations came in all designs and colours- well done to all who turned out some splendid efforts for decoration in the hall windows. Reindeer were awarded to all who entered (chocolate of course!) and thanks to Jan and Caroline who decorated the windows and produced the silver trees to display the entries.

The hall windows were also decorated suitably for Remembrance Day in November as we could not hold our usual event.

Sadly, we have to report the passing of our oldest resident, Dys Hart, who lived in St James for many years with her husband Dick, until he passed away four years ago. In her latter years, Dys often enjoyed attending hall events and will be remembered for her pleasant and lively company. Her family have sent the following:



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Gladys (Dys) Hart

Gladys (Dys) Hart, aged 95 years, of St James passed away peacefully at James Paget hospital on the 21st of November. Her family would like to thank neighbours and friends for all they have done to support her in recent years and particularly in the last difficult six months.

CHANGES

There are changes in our lifestyle, that we are doing quite unconsciously, such as on seeing someone on a path or corridor you try to go wide of them. If someone gets too near you, you then step back and it becomes a dance as they step forward you step back. you put on your mask to enter a shop or building and then if, like me, you get in the car and put your shades on (sun is low this time of the year) then can't understand why the windscreen is fogged, visibility is poor and putting on the windscreen wipers makes no improvement, 'then' it strikes you it's your glasses that are fogged due the fact you still have a mask on!

ST CROSS

HERE WE ARE IN LOCKDOWN 3.

We are all now well versed with how our behaviour should be modified to protect ourselves and our community. Stay safe!

As before, if anyone requires help or support, please contact one of your parish councillors.

FAREWELL AND WELCOME

The village bade farewell to one of our long term residents, Rose Debenham. Rose has made a positive move to be nearer to her family and is settled in to her new home.

We welcome new residents to Minster Cottages and The Old Smithy.

RAIN, RAIN, RAIN.

We had some intense rain over recent weeks and while it had been welcome in filling up ponds etc, it also provided "challenges". For some of us it meant turning the bike round and finding an alternative route home but there were more significant issues for the supermarket delivery driver who tried to make it through the floodwaters on Mendham Lane. The van was static for 36 hours and somebody's food delivery was most definitely delayed!

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And finally...please Stay Safe, everyone!

The next few weeks and even months are likely to be difficult.

Defeating this pandemic lies with each and every one of us.

Let's remember to look out for each other and protect ourselves and our community. Let's remember all our key workers and heroic NHS staff.

Let's remember that it is our behaviour that will ultimately defeat the virus. Let's look forward to the Spring!

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF IAN

30 months after I replaced my Quartz Halogen outside lights with Low Energy LED models, that came with promises of 250,000 hours of illumination and 100,000 on/off operations, one failed.

To replace an old bulb (normally they lasted about 2 years) needed 1 screwdriver, a new bulb @ £2 and about 8 minutes including getting the ladders out and putting them away again.

This is the story when the new light faded to a flicker:

GO UP LADDER, come down to find tiny specialist tool to undo fixings

GO UP LADDER, remove 4 screws the size of match heads, come down to get a different tool to undo different fixings now exposed

GO UP LADDER, remove 4 screws to size of grains of rice, come down as it is now obvious that LED is not replaceable, drive to Harleston to purchase whole new lamp

Partially dismantle new unit before GOING UP LADDER armed with wire cutters, wire strippers, long nosed pliers, small flat bladed screwdriver, medium Philips screwdriver, spanner to tighten cable entry gland, spanner to tighten bracket bolts and tiny cross head screwdriver to tighten up 4 micro-dot screws that are now loose in my coat pocket probably never to be found again. Did I mention it was freezing cold and blowing a gale? Back down ladder to turn off power supply

GO UP LADDER, cut, trim, strip and fix wires, miraculously find and fix tiny screws (using 2 hands made up of 10 frozen chipolatas) to waterproof unit, come down ladder to get longest Philips screwdriver as existing bracket does not fit new unit

GO UP LADDER, miraculously find that new bracket can be installed using existing screws! Come down ladder turn mains back on and test

Put ladders away and throw away an alloy housing and various parts made of plastic, copper, iron and who knows what a LED is made from. Still it's done and only cost 13 times more.

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Goodbye 2020

By the time this little rhyme goes to print
Christmas will be over, we'll all be skint.
The virus didn't dampen our Christmas cheer,
Lights were twinkling everywhere,
Glebe Cottages, Homersfield had an amazing display,
The glow could be seen from miles away.

Carol singers were out, braving the weather,
Beautiful voices all singing together,
Others, like me, who can't sing a song
Supporting the others and humming along.

Ronnie the reindeer did suddenly appear,
Up on the rooftops, without any fear.
Santa watched in awe and alarm
From his secret window at Red House Farm,
But all turned out well for this dashing young pair
As they travelled the lanes spreading gifts and good cheer.

The old year is done with, a new one's begun,
Fingers crossed, this year will be a good one,
Vaccines are coming, we'll wait for our turn.
My sleeves rolled up ready, with just one concern,
I saw it on T.V. and just had to cringe
When I saw the length of that needle on the syringe!

Stay safe everybody and try to take care
And maybe we can have "fun" this year.

Sally Remblance, Homersfields (Pam Ayes)

P.S. i just had to add one more little bit,
Christmas Eve, Homersfield was in really deep....
We were officially an island that day,
I expect a plague of locusts is now on its way.

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