

## Parish Diary

### April

Sat	1	10.30am	Coffee Morning	Midwicket, Pavenham Rd
Sun	2	10.15am	Mothering Sunday Family Service	St Mary's Church
Wed	5	8.00pm	Festival Weekend Planning Meeting	Pinchmill Hall
Sun	9	10.15am	Choral Communion	St Mary's Church
Mon	10	7.30pm	Annual Church Parish Meeting	Pinchmill Hall
Sun	16	10.15am	Palm Sunday Matins followed by a short Communion	
Mon	17	7.30pm	Meditation and Night Prayer	(Reading, short address,
Tue	18	7.30pm	Meditation and Night Prayer	period of silence
Wed	19	7.30pm	Meditation and Night Prayer	night prayer)
Thu	20	7.30pm	Maundy Thursday Communion	St Mary's Church
Fri	21	10.00am	Family Service (No Communion)	St Mary's Church
Fri	21	7.30pm	Good Friday Evening Service	St Mary's Church
Sun	23		Easter Sunday Choral Communion	St Mary's Church
Sun	30		Choral Communion	St Mary's Church

### May

Sat	6	10.30am	Coffee Morning	'Long Mynd', Pavenham Rd
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**Priest in Charge: Rev David Mason (309737)**

**Churchwardens: Ken Shrimpton (781381), Rosemary Brough (782104)**

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We are happy to publish any item on any subject which might be of general interest. Feedback on any of the items published would be most welcome – whether for printing or not.

Items for next month's Ouse News should be sent to Clive Just, 2 The Old Rectory by the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month. It would help if items were emailed to [OuseNews@bigfoot.com](mailto:OuseNews@bigfoot.com); sent on disk; or typed. Phone 781967 for more details.

# Felmersham & Radwell Ouse News

On line: [www.felmersham48.freemove.co.uk](http://www.felmersham48.freemove.co.uk)

April 2000

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### Parish Footpaths

**Chris Ure**

A new footpaths leaflet for Felmersham and Radwell has just been published by the local P3 Group. Designed and illustrated by David Cardy and family, the leaflet provides details of the definitive footpaths and rights of way for both villages. The Parish Paths Partnership (P3) is a national scheme developed to ensure that a network of parish footpaths is legally defined, properly maintained and well publicised. The leaflet will shortly be available at the Village Hall and local public houses. If you would like to join the P3 group or if you would like a copy of the new leaflet, you can contact Chris Ure, the local P3 representative on 782126. Walkers are reminded to keep to the designated public paths, to respect farmland and livestock and at all times to follow the country code.

### WI.

**May Mills**

It is a comforting thought that down the centuries, human nature does not change. Friendships will always be made and broken, and so it was with Queen Anne and Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, as chronicled in their vast correspondence, and placed firmly in historical context for us by Colonel Woodrow. Theirs was an intense friendship of apparent opposites, the energetic and domineering Sarah seeming to hold an extraordinary power over the infatuated and homely Anne, who allowed her friend to dispense with royal formalities to the extent that they used the nicknames of Mrs Morley and Mrs Freeman. After a period of nearly forty years the fiery and temperamental Sarah fell victim to the rising influence of the Tories, and her star waned as her position was usurped by the gentle Abigail Masham, the Queen's new bosom friend. How will human nature fare in a future dot.com world?

### Coffee Mornings

**Mary Watson**

This month's coffee morning in aid of the Felmersham Church Restoration Fund will be held at the home of Karen and Geoff Stokley, 'Midwicket', Pavenham Road, Felmersham on Saturday April 1<sup>st</sup> at 10.30 a.m.

Please come and bring your friends. Contributions of cakes, toiletries, produce and bric-a-brac for the bring-and-buy stall will be most welcome.

### Festival Weekend

**Maggie Spoor**

The next planning meeting will be on 5<sup>th</sup> April at 8pm at Pinchmill all are welcome.

### **New Season, New Life**

**Rev David G Mason**

This year I am writing the article for the Ouse News just as Spring begins. The winter this year has been kind, and all the spring flowers are coming into bloom. The leaves are beginning to sprout in the hedgerows, and in the fields the new lambs are appearing. Everywhere has a fresh look about it. The drabness of winter once again gives way to the new life of spring once again as the regular cycle of the seasons continues.

Easter this year falls almost as late as it can possibly be, so that be the time it comes many of the early spring flowers will be over. Just as with the coming of the spring we see again new life coming into the dull and drab landscape, so at Easter we remember how, at the resurrection, Jesus rose from the dead and brought new hope to the disciples who thought that all had been lost with the death of the one on whom they had pinned all their hopes. The drabness and despair that they must have felt after the arrest, trial and execution of Jesus was transformed into joy and renewed hope as Jesus appeared in their midst, fully restored to life. At last they were able to understand and accept the things that Jesus had told them about the meaning of the Good Friday and Easter events, and to know that the promise of eternal life given by Jesus was true.

Very soon we will be entering into Holy Week, and studying and remembering all the events of that week that changed the world. However much we have heard about the events in previous years, there is still something to be gained by going again to the scriptures and making a special study in reading and prayer about them. The age in which we live is as much in need of the gospel message of love and hope as it ever was, and I am sure that Jesus has much to say to us as we seek to be his faithful followers and disciples. I hope that we will all endeavour to spend extra time in Holy Week away from our usual activities so that we can spend some time in prayer and study working again through the gospel accounts of that week. Let us come to Easter ready to rejoice at the resurrection, and ready to re-dedicate ourselves to serving Jesus in our lives and witness.

### **Annual Church Meeting**

**Rev David G Mason**

St Mary's Church Annual Parish Meeting to be held in Pinchmill Hall on Monday 10 April at 7.30pm Please come to support your Church and let us hear your views on any matters connected with it.

### **Computers and equipment wanted**

**Clive Just**

Pinchmill School are planning to develop a computer area with 10 PCs. They already have a few PCs but many more are required. Do you know anyone who might be able to donate unwanted computer equipment e.g. Pentium PCs, monitors, printers, network cards or hubs? Although most of the equipment should be in working order we are happy to take computers that are not working - provided they are repairable! There will be a small work party to put in additional workspace and a qualified electrician is also needed. If you are able to help with any of these things please contact me on 781967.

### **Bedfordshire Advocacy Service for Older People**

We are fast approaching the end of our first year operating as an independent charity. Client numbers continue to increase. We are now working on average with 50 clients each month. The problems and issues people have cover every area. The assistance given by advocates includes help with writing official letters, assisting with major changes such as home moves, legal and financial matters, supporting people dealing with different kinds of abuse, assisting people suffering from dementia in hospital settings as well as in their own homes.

We will be doing widespread publicity throughout the County as from April . We always need more Volunteer Advocates, to help us meet the needs of a growing client demand throughout the County. We will be running a new training course in May/June, so please contact us for further details. We are also currently looking for a Volunteer Treasurer to join our service and would be pleased to hear from anyone who might be interested and who has a financial background. The Treasurer needs to have computer experience and details of all our volunteer requirements are available on request. The process of securing our future funding is on going and we are very busy with applications being sent to a variety of funders. If anyone has accessed sources of funding that have been particularly useful please tell us about them.

Last, but not least, please tell people about our Service. Our work is voluntary and of real help to many older people who have problems to resolve in their lives. The service is free and confidential. If you, or someone you know, need an advocate please telephone Gail on 01234 218880 or Heather on 01582 470903.

### **Provision Of Disabled Access Lift At The Mill**

**Theo Gibbs**

Just close your eyes and dream of winning one of the following super prizes:

1st prize: £500 CASH; 2nd prize: "Wining & Dining" worth at least £220; 3rd prize: "Sports & Leisure" selection value £200; 4th prize "Homes & Gardens" worth £200+; 5th prize "Pamper Yourself" selection value £125; 6th prize £100 worth of "Nights Out"; 7th prize "Let's Celebrate" value £100+ and many more.

Now is your chance to turn a dream into reality by taking part in our Grand Prize Draw. The proceeds of the draw are to be used to help provide a disabled access lift at the theatre. This is an essential part of the ongoing programme of improvement of the facilities at the Mill for the benefit of disabled people of all ages in the community, who use the Mill Theatre as theatre goers, members of the company or supporters of this very worthy Charity.

Planning permission has already been granted and we now urgently need to raise some £47,500 in order to provide dedicated disabled access facilities.

If you would like to buy some tickets - or better still take some books of tickets and sell them to family and friends, colleagues, or anyone else - then please contact me on 782474. Tickets are £1 per ticket or £5 per book and the draw will take place at the theatre on Saturday 27th May 2000.

## Save the Children Fund

## Ron and Judith Smith

Bedford was the host branch to the twenty five Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire Save the Children Fund Branches at their annual conference on Saturday, 18 March, at Sharnbrook Upper School.

The fund operates in fifty six countries, including the U.K. Work in two areas were the subjects of two of the speakers, former Yugoslavia and a project in the North of England. In the former, SCF is the lead organisation in reuniting displaced children with their families and when children are orphaned by the fighting, placing them with, and supporting foster homes as against placing them in orphanages. Thanks to the generosity of the British public, SCF was able to help some 100,000 children by providing emergency food, clothing, boots and shoes, household kits, in addition to establishing primary healthcare centres that will continue to function when the U.N. retires. The problem of school avoiders was the subject of SNAP - School Non-Attendance Project, being piloted in Blackburn, Darwen and Bolton by SCF. The statistics do not make for good reading; one million children play truant, 100,000 are temporarily excluded and 12,300 permanently excluded annually. The SCF project was mounted to find ways of reducing these figures.

A lighthearted note was introduced by a senior supply officer of the Fund who talked entertainingly on the logistics of getting aid quickly and cheaply to emergency areas, and dealing with offers of goods from various organisations. He mentioned the six tons of Mars bars he had regretfully to decline, and the hundreds of cricket shirts produced with the wrong logo which were accepted with delight. There was also the tale of one hopeful entrepreneur who wanted the Fund to transport his Hot Dog stand to Kosovo to sell his wares to passing refugees, with 50% of the profit to SCF. When the offer was declined promptly, he offered a 75%/25% split!

Midday on Friday, 3 March, the Bedford branch secretary received a telephone call saying 'tomorrow and Sunday, Sainsbury plc has given permission to Save the Children Fund to collect at all their stores for the Mozambique appeal'. Persuading people to help by 'shaking a tin' usually takes weeks to complete a rota of volunteers. This time it had to be done in hours. In the event, £2,680 was donated by Sainsbury shoppers at the Clapham Road store and a few extra grey hairs acquired by the Branch. Our number of volunteer helpers willing to give an hour on collecting days is diminishing through natural wastage. We do need your help for the benefit of children whose need is so great.

Our next collecting days are:

30 April	10am - 4pm	Sainsbury, Clapham Road
6 May	9am - 5pm	Q.D.Store (was Safeway:)
8 May	7am - 9pm	Bedford Rail Station

Please help us! We need you for the sake of those children. Contact Ron & Judith Smith on 781430 if you can spare an hour to help.

## A Light in the Dark

The millennium cross at St Mary's:  
A new dawning made so profound;  
A message of peace and salvation  
A beacon of hope all around.

The cross borne by our Lord to redeem us  
The pain of a crucified King;  
The joy of a brand new beginning  
With hope that faith only can bring.

Floodlit to begin a new century:  
A symbol of more than just light;  
Christ's promise of love and forgiveness  
Shining out in the darkness of night.

The cross on the tower at St Mary's  
Is destined quite soon to depart,  
But the message of hope and salvation  
Forever can stay in our heart.

This anonymous poem was written as a thank you for the vision to erect the millennium cross at St. Mary's Church. The cross will be lit over the Easter period and then removed.

**Felmersham and Radwell W. I.  
are holding a**

***CAR BOOT SALE***

**Sunday April 30th  
10am to midday**

**FELMERSHAM VILLAGE HALL  
Church End Rd**

**£5 pre booked, £6 on the day**

**20p Entrance fee (adults)  
Refreshments available**

**To book phone 781430 or 781204**

## Annual Parish Open Meeting

**Maggie Spoor**

At the Annual Open Meeting held on 7th March 2000, 5 Parish Councillors, County Councillor Foster, PC Jessop and 6 members of the public attended.

There were reports from the Chairman, Borough Councillor Hulatt, County Councillor Foster, PC Jessop (Beat Manager), a Financial Report by the Clerk, and a report on the P3 Group by Mr Ure.

Mrs Spoor said that after reducing the precept last year, Councillors had voted in January to keep it at its present level of £6,000. Over the next year we will be looking at a number of projects to improve the general surroundings of the villages. Most complaints to councillors have concerned litter and dogs fouling footpaths and verges in the village. Two 'poop scoop' bins have been purchased (with sponsorship by Daisy Bank Kennels) and will be installed soon. From this summer the Borough is introducing legislation making it an offence to allow your dog to foul a footpath or verge. (Please keep your dog(s) on a lead in the villages and clean up after them). Last year the Council took the decision to improve the grasscutting. We are aware we have spent more on grasscutting than in previous years. If you do not agree that we should continue in this way it is possible to revert to the County Council cutting the grass. They will cut 6 times a year within the 30 mph limit and twice a year outside the limit.

Mrs Spoor also reported on the churchyard extension - if anyone would like to see the archaeologists' report she has a copy; the 'Millennium Mugs' project - 137 mugs were distributed; 20 Millennium oak trees are being planted along the roadside between Felmersham & Radwell. Parish Councillors have attended meetings organised by the Borough and County Councils and have maintained regular contact with departments at the Town and County Halls and with the local Police.

Borough Councillor Hulatt told us about the Local Plan Enquiry. This has now closed and the Inspector will report next year. The Borough is producing its own community newspaper which should be delivered to every household.

County Councillor Foster told us that Bedfordshire has the lowest council tax in the country. In spite of this they will be increasing the money available to parishes for highway works from £2000 to £4000 next year.

PC Jessop spoke about the rural responsibilities he shares with PC Anstey. They want to work in partnership with communities, Homewatch, and particularly with young people.

Financial Report. The Clerk stated that the audit for the year 1998-99 had been completed satisfactorily. Cash in hand was £10,544.02. (This includes the £2,000 grant held for the Village Hall for the new curtains).

In his report on the P3 Group, Chris Ure asked us to report any problems with overgrown footpaths, etc., and stated that the guided walk he has produced in conjunction with David Cardy has been printed and is available locally. This is an excellent guide and Chris and David are to be congratulated.

Parishioners' comments at the end of the meeting included:

A criticism that the Council has been a 'save, save' council. Whilst not advocating profligacy, Councillors were reminded of their duty to raise a realistic precept which, when spent effectively, would bring about benefits to the whole community.

We were urged to ensure that the churchyard consecration would be a community event with as many parishioners involved as possible. Felmersham bus shelter ceiling was in need of repair.

An idea for timetabling Agenda items at future Council meetings.

The Open Meeting then closed and was followed by the Parish Council meeting.

Items discussed included:-

The post box - the Post Office has run out of new boxes! Next allocation due in September. Clerk will request that they at least paint the existing box. Town Lot field - letter to Trustees re. future tenancy. Churchyard extension - agreed to re-apply for change of use to burial ground.

Highways - Problems caused by cars parked in the Old Road and Memorial Lane - letter to School Governors. Kerbing along the Old Road in a poor state. Also, cars parking on Radwell Green.

Pavenham Road - meeting with Andrew Prigmore (County Highways), Environment Agency and Geoff Hulatt. Drains are full again. Agreed that grill to road culvert will be removed and spikes installed to collect debris. Residents are requested to clean their part of the ditch.

A kerb will be installed outside Nos. 5 - 8 Baileys Villas to help stop water getting into the houses.

Lights on Marriotts Close steps have been vandalised yet again.

Correspondence with Raglan and Pilgrim Housing Associations regarding letting criteria of houses at Swansholme.

Anglia Water will be installing a pumping station just south of the cricket field.

From 8th May the library van will be in parish every other Friday. In Radwell from 10.20 am - 10.30 am, and in Felmersham from 10.40 am - 11.40 am.

Bulky Refuse Cart will be in Felmersham (Marriotts Close) on 6th May and 23rd September 3.00 pm - 5.00 pm, and in Radwell (The Green) on 7th May and 24th September 1.00 pm - 3.00 pm. Make a note on your calendars.

And finally - in conjunction with the WI we are taking part in the Tidy Britain and the Borough's 'Operation Spring Clean 2000'. This will mainly take place on Saturday 29th April in Felmersham and Radwell from 10.30 am. The Borough have offered litter pickers (tongs!), gloves, and bags and will collect the results of our efforts. Tidy Britain are offering tabards and publicity material!! Could you spare a little time to help? If so, please meet by the church in Felmersham or The Green in Radwell at 10.30 am on the 29th April. Thank you.

## Epiphany

It was, I thought, the star that started it,  
exciting,  
beguiling,  
urging men forward over undetermined ways,  
so, when it was my turn  
to stand on the brink of a new millennium,  
i looked for my star.

None was there.

The earth lay silent  
insensate,  
indifferent,  
soaking in a quiet rain,  
lit only by the sodium glow from a distant town,  
and the security lamps,  
ring fencing the research station on the eastern hill.

Yet, in the morning when the blinds were drawn,  
a star shone at me through the slats.  
Beside it, in a greening sky,  
a final quarter moon lay on its back,  
cradling the rest of the orb within its curve.

I went into the garden  
the better to observe this punctual phenomenon.  
Its design, it seemed, too exquisite for mere chance encounter,  
and, as I stood, in silent elation,  
two vermilion vapour trails,  
lit by a sun that had yet to reach our shores,  
streaked across the sky above the research station.

This was the stuff of prophecy,  
material ripe for legend.  
Doubtlessly explicable,  
yet, nonetheless,  
mysterious, significant,  
eternally renewable.

A sudden movement shook the silver birches,  
from behind them rose three great black birds,  
slowly they flapped across the vision pendant in the sky  
blurring its purity

disrupting my private celebration  
of the turning of the years.

Yet still there was no message,  
no oracle spoke.

Winter sunshine flooded the garden,  
outshone, the lesser lights off dawn withdrew,  
into infinity.

My star had come  
I had seen it from afar  
and I had worshipped it.

Now it was time to retreat into the new century  
knowing that, after all,  
it was no coincidence of star and moon that started it.  
It was a death.

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### Toad Of Toad Hall vs Kermit The Frog

### The Wildlife Trust

Know how to spot the difference between a toad and frog? The primary indicator is their skin. Toads have drier, bumpy skin which is brownish whilst frogs have smooth, moist, green skin - their slimy look is caused by a secretion from glands in the skin to keep it moist and supple.

Frogs tend to feed during the night at the edges of ponds using their characteristic long, sticky tongues to capture flying insects. Toads travel afar to get their food, which includes snails, slugs and woodlice.

During the colder winter season when temperatures drop below freezing, the male frogs bury themselves in mud at the bottom of ponds. Here they slow down and hibernate, breathing through their skin. Young, female frogs and toads hibernate under logs, stones and amongst leaves.

Frogs lay their spawn in clumps in shallow water where toads prefer deeper water and lay their eggs in long rope-like formations, which wind around plant stems. Out of 2,000 eggs, on average only five adults will survive to breed.

The Wildlife Trust urges that frog and toad spawn should be left alone as they often die needlessly when removed from their normal environment. One real danger is when spawn is taken from domestic ponds and dumped out in the wild; this can spread infection like the horrifically named Red Leg disease.

Why not help protect local wildlife and become a member of The Wildlife Trust. to join over the phone or ask for a membership leaflet, simply ring the Membership Secretary on 364213.