



# SOUTH WILLINGHAM NEWS

## South Willingham Walks

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The contribution below, 'An Autumn Walk', is an uncomfortable reminder of the restrictions on walking around South Willingham. I have lived in cities and towns and there are more footpaths and routes where I could walk safely than there are here. The only walks available to South Willingham people are narrow country lanes without pavements where the increasing amount of traffic, often including heavy goods vehicles, makes the exercise quite



Not a sign in South Willingham

unsafe and sometimes very dangerous.

The Lincolnshire County Council, together with our own Parish Council, are at present negotiating further open footpaths in the

area, but because there have been objections, the whole process has been referred higher to the Secretary of State. Of course, we have to take the fears behind these objections seriously because there are rights on both sides. However, there will not be many walkers and most of them will be local people who will respect the Countryside Code.

We will keep you informed of the progress of the negotiations. There may have to be a public enquiry with the Inspector deciding between the competing interests.

*Paul Fuller*

### Special points of interest:

- Negotiating footpaths
- Farewell to Mel Montgomery
- Poetic Eric's epic
- Christmas arrangements
- "hides the ruin that it feeds upon" - ivy
- Greetings from the Luttrell Kings

## An Autumn Stroll

In the last issue of South Willingham News there was a piece entitled Geologists and Special Constables, relating the tale of two geologists, sometime in the early 1900s. Whilst waiting for a train at South Willingham station they were interrogated and rebuked by two men wanting to know what they were doing and every last detail about them.

Times haven't changed a great deal.

I am not the only one who has been stopped and chastised whilst walking down Moore's lane, which according to the Ordnance Survey map is a public right of way up to the point where the lane forks.

There are acceptable and unacceptable ways of speaking to people. My

experiences have been from people with an extremely supercilious air, and the last occasion could almost have been described as harassment, as the person in question crawled along beside me in their 4 x 4 whilst talking down on me as though I was some sort of tramp.

It's funny how things don't change much.

*Liz Noblet*



Lee and Katie Miller at their wedding in October

Mel's farewell. Below are Fran with Jackie and Keith Miller and Rowland, June and Steve talk to Mel (far right)



(Below) a happy table at the Harvest Supper



More guests at Mel's farewell



## We live in South Willingham

Betty and Alan have lived at Bluebell Cottage for thirteen years, they were previously at Sturton-by-Stow.

Betty works as a catering assistant at the Priory LSST Academy, a school in Lincoln, and Alan works at a bakery in Lincoln.

Alan's main hobby is anything to do with vintage and classic cars, including doing them up and watching races.

Betty is very creative and has turned her hand to ceramics, making doll's house furniture and sewing.

Between them Alan and Betty have three children and five grandchildren.

### What is your earliest memory?

Alan: I would have been about two years old, I was walking across a field on the farm where I grew up and we came across a water-logged area next to a gateway. My wellingtons got stuck in the mud and I ran home crying!

Betty: I remember sitting on my uncle's knee. I would have been about two.

### Which living person do you most admire, and why?

Alan: Ettore Bugatti, he is a fantastic engineer and artist.

### What is your most treasured possession?

Alan: The chassis of my

first car. It was a Morris 8, I bought it when I was sixteen.

Betty: My mum's wedding ring.



Alan and Betty at home

### What is your favourite book?

Alan: Any books about the way of life pre-war, also books on architecture and vintage cars.

Betty: I like romantic novels set during the war.

### What is your guiltiest pleasure?

Alan: I love to have a cup of tea or coffee in a nice little café or tea-room.

Betty: Sloe gin!

### Who would you invite to your dream dinner party?

Betty: Billy Fury!

Alan: Raymond Mays, Eric Clapton and Lady Godiva.

### What is the worst job you have ever done?

Betty: Packing crisps, it was so boring.

Alan: I had to clean the coaches out after a Saturday night when people might have drunk too much!

### How do you relax?

Betty: I watch the telly.

Alan: I read and watch the telly.

### Where would you like to be right now?

Alan: Somewhere warm.

Betty: A Caribbean island.



Emma, John and Jo at the Harvest Supper



## Winter — the final installment from the Luttrell Psalter

In November, the villagers would turn their pigs out on to the common land and into the woods to fatten them up for the winter. Pigs love acorns and enjoy rooting around for them in the undergrowth. This is called ‘pannage’ and still takes place in the New Forest these days. Most of the pigs would be killed in December and salted and stored in barrels, some of the best joints being smoked over the open fire. Only a few animals would be kept for breeding next year. A few of the villagers’ cows would also be killed and salted.

wives tossed the grain with round winnowing fans. The villeins were allowed to keep a proportion of grain for their own use, this they put into sacks to take home, while the majority of the sacks were stored in Sir Geoffrey’s granary. The straw went for bedding to the stables for the horses and

other church festivals was the rare time when people could relax and have fun.

Sir Geoffrey celebrated Christmas by having the great hall decorated with branches of evergreen – fir, yew, holly, ivy and mistletoe. The hall would be lit by wooden torches, with a great fire in the centre of the hall piled high with logs, the smoke swirling around the room before leaving by the large central chimney.

The household and villagers would be invited to sit at trestle tables down the hall. Christmas food was always better than at other times, there would be meat stew, ham and bacon, cheese and sweet-meats and plenty of ale. Sir Geoffrey and his guests would sit at the raised high table and would be served boars head, swan and other exotic dishes. He would use a sharp knife to cut his food, but would eat with his fingers.

The first Sunday after Twelfth Night marked the end of the festivities and a plough was taken to the church to receive the priest’s blessing. The next day the village lads would drag the plough around the whole village past all the houses, singing, and cracking whips to drive away evil spirits. This was known as Plough Monday, and the year’s farming cycle was about to begin all over again.

*Martin Doughty*



Plough Monday

When the weather was too harsh to work outside, then all the tasks that could be done inside were done. Weather in the 14th century tended to be far more severe than now and periods of famine were not unknown. Villagers would work collectively threshing grain in the large barn, while the freemen would work in their own small barns. The villeins had to work on the stored wheat sheaves in the great barn on the demesne farm. The reeve played an important roll at this time, he had notched up on his tally sticks the exact number of sheaves each man had grown on his strips of land, and had allotted the stored sacks of grain accordingly. In the large barn the doors were built opposite each other to create a draught across the openings. As the villagers threshed the wheat with flails the wind across the two doors would blow the husks away as the villeins’

oxen. Children were expected to work hard during this time and they would work in the barns and help with the preparing of the carcasses for salting and smoking. By Christmas most of the winter food would be stored, and in a good year the villagers and their animals would have enough to survive until spring. This was not always the case and quite often both people and animals did not survive the riggers of winter and famine, life was indeed very hard.

### CHRISTMAS

Everyone put their tools away when Christmas came round, and for twelve whole days the villagers were able to relax and enjoy themselves; eating, drinking, playing games, and dancing to music. Everyone was expected to attend church on Christmas Day. This festival along with harvest and some

“quite often both people and animals did not survive the rigours of winter and famine, life was indeed very hard

# A'carolling We Will Go

by Eric Payne

'Twas the week before Christmas  
And in yon village square  
Some Creatures were stirring  
Including maidens so fair.

The ladies were nestled all snug in their wraps

While waiting for sherry or maybe  
some schnapps

Then with stars shining down on our  
motley crew

We all sallied forth with no more ado

Willingham carollers with mufflers and hats

'Twas their annual attempt to scare old  
ladies and cats

With lanterns and torches to light up  
their way

And dear Mr Doughty to show us the  
way.

When from over the fence there came  
such a clatter

And all of us wondered what on earth  
was the matter,

But then realized, of course, it's Fergu-  
son's dogs

Like shadowy Ghosts barking there in  
the fog.

The moon on the breast of the new-  
fallen snow

Gave the lustre of mid-day to poor  
sods below

Determined we were to give of our best  
–

But alas comes a call – “It's those car-  
ollers – the pests!”

“Quick, off with the lights” from inside  
comes a cry

“and if we're dead lucky they'll just go  
on by.”

But us carollers are canny and so we all

shout,

“Come out , you old skinflints, we know  
you're about!”

Then, having extracted a handful of cash

It's over to Mel's place for our first eve-  
ning's bash

And after a sherry, mince pie and gin  
Our heroes regroup to continue their din.

The temperature's dropping, our noses turn  
blue

So it's all into Terry's for a stiff drink (or  
two),

Then having imbibed at the Ringrose'  
abode

Ann throws us all out with “Get back on  
the road!”

“You've plenty more houses whose doors  
you must knock,”

But the freezing night air, it comes as a  
shock

So it's Rat-a-tat-tat on this door and that,

The dogs flee in terror closely followed by  
cats.

So a couple more visits with feet turning  
numb,

'Till someone cries “Marcus does a nice  
line in rum!”

In less time than it takes to tell you this tale,

We're ensconced at 'The Manor' swilling  
toddlies and ale.

But lest you may think that carol singing's a  
lark

Lots of money is raised by those folks in  
the dark.

So look kindly on those who give of their  
time...

And Seasons Greetings to all in 2009.

(With apologies and acknowledgements to  
Clement C. Moore – 'Twas the Night Before  
Christmas)



**“With lanterns and  
torches to light up  
their way”**

## Snippets

On a Sunday in October, John and Fran invited a number of us who had known Mel over the years to come and say 'goodbye' to him. It was a limited goodbye because he does not leave till December and in any case we hope he will often come from Louth to join us. But it was a good opportunity to say thanks for all he has done in the village. He joined the Parish Hall Committee and soon became Chairman – an extremely good one, either in the leadership position or working hard behind the scenes. He has also arranged very successful Progressive Dinners. We will miss him and his efforts and look forward to seeing him in the future.

Christmas with its jumble of events will be upon us before we know it, so mark your diaries. There will not be a separate event run by the Parish Hall but they will provide the refreshments for

the Parish Carol Service at St Martin's Church, 6 p.m. on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup>. The following evening, Monday 21<sup>st</sup>, Carol Singing round the vil-

Sometimes we want to get in touch with the Police when we are not in an emergency situation. In this case the number is: 0845 606 0222.



Ann and Celia harvest the wine

There's a marvellous amount of social activity in this village all run by volunteers, but just occasionally we need to ask for more. The Coffee Morning on the first and third Wednesdays in the Parish Hall is being run by the same few people, and we are asking if one or two others could run it from time to time.

Though it is free, we have donations and now reimburse those who help.

One other request. The colour pages in South Willingham News cost £20 a time and though the Parish Council and the Parish hall subsidise the rest, we need sponsors for the colour. If you are able to support us would you put your name on the sheet in the Parish Hall, or let the Editor know.

lage will begin at 6 p.m. – assemble at the bus shelter.

For Carol Singing bring warm clothing and a torch. This year the charity will be the NSPCC and as there are probably more singers than the rest of the village put together and we want to produce as good an amount as usual, is it politically incorrect to remind carollers that they contribute too?

**"a good opportunity to say thanks for all {Mel} has done in the village"**

## Ivy and Trees: a Question of Balance

Much has been argued as to whether or not ivy climbing a tree will cause harm to it. Trees can be overwhelmed by ivy and, once it reaches the top or apex of a tree, it blooms and sets seed causing the premature demise of the tree.

The flowers can afford a good supply of [honey](#)

for bees and, as they appear in autumn, they occasionally make amends for the shortcomings of the season. The berries are eaten by wood pigeons, black-birds and thrushes.

enemies to keep it in check and balanced.



Ivy has no natural Technical experts *(Continued on page 8)*



Joseph Matthew Burn, son of John and Sarah, born on the 11th September 2009, weighing 7lbs 6ozs. Is he happy to be in South Willingham?



Pannage—Luttrell Psalter

A Happy Christmas  
to all our Readers from  
South Willingham News



The Three Kings in the Luttrell Psalter

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Parish Hall

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## Parish Hall

CAROL SERVICE IN  
ST MARTIN'S  
CHURCH 20TH  
DECEMBER AT  
6 P.M.

**Coffee Mornings 1st  
& 3rd Wednesdays**

**Parish Councillors:**

Marcus Edmundson	313623
[Chairman]	
Paul Cutts	313486
[Vice-Chairman]	
Rowland Crouch	313428
Martin Doughty	313686
Nikki Harris	313618
Claire Harrison	313406

**Parish Clerk:** Nigel Spencer 313614

**Parish Hall :**

Mel Montgomery (Chairman)	313590
Maureen Ferguson (Secretary)	313584
Chris Nutten (Treasurer)	313500

The Parish Council and the Parish Hall are jointly producing this paper and through the Management Committee are publishing it quarterly. As well as official news and information about the Hall, they would like stories from around the village. As they are also reporters, sub-editors, publishers and first copy printers, they hope village people will come forward with ideas and stories themselves. Their thanks to Courseware4Trainers Ltd for the printing. Thanks also to Paul Fuller for the colour pages.

*(Continued from page 6)*

Once you have located a tree infested with ivy, use either loppers or a pruning saw to cut through each vine clinging to the tree trunk at shoulder height and at a n k l e height. This severs the connection between the life sustaining roots and the rest of the

ivy. Be sure to cut ALL vines as even one can continue to nourish ivy higher up the tree. Strip the ivy away from the tree between the two cuts - some vines can be so big that you need to pry them away from the tree - just be careful not to damage the bark. Recheck the area for any thin vines which may have grown under the tree's bark and you're finished.

However, after all that work, you don't

want to give ivy a head start by leaving it to grow next to the base of the tree! Research has shown the once ivy has been pulled at least 6 feet away from a tree it will continue to grow away from the tree rather than towards it again.

If you love trees and have some on your property, please check them out.

*Nigel Spencer  
Tree Warden*



James and guests at the Harvest Supper