



The Swaffham Crier

Volume 24 Number 3

March 2000



Editorial

Val had a big send off from the Village Hall last month at the final closing down Post Office Tea. She'll be pleased to know that the new **Shop/Tea Room** venture (see p.10) is going well and although not huge profits were reported for the first afternoon's trading (it would have been £1.65, but one of the 50p's was past its buy-by date) everyone had a lot of fun. And the **Fire Engine** picture did not survive an instant with the tea-party crowd, who identified absolutely everybody in the picture (bar the odd chopped in half figures). But why was Alf Badcock called 'teapot'? This is what I want to know.

Hot of the press, the **Jumble Sale** was a big success and I hope it raised lots of loot. There were some really lovely books which I happened to notice (read from cover to cover) when I was 'helping' on the book-stall and being generally handy about the place. Fortunately, there were a number of other assistants who had been working all that morning, all the day before and possibly even all the preceding week(s) — it's all that *jumble* that does it. Congratulations to organisers and helpers alike: it was worth it.

In deference to, among other things, the *Crier's* aging collating stapler, on its last legs etc., we've finally decided to resist the deluge of material from the Foreign News Desk and resort to a **What's On** (in other villages) column. This space-saving measure has come in the nick of time because *now they know our email address*. I've never known a neighbourhood for having so many things *on*. If they don't look sharp and have a few things *off* now and again, they'll be shrunk down into 8 point. Ah yes, our regular contributors know us well.

We have some **distribution problems** at the moment so we're returning to *Plan A*, which is: copies of the Crier will be left in the Village Hall for collection by people who aren't getting their Crier delivered. *If you know anyone in this position, please inform.*

The **sun-dial!** The **chiming clock!** No sooner mentioned than done. This village must be quite unique in the speed and efficiency with which it achieves its objectives. Don't forget the unveiling on the 26th, and....

It's **Quiz Night** again! We'll be cheating as ever—see you there!

Caroline Matheson

Cover Picture: *March Hares*, by Barbara Ives



Letters to the Editors



Dear Editors

Belarus Childrens' Holidays

In the summer of 1998 the Eastern Area of Baptist Churches organised a successful holiday for a group of children from Belarus who are still suffering as a result of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster 14 years ago.

A similar holiday in East Anglia is being planned for 54 children and 6 adult leaders from 11th June to 2nd July this year and Zion Baptist Chapel is sponsoring at least one child (£250).

Some of these children bring very little with them in the way of clothes etc and really do benefit from the holiday. They stay with families and visit local places of interest such as fire stations, zoos, pleasure parks, the beach and museums with 'hands on activities'.

If you feel able to help please put your donation, however large or small, in an envelope marked 'Chernobyl holiday' through my letterbox at 17 Green Head Road - you needn't even give your name. Alternatively there is a box in the foyer at the Chapel.

Your help will be much appreciated.

Ruth Stinton

Secretary, Zion Baptist Chapel

The Village Clock is to Strike Again

In December 1991 the bells in St. Cyriac's rang out again after their major refurbishment. The great pleasure at the event was a little diluted because the clock bell had not been replaced after other repairs to the tower. All this is to change. The clock is to be restored, it will be automated, and it will again chime on the hour.

The Churches Conservation Trust is paying for the restoration but it thinks (rightly to my mind) that if the village wants the clock to chime, and does not want to climb the tower everyday to wind the clock, then that is a village affair. The cost for the automation and the chiming is £3,641.75p (including VAT). A number of people have been approached and they have shown a quite wonderful affection for the clock and its chime. They have also made very generous donations. It is impossible to speak to everyone, so if anyone shares the same warmth for the clock, wishes it to chime again and would like to make a donation, please phone me on 742974. There is as yet no schedule for the work but it is unlikely to be completed before the Autumn at the earliest.

Our late seventeenth century clock is reputed to be "one of the finest clocks in Cambridgeshire." But it is badly documented. Before it chimes again attempts will be made to find more information. At some point you will be told this in the *Crier*, and also how Philip Sheldrick brought it back to life after the war and has nurtured it ever since.

Alastair Everitt

? SPRING QUIZ NIGHT ?
in
The Village Hall
Swaffham Prior

Saturday March 18th at 7.30 pm
Doors open 7pm

Book Your Team of 4 to 6 players with
Jenny Brand 01638 742161 or
Lynne Rand 01638 741960

tickets cost £2.50 per person to include a baked potato supper but please bring your own drink and glasses

? Organised by Members of ?
St Mary's Church
Swaffham Prior

LAMBETH PALACE, LONDON

There is an outing from the Swaffhams and Reach on Saturday 6th May to see the Archbishop of Canterbury's London residence. The coach will leave around 10.15am, and the tour there begins at 1.15pm.

The cost for the day is £6 (£4 concessions) plus coach fare of £7.

Please book your places now with The Vicar, tel: (01638) 741409

WANTED: Space for 2 Windmill Sails

As you will all have noticed, the windmill is without two of its sails. We need dry storage space in the village (or as near as possible) to work on the two damaged sails (each 10' x 26') removed from the mill in November. A farm barn would be ideal. Can anyone help?

Also, if anyone has good joinery skills and is willing to give some time to helping us restore the sails, we would be delighted to hear from them.

We are still producing our full range of flours (White, Wholemeal, Spelt and Rye). If you would like to order, want advice on which to use if you have a bread maker, do not hesitate to call the number below or drop up to the mill when the yellow signs are out.

Jonathan Cook

01638 741 009

mark@scorteus.demon.co.uk

The Millennium Sundial

Swaffham Prior is celebrating the Millennium with several objects, one of which is a sundial, to be placed on the front wall of the school, facing the village street. A (vertical) wall sundial is slightly different from the typical horizontal dial seen as the centre-piece of many rose gardens. The rose-garden dial can stand in sunlight all day and can tell the hours from early morning until late evening. A wall dial, unless the wall happens to be facing due south, can tell only part of the day's hours. The school's front wall is facing well to the east of due south; so it can count all the morning hours even the earliest after sunrise in summer, but not the afternoon hours. The sun is off the front wall at about 2.30 p.m. in summer, and the whole of that side of the school building is in shadow.



Our sundial is already completed, and like many dials, both horizontal and vertical, it shows a bright sun's face at the base of its gnomon, the shadow-casting part. It is to be fixed onto the wall in mid-March and the dial will be officially 'unveiled' at 12.15 p.m. on 26th March, a date just after the spring equinox, and just before the start of British Summer Time, the hour system for which the dial has been marked.. All residents and their friends are invited to the 'unveiling'. Let us hope that the sun will be shining.

Margaret Stanier

By **Kind Invitation of Mrs R Wood**
All are Welcome to Enjoy
A VILLAGE COFFEE MORNING
and
THE SPRING BULB GARDEN
at
The Manor, Lower End, Swaffham Prior.
on
THURSDAY MARCH 9th, 10.30am to Noon

Stalls for
Unwanted Gifts and Quality Second Hand Books
Cakes and Produce, Raffle

In Aid of St Mary's Church
Suggested Donation for your Coffee and Cake £2 to £3

Easter Lilies

Each year we have had lilies in St Mary's Church at Easter time and, recently, many people have contributed to these in memory of a loved one.

Donations can be made anonymously or with your name and the name of your loved one. A list will then be compiled and placed in church for Easter Sunday. As a guide the Easter lilies cost £2.50 per stem last year. All contributions will be *very* welcome and will enable us to have a beautiful display.

If you would like to make a donation please put it through Sue Rust's door at 23 Greenhead Road or Ruth Scovil's door at The Oaks, Manor Farm Court, Lower End (the letterbox is in the door at the back of the house!). Please include the name of your loved one and your own unless, of course, you wish to make your gift anonymously.



Ruth Scovil

From our Reporter at the Parish Council Meeting

I regret that some of the Parish Council's wittiest remarks were lost to me. I'll have to get an ear trumpet until such time as I have a hearing aid to connect to the village hall's famous LOOP. But will I be able to write with one hand and hold a trumpet with the other? Minus trumpet, I did hear that Mrs Sandra Wilson of Fairview Grove has stepped forward to fill the vacancy on the PC and is now an honourable member of that august body.



The playground was causing anxiety. I couldn't quite catch what was the matter, but it seems that there's a crack (opening up to Australia? children would love that) somewhere near the swings. It's going to be repaired; I think they said they would fill it in and then cover it with rubber tiles. But there was no hope of a grant from the Hanson environment fund which will only contribute to new schemes.

As at last month's meeting, there was much to say about footpaths. The PC are getting together a definitive map with all the village footpaths marked on it in case we forget where they are. Until it is repaired, the dangerous bit by the Beeches may get a notice at each end to warn us not to fall off it. Complaints have been received about hedges and trees overhanging the backpath between the Beeches and the churches. Eric thought the County Council was responsible; Councillor Fitch said it wasn't. Henry said that once upon a time the PC used to write to owners of recalcitrant vegetation. Trevor suggested writing to everyone saying if by some mischance they had an unwieldy tree/hedge ...etc. But Eric thought that might offend those with well-groomed greenery. Someone else thought the PC could get the work done and send the bill to the owners, which seemed a direct if not a soothing approach. In the end it was decided to send a tactful letter to all adjacent hedge and tree owners.

The village grasscutting areas are also being remapped, along with information about how many times a year they are cut, which seems to vary. This map will be given to the cutters so that they don't get in a muddle. Last year grasscutting cost £828, the first cut being early in April. Councillors were reminded of the jumble sale on 19 February in aid of the Millennium Map - Bargains galore, something for everyone'. "But," said Henry, "St Valentine's day is on the 14th."

The sundial is to be unveiled on 26 March at 12.15. "I suppose they mean p.m.," said the Chairman, and he expressed pleasure that for once he was free and could go to this event. I think the PC then agreed to donate £25 towards the sundial. I dreamed of a sundial unveiling at 12.15a.m. with the moon looking on. There is growing enthusiasm for the restoration of the

chimes to the clock in St Cyriac's. Eric gave a little disquisition on how this would be done - something about running a wire from the bell to the clock. The PC were delighted to hear from Alastair Everitt that he is collecting individual donations to this cause and, not to be outdone, they agreed to give £500 - at least, I think and hope that is what they said. I used to hear the clock's melodious chimes when I was gardening; they reminded me when it was time to stop and smell the roses.

Councillor Fitch told us that Cambridgeshire gets the lowest Government funding of all the counties, but would get a slightly increased budget as would the District Council and the Police; the Police were to get 42 more officers, which would be better than nothing. The County had received a 'Charter Mark' in recognition of its successful Park and Ride scheme. The Council Tax increase would mostly go to schools; he reported that Swaffham Prior School was improving satisfactorily and both the Shire Hall and Brenda Wilson were encouraged. There were to be more cycleways connecting with Quy.

Volunteers are invited to join County Council workers in conservation work on the Devil's Ditch/Dyke (see page 23 or the village noticeboard). The Mill Hill/Heath Road building application has been approved; the footpath across the fields to the Devil's Ditch will be re-routed and a high, unclimbable wall (with spikes on top?) will be built on the main road side for safety reasons. It will probably be hideous and I regret the loss of the hedge. A notice has been posted by the site.

So, it seems the Millennium will present the residents of Swaffham Prior with little excuse either to be late or to get lost: we will soon have a footpaths map, a grasscutting map, a Millennium map, a sundial and a striking clock. Perhaps we should be providing a compass alongside the Map and a weathercock above the sundial on the school to be on the safe side! (The weathercock, of course, to provide extra guidance on an umbrella versus a sunhat.)...And a moondial?

Meryl Moore

BRIGHT SPARKS PLAYGROUP

Swaffham Bulbeck Bright Sparks Playgroup is pleased to announce the addition of a third weekly session. The playgroup now meets on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9:15 - 11:45 am. We are located in the village hall next to the Primary School. Children are able to attend playgroup from the term in which they are 3 years old. Fees are £3.50 per session.

If you would like more information about joining our playgroup please call Jane Crussell, playgroup leader, at 01638 610135.

Priory Youth Club News

The club is planning a trip to Thorpe park in June. All junior members must and will be supervised. This does not mean that all parents will be expected to come, hopefully there will be enough volunteers and leaders. The cost for the coach and entrance to the park is £15.00, for a day out I think is very reasonable. Rides inside the park are included in the entrance fee. I would hope this will be a very good and enjoyable day for the younger community of the village. Any parent needing any more information ring Jill on 01638 742228.

Generally the club is holding its own, whereas other clubs are struggling to stay open. We would be delighted if there were more people willing to help. This is our biggest headache, if you feel you could help in any way e.g demonstrate a craft, flower arranging, artwork, anything at all, we would appreciate it greatly.

The number of youngsters using the club is quite good but we have learned that there are about 20 or so children that could attend the junior club but don't. Perhaps they don't want to, that's okay, perhaps they think they are ineligible, find out, give us a ring, you could be missing a good night.

Well, the scud missiles are back (dog turds). We should not be expected to inspect the grass at the front of the club every time we need to use it. The only way to stop this is for a complete and total ban on this area. I will contact the Parish Council to see if this is possible.

Our main project for the year is to raise enough money to renew our floor. This is old and really does need replacing. We are going to try to replace it with a safety floor covering, this is expensive but will be well worth doing.

A. Badcock.

Leader in Charge.

BURWELL VILLAGE TWINNING ASSOCIATION

JAGGER'S CEILIDH

Saturday, 18 March 2000

at

The Gardiner Memorial Hall, Burwell

starting at 8.00 pm

Caller: Jagger Laycock

Pay at the door: Members £3.00, Non-members £3.50. All welcome



CAMBRIDGE VOICES

On Ash Wednesday, March 8th at 7.30pm Cambridge Voices will sing **Allegri's** famous *Miserere mei, Deus* as the finale to Holy Communion in St. Cyriac's Church. This sublime work was traditionally the exclusive property of the choir of the Sistine Chapel in Rome, who would perform this work in darkness in front of a packed chapel. Later, once both Mozart and Mendelssohn had independently written down the work after hearing it performed live, copies of the music began to make their way into various other chapels across Europe and is now published in various editions according to different sources. And therein lies the problem of performing this celebrated work: just exactly which version is authentic, bearing in mind that Allegri's original version contains no reference to the heart-rending top C repeated by a lone chorister at the climax of each verse?

The version most commonly known nowadays as Allegri's *Miserere* is simply the one copied down by Mendelssohn and recorded so movingly by Roy Goodman and the choir of King's College, Cambridge under David Willcocks in the 60s (and for that recording it was translated into English hardly authentic!).

For Cambridge Voices' performance this Ash Wednesday, during the course of the repetitive work, we will survey chronologically the whole gamut of versions of this work, from the tame version of Mozart's time to the intriguingly florid, quasi-operatic version from the early 20th century.

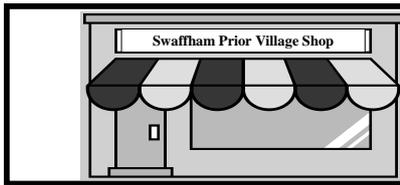
Other music performed during the service in St. Cyriac's, beginning at 7.30pm, will feature other works associated with the Sistine Chapel: the luminous *Missa Brevis* by **Palestrina** (Director of Music there) plus an excerpt from his *Missa Papae Marcelli* composed specifically according to the requirements of the current Pope, plus a different setting of the *Miserere* by the Flemish composer **Josquin des Près** who was a scholar in the Sistine Chapel Choir.

All are welcome to attend this special service: there will be a retiring collection. Heating will be provided before the service starts however you are still advised to wear warm clothing!

Ian de Massini, Director of Cambridge Voices

FUTURE CONCERT DATE: Good Friday April 21st - 7.30 pm

Concert of Music for Holy Week in St. Cyriac's with Cambridge Voices, Prime Brass and narrator Hilary Sage, featuring Purcell's Music for the Funeral of Queen Mary, Spirituals and a new work from Ian de Massini based on the Seven Last Words for brass, choir and narrator.



Village Shop, and Tea Room

The tearoom and shop are up and running on Thursday afternoons. Attendance was a little down the first week, but moving up again by the second. The organisers are enjoying the challenge and enthusiastic about the

AS FROM THURSDAY MARCH 2, THE

future—though there is no news of a take-over bid from Tesco yet. Come and try us for an excellent cup of tea in a friendly atmosphere or for shopping.

Don't forget that Graham Fuller offers a wide range of fruit and vegetables and eggs, while the shop has a good line in Lane's bread and cakes as well as stamps, sweets and drinks and general stock.

To order Bread/Cakes phone 741221 or 742174



Swaffham Prior *Shining* Stars

A Major New Movie
Production
(Co-starring Michael Caine)



Congratulations to brothers Shane (11) and Michael Donaghy (6) who are currently acting with Michael Caine in *Shining*, a new film production. Shane and Michael were put forward for the parts of the two stage brothers by *Whizz Kids*, a Cambridge acting group, because the producer needed two children who looked alike. They agreed to audition at Chelsea Barracks where they made an immediate impression because someone cried "These are our boys!" and they were in.

The boys' acting skills are tested to the limit because they mostly have to chase around making a lot of noise! Shane has an immortal line: "Go on Mum, bite 'er ear off!". Unfortunately, this will be an over-18s only

production (they have to cover their ears sometimes), so their friends won't be able to see it. Shane's stage name is 'Jake', and he had to have his hair cut for the part. They have spoken to Michael Caine, but he didn't say a lot.

The Szulc and Donaghy family are no strangers to the bright lights. Recently everybody, Mum and Dad included, put in an appearance in 'The Last of the Blonde Bombshells' (*do they mean me?* - Ed.) But things are not as glamorous as we may imagine: leave home 5.30 am for Putney, stand around in the cold for *hours*, everybody frozen, hide behind seats on 'Big Breakfast Bus' to get changed, stand around for *hours*, cut, take, powder Dame Judi Dench's nose, recut, retake, re-powder Dame J's nose.... But Shane likes it even so, and he'd like to be an actor when he grows up. What he thinks is very impressive is that the really ghastly horrible character in the film is actually *incredibly nice* in real life.

Best of luck, boys, and us *over-18s* will all come to see it!

Caroline Matheson

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF A UNIQUE THEATRE EVENT IN LITTLEPORT

With over 47 tonnes of equipment transported in 5 articulated trailers the RSC will visit towns **and cities across the UK to celebrate 20** years of a unique event, which began its life in the late 1970s. **The Taming of the Shrew** will be staged at Littleport Leisure Centre in May to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the RSC's regional tour.

Education and community events will also accompany the visit and audiences in Littleport will get the chance to find out more about the production with the Insight event. This takes place before the matinee on Friday 12 May at 10.30am. With a sell-out run in London and Stratford-upon-Avon the anniversary tour gives people the only chance to see this production.

Adrian Noble, RSC Artistic Director, said: "Two decades ago the RSC set out on an artistic and social experiment that has formed one of our guiding principles ever since. We wanted to ensure that people living in areas without their own theatre were given access to the RSC. Now in its twentieth year, having visited over 120 different British towns, the RSC's regional tour may have become more sophisticated and visits larger towns with its own purpose-built auditorium, but it still remains faithful to these original aims".

Performances are at Littleport Leisure Centre from Tuesday 9th - Saturday 13th May with matinees on Wednesday and Friday. Tickets are priced from £13 with concessions available. Contact the Box Office on 0191 567 0907.

Movable Feast

A congenial Evening to raise funds for the Millennium Map.



Three-course Dinner with Wine

Home Cooking. Each course served in a different village house, all within easy walking distance. Leave the car at home and enjoy an evening out.

SATURDAY APRIL 1st

Tickets: \$12.50 each, available from:

Mark Howarth Elaine Malster Elizabeth Everitt

741409

743894

742974

Please book by March 24th.

Ely and District Millennium Festival of Service

MILLENNIUM POETRY COMPETITION



The work of over 150 voluntary organisations working in and around Ely will be celebrated at a special festival in Ely on May Day, Monday May *1st*. As part of the celebrations the ADeC Literature Development Group is running a poetry competition on behalf of the Festival. You're invited to submit a poem of no more than 30 lines long on the theme of service to the community. The competition is open to all, no matter what your age, and there will be three prizes of £100, £75 and £50 which will be presented at the Festival's Magnet Event on the afternoon of May 1st.

Entries will be judged by a small committee from ADeC's Literature Development Group and must be received at the ADeC office by April 7th. Please mark your envelope 'Millennium Poetry Competition'.

Further information from the ADeC offices on 01353 669022.

Donation: The Editors would like to thank the Swaffham Prior Parochial Church Council for their kind donation which will be very helpful towards our running costs.

Munich Crisis 1938

Thanks to those taking tea in the Village Hall at the same time as last month's *Crier* Collating, nearly everyone in the picture (see last month's issue) was identified before the magazine was even stapled together.

The picture was taken on the occasion of the Munich Crisis, when the ARP was formed and everybody had just been issued with Gas-Masks. Sensing trouble ahead, the assembled company had retrieved the elderly Fire Engine (donated to the village in 1791 by Maria Allix — you can just read this on the bonnet) from its garage in the Cage, where we understand it's still housed at this very moment. I don't expect it looks a day older.

From left to right, they are (we think!): Mr Jennings (from Reach); Mr Dowdeswell (whose wife was the teacher, and lived at Rose Cottage); Mrs Hawkes; Alf 'Teapot' Badcock; Ernie Butler (Goodwin Manor); Nobby Clerk; Jack Woods; Jean Fleming; John Butler; Doug Rouse; Bob Pritchard (Rogers Road); Unidentified; and Dan Fleming. Additionally, standing just off the picture to the left, but unfortunately not actually in it, was one John Clarke (a slightly younger version!).

Thanks to Bert, John Clarke, Jean Fielden, Mrs Symonns, Barbara Bridgeman and the tea-partiers one and all for fingering the faces. A few pictures were taken of them too!

Caroline Matheson

What's On This Month (In Neighbouring Villages)

FRIDAY 3rd 7.30 pm - **QUIZ NIGHT** in the Main Hall, Bottisham Village College in aid of the **Swimming Pool Association**. To book a team of up to 8 people please contact Stephen Potter on 01223 812674. Tickets are £5.00 each [pay on the night] which includes a hot supper. Please bring your own drinks and glasses.

Saturday 4th - **MILLENNIUM MUSIC HALL** in the School Hall, Swaffham Bulbeck (in aid of St. Mary's, SB). Tickets: £6 (concs £4) from M. Roberts C 811772, A. Datson C 812395, J. Roebuck C 811772.

Friday 10th at 8:00pm - **Bottisham Village College Music Society** in BVC Main Hall. *Desert Island Discs* with Lester Milbank interviewing Martin Gent. Club style (bring your own refreshments). Ticket £5 (conc £2.50) at the door.

Saturday March 11th 2pm to 4pm - **JUMBLE SALE** at Bottisham Village College organised by the Friends of BVC. Please bring your jumble to the college on Sat morning between 10.30-11.30am Anyone wishing to help please contact Fran on 01223 813016.

Tuesday 14th at 7.45pm - **Lent Supper** with guest speaker Jo Jones, local Christian Aid Co-ordinator. In Swaffham Bulbeck Village Hall. Tickets £3 (inc. Jacket Potato, Filling, Fruit & Cider) from M. Roberts 811772 or J. Roebuck 811772 with opportunity to donate to Christian Aid.

Saturday 18th at 7.30pm - **PETERBOROUGH MALE VOICE CHOIR** in St James Church, Lode. Tickets £5 (include refreshment) available from Lode Post Office, Lushers News or Julie Sale Cambridge 811222.

Saturday 25th March 7.30-11.30pm - **LINEDANCE** (some tuition given for beginners) **and 60/70'S Disco** at Bottisham Village College, organised by the Friends of BVC. Tickets £4 Adults; £2 Children (11-16) from Lushers Newsagents or contact Sue on C 812194. Bar available. Come dressed cool and casual for a fun night out. 'Waltzing across Texas', delighting in 'The Cowboy Cha-Cha' and strutting to 'The Red Hot Salsa'.

And next month (needing early booking):

Saturday 22nd April at 10:30am until 5:00pm - **Stainers Crucifixion**

Choral Workshop in St James Church, Lode. If you are interested in taking part please contact Rev Val Brechin at Bottisham Vicarage or Julie Sale, Station Farm, Fen Road, Lode CB5 9HD. Last date for registration Saturday 8th April 2000. For more information please contact Julie Sale 01223 811222.

Dora O'Dowd 1914-1999

John and Dora O'Dowd's marriage did not end when John died. He left eight young children, and a steadfast wife. Alone as Parent, Dora raised those children as John would have hoped to do. She didn't panic. Calmly and resolutely she accomplished a task which to most people would be crushing.

She was never crushed; she was the constant, ever reliable centre of a family; a rock of stability in the uncertain world of growing up. She was always there, loyal, determined, steadfast.

She was a child of the Fens, born into a life much closer to this rich earth than ours. She grew up understanding how seed planted in good soil will grow, and how to bring it on. She grew up with the sense and love of God's creation all around her, in the sure knowledge that winter will be followed by the spring.

She was not uncritical, and she did not dissemble; you always knew exactly where you stood; but neither was she solemn. Her humour found the funny side of most of human life. And instead of raising and waving goodbye to her children she acquired more, because those who married into her family also saw her as Parent. She became a matriarch, and laughed at the notion.

She had no pretensions. Pomposity was greeted with a quirky smile. Yet she carried, without wielding, enormous authority. Because of who she was, what she had done, because of her example, one could not bear to disappoint; one could not bear to see the laughter leave her eyes.

When, two weeks ago, she stood before God, she had accomplished in and for her family all that He had set her. Her children have no complaints; I cannot think that He has either.

Mother, Grandmother, Great Grandmother, Parent, steadfast wife; we thank God for her.

The O'Dowd Family
(from address at the funeral)

Our Man of the Millennium - VI

Schoenbaum has shown convincingly that there is a dearth of information about Shakspere of Stratford as a playwright and a person. (Schoenbaum incidentally was a firm believer in the Stratford man.) To end this outline of the lack of evidence I had intended to examine three recent biographies of Shakespeare published in 1997, 1998 and 1999. This has proved to be far too depressing. All are by Professors at English universities and all broadly follow the same technique. Linking one "it is quite probable" with "we may safely assume" they all manufacture a 'fact'. This 'fact' is then added to a further speculation to create another 'fact', and so it goes on. These 'speculative facts' are presented as "new evidence", with a little bit of academic veneer to help the deception. This is not a criticism of Shakespearean scholars as a whole, but only those who venture into new biographies and who ignore the great E.K.Chambers who insisted "it is no use guessing".

Everyone accepts that legitimate surmise, interpretation and insight are part of a successful biography but these must be woven into the established facts available, and not provided as the facts themselves. Robert Bearman in a work published by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust (1994) gave us two undeniable facts:-

1) Shakespeare was "*perhaps the most gifted of all time in describing the human condition.*"

2) Shakspere of Stratford "*seems merely to have been a man of the world, buying up property, laying in ample stocks of barley and malt, when others were starving, selling off his surpluses and pursuing debtors in court, and conniving, as it seems, in the Welcombe enclosures....*".

There is *nothing* bridging the gap between these two facts. As Jonathan Miller said in a recent television discussion "It's almost as if this stuff [the plays] arrived on earth from another omniscient planet." Another on the programme likened Shakespeare to a "god". In other words it was a miracle.

Disquiet about this 'miracle' first occurred in the eighteenth century and it grew apace from the mid-nineteenth century. The doubters, or "heretics" as they became known, now needed a replacement author and over the years many candidates for the authorship have been proposed. But before we consider these, let us look at the plays (especially *Hamlet*) and sonnets as a whole. Stratfordians say you must look to the works to discover the man, and what do we find?

- 1) A man of some maturity
- 2) Of intense sensibility

- 3) Unconventional
- 4) Of superior education
- 5) An intimate knowledge of court life
- 6) And a familiarity with the politics of power
- 7) Of pronounced literary tastes
- 8) An accomplished lyrical poet
- 9) Knowledgeable about the stage
- 10) Great concern about name and honour, and the loss of both
- 11) An enthusiasm for Italy
- 12) The word "noble" appears 650 times in the plays
- 13) An excellent knowledge of the law
- 14) A deep concern about the State
- 15) A lover of music
- 16) A great knowledge of aristocratic sports - riding, falconry, the hunt
- 17) A master of the English language who added about 3200 new words
- 18) Knowledge of the sea
- 19) A familiarity with military affairs
- 20) Little concern with money
- 21) An ambivalent attitude towards women
- 22) A prankster
- 23) A great wit
- 24) Rash, passionate and proud
- 25) A man of great activity

There is nothing superhuman about any of the above. Put all together and you could have a quite remarkable man. But Shakspeare of Stratford succeeded in hiding *all* these lights under one of his bushels. Not one of the Stratford residents was aware of his range of talents. None of his family, including his well educated son-in-law or his granddaughter who knew him until she was twelve and lived until 1670, was aware of any. Shakspeare of Stratford remains as Bearman described him - simply a hard nosed businessman, not a 'god' from another planet, not the author of the plays.

Next month: The major candidate for the vacancy.

Alastair Everitt

BOTTISHAM FOOTBALL CLUB

Boys & Girls Football

If anyone is interested in joining the club either as a player or helping with training, refereeing etc please contact me: Tessa Shrubbs, Club Secretary (01223 811812)



WI Notes

Unfortunately the W.I. meeting is too late for the *Crier* deadline this month so it will be reported on in the April issue.

On 20th March we shall be holding our A.G.M. followed by a talk about Thornton's chocolates. We hope there will be some samples!

Betty Prime



VILLAGE GARDENERS

'Pruning shrubs and trees' was the subject of a very helpful talk by Mr. Peter Jackson at the February meeting of the Village Gardeners. Mr. Jackson, Director of Scotsdales and a B.B.C. broadcaster, began by advising us on the best tools for the job and recommended two very good books on the subject. He then told us the best way of pruning various shrubs, several of which he had brought with him. We learned that all shrubs and trees need a certain amount of pruning and thinning, and that more harm than good is done by not cutting back. Members found this a very interesting talk and had a number of questions for Mr. Jackson.

Next month Mr. Paul Heavens, Chairman of the Mid Anglia Fuchsia Society, will be talking on 'Growing Fuchsias'. The meeting will be at 8pm on Tuesday, 21st March, in Swaffham Prior Village Hall.

The Village Gardeners will be running a Plant Stall at the Swaffham Prior Feast Day on Saturday, 13th May, and there will be Gardens Open in Swaffham Prior and Reach on Sunday, 18th June. See you there!

Betty Prime



WILDLIFE SNIPPETS TOAD OF TOAD HALL

vs

KERMIT THE FROG

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 01234 364213.

Conservation work at Devils Dyke



Cambridgeshire
County Council

During late February and March this year conservation work will be carried along the top of the Devils Dyke to help protect the monument and improve the wildlife interests.

The monument is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and a Special Site of Scientific Interest and as such of national importance for both archaeology and wildlife. It is the largest Anglo-Saxon dyke in the country, while its designation as a SSSI is for chalk grassland.

The work planned will clear a wider path along the top of the dyke cutting back recent scrub growth to expose areas of surviving grass. By cutting back over hanging scrub more sunlight will penetrate and this will help the grass to flourish and spread. It is also hoped that by widening the path that some of the erosion on the narrow path might be reduced.

If anybody wishes to volunteer with the BC Group Trust, who will be carrying out the work, please contact Geoff Blackford Tel (01638) 507390 or P0 Box 102, Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 0RU.



The first full council to be held outside of Ely will be on the 28th March in Bottisham Village College at 3.00pm. The meeting will start with 15 minutes devoted to questions raised by the public. We hope to have a short presentation from the Managing Director of Cambus, Mr Eden, who will talk about his company's plans for our bus services. And we hope to have a presentation on Community Education in this area. There will also be the usual council business discussed, including a review of the Council's work over the past year. The agenda is normally published about a week before the meeting. If you are thinking of attending and would like a copy of the agenda, please let me know and I will arrange for you to receive a copy. This is an experiment, to see if there is sufficient public interest to justify us holding more meetings outside of Ely, so please do attend if you are interested in seeing how your Council operates.

I have received several complaints about bus services, which I have followed up with Cambus. I find it useful to receive your complaints because it gives me an overall view of the problems with the service. But you should also complain directly to Cambus (01223 423578) as your calls will be logged as customer complaints whereas my calls on your behalf are not logged in this way. Also, if you can show 'significant inconvenience' Cambus may offer you compensation in the form of a travel voucher. On the whole, for a rural area we receive a good bus service. But there are strange gaps in the service during the day and its very drastic for users if buses leave early, don't arrive or drive past the bus stop without picking up waiting passengers! If you complain about your problems directly, and keep me informed so that I can raise issues with Cambus, they will improve and our service will become more reliable.

We shall set our budget for next year at the February meeting of full Council. The recommendation for the level of Council Tax for district services for 2000/2001 is £60.85, an additional cost of £3.35 a year for the average taxpayer, which is approximately 7p a week. This additional income, together with drawing on reserves, will allow us to significantly improve and expand the range of services which we deliver, particularly those identified by local communities through the Citizen's Panel, including:

Crime, Transport, Open Spaces and footpaths, Environmental issues, LA21, Arts strategy and Supporting villages via community appraisals

Charlotte Cane



The strange, sad slaughter of a fellow County Councillor in Cheltenham early this month makes one think hard about the recent trend towards cruel and often motiveless murders. It is not reassuring to one's family to know that we are often out on streets and lonely county roads and are vulnerable to aggressive and uncontrolled men (mostly) who think little of their violent actions until it is too late.

Cllr Andrew Pennington died protecting Nigel Jones at the M.P.'s "surgery". He deserves the ancient accolade that "there is no greater love than laying down one's life for a friend". As for the murderer, what possible explanation can he put forward to justify carrying a weapon to an unprotected office and stabbing someone whose very function is to help his fellow men and women?

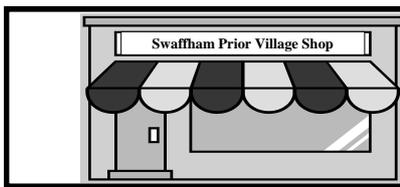
I have often wondered whether to have a "surgery" within my ward, but after trials some years ago decided against. The reason was simple: insufficient people attended to make it a good way of using scarce time. Also, I have realised over the years that people wishing to support, complain, enquire or lobby for a cause want to do it then, not 2 weeks later at a surgery in another place. So I work on the basis that I am always available at any time at home, on the 'phone or increasingly on e-mail. If I am around you will always be welcome (try to avoid 6.30-7pm). I depend on you to use your judgment as to whether it is important enough to contact me after 9pm or on Sundays. If you think it is important and urgent, then you'll get a considered reply. Should you need me to call on you, 'phone and fix a suitable time.

Over the years I have suffered very little inconvenience or harassment. The worst case was some fool who rang me every half hour between 4 am and 8 am without saying who it was. The funniest case was the man who thought I could stop a neighbour's ghetto blaster at 1 am on a Sunday when he lived 5 miles away in another village. These occasions are very rare. I'm glad I represent people who are generally considerate and understand that my fellow councillors and I are entitled to a private life and time off in return for being always at hand in time of need.

Turning to County matters, it is nice to report that the County has been awarded three new Charter Marks for Property Management (e.g. rebuilding the Pool); County Farms; and Park and Ride. In connection with the last, it is intended to double the size of Newmarket Road Park and Ride before long.

In the year 2000/01 schools really will get a share of £2.3m new money. The increased budget for all services will be financed by government money, business rates, reserves and an increase in the County's share of Council Tax of 8.5%. The total Council Tax will still be well below the average of all counties.

James Fitch



Village Post Office

The Village Hall Management Committee and the village had been led to believe that once the Post Office closed it would never open again. However, as many in the village know, Post Office Counters have announced that it is only a temporary closure until an agent can be found. Unfortunately we have to pass on the following sad news.

The latest issue of the Village Hall Newsletter published by ACRE, and only recently received, contains a reference to the establishment of a post office within a village hall and states "permanently housing such a facility could conflict with Charity Law as it is at present drafted." Therefore as the rules stand the Village Hall is not an option. ACRE is looking at the problem and in due course the situation may change. But at present patience is the order of the day.

We regret the situation but see no point in allowing false hopes to be raised, unless anyone can offer alternative accommodation.

The Village Hall Management Committee

Notes from the Parish Council February Meeting

Mr Andrew Badcock chaired the meeting with 5 members and 2 members of the Public.

Matters Arising.

Parish Council Vacancy: Mrs Sandra Wilson of 1 Fairview Grove was co-opted onto the P.C. and joined the meeting.

Playground Equipment: It was agreed after further discussion to go ahead with the works needed to repair the surfacing to the play area.

Public Footpaths: With reference to the stretch of footpath causing concern at the Beeches, the Clerk had written to CCC asking about the possibility of repair works. An acknowledgment card had been received in response noting that the matter was being looked into.

Several complaints have been received about overhanging tree branches & brambles on the footpath running from the Beeches through to Coopers Green. It was agreed to send a letter to all households along this footpath asking for their co-operation in keeping overhanging vegetation trimmed back.

The Millennium: The details of the unveiling of the sun-dial was reported. This is to take place on 26th March at 12.15pm. Further details in the *Crier*.

The Jumble Sale/Nearly New Sale will go ahead on the 19th February at the Village Hall. Whilst discussing Millennium projects, it was reported to the meeting that a Yew tree donated by ECDC would be arriving in the near future. This Yew tree is to be planted in the cemetery.

Church Clock: The Chairman reported that funds were now available for this work to go ahead. It was agreed by all that Mr Everitt be congratulated for his efforts towards this project.

Grasscutting: This was discussed. Tenders are to be invited for this years season.

Cemetery Path: It was agreed that this work should now go ahead.

Reports

Councillor Fitch reported to the meeting on both CCC & ECDC matters.

Correspondence Received

A letter had been received with reference to Conservation work to be carried out on Devils Dyke. The details of this are on the noticeboard (and on p 23). A copy of the "Schedule of Proposed Modifications" for the District Local Plan has been received. This is available for viewing at local libraries or by contacting the Clerk.

A copy of the Register of Electors 2000-2001 was received. Copies of this are to be posted.

Accounts for Payment

These were agreed.

Planning Applications

Received: Windmill Cottage, 34 Mill Hill: Replacement Garage (retrospective).

Planning Approvals:

Heath Road - Four New Terraced Houses for Cambridge Housing Society.
30 Green Head Road: extension to non-clinical veterinary practice to create additional office space.

The next Parish Council meeting will be on Thursday, 9th March 2000 at the Village Hall.

Karen King

Clerk of the Parish Council

From the Parish Registers

In Memoriam: Doreen Marion Bishop (68)
Patricia Victoria Cunningham (66)



Church Services

March 2000

ST MARY'S Swaffham Bulbeck

ST MARY'S Swaffham Prior

ST ETHELREDA & THE HOLY TRINITY

QUINQUAGESIMA

Sun
5

8:00am
Holy Communion[†]
9:30am
Family Service

11:00am
Parish Communion

6:00pm
Evensong[†] and
Sermon

LENT 1

Sun
12

9:30am
Parish Communion^A

11:00am
Harvest Family Service
6:00pm
Evensong[†] and Sermon

8:00am
Holy Communion[†]

LENT 2

Sun
19

9:30am
Village Communion^A

8:00am
Holy Communion[†]
6:00pm
Evensong[†] and Sermon

11:00am
Family Service

LENT 3

Sun
26

9:30am
Parish Communion^A

11:00am
Mattins[†] and Sermon
6:00pm
Evensong[†] and Sermon

8:00am
Holy Communion[†]

*ASH
WEDNESDAY*

8

Sung Eucharist in St. Cyriacs with CAMBRIDGE VOICES
7.30 (See page 9)

Holy Communion
Evening Prayer

1st Thursdays 10am, Swaffham Bulbeck Church
Tuesdays, 5:30pm, Swaffham Bulbeck
Wednesdays, 5:30pm, Reach
Thursdays, 5:30pm, Swaffham Prior

Sunday School
Bellringing
Housegroup

Not meeting this term. Creche facilities available as required.
Tuesdays, fortnightly 8pm. St. Cyriacs. Contact: Dr Margaret Stanier on 741328.
Tuesdays, 8pm, fortnightly in Reach.
Contact Olivia Cole 743434, Juliet Vickery 742676

Mothers Union

1st Mondays, 2:15pm, c/o Free Church, Commercial End.
Contact Win Norton on 01223 811509

Toddlers Service

3rd Thursdays @ 11:30am for 15 minutes in Reach Church or Centre

The vicar is never too busy to **visit** anyone on urgent pastoral or spiritual

Dear Friends,

GROWING UP

When Jesus called the original disciples there was an authority in his voice which compelled them to drop what they were doing, and to follow him. We may not meet Jesus face-to-face, as the first disciples did, but the authentic call of God always has the same compelling authority behind it.

All Christians will have doubts and questions; they are unavoidable in the dynamics of encounter, when we experience God by faith. In the world-to-come it will be different, but for now 'we walk by faith, not by sight' (2 Corinthians 5:7). Nevertheless, amid our doubts and uncertainties, we should feel the same strange and mysterious compulsion to follow God, as did the first disciples.

This is not to say that our knowledge of God is somehow infused directly into us, and that the compulsion of faith simply overrides our humanity. If our knowledge of God is to be real, it has to be real for us; it has to be won at the coal-face of life. We see this process very clearly in the New Testament - having called the disciples, Jesus does not set out to indoctrinate them, to tell them what to think. Rather, he draws them into a relationship with him and with each other in which they are to discover for themselves who he is, and what he wants for them.

So, for example, St Peter is not told by Jesus that he is the Messiah, the Son of the living God, but rather has this drawn out of him by Jesus. The same process operated in the early Church, for Jesus left no blue-print or book of instructions for them; it was left to the communities of the early Church to seek God's guidance in their individual circumstances, hence the great diversity of the Church's tradition.

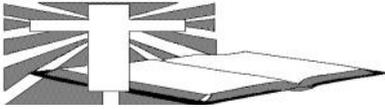
All this has deep implications for Christian education today, and I am writing this in the week before Education Sunday. Learning needs a clear framework, a structure of assumptions about the nature of the world, and the purpose of human life. It needs teachers who accept the responsibility with authority, and out of a deeply-held Christian tradition. It needs teachers of faith and commitment, who acknowledge the high calling of their profession. It also needs a society, and a Church, which places proper value upon teaching and teachers. Learning is essentially a community activity, which will only flourish when the community is fully behind it.

On the other hand, a creative approach to Christian education will be liberal and open, allowing people a generous space in which to discover the reality of God in their lives. Tolerance and generosity will be the hallmark of a truly Christian approach to education, within an overall moral and spiritual framework, which recognises the supreme authority of God, and His claim upon each of our lives.

A Christian teacher will know where to find the bread of life, but he or she will not attempt to thrust it down other people's throats. Education, like everything else in Christian life, is an act of love. In that spirit, we shall engage here in these parishes, ecumenically, in our 5 Lent Groups, to which any enquirers are welcome; they are not for the 'in-group' ... there is no 'in-group'! ... but we do hope to learn more about our faith and our lives, and to grow in the process.

Yours sincerely,

Mark



Zion Baptist Chapel

Services for March 2000:

| | | | |
|----------|------------------|---------|---|
| Sunday | 5 th | 10.30am | (No Service) |
| | | 6.30pm | David Bousfield (Communion) |
| Sunday | 12 th | 6.00pm | David Bousfield |
| Sunday | 19 th | 6.30pm | Joint service at Swaffham Bulbeck Free Church |
| Sunday | 26 th | 6.30pm | Steve Ayers |
| Tuesdays | | 7.30pm | Alpha course as announced |

Seeing and believing...

G
O D
L O V
E S U S
A N D W A
N T S T O B E
P A R T O F F O U R
D A I L Y L I V E S

David Bousfield

Roman Catholic Church, Newmarket Parish

Masses: Newmarket: Sat 1830; Sun 0900,1030,1700;

Kirtling: Sun 0945; Soham 1700

In Bottisham Parish Church, Sun 0900 (Served from Cambridge).

From John Morrill, Deacon to the Roman Catholic Community

This year Easter is as late as it can be: 22 April. And that means that Ash Wednesday is as late as it can be - 8 March. Most of us know that there are forty days in Lent (the period from Ash Wednesday to Easter) but I got to quite a ripe old age before I realised it was forty days *excluding Sundays*. I suppose that it has always seemed to last so long, because I had given something up for Lent and was desperate to be able to get back to it whether it was tobacco (in my teens), beer (in my twenties), wine (in my thirties), whisky (in my forties). And what it is in my fifties is for me to know and you to speculate about!

Actually, Lent has not always lasted forty days (plus Sundays). In the early centuries of the Church it was 36 days (plus Sundays). That was to represent a penitential tenth of everyone's lives offered to God (36 out of 365), to match the one tenth of everyone's income (the tithes) which was paid to the Church. The move to forty days seems to have happened in the darkest of dark ages, around the year 700. Why it was changed is not known (at least to the authors of the books I have consulted!). But it was clearly intended to recall the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness before he took up his ministry. Those were days of gaining focus and a sense of true priorities. Every Jesuit at an early stage of his formation has to undertake a 'desert retreat' of forty days duration, during which he is deprived of all external stimuli and spends the time alone with God and a spiritual director who guides the retreatant through specific readings but otherwise alone. A friend of mine in a northern diocese retired from school-teaching after thirty years in post and went on just such a retreat for forty days because he had no idea what to do with himself. He came out with a very strong sense of calling to prison chaplaincy.

The imposition of ashes is a reminder of our mortality: 'remember', the priest or deacon says, 'that you are dust and unto dust you will return', something which itself reminds us to keep things in perspective; but the ashes which are imposed are the ashes of the previous Palm Sunday, the ashes of all the hopes and aspirations of those, the Gospel tells us, who waved palms and cried Hosanna to the King of Kings as Jesus rode into Jerusalem, and who a few days later were either braying 'crucify him!' or (if they were his close friends) hiding themselves away lest they be crucified too. The ashes of the palms are the ashes of our best intentions, our failure to live up to our hopes and promises to love God and to love God-in-our neighbour. And that is why, whether the phases of the moon that determine the date of Easter and therefore of Ash Wednesday, whether therefore it is mid February or early March, it is good every year to think about how we have grown and developed, how we have promised and failed, how we can and must rededicate ourselves. Our betrayal of God leads annually to Good Friday; and his forgiveness leads annually Easter and the guarantee of His unwavering love.

Dates for Your Diary - March 2000

- Wed 1 Cubs, Village School, 6.30-8:00pm.
- Thu 2 2.00-4.30 Tearoom and Shop, VH
7.30 School Governors
- Fri 3
- Sat 4 7.30 Millennium Music Hall, SB School Hall (£6/£4)
- Sun 5
- Mon 6
- Tue 7 Mobile Library, Cage Hill 2:40-3:30, Chapel 3:35-4:00pm
- Wed 8 Cubs, Village School, 6.30-8:00pm.
- Thu 9 PC Meeting
2.00-4.30 Tearoom and shop
10.30 Coffee morning @ The Manor House, Lower End
- Tue 14 **Crier Copy Deadline**
7.30 Lent Supper, SB VH; speaker: Jo Jones (Christian Aid)
- Wed 15 Cubs, Village School, 6.30-8:00pm.
- Thu 16 2.00-4.30 Tearoom and shop, VH
- Fri 17
- Sat 18 7.00 for 7.30 Spring Quiz Night @ VH (£2.50)
- Sun 19
- Mon 20 WI AGM
- Tue 21 Mobile Library, Cage Hill 2:40-3:30, Chapel 3:35-4:00pm
8.00: Village Gardeners, VH
- Wed 22 Cubs, Village School, 6.30-8:00pm.
- Thu 23 2.00-4.30 Tearoom and Shop, VH
SP & Reach PC Trustees Meeting @ The Vicarage
- Sat 25
- Sun 26 12.15 Unveiling of the Sundial, School Playground
- Mon 27
- Tues 28 3.00 ECDC Meeting, BVC
- Wed 29 Cubs, Village School, 6.30-8:00pm.
- Thu 30 **Crier** Collating, Village Hall, 2:30pm
7.30 School Governors
2.00-4.30 Tearoom and Shop, VH

Apr 21 Good Friday: Cambridge Voices, St Cyriacs