**NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH**

Please be on the lookout for unusual vehicles in the vicinity especially near places where there is saddlery or tack. Thieves have been targeting this area. Although there have been some recoveries by the Police, the prices obtained for this type of property are very good, and so the chances of recovery are small. Should you see anything suspicious contact the Police either by 999, Parkside Station (01223 358966) or PC Rob Turner’s mobile 07740 734975. He will be happy to advise anyone with stables on security matters or contact Ellen Muirhead on 01954 719285. Another perennial problem is bogus callers, here are some simple steps you can take to ensure you do not become a victim.

1. Fix a security chain and/or door viewer and use them when answering the door.
2. Do not allow anyone in your home that you do not know or doesn’t have identification that you can verify.
3. Ask the caller for identification and verify it by telephoning the company they purport to work for – do not ring the number on the ID card that they supply – use a telephone directory.
4. Most of the major utility companies will ensure that their staff come equipped with your customer number, so ask them to read it to you.
5. Do not be pressurised into buying products or services that you do not want.
6. If you are still not happy, phone the Police – dial 999 – and tell them what’s happened. Also remember to tell your neighbours, particularly the elderly, who are often the target of bogus callers.

Burglars won’t go to the trouble of breaking in if they can just knock and be invited in, often, and quite unnecessarily, people feel quite embarrassed about refusing to let someone in at the door. Always be on your guard when someone unexpected calls, including a woman or children.

Another problem is dealers who call and offer to buy your antiques, collectables, jewellery etc. at what seems a good price. The chances are that they are more interested in items you do not want to sell and they can be very persuasive in tricking you into selling items for a lot less than their worth. If you want to sell an item it is best to go to a well-established dealer or ask a friend for their advice.

One final note, please report any crime that happens to you. Often people who are the victims of (minor) offences, or even attempted offences, don’t bother to report them because ‘no harm (or hardly any) was done’. Perhaps you think it is just not worth the hassle. I know it’s boring but reported crime is what makes statistics, it also makes patterns and trends obvious. At the beginning of this article I was able to warn potential victims about a current trend, so it is useful even though you might not think so.

Contacts, PC Turner, PC Iain Perry, Margaret Wilson.

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Don’t forget that the village hall committee has a marquee available for hire. It is canvas 20 X 25 ft. and costs £50 to villagers and £100 to non-villagers. The borrower is responsible for any damage because there is no third party insurance. Four to six people are needed to erect it. Contact Sally Eley 207340 for further details.

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**After alpha**

As a lot of people are aware we have a lively discussion group in the village that meets every two weeks. This followed the Alpha courses run earlier but is much less formal. The idea is to meet, have a cuppa and piece of cake, and discuss whatever issue comes up. You can imagine that the dreadful events of last year gave rise to many searching talks. If you fancy something more informative Therfield Chapel will be commencing Christianity Explored on 28th February. The course is aimed at everyone who is seeking to explore the Christian faith and to discover what it is all about. No prior knowledge of the Bible is required. This is a jargon and cringe free course, where real people can come to ask real questions without being embarrassed. For After Alpha contact Iris Green 209325; for Christianity Explored contact Louise Wilson 208648.
Whaddon Parish Council
Vacancy For Parish Clerk

The Parish Council is seeking to appoint a new Clerk when the current post holder vacates the position in the near future.
Applications in writing with C.V should be submitted to the chairman Mr E. Webb at 42 Bridge St. Whaddon, by the end of March 2002.
For an informal chat with the Chairman and the present Clerk please telephone. 01223 207564 or 01223 208122

Prescription Pick-up
If you use the facility of picking up your prescriptions from Melbourn Surgery through Mrs M. Hinkins, 9 Bridge St, could you please collect them before 6pm on the day of delivery (Tuesday and Friday).
Some prescriptions are being left for weeks or not being picked up at all and are therefore have to be returned to the surgery. Thank you for your help and co-operation with this matter.

Whaddon Village Hall Committee...
...Village Event to Celebrate
The Queens Golden Jubilee
Monday 3 June
A party for all, starting with games for the children, fancy dress (Kings and Queens), an early Barbecue and live music.

Welcome
We would like to welcome new residents in the village:
In Meldreth Road Lena and Hakan Erlandsson have moved from Haslingfield and Pat and Michael Kerr have returned to the area after a long sojourn in Spain. In Bridge Street James and Vanessa Arnold have taken up residence having finished their new house.

DEADLINES
To assist with a more regular publication of Whaddon News we have decided to have deadlines. We still aim to have three publications per year unless demand and content means that four are necessary. We love to have contributions of whatever kind from you, the villagers. For example who will hear the first cuckoo of 2002? The deadline for the summer edition is 11th May. The newsletter will go ahead after that date with or without your copy. If you have an item please either give it to Margaret Wilson (208648) for typing up or to Ann Williams (207779) if it is ready to include. It should be in black ink and typed in two columns so that it fits into this format. Thanks, we look forward to your contributions.
Sunday 3 March 6.30pm
Service in Bassingbourn Church
ALL WELCOME
The following extract was printed in
The Church Bulletin for Whaddon and
Bassingbourn
'At this special evening service our Archdeacon Jeff Watson will be instituting John Armstrong as the Vicar of our two parishes of Bassingbourn and Whaddon. Now you may say that surely John is our vicar already and to all intents and purposes he is. However technically he is actually Priest-in-Charge and this is because for the past 5 years his “presentation as vicar has been suspended”. This is no reflection on John but simply that the Diocese was going through some wider pastoral reorganisation.

PCC members of both parishes will know that before Christmas, the Diocese suggested that the “suspension” should be continued for a further period of five years but both PCCs strongly argued that this arrangement should come to an end. The Deans of Westminster and the Deans of Windsor, the patrons of the two parishes, gave their support to this and as a result the Bishop of Ely, Bishop Anthony wrote to advise us the he also supported this view and that John could now be inducted as Vicar. His letter referred to both PCCs strong support for John’s ministry, which the Bishop said he was pleased to endorse. So “Good News” all round and do come to this service if you possibly can so we can celebrate together.

Mike Warner & Clare Byatt
Secretaries to Bassingbourn & Whaddon PCCs

John, Vicki and family write:
As a family we appreciate your support. We came to Bassingbourn and Whaddon on the clear direction of the Holy Spirit. Although the post of “vicar” has no time limit, we would consider the length of our stay must also be determined by His leading!

Mothering Sunday Service
St Mary’s Parish Church
Whaddon
Sunday 10 March 9.15am

Easter Coffee Morning with Cakes, Bring & Buy and Children’s Easter Egg Hunt
Saturday 23 March
at 10.00 am
in the Parish Church, Whaddon

Celebrate Easter Sunday at a Service 9.15am
in the Parish Church
ALL WELCOME
INCIDENT ON THE RECREATION GROUND

The Parish Council and the Village Hall Management Committee are very concerned about an incident which took place between the hours of 8.00 and 11.00 p.m. on Saturday 16th February when the motor caravans parked by the village hall had a number of eggs and golf balls thrown at them. At least one caravan was dented in two places.

The following morning the caravanners were approached by a group of "children". A conversation took place between two of the children (who said they were local) and the members of the caravan club, who found this exchange to be "very unnerving and threatening".

The caravanners visit the village several times a year and we would like them to feel welcome, not threatened. This is the second such occurrence of egg throwing at caravans parked on the recreation ground in the last two years.

We would like to be certain that this type of incident will not recur in our village.

This has been reported to the police and if anyone has any more information please can they contact PC Gray at Sawston Police Station – incident number 10681-2, Mr Ted Webb, Chairman of the Parish Council or Mrs Wilson, Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator.

BARN OWL SCHEME
SPREADS ITS WINGS

A scheme to encourage more Barn Owls into the countryside is spreading its wings. County Farms Officer, Victoria Mitchell, has said that 10 nesting boxes will be erected in 4 villages in South Cambridgeshire.

One of these villages is "WHADDON".

Barns owls feed on short tailed voles and shrews in farmland and open countryside and their preferred habitat is rough grassland, stream banks, field margins, headside verges and young forestry plantations.

Keep your eyes open for these majestic birds, we would like to hear of sightings.

Source:
News and Information from Cambridgeshire County Council – Farms Estate.
Welcome Whaddonians to the first of an occasional series of newsletters about your Village Hall modernisation work.

But first please allow all of us, Members of the Parish Council, to thank everyone for attending the introductory presentation of the proposals and all those willing hands that helped to make the evening so successful.

There are no pretty pictures this time, only questions to be answered together with the confirmation of our Parishioners' continued interest, support and good ideas needed to help define the brief around which the proposals can evolve. Nothing is yet cast in stone.

Although no formal voting took place on the choice of the retention of the old village school building or for a totally new structure altogether, it did seem on the night that the former option with a new multi-purpose building attached to the rear of the existing hall was the favoured option.

Unless, therefore, an early and thunderous reaction to the idea is received the design process will proceed on the assumption that almost everyone in the village would like to see the salvation and revitalisation of our little reminder of Whaddon's history.

So what has been going on and what needs to be done now before the realities of the new village hall start to emerge?

Following upon the introduction of our ideas one of the main priorities is to sustain interest and regular input from the village community without having to distribute yet more boring forms to complete before finding their way into the salvage bin.

It is none-the-less very important that regular feedback is received from all interested parties, indeed the questions to be answered on grant aid application forms refer specifically to the extent of local community support the proposals have received. This would refer not only to the building operation but the facilities, benefits and activities to be associated with it.

So your suggestions and involvement over the coming months would help things along.

In the course of our investigations two village halls serving communities of a similar size to our own have been visited at the kind invitation of the Toft and Thriplow Parish Councils, each of which were granted substantial grant aid toward their development costs.

Thriplow Village Hall is an entirely new building whilst Toft's Hall is a clever example of the conversation of a school building very similar in appearance to our own. The example set by each is that whether by conversion or new build, a very appealing and economic result is possible by the clever use of the available space without the need for a significant increase in floor area with obvious reductions in contracting costs.

Mindful of the expense involved in the construction of new building works, our next subject of investigations will involve the adaptation of the cheapest space available i.e. the replanning and layout of the existing structures on site and the introduction of the extra rooms into the roof space, as Committee Members have seen in the Toft Hall, used in an invitingly attractive way.

With the Whaddon population assessed at only about 500 persons, any method of reducing the budget whilst maintaining the overall vision should be the aims of the earliest assessment.

The next objective will attempt to demonstrate that with the innovative use of the existing space and planned multi-user facilities; the overall concept can be confined within a reasonable cost frame.

It is anticipated therefore that in the process the "grand design" produced for illustration purposes at the first meeting will become subjected to modification with the benefit of reduced costings and improved prospects on our application for maximum grant funding.
WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

The development or alterations to the Village Hall cannot be implemented by the existing Whaddon Parish Council. All grant applications are evenly proscription on this point.

A specially dedicated team will need to be appointed with a Chairperson and secretarial support and a separate bank account. This group would in most cases be set up as a charitable trust to which the hall would be leased.

There are members of our community who have expressed an early interest but the Management Team and Trustees Membership yet remains as an opportunity open to anyone who would like to participate.

Grant aid is available for building and conversion work, equipment, services and plant, from organisations like the National Lottery Fund, South Cambridgeshire District Council and from some of the many Historic Building and Environmental organisations.

Investigations are now under way but the consideration for grant aid would rely in the end for its success on a full presentation of all aspects of the construction and cost plan assessment. Further details describing the aims, needs and conformity of the proposal with the Disabled Discrimination Act 2004 and planning consents also feature in grant applications.

Plans for resource manager, financial proposals and income forecasts are also required.

Grant aid would of course not be sufficient in itself to pay for all costs, the upper limits being in the region of 60%. Parish funds, income or loans and private donations etc. would be required to make up the difference.

Our research has confirmed what had already been envisaged from the earlier village survey, namely that youngster and children should be actively involved in the proposals and where possible their suggestions incorporated into the Brief. One young man attended the first Village Hall Development Meeting and bravely endured the early formalities to promote afterward some very amusing and entertaining ideas for both the New Hall and the forthcoming Jubilee Celebrations.

A suggestion has been made that a “Children’s Council” could be counted upon for some lively ideas, which if not formally presented in true Council format, might by transmitted by text messages from their hand sets.

Are there youngsters in Whaddon who would like to join in? All suggestions other than a new “Dome” would be welcomed.

By the time the next Newsletter is due for circulation, it is envisaged that the Old School building will have been surveyed and the scope of the work needed for restoration identified. This is the minimum fallback situation if later difficulties arise in finally producing the main scheme.

From the drawings already prepared it should be possible to obtain a preliminary reaction from the District Planning Officer to the proposals and the Highways Department in particularly on the revised lay-by and the modified boundary railings consent.

Preliminary and informal approaches are being made to grant sources, professional advisory groups etc. and some urgent work must be done on the calculations of what our ideas are going to cost.

Thank you again and please maintain contact with your Parish Council with any matter, which comes to mind. A suggestion box will be located at the Village Hall for your messages.

Clive Hough
Architect RIBA

On behalf of the Chairman and Members of
The Whaddon Parish Council

February 15th 2002
ST MARY'S CHURCH

THE ORGAN

The history of this organ was initially researched by the Rev. F. C. Clare, vicar of Whaddon 1943-1952 and he left the following in his notes.

The organ was built by John Snetzler in or about 1740. His first organ built in England was that made for the celebrated composer George Frederick Handel and was used at the first performance of the Messiah in 1742.

Our organ, which has the old raised keys made in strips of ivory and ebony, was built as a chamber organ (that is for a private home) without swell or pedal clavier and in its original condition was bought through a music dealer in 1857 by Mr. John Beaumont of Town Farm, Whaddon. Mr. Beaumont had the instrument rebuilt and enlarged by J W Walker and gave it to Whaddon Church.

There is a strong local tradition that at one time the organ was in the Parish church, now a cathedral, at Manchester. The fine carved angel blowing a gilded trumpet certainly suggests a former position in a great church.

Following up the researches of the Rev Clare we have found that during the restoration of Whaddon Church in the late 1860s the organ was removed and placed in the Royston Institute. This removal was undertaken by the organ makers J W Walker & Sons Ltd who charged the sum of £5 4s for-

“Organ carefully taken down in church, conveyed to the Royston Institute and there refixed, regulating and tuning the same”.

An article in the Royston Crow for September 1868 explained the cooperation between Whaddon and the Royston Institute. It stated:

It is deemed advisable to explain how it is that Whaddon and Royston are united in an attempt to raise funds for their mutual benefit.

When Mr. Beaumont proposed to place his Organ in the Institute during the restoration of Whaddon Church, it was felt that it would occasionally be a source of great musical enjoyment. The Committee of the Institute also felt that, with the Organ in their Hall, their income would suffer through them not being able to let the Hall for certain entertainments requiring a large platform space. Both parties, therefore, appearing to have an equal claim, it was agreed that, whenever the Organ was used for any Concert or Entertainment, the profit arising from the sale of tickets should be equally proportioned between Whaddon and Royston.

Before the advent of electricity a boy from the village was employed to pump the bellows. The organ was played by visiting organists as well as local ones and the amount of wind required was adjusted to each player’s requirements.

International Interest

Recently the organ has been visited by a party of enthusiasts from the Netherlands and has been played by a Professor on holiday from South Africa.

A leaflet, compiled by Ted Webb, containing an illustration and details of Mr Beaumont is available in the church.

WHADDON, CAMBS.
MESSRS. NASH AND SON
Are instructed by Mrs. Judd, who is declining Farming, to sell by Auction, on Thursday, 8th October, 1868, at 1 for 2 o'clock, LIVE & DEAD FARMING STOCK, COMPRISING

3 WORKING HORSES, 3 MILCH COWS,
8 2-year-old Steers and Sturks, 2 Sows, and
14 Store Pigs,
Ploughs, Harrows, Roll, Dressing Machine, 2 Carts, 8-coulters
Steer Drill, Harness, Gig, 12-bushel Brewing Copper and Plant,
Implements and various Effects.

May be Viewed on the morning of the Sale. Catalogues may be had on the Premises, and of the Auctioneers, at Royston.

According to the 1861 census Mrs. Sarah Judd was the wife of Joseph Judd who farmed a 100 acre farm in the High Street and employed four people.
A QUESTION OF FROGS

Frogs are mentioned in many place names in the area and we have our own Frog Hall in Whaddon. Three articles show us that frogs in this area have been thought about for at least 100 years. The first appeared in a recent edition of the New Scientist and the other two appeared in 1903 in East Anglian Notes and Queries, a publication written by early local historians.

The ponds of Southern England are full of water frogs, but these are descendants of French and Belgian green frogs introduced by 19th century landowners. In the mid 1900s it was felt that the brown pool frogs of East Anglia, which were edible and unfortunately now extinct, were different from these green frogs.

After research which included, looking at DNA samples from specimens in museums collected around East Anglia in the 19th century, examining 1000s of tiny bone fragments found by archaeologists in digs in the fens, and analysing sound patterns of their croaks, it was decided that these brown frogs were linked with Scandinavia and arrived in Britain before the North Sea formed and cut off Britain from Scandinavia about 8000 - 9000 years ago.

The correspondence in the early articles of 1903 show that naturalists were familiar with the different raucous choruses of frogs and Fenland frogs were recognised as a distinctive English species. They knew they were edible and one naturalist suspected they had been introduced by the Romans.

Thomas Bell, a dental surgeon and a leading expert on frogs of his day, commented on the "very remarkable and sonorous croak" of a frog to be heard in the Fens so commonly that they were known as "Cambridgeshire nightingales" or "Whaddon organs". In 1849 he recalled observations made by his father in the late 1700s who had described to his son "the peculiarly loud, and somewhat musical sound uttered by the frogs of Whaddon and Fowlmere".

Another correspondent in reply thought the term "Whaddon Organ" was suspicious and thought that it really referred to the boasting of Whaddon Churchmen who had acquired a barrel organ and he questioned the existence of the frogs in both Fowlmere and Whaddon because of physical constraints.

Certainly there were frogs but will we ever know if Whaddon had the Fenland Frog or a simple Belgian import?

DREADFUL WEATHER

The great snowstorm of 1836 was particularly memorable for the suddeness and its extent. It commenced to snow on the night of Christmas Eve (Saturday), all day Sunday and the next day. No snow storm in Britain for the previous 100 years equalled it in violence and extent. On the evening of the 26th after it had been snowing for 48 hours, the wind increased to a hurricane, and in the night the fall of snow was from four to six feet, while the drifts were from 20 to 30 feet in depth. All communication was cut off for a week. Because of the season many more stage coaches were on the road than usual and many a Christmas party was without its guest. Coaches were snowed up everywhere and had many passengers not been accommodated in private houses and inns, many would have perished. The Edinburgh Mail, Boston Mail and Stamford Coach on their way to London were all stranded in the vicinity of Whaddon. It is interesting to note that the remarkable storm was followed by a serious outbreak of influenza.

"Prevention is Better Than Cure"

A Notice from the Workhouse (1866)

Precautions against Cholera and Diarrhoea

- Boil all water to be used for drinking purposes fresh every day.
- Lime wash inside your Houses.
- Clean out all Sinks and Drains.
- Remove all dirt heaps and slop holes from near your doors.
- Keep open the windows as much as possible.
- Use Lime and other Disinfectants for Privies and Sinks or Drains.
- Always eat a crust of Bread in the morning before you go out to work.

Whaddon was part of the Royston Union ran by a Board of Guardians. Unions were set up in 1834 to administer the New Poor Law which provided help for the destitute. Twenty-eight villages in Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire were in this Union and each village had a representative on the Board of Guardians. The workhouse was situated on the Baldock Road. A. Coningsby was Whaddon's representative at the turn of the century.