

the nORTON messenger

May 2017



EDITORIAL:

Firstly, apologies that this issue is a little late – Easter holidays got in the way!!

Another jam-packed month, and with some new contributors. Elmswell History Group – on page 8, and Pakenham Water mill on page 12.

We also have a full summary of the year from the Parish Council on page 2, and a detailed Village Hall update on page 3.

Thank you, once again, for the beautiful images. Robert Lenko has kindly supplied the daffodils picture, and you will also see some lambs from Ickworth amongst some of the articles.

If you have any images from in and around our beautiful village, or any articles that you would like to submit, please do so by 15th May to
nortonmessenger@gmail.com

Best wishes for the coming month,
Sarah

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PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Chair: Andrew Burt, - andysautofix@yahoo.com
Vice Chair: Kirsten Fullam – kafullam@outlook.com
Parish Clerk: Jill Rowland – rowland@talk21.com

PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE 2016/17

This time last year we were pleased to receive the defib for the village which is sited at the village hall. Members of the Parish Council met with the First Responders who demonstrated how it worked.

We met with the Suffolk wildlife trust who talked about their plans for the low meadows off Heath Road. They plan to open a small car park for around 8 cars and increase access for the public rights of way over their land.

The play area continues to be one of the best used facilities in the village. It requires on-going maintenance and improvements. In the last year the slide has required some welding, we have added a set of chin up bars and new signs. The decision was made to relocate one of the picnic tables from the Village Hall play area to the one on prospect road which was a very welcome addition to the facilities there. There has been very little use of the 11 a side football pitch by the adult teams and we are looking to replace this with a cricket wicket and 2 smaller pitches which are more suitable for use by all ages.

Speed control measures within the village have been one of the key items which have appeared on the agenda. We have now got 2 portable Vehicle Activated Signs which can be used on number of posts throughout the village and these can record information on the times and speeds of vehicles. We also have a mobile sign which can be used in other locations . The community speed watch is active and now the weather has improved we will be out and about at all times of the day. On Sunday evening we recorded 3 pages of offenders in about an hour, and despite the common misconception we did not record a single motor bike speeding.

There have been a number of Parish Council organised events which have seen great turnouts.

We started with a village walk which was part of a walking festival and we were shocked by the attendance so we have made these a more regular event. We held another walk which again had a great turn out of both young and old and we have more walks planned for later in the year. The highlight of the events for me was the amazing turn out for remembrance Sunday when we were joined by around

80 people at the memorial. Wreaths were laid by the children of the village and the brownies, school and preschool were all represented. The Parish Council arranged for a Village Christmas tree for the second year and the Salvation Army were kind enough to play carols for us around the tree which again drew a good number of people. We are hoping to plant a permanent Christmas tree at the Village Hall so that we can continue this tradition

The parking along the street is still an ongoing issue but one which despite trying to look for a solution there does seem to be no short term solution. The school has expanded to accommodate additional school years and has around 210 pupils.

Half the village continues to be served by fast broadband where as the other half currently does not. Sadly this area did not fall on to the latest BT roll out and although the exchange at Elmswell does have fibre, it does not reach as far as homes in Norton. 4G has been a viable alternative to this and a number of the mobile providers offer this service although it is more expensive than fibre.

There have been cuts which have affected Norton and the warden controlled housing in school close is loosing its warden and we have also lost the police access at both Ixworth and Elmswell police stations which now only serve as offices.

Norton has seen a number of planning applications passed and due to the land supply issues within mid Suffolk we are likely to see more planning applications over the coming year as people take advantage of this. Our precept has remained the same this year at 20,000 which means the contribution per house hold will be reduced .

Recycling banks have earnt the village almost £1000 which is great. We have decided to update streetlights as and when they break as although there are savings to be made with the new LED style lights it takes around 25 years for the savings to be offset. War memorial is due to be restored later this year thanks to locality funding from county councillor. And we have signed up to display a beacon in 2018 to mark the 100th anniversary of the great war. There have also been plans put in place for some new play equipment, benches goal posts and a cricket wicket at the playing field, pending approval from MSDC.

VILLAGE HALL UPDATE

We are delighted to announce that the toilet renovations are complete. The Hall now accommodates a Disabled/Parent & Toddler Toilet/Baby Changing Unit in addition to a new Bar which is adjacent to the Committee Room. Funding applications were successful from the following sources and without the generosity from these benefactors the works would not have been able to go ahead:

Mid Suffolk District Council
Alfred Williams Charitable Trust
Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation
Garfield Weston Foundation
Suffolk County Councillor Jane Storey
Geoffrey Burton Charitable Trust
Ganzoni Charitable Trust
Havebury Housing Partnership

Village Fundraising contributed a substantial amount of money towards the works so we would like to thank everyone for your support with our events – your attendance and generous support at our events has been phenomenal.

Particular thanks go to Jo Butcher for organising our successful Bingo evening last year and giving up her time to help us fundraise – the evening was a huge success. Jo has kindly offered to help us organise another Bingo evening on Saturday November 18th 2017 so if you want to avoid the rush get your tickets now!

We would like to personally thank Doug Mead and his team of builders at D. S. Mead Ltd for all their hard work with this renovation. His competitive price, flexibility and excellent attention to detail have made it a pleasure for all the Committee Members to work with him. If anyone is looking for a reliable builder then come and look at the work he has carried out in the Hall and see the quality of his workmanship – it speaks for itself!

Thanks are also extended to everyone who has been patient with the parking situation in the Village Hall car park whilst these works have been undertaken. We are particularly aware that the school runs have been more difficult due to limited parking.

We are delighted to announce that tickets are now on sale for our Pig Racing Event on Saturday 17th June and available from Angela Walton on 01359 230 049 or from any other member of the Village Hall Committee. This was an absolutely brilliant evening last year. Grandparents were equally as excited as their grandchildren watching the little pigs race to the finish line. This is a fun family event so get your tickets early to avoid disappointment! More details to follow.



Norton Village Hall

CHARITY
(Registered Charity No. 1053052)



Licensed Bar

Prize Raffle

REGULAR VILLAGE EVENTS

Monday	Toddlesong for 0-4 years -- 0930-1130 -- Salvation Army Hall Jo's fit4all Class -- 1930 -- Village Hall Foodie Mondays at the Norton Dog. £10. for 2 courses & £15. for 3 courses from a special menu
Tuesday	Carpet Bowls -- 1400 -- Baptist Hall '610' Children's Club -- 1800-1900 -- Salvation Army Hall (term time only)
Wednesday	Zumba -- 1815 & 1930 -- Village Hall
Thursday	Lunch Club at the Salvation Army -- 1200-1300
Friday	Zumba -- 0915 -- Village Hall
Sunday	Norton Adult Football - Contact Aaron (aaron.florian@btinternet.com)



NORTON AND DISTRICT TWINNING ASSOCIATION



Quiz Evening 31st March – A huge thank you to everyone who took part in the quiz, making the evening such a success. The questions were ‘just right’, the food hot and tasty and the atmosphere jolly - a recipe for a great night out.

May 25th -28th are the dates for main event of the year when we are visited by our friends from Muids. The celebrations include a Welcome Reception on arrival and a Medieval Banquet on the evening of May 26th. The ‘Jumelage’, as it is known in France, is undergoing a revival in Muids and they now have more members wishing to visit Norton than we have host families. If you would be interested in joining the Twinning Association and hosting a family of 2 adults who have 2 children PLEASE get in touch. You do not need to be able to speak French but some patience and a sense of humour help most of the time. I was once told by one of the ladies who stayed with me that she could not understand my French or English, I was tempted to see if my Welsh language skills could save the day!

Other events:

July 15th Summer Social – a members only event – Treasure Hunt followed by a BBQ

August 20th French Boule and Croquet – a members only event – Cost £5.00

October/November Wine Tasting open to all. Details to follow.

For more information on any aspect of Twinning Association membership and social events please contact Jane Williams, the Membership Secretary, by email at penrhiwgarn@hotmail.com

The menu card features the association's name in a curved script at the top, flanked by the Union Jack and French flags. Below this, the word "Menu" is centered, followed by "To Start" and "Join Norton & District Twinning Association". The "Main Course" section encourages meeting new people and enjoying events. The "Dessert" section offers a chance to go to France and host friends from Muids. At the bottom, a banner provides contact information for the membership secretary.

Norton & District Twinning Association

Menu

To Start

Join Norton & District Twinning Association

Main Course

Meet new people and enjoy our many events

Dessert

A chance to go to France and to host our friends from Muids

For further information please call our membership secretary
Jane Williams on 01359 244 654

ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH.

(Part of the Benefice of Pakenham,
Norton & Tostock, with Great Ashfield,
Hunston & Stowlangtoft)

Priest-in-Charge: Revd. Katherine Valentine
Tel: 01359 235095
Email: katherine@kavalentine.plus.com

Our beautiful and ancient church is open daily for visitors and for private prayer.

MAY 2017

7th	1100	Morning Prayer
14th	1800	Evensong
21st	Rogation Sunday	
	1100	Family Service
	1500	Benefice Rogation Service & Tea at Pakenham - see below
25th	Ascension Day	
	1900	Deanery Communion at Pakenham
28th	0930	Family Communion

ROGATION SUNDAY

21ST MAY 1500 AT PAKENHAM - TRAVELLING SONGS OF PRAISE

Rogationtide is traditionally the time when we ask God for his blessing on all our work, both in the fields and villages of our benefice. It used to be the time when the 'beating of the bounds' took place to denote the specific boundaries of the parish, but also to ensure that God's blessing extended to every inch of the parish. As last year we are going to be holding our benefice Rogation celebrations in Pakenham, travelling around the village with the aid of tractors, praying for fields, gardens, businesses, and village as we go, finishing at the church for tea. We'd love to see you!!

PRAYER 12

from Churches Together in Norton

SATURDAY 3RD JUNE – 0700 - 1900 IN ST ANDREW'S CHURCH

What or whom do you think needs our prayers? There are many in all sorts of need around the world, many situations in need of God's love, and there may be people you know going through difficult times who would appreciate our prayers. As part of the national initiative called 'Thy Kingdom Come' by all the Christian churches in the UK for the



PRAYER 12 - 3rd June 2017

Please pray for

St Andrew's Church – Floodlighting

Would you like to celebrate a special event, memory or person? Our historic village church looks beautiful lit up at night and you can sponsor the lighting as a celebration which is shared with all the village.

The lights will now be on until 0200.

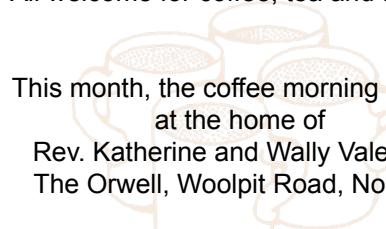
A list of your dedications will be published in the Messenger. There are still opportunities for sponsorship. **Only £10 per week.**

For details, contact Martin Wood
Email: ali.etal@tiscali.co.uk; Phone: 01359 242367

May Coffee Morning

Wednesday 17th May 2017
10.30 till 12.00

All welcome for coffee, tea and a chat.



This month, the coffee morning will be at the home of Rev. Katherine and Wally Valentine. The Orwell, Woolpit Road, Norton.

Please park in the Salvation Army Car park.

If anyone wishes to host a coffee morning in the future, please contact Penny – 01359 232472

week between Ascension & Pentecost, all the churches in Norton and in the Benefice will be committing to twelve hours of prayer, praying in response to your requests. Anyone is welcome to join us in silent prayer, even if you can only pop in for a few minutes. Please write your prayer request on the slip below and post it in the box labelled

"Prayer 12 - Village Prayer Requests" in the Salvation Army Church porch, the Baptist Chapel, or St Andrew's Church porch.

SALVATION ARMY

DATES FOR MAY

Sunday	Services at 1100 & 1800
(Family service/Cafe Church 7th at 1045)	
Monday	Toddlesong 930 -1130
Tuesday	'610' Children's Club 1800 - 1900
Thursday	Lunches 1200 open to all ages
Friday 12th	Games Night 1930
Friday 19th	Craft Night 1900

EASTER EGG HUNT

Over 40 children, plus parents and other family members, took part in our Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Saturday. It was a lovely sunny afternoon and the children (and adults!) had a great time. Thank you to everyone who supported the event and a big thank also to the members of our corps for organising a fun afternoon.

SPRING FAYRE, PLANT & TABLETOP SALE

SATURDAYS 6th & 20th MAY

1100 - 1400

See separate notice for details

For more information about services or events at the Army contact Captains Andrew & Jackie Jarrold on 01359 240787.

Email: Andrew.jarrold@salvationarmy.org.uk/
Jackie.jarrold@savationarmy.org.uk

Website: www.nortonsalvationarmy.co.uk

BAPTIST CHURCH

During May from the 14th to 20th we have Christian Aid Week when there will be a house to house collection be. In past years Norton has been very generous in its giving. If you wish to help out in any way this would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Helen on helen@theallumfamily.co.uk or phone 230093. You can look on the web site at Christianaid.org.uk if you wish to explore more about the charity and their work.



THE SALVATION ARMY

SPRING FAYRE PLANT & TABLETOP SALE

SATURDAYS

6th & 20th MAY

11am - 2pm

**Fish & Chip lunches/hot snacks
Plants, Cakes, bric a brac etc.
Sale tables £5**

**For more info. call
01359 240787**

The ladies of the Church will be going to their Spring Rally at Burlington Baptist Church, Ipswich, on the 17th May. Some of the men from the Carpet Bowls will be visiting West Road Church in Bury on the 21st for a competition evening. We hope they will all have a good time.



DOWN OUR STREET.

I thought that I would share some old school photos over the next few months. The oldest I have is from about 1909 but unfortunately I have no names to go with the children. I have a class photo from 1912 with most of the names. If anyone has any old school photos from either the old school or the new one, I would be most interested in having a copy for the village archive. Even better if you can supply the names as well.

Please email David on bg55599@hotmail.com mentioning 'Down Our Street', Norton. Many thanks.

This photo was taken in July 1989. (If anyone spots a mistake with spellings or names, please contact me at the above email address). I would love to know what everyone is doing now, are you married and what jobs do you have, etc?

L – R starting at the back.

Gemma White, Gareth Douglas, Louise Brown, Clinton Harper, Donna Bennington, Jason Day, Lucy Chipchase.

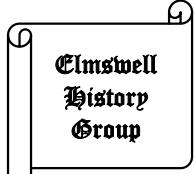
Mrs Arondel, Carrie Fuller, Marie Flack, James Carter, Billy Hooper, Serena Neal, Sally Osborne, Nicky Meekings, Stuart Meekings, Mr Haddon Silver.

Emma Brennan, Rachael Carter, Wayne Brown, Mark Reynard, Richard Flowers, Toby Whitford, Owain Wilson, Andrew Burt, Judy Day, Sian Thurston.

Sarah Plummer, Emma Rowland, Daniel Flowers, Nicholas Carter, Carl Jenkins, Leila Williams, Victoria Thurston, Geneen Neal, Samantha Brown.

Celia Kerr, James Rowland, Neal Whitford, Huw Wilson, Joseph Santy, Daniel Reynard, Katy Brennan.





ELMSWELL HISTORY GROUP

Venue: Wesley Hall, School Rd,
Elmswell IP30 9EE

We are a very friendly group of amateur but enthusiastic history lovers, who offer a warm welcome to members and visitors alike at our monthly meetings. Unless otherwise stated, we meet at 7.30pm on the second Thursday of each month (except August), in Elmswell's Wesley Hall which is next door to the Railway Tavern and opposite the Fire Station in the centre of the village.

The hall has ample on-site parking with full disabled access, and is on the 384/5 bus route.

Cost = £1.50 for members, £3 for non-members.

We had an excellent start to the New Year with our January talk on Elmswell's WW1 aerodrome and the launch of our HLF-funded project on this subject. In February, local historian and British Museum archaeologist, Helen Geake, gave us a fascinating talk on the Anglo-Saxons, followed in March by Gareth Davies' well-received talk on Pablo Fanque's Fair & early Victorian Circus when we were delighted to be reminded that Norfolk's Pablo Fanque was featured on The Beatles' Sgt Pepper album! In April, Edward Martin shared his extensive knowledge on the Moated Halls of East Anglia with an excellent and colourful presentation.

Our next three meetings will be as follows:-

Thursday, 11th May – 7.30pm

Illustrated talk by Mark Mitchels, entitled "*Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, Doctor & Mayor of Aldeburgh*".

Mark is a very popular and highly-regarded speaker who will tell us the fascinating story of the Suffolk girl who, against the odds, became a doctor, then established a hospital, and ended up Mayor of Aldeburgh.

Thursday, 8th June – 7.30pm (preceded by AGM at 7pm)

Illustrated talk by Paul Peachey, entitled "*Elmswell in Postcards*".

Paul has lived in Elmswell all his life, and has amassed a huge collection of village postcards, some of which have not been seen before, and all of which will soon be published in his forthcoming book.

N.B. Due to the General Election, this meeting has had to be re-located to **St John's Church**, Church Rd, Elmswell.

Saturday, 15th July – 10am, Summer outing to West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village

Two-hour guided tour round one of England's great archaeological sites, which has extensive indoor galleries (with many new recent exhibits) and a stunning recreation of an Anglo-Saxon village surrounded by 125 acres of unspoilt countryside, so visitors can explore history and nature. West Stow's remarkable wooden homes were rebuilt using ancient Anglo-Saxon methods on the exact sites of the original settlement after extensive archaeological surveys. Inside, the sights and the smells of a past world make the centuries fall away.

Subsidised Cost = £3 for members, £5 for non-members (would normally cost £6). Tickets for this outing need to be purchased in advance, and will be on sale at our May and June's meetings, or from 01359-242601. Own transport, on-site car park costs £2 per car, lunch is also available (10% off café prices with car park ticket).

For more information on any of these meetings, please contact 01359-242601, or visit our website, www.elmswell-history.org.uk

TOSTOCK PAST AND PRESENT SOCIETY

Our next few meetings are as follows:

Tuesday 2nd May – 1930: Georgette Vale - Julian of Norwich & Margery Kempe: 2 Medieval Mystics
This entertaining evening enlightens and entertains by exploring the lives & devotions of these two remarkable women. Julian was the first Author and Margery wrote the first Autobiography in the English language. We share their visions and take a journey through their books.

6th June – 1900: Evening Visit to Mildenhall Museum

The cost of entry will be £2 at the door and the Society will also be making a donation. Members will be receiving a booking form as we have to know numbers before the visit. Non-members are very welcome but please could they contact me by email or phone (details below). Once we know numbers I will try and combine lifts etc. We envisage leaving Tostock at about 1800.

From the pre-history room with flints and fossils, with examples you can touch, to the 1950s community room, Mildenhall Museum has something for everyone. You can see the Lakenheath Warrior, his horse and his artefacts from the grave, discover the mystery of the magnificent Mildenhall Treasure, and find out about the key role Mildenhall's air base played in the Second World War.

29th June – 1430: Visit to Ousden House, near Newmarket

The cost of this visit, to include tea, sandwiches and homemade cakes, is £17. Members will be sent a booking form, but if any non-member would like to join us they can contact me, and be put a waiting list. We often have 1 or 2 spare places.

Ousden House is a pretty Georgian building, formerly a stable and coach house which, eighteen years ago, was fully converted to form an elegant and delightful house. At the same time the owners created a remarkable eight acre garden, which includes extensive herbaceous borders, a rose garden, water garden, a long double crinkle yew hedge, formal courtyard, clock tower and dovecote. Beyond the garden is a small lake with ornamental woodland.

Tuesday 5th Sept – 1900: Peter Driver - Suffolk Men at Waterloo



PATIENT SERVICES AT WOOLPIT HEALTH CENTRE (Woolpit)

Recently members of the Patient Participation Group (PPG) at Woolpit attended a meeting with doctors to discuss changes to two services:

Blood Tests (phlebotomy) and Leg Ulcer Care.

I am one of the members of the PPG, and am writing this to inform you of what is happening.

PHLEBOTOMY

WHC requires c14,500 blood tests annually. Up till now, the practice itself undertook 3,500 of these, 7,000 were done at West Suffolk Hospital and the remainder, 4,000, were done by the visiting phlebotomists at their appointed time at Woolpit.

The service of the visiting phlebotomist has ended with the withdrawal of the service as at 1st April, 2017 and those 4,000 blood tests will have to be performed at West Suffolk Hospital. The surgery itself can slightly increase the number of tests it carries out but, inevitably, a lot of people will no longer be able to avoid going the hospital.

Every possible option as to how it might be possible to avoid the inconvenience this will cause to patients has been considered and, under current funding, contractual and administrative constraints, the health centre cannot find a way around this.

LEG ULCER CLINIC

Patients suffering from leg ulcers are currently treated at the Health Centre's excellent leg ulcer clinic. However, Woolpit has been advised that this service is also to stop at Woolpit with the treatment being undertaken by Suffolk Community Healthcare at a location yet to be decided. The service is scheduled to stop on 1st October, 2017.

Patients will be treated at first for six weeks at Woolpit, and then be referred to the new treatment under Suffolk Community Healthcare. Woolpit is concerned that there can potentially be a long waiting time between the end of its management of the patients problems and obtaining ongoing treatment under SCH.

In both the case of phlebotomy and leg ulcer care, it is inevitable that patients will have to travel further, some perhaps with debilitating problems to receive care, which was previously provided in Woolpit.

This is directly contradictory to the Government mantra of “local services for local people”.

However, it has become clear that where anomalies exist within the system, however good they may be,

they will come to an end. The two services mentioned here are such anomalies, but they are also what is best for the affected patients, having evolved in our locality over many years. Thus the quality of your healthcare will fall, and it is reasonable to assume further services will come under similar threats. NHS policies appear to be working towards large Health Centres with perhaps a minimum size of twice the number of patients on the list at Woolpit. That is fine in large conurbations, but to achieve this in a rural area such as this, the catchment area could become geographically untenable, yet the threat is there, and growing.

It is the thin end of a worrying wedge. I should emphasise that this article is specific to Woolpit Health Centre, here in West Suffolk.

We need your support as patients affected by these changes. Members of the PPG are writing to the relevant Directors of this area's Clinical Commissioning Group, but if you feel that you yourself want to try to have these decisions reviewed for the good of yourselves and other patients at Woolpit, we would ask you to write to your MP.

Her details are as follows:

Jo Churchill
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA
Email jo.churchill.mp@parliament.uk

It was clear from our meetings at Woolpit that the team there are very concerned for the patients under their care and that they have explored every avenue possible to avoid these issues, but it will it seems now only be the political will of our Parliamentary representatives who can push for changes of opinion.

The PPG would ask you to take the time to write in your own words to our MP if you feel concerned as to how these changes will cause you difficulties in obtaining the healthcare you rely upon in the best way for you. Receiving numerous letters and emails from her constituents will make our MP take the subject forward.

Thank you

Alex Jarrett
On behalf of the Woolpit Health Centre Patient Participation Group

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Final part of Mrs Taylor's story.

It was before Father's death that Lloyd George's National Insurance Scheme came into being. As Father was 70 in June, Mother was able to draw 5/- a week in his name and thus say goodbye to Parish Relief. Mother's birthday being in August, she was unable to draw pension for herself until after her 70th birthday. She prayed to be allowed to draw them together just once. She did. 5/- was riches, but 10/- was wealth, but alas it could not benefit Father. Various family members had paid insurances for him and so he was given a proper funeral. Mother took as much pride in adjusting her bonnet and black gloves as a bride, because she said Father always told her she looked as though she'd stepped out of a band-box and so she had to do him credit. After the funeral, Alice took mother to Blackpool for a complete rest and a change.

I did not leave Suffolk again. Flo married in 1919. I was the only one who was single and so remained within cycling distance from home. As Hawkdon was only 18 miles from Pakenham I was able to cycle home frequently. I was general servant to a retired major and his wife, a couple I learned to respect with real affection. It was during my service with Major and Mrs. Heard that I met the man whom I married.

When we arranged to marry, we had to consider the question of accommodation. Harry was a farm horseman. All the cottages on the farm were occupied, but the cottage the cowman occupied had been converted into one cottage to accommodate the cowman's family, some who had grown up, left home and were married. Harry asked the farmer whether, in view of the cowman's reduced family, the cottage could be returned to two, and we could be allowed to have one. The cowman's wife was understandably aggrieved when it was suggested, maintaining that she must have three bedrooms as she still had two grown up daughters and a son at home. Before anything could be settled, the farmer's wife wrote to my employer for a reference and demanded an interview, stating the date and time I was to visit her. I arrived at the stated hour and she kept me waiting an hour before seeing me. She asked me a lot of personal questions such as could I cook, sew, keep a house clean and tidy and so on and so on! Then she came to the real point, "Why did we want to get married?". I replied, "Harry is thirty-eight and I am thirty-two. He is tired of being at his mother's table and I am tired of being in service." She said, "Is that all?" and I jokingly replied, "Love is for the young; Harry and I are no longer young, but we understand each other and we know what we want." My answers satisfied her. Harry and I were granted the cottage and the builders were ordered to build an extra bedroom on the other cottage. We were married in February 1924.

My father-in-law, although a hard-hearted, narrow-

minded, non-conformist, was usually very pleasant to me, but it took my mother-in-law a long time to forgive me for robbing her of her best son. Married life was far from being a bed of roses. The cottage was small and isolated; Harry's wage was just twenty-nine shillings a week; I had five children in eight years; it was the years of the Depression and Harry's wage was cut by a shilling or sixpence a week until he was bringing home just nineteen shillings (95p) for a week's hard work. To help out I went stone picking, sugar-beet or mangold singling in the fields. In wintertime I helped in the sprout shed, packing sprouts for Covent Garden market and was paid 4d (1.5p) an hour. One morning I collapsed three times. The third time I had to be taken home where Thora, my nine-year-old, was home from school looking after the baby and her young brother, Chris, who was not yet three years old. The next day I saw the doctor and he told me my trouble was starvation. Realising that I was unfit for land work, I applied to the Head Mistress at the school asking her if she would accept Christopher at the school even though he was under age, and if so, whether she could help me obtain work as a charwoman. She accepted Christopher and found work for me at a farmhouse. Thora used to push Christopher to school in a pram and then walked on to Hungriff Hall, to start work at 9 a.m. I worked till 4 p.m. for two shillings (10p), four pence an hour, but four pence was deducted for my dinner hour, although I normally only took fifteen minutes as I was anxious to be able to finish work at four o'clock sharp so that I could collect Christopher from school and take him home. Thora was still too young to be trusted with pushing him in the pram for the mile and a half and the way was very hilly. The children would be given a light snack meal and I would then prepare a hot meal for them and for Harry, who would arrive home soon after 6 o'clock. Harry's work hours were from 6 a.m. till 6 p.m. I retained my charwoman's job for ten years, by which time we had left the old cottage, because of overcrowding and obtained the council house where we still live. My son, John, left school at the age of fourteen and obtained a job as a tractor driver at the farm where I was employed with the promise of driving the lorry when he reached the age to do so.

While they were all at school and I was working to keep the family just above the starvation level, I often used to reflect on how mother worked for us in similar circumstances. After Margery's and Grannie Miller's deaths there were only Flo and me at home, Father often being out of work between seasons or because of bad weather conditions; in those times no work meant no wages. Mother went to work in Sir Walter Greene's private laundry at one shilling (5p) for a twelve-hour day. She also worked at two other houses for the same rate of pay. Father worked at the same laundry three evenings a week, turning the handle of the big box mangle. See picture.

[The weight of a box filled with stones, or sand, was used to press household linens and clothes wound on rollers below, or sometimes the linen was spread flat under the rollers. A specially-woven mangle cloth matching the width of the box might be used to cover the freshly-laundered things and keep them clean.]

There were twelve maid-servants and three men-servants at Nether Hall. All sheets, towels, pillowslips etc. were mangled, not ironed.

Father was paid one penny (1d) an hour for this work. (1p = 2.4d). Mother continued to work until Father had his second operation when he became too ill to be left. During the Second World War Harry, my husband, was persuaded to leave the land and take up thatching which he was proficient at. He did this until he retired. I continued to work as a charwoman until I was seventy-nine when I had to admit to myself that I could no longer do a good hour's work in one hour. When I finally gave up charring, the price had gradually risen from four pence to five shillings (25p) an hour. Married life has had its hard times, but I have a wonderful family and my three sons are good men, good husbands and good fathers, a great pleasure to me and make the hardships and anxieties all worthwhile.

During my years in domestic service I have lived in various counties. Each has a beauty of its own but none as poor or better controlled as Suffolk, even now. I am still a rebel, an outsider and a loner, but I have my family and my memories. My brave little Grannie Miller, my humble hard-working mother, my father who taught me so much, my two handsome brothers and all my lovely sisters – it's wonderful to be a member of such a family. Although at eighty-two I have nothing to look forward to, I have much to look back on and the good things far outweigh the less good. For instance, the last time I saw my sister Nelly, shortly before her death from breast cancer, we enjoyed a real laugh together about the way our foot rags flapped in the mud, proving that even poverty can be laughed at from a distance when it is shared with family love.

Grannie Miller's maiden name was Peck. There were many families of Peck in Pakenham. Legend has it that Pakenham means 'Home of the Pecks'.

This autobiography was written by Mrs Kate Taylor of

Crosslands Corner, Hawkdon. I hope it has touched your hearts as it did mine. Many thanks to her relatives for sharing this important piece of social history and the first-hand account of the hardships endured by just one local family.



Nether Hall, Pakenham.



A typical Box Mangle.



Naomi Balls with her great grandson Eddie. He had cycled from Fleetwood, Lancs, with his brother to meet her in 1934.

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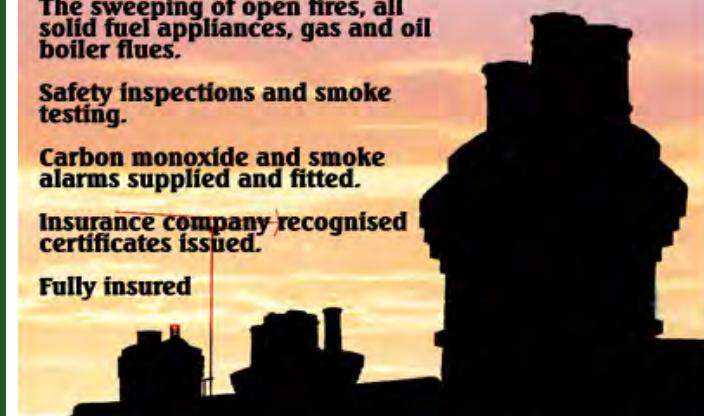
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