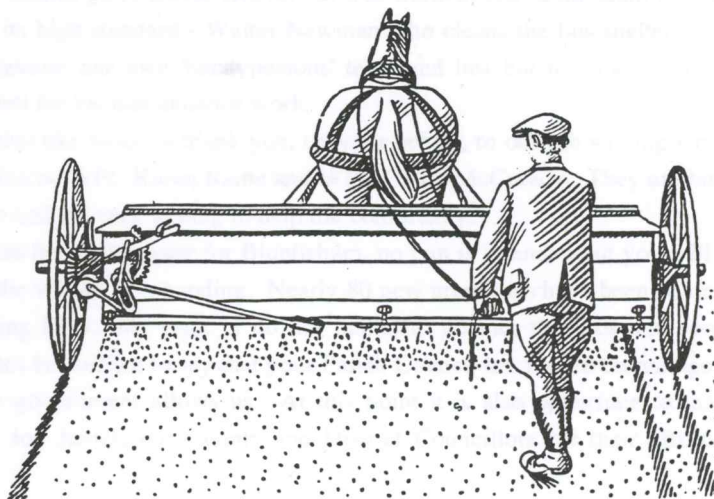


BLUNTISHAM PARISH NEWSLETTER 1998



"SPREAD THE NEWS"

BLUNTISHAM PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

APRIL 1998

Firstly, a warm welcome to all the new residents in the Parish, it is our sincere wish that you will all be happy in Bluntisham.

Whilst I am writing this introduction, I am hoping that it will be a longer format than in the past, as local clubs and other groups in the village will be putting pen to paper with their own short reports.

Before launching into the past year, I would like to extend some thanks. Firstly many of you will know that our Parish Clerk of the last two years, Eric Long, has handed over to Richard Ellerker. Many thanks to Eric for keeping the Parish Council in order, we wish you and Jean all the best with your other commitments for the future. At the same time our best wishes go to Richard taking on the job as clerk. Unseen by many, our thanks go to David Gedye, our tree warden, and to the team that keeps the village at its high standard - Walter Newman who cleans the bus shelters, Carol and Wimp Chessum our own 'handypersons' team and last but not least, our thanks to Tom Barnett for his maintenance work.

I should also like to say a thank you, on your behalf, to our job sharing Community Police Officers, WPC Karen Raine and WPC Cathy McCready. They are both doing a great job and are very willing to help the community.

1997/98 has been a big year for Bluntisham, no pun is intended but you will all have seen that the village is expanding. Nearly 80 new properties have been committed by the Planning Dept. this year. I do not intend to go into the pros and cons of the various sites but suffice to say that your Parish Council has fought the village's corner as well as government allows us. At this point it is also opportune to thank John Eddy and Joy James, our County and District Councillors for their efforts on our behalf.

On a more positive note we have succeeded in obtaining a 7.5 tonne weight restriction through the villages of Colne and Bluntisham, which should limit the flow of heavy goods lorries through the villages.

1997 saw the return of the fair which hopefully will again be on the new playing field at the end of April to the beginning of May.

Mr Charles Pittoors

Mr Charles Pittoors lives in Belgium and he and his three brothers were billeted in Bluntisham during World War I. They lived in the Chapel as Belgian refugees with their parents, the children attending the Old School. The father of Mr Pittoors was

skilled in Flemish wrought iron work and he produced the sign over the Walnut Trees and the wrought iron gate trestle. He was also responsible for the pedestal for flower arrangements in the Chapel, which was given as a thank you gift. They left the village in 1916 to do munition work at Letchworth.

I am sure that you will be interested to know that Mr Pittoors who is aged 86 is visiting the village at the end of April with his children and a granddaughter.

I suppose the last major feature of the year is the proposed community hall, of which more later.

At this point, prior to other reports, I am going to raise some old chestnuts. Very briefly:

1. **Speeding vehicles** : Too many vehicles go through the village at high speed and sadly this is very often village residents.

2. **Dog fouling** : This is anti-social and also against the law. There is now a fixed penalty fine which is enforceable. Would dog owners please be responsible and use a bag (freely available from HDC). Do not leave droppings on footpaths or the playing fields, especially the new playing field next to the school, Meeting Walk and Mill Lane, which all appear to be regarded as public dog toilets. Failure to use a bag may result in it costing you a hefty fine.

3. **Litter** : Please use the bins provided, especially on the playing field..

4. **Vandalism** : Several hundred pounds of Parish rates was wasted by a few individuals last year with mindless vandalism.

As a final item before the Club/Society newsround, my sincere thanks to all the Parish Councillors who have worked hard on your behalf and suffered me as a Chairman.

Village Information

Update on the Village Hall Proposal

Since our new committee was set up in 1996 we have been working toward our target of a new village hall for the millenium.

The process has been a long one, at times frustrating, and so far there seems to be no end in sight. From the initial rush of setting up a committee, starting a feasibility study and village research, things went into the hands of the bureaucrats as planning permission and other matters have to be discussed by various official bodies, and that takes time.

That is where we are at the moment. We are waiting to hear from Hunts. District Council (HDC) as to what our next move can be. They are in favour of the new hall. Though they have imposed various rulings on the matter, they have also made many helpful suggestions.

Planning permission to build on the site of the current village hall was turned down late last year. We have been looking into the possibility on building on the land next to the school, the land is owned by the Cambridgeshire County Council. They have stated that they want to capitalise on that ownership by building a small housing estate on the land. This is not possible under current village planning guidelines, and the Parish Council are not in favour of a housing development on this site. Because of these policy disagreements it means a hall cannot be built there for the foreseeable future. The one site remaining is on the land at the back of the new Wimpey estate, which will be given to the Parish Council soon. We are discussing this suggestion with HDC and hope to hear from them in the near future.

We would like to thank everyone who came to the open evening at St Helens School, we have filed all of the information from that night along with the feasibility study. Once we have a location for a hall we hope to put your suggestions into action.

BLUNTISHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCHEME

As many of you know, the village of Bluntisham is very well covered by the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme whereby suspicious persons or incidents are reported and passed on to the police through various co-ordinators. If you have not yet joined (£1.50 per house) and wish to do so, or do not know who your co-ordinator is, or would simply like more information about the scheme, please contact me, David Lumb, either in writing at 4 High Street, Bluntisham or Tel: 01487 841687.

I would be interested to know of any concerns you may have in which the Policing and/or law enforcement in the village may be improved. A sample list of items which may be of concern are listed below (but you may have other concerns not mentioned). Please advise your co-ordinator or myself as soon as possible in order for the relevant points to be brought to the attention of the police.

Illegal or dangerous parking

Speeding

Drugs/solvent abuse

Gangs of young people

Dog fouling

Vandalism etc.