

SOUTH WILLINGHAM NEWS

Parish Council at work

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Special points of interest:

- Three new babies in the village
- A travel story with a difference
- Council to renew efforts on footpaths
- Two young ninety year-olds in the village
- Two bananas for three ha'pence
- Wow! What a garden! And only three years old.

The work of our Parish Council affects us all and we print the report of the Chairman, Cllr Paul Cutts, given at the Annual Meeting:

In his first year, the Chair had been well supported by Councillor Crouch as Vice-Chair and a hard-working committee. The Council had decided to change its way of working by the adoption of "lead roles" to divide the workload amongst the members. A further change had happened in November with the appointment of Margaret Charman as Clerk, a great asset to the committee.

There had been improve-



The Parish Council at work

ments to the Council's assets – the redecoration of the bus shelter had been completed and the Council was in the process of replacing the bench and the notice boards in the bus shelter.

The Council had also welcomed the support of District Councillor Daniel Simpson, particularly with funding for the new

bench; and County Councillor Hugo Marfleet for a wealth of invaluable advice.

Progress had also been made with the naming of Moors Lane after lengthy negotiations and road traffic signage – hashing in front of the bus shelter; a "no through road" sign on Moors Lane and a "reduce speed now" sign on Hainton Road. Despite the use of a traffic counter and digital speed indicator, the perennial problem of speeding through the village continued.

The Council had continued to support planning applications from residents if they were in

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All change at the Hall

At the last AGM we were getting ready to start work on the next step in refurbishing the Hall. At the beginning of July Hillway Builders started work stripping our the old kitchen and preparing to insulate the walls. We were hoping the cladding

could be saved and refitted but found that it was riddled with woodworm and had to go.

As always seems to be the case, work overran somewhat and we were not quite finished by the time of the Harvest Supper. The new chairs arrived the

week before and it was all hands on deck to get the Hall in a fit state for use.

It was not until Christmas that we were able to get the floor finished and there are still bits and pieces to be done. Not

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Mothering Sunday at St Martin's Church



A good attendance at the Quiz and Curry Evening at the Parish Hall in April



Jack William Stanley, son of Guy Stanley and Jo Jenkinson, born on 12 February and weighing 9lb 9 1/2 ozs. Jack is already a regular at the Coffee Morning



Sophie Olivia Millington - just arrived home as we go to press

Memorable Encounters

Gordon Stephenson

In the late 1940s I was airborne from Butterworth, northern Malaya, heading for the first but not the last time towards a small island approximately 600 miles away. This patch of land was called *Car Nicobar*, one of several hundred islands situated in the Andaman and Nicobar chain extending from the Bay of Bengal through to the Indian Ocean. Our flight's purpose was primarily one of supply. On board was mail, other small items and, excluding fresh water, food provisions needed to provide human sustenance. In particular there was bottled beer and soft drinks (provided free by breweries in Singapore), as well as lots of free cigarettes - seized contraband courtesy of the Malayan Customs and Excise. Most important were several current 'movies'. The intended consumers were roughly fifteen Royal Air Force personnel manning the R.A.F. base at Car Nicobar, each on a three month tour of duty.

About four hours after take-off and at an altitude of around 3000 feet we scanned the ocean for breaking surf as a sign of low level land. Navigation to this point had been by compass, airspeed and elapsed time. A mistake meant trouble. There was insufficient fuel to return to Butterworth and there were no alternative airstrips other than Car Nicobar. We had no parachutes and a dip into the shark-infested Indian Ocean with a low probability of rescue was not to be welcomed. It was then that I

appreciated the task I had been given: to survey and commission the installation of a radar beacon which would provide aircrew with both a direction to fly and an indication of their aircraft's true distance from the island.



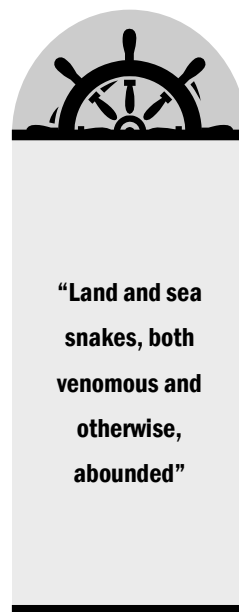
A community hut which housed a number of families

In the 1940s Car Nicobar was (and still is) near the Equator and had a tropical climate - annual temperatures averaging around 30 degrees Celsius and humidity levels exceeding 80% throughout the year with spells of very heavy rain. The island, though inhabited, was nearly flat and almost one hundred percent jungle. There were no roads, merely tracks. There was no electricity, no telephone network, no radio communication, no mail. There were no shops; indeed there was no currency in circulation. In other words ... primitive and isolated.

The R.A.F. base on Car Nicobar was a refuelling point on the Singapore to Ceylon (Sri Lanka) route and existed around a jungle-bounded crushed coral airstrip with a

motley collection of huts. The airstrip had been constructed by the Japanese military when they occupied the island in 1942; this was land at the extreme boundary of their territorial advance. Tactically it threatened Ceylon approximately 600 miles to the West and served as a guard post to the Straits of Malacca, the sea route to Singapore. Fresh water for the R.A.F. set-up, which was severely rationed, came from water-holes (wells) without which the base was not habitable. The base itself resounded night and day to the roar of the ocean surf: six to eight feet breakers would continuously hit the beach 200 yards away. In fact, sea swimming was far from safe. Land and sea snakes, both venomous and otherwise, abounded and so one had to be very wary wherever one went. Malarial mosquitos existed in great numbers, particularly at night, with protection being afforded in the form of mosquito nets around beds and the daily Mepacrine tablet which turned one's skin a nasty yellow. Electricity for the base was provided by diesel-engine powered generators mounted on trucks. All communication with the outside world was by 'no-voice' radio during daylight hours; an operator sent and received messages by Morse Code using a hand operated key. Air conditioning was non-existent. The island had no natural harbours and was surrounded by a coral reef, meaning that any vessel bigger than a large canoe had to

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**"Land and sea
snakes, both
venomous and
otherwise,
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Memorable Encounters

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anchor offshore and all bulky and heavy items (such as barrels of fuel) had to be floated to the beach on a raft.

Car Nicobar was one of the few islands in the chain to be inhabited. Over the centuries, other than for brief encounters with the crews of passing ships, the islanders were isolated, very hostile, and considered to have the “heads of dogs”. There had never been an influx of outsiders. Anthropologists assumed the culture had remained virtually unchanged until the invasion by the Japanese military in March 1942 ... with disastrous consequences for the natives. It was during 1946 that the Royal Air Force arrived to make use of the airstrip.

A Nicobarese is a Negrito - a Pygmy of adult height 4ft or less and thought to be of Mongoloid origin. At that time Nicobar language was unique, making communication with other island groups very limited. They possessed extremely strong teeth and apart from being able to use them to strip the outer husk off a coconut they could create indentations in a metal bar. (Hence “heads of dogs”?) Their society consisted of communal groups occupying large ‘beehive’-style huts mounted on stilts close to the beaches. Each group had a headman who presided over disputes, etc.; in particular he regulated ‘marriages’ and separa-

tions ... in the latter case the man concerned had to continue taking care of his ex-wife and all offspring. There appeared to be no religion, simply a belief in ‘spirits’. Whilst under no

the island following their importation by the invading Japanese.) Prior to an aircraft take-off or landing the natives often had to be cleared from the airstrip, a place where they regularly squatted to eat their food; for them it was the best road on the island ... there was no other! Fish was another source of food, much of which was caught at the shoreline and usually by the women. Canoes, both large and small, constructed from hollowed-out tree trunks and stabilised with an outrigger, were used for offshore fishing with spears. Journeys to other islands were not undertaken. However, the natives of neighbouring *Great Nicobar* were known to paddle their canoes quite some distance to Car Nicobar and then to stay on the beach for a night or two having a ‘rave-up’, causing the local natives to disappear to the other side of the island. (The Great Nicobarese were noted for their aggressive behaviour.)

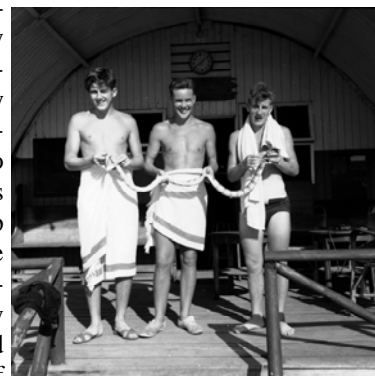
There was no economy. Crews of passing dhows would barter metal items and cloth for Copra and Areca nuts ... the latter were often wrapped in Betel leaves and chewed to provide a stimulant! Theft was unknown:



War Memorial erected by missionaries from India for Nicobarese killed by the Japanese

direct orders to refrain, R.A.F. personnel simply accepted that the indigenous people were ‘off-limits’ as far as cameras were concerned.

Agriculture was unknown and food was provided in plenty by jungle fruits of many varieties. Cooking fires were not common. Hot earth ovens were used mainly for roasting wild pigs – animals which were a menace for any landing aircraft. (They had a tendency to dash across the airstrip from the nearby jungle, usually accompanied by a pack of mules which remained on



Three National Service lads holding a poisonous sea-snake

“the islanders were isolated, very hostile and considered to have the ‘heads of dogs’”

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South Willingham area as a place of pre-history

When the village history group was established some months ago I volunteered to research the parish and surrounding area pre-history that is the Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age. This required a lot of investigation and the expert advice and support from the Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record Office. Formally known as the Sites and Monuments Record, this office contains all of the known archaeological and historic sites in the county from the earliest Stone Age (around 500,000 years ago) to the 20th century.

The office holds details of:-

- archaeological sites from single finds to large and complex multi-period sites such as settlements, ritual sites or industrial sites.
- historic buildings
- historic parks and gardens
- battlefields
- other historic features such as ancient woodland
- even some of the legends that are attached to our historic landscape

They also identify finds and help you with any research you may be undertaking.

So what did I discover in my quest for information about the Paleolithic, Mesolithic Neolithic Stone Age, Bronze and Iron Age around our village? Well the next newsletter will contain a further supplement that will explain all!! The finds and monuments are really interesting and full of surprises.

If you have things that you have found in your garden or from walks then contact the Historic Environment Record Office on 01522 782070. You never know what treasure you may have.

Martin Doughty

Two views of some sites

Photos: Martin Doughty



The things my mother taught me

My mother taught me **religion**

“You had better pray that will come out of the carpet”

My mother taught me **logic**

“Because I say so, that’s why”

My mother taught me **more logic**

“If you fall off that swing and break your neck, you’re not coming to the shops with me”

My mother taught me about **anticipation**

“Just wait until we get home”

My mother taught me about **envy**

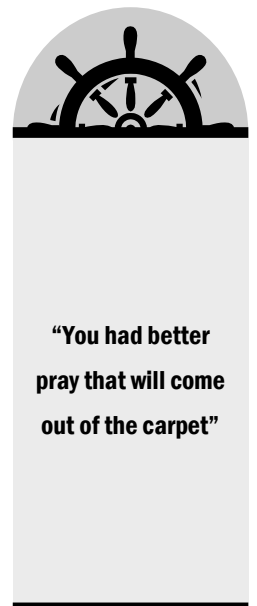
“There are millions of children in the world who don’t have wonderful parents like you do”

My mother taught me about **genetics**

“You’re just like your father”

My mother taught me about **justice**

“One day you’ll have kids and I hope they turn out just like you”



Memories of growing up in South Willingham

Reprinted in honour of Dulcy's Ninetieth

Dulcy came to the village as a young girl with her parents in 1929 and lived at Hillcrest on the Barkwith Road. Both of her parents had been brought up in South Willingham, her father's family lived at Stone Cottage and her mother's at The Poplars on Donington Road.

Even though there was a school at Hainton, Dulcy attended the school at East Barkwith, as it was thought to be the better one. School started at 9am and ended at 4pm. Dulcy would walk the two miles or so to

school until she had her own pushbike, although on days when the weather was very bad the children were allowed to leave a little earlier so that they could catch the bus home. A packed lunch was taken to school which, as Dulcy was rather a fussy eater consisted of bread and butter which she would supplement with a couple of bananas from Brackenbury's shop in East Barkwith. Two for three ha'pence! School was very strict but Dulcy loved her days there and was very sad when she left at the age of fourteen.

After leaving school she helped at home with the livestock and around the house. Most of the houses in the village were smallholdings, people usually kept a couple of cows, pigs and hens and grew vegetables. The villagers all knew each other as they either worked in the village on their smallholdings, or on the Heneage estate.

Dulcy can remember the Post Office shop, which sold all manner of useful items including homemade ice cream, which she was

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one could leave a valuable item or personal possession anywhere and it remained untouched.

Noting that, except for the head, there was no body hair (including facial) the Nicobarese of both sexes went about their daily life naked, although some might wear a loin cloth from the school of fashion labelled "minimalist". Christian missionaries who occasionally sailed by the island had at one time stopped and donated cheap cotton bras and pants for obvious use by the women, but these were worn or used in quite contrary ways and places ... very good head-protection from the sun and useful carrying utilities!

When the RAF base held its regular film shows in the evening - a

projector on a packing case and screen on the back of a Jeep - the Nicobarese men and boys were usually present, having made their way through the jungle with flaming torches in hand ... and they found all films uproariously funny!

By the early 1960s the R.A.F. had no further use for the airstrip as the newer aircraft had the capability to overfly Car Nicobar. During 1964 I met a former member of the Indian Air Force who informed me that a large and more permanent Indian air base had been established on the site of the old airstrip. The whole island was a strictly

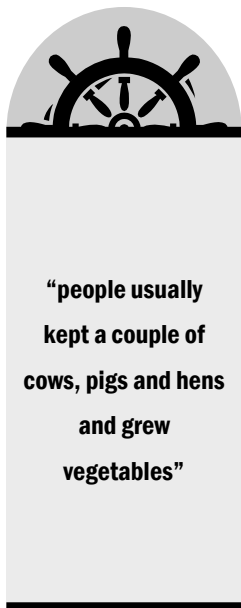
'No Go' area for security reasons and I believe it remains so to this day. In a way, a form of isolation continues for the Nicobarese.

On Boxing Day, 2004, the island met the full force of the tsunami. The Indian airbase was wiped out,,,, great damage was done to the vegetation and many lives were lost. Upon reflection, I now realise how privileged I was to witness and experience at first hand

on more than one occasion a rare, primitive form of human existence in an area of the planet virtually untouched before the onset of civilising forces and progress.



The 'main road' through the jungle



South Willingham Parish Hall
 July 2nd at 2 till 5 p.m.
Craft and Business Showcase
 For small businesses and charities
Books, CDs and DVDs Sale
 Bring your old or unwanted discs

 Strawberry Tea on 17th July



Steve, swatting up the answers at the Quiz

(Continued from page 1)

keeping with existing buildings and materials. The Council also continued to support the production of the Village Newsletter.

Over the coming year, the Council intends to reinvigorate its campaign with the County Council to re-establish several footpaths around the village.

It
 is an
 amazing
 fact that nine
 out of ten people who
 begin to read this triangle
 no matter how obvious it may
 become that there is no point in doing
 so will nevertheless continue to read on right
 up to the inevitable and absolutely bitter end.

(Continued from page 1)

least, the replacement of the heaters. We had hoped to keep the existing ones but some are not longer working and they are not very efficient or economical.

Due to the Hal being out of use for about three months, there have been fewer events this year. The American Evening on 2nd July was the last “do” in the old hall. Mountain Oyster entertained us with American folk music and we ate a variety of American inspired food. The 8th October saw us celebrate the annual Harvest Supper. Once again Mike Perkins conducted the auction. On 12th November we held a quiz night with fish and chip supper. And on 1st April we held another quiz, this time with a curry supper.

Our next event is a sale of books, CD’s etc. on the 2nd of July to coincide with Jo Rouston at Mill Cottage opening her garden to the public through the National Garden Scheme charity. After that, on 17th July, there will be a strawberry tea.

Lastly I would like to say a big thank you to all the Committee who have worked hard in what has sometimes been a challenging year, and to everyone who has given up their time to help you in a variety of ways, from compiling questions for the quiz nights, cutting the grass and cleaning the Hall, especially after the floor was sanded! Plus all the other little jobs to get the Hall back into full use.

Thank you.
 Chris Washer

In the first half of life we have problems with our children; in the second they have problems with their parents

**“the replacement
 of the heaters. We
 had hoped to keep
 the existing
 ones...”**

Snippets

The population of South Willingham is growing at both ends of the age range. We now have two nonagenarians in the village. Harold Bray was 90 on 11th May and Dulcy Layer is 90 on the 18th June. We send our congratulations to both of them on behalf of the village and hope that in ten years time there will be big celebrations.

But at the other end of the range we have three new babies and send congratulations too to all three sets of parents. Jack was born in February to Guy Stanley and Jo Jenkinson. Grace Olivia came on 6th April to Paul and Kathryn Elliott and lastly Sophie Olivia arrived this month to Lee and Kate Millington.

Reel Issues, the film group, met in May to plan next

year's programme. Because its aficionados were so keen, we extended our season last year to September to April and that will be continued in this coming winter. The selection is done democratically and we make sure the



different genres are represented. There is a surplus of about £200 in the account but that is a buffer against a projector bulb going – an expensive item. Further details of the programme will be given in the next issue.

The AGM of the Parish Hall was a good meeting but not well attended. The Chairman's Report is given elsewhere in the News. Martin Doughty spoke about the pre-history of the village and there was a small exhibition of photos and documents from the History Group.

The South Willingham local History Group has been meeting regularly and is beginning to accumulate a large amount of material connected with the village. Paul Ferguson has set up on our behalf a website for the village. If you have access to the internet, try www.south-willingham.org.

The Litter Picking Sunday went well with volunteers collecting fifteen bags of litter and other rubbish. It's a job that has to be done each year to keep the village tidy.

children would perform recitals and sing songs. On the following Monday they would board decorated wagons and visit neighbouring farms where they would entertain. Later they would return to the schoolroom for tea, and then go up to the town field (Hainton Road) to play games.

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sent to collect in a basin! There was also a carpenter, a cobbler and a blacksmith in the village.

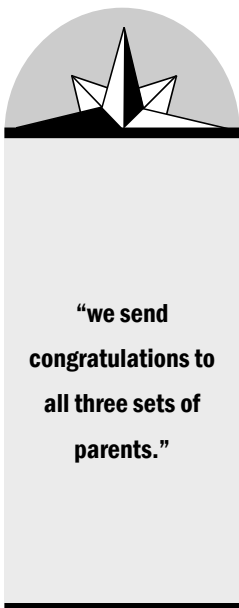
As a young girl Dulcy can remember when there were only three cars in the village, but there was a very reliable bus and train service. Dulcy preferred to use the bus, as it was threepence cheaper and not as far to walk to catch it!

Church played a big part in village life. Not only was there St Martin's church, there was the Methodist chapel at the top of Barkwith Road, and the Free Method-

ist chapel (the bottom chapel) further down the road. Dulcy attended the Methodist chapel and went four times every Sunday. First there was Sunday school, followed by the morning service, which she attended with her grandfather. In the afternoon there was Sunday school again, and later the whole family would attend the evening service. In June the chapel anniversary was celebrated. The



In 1942 Dulcy was called up to serve in the second world war. She was trained to be a switchboard operator for the Royal Signals and spent time in various parts of England. She later returned home and has lived here ever since.



"we send congratulations to all three sets of parents."

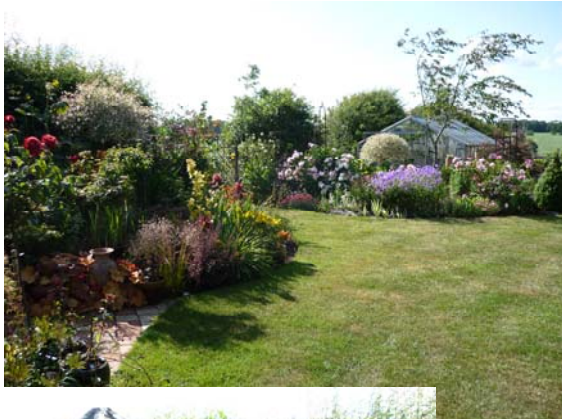


Harold and Alice Bray. Harold was ninety in May but this picture was taken at their Golden Wedding last year.

Photo: Sally Bray



Grace Olivia Elliott, born on 6th April, to Paul and Kathryn Elliott of Barkwith Road



Jo Rouston's garden on show Saturday 2nd July.



A photo of the newly found millstone is on page 8



South Willingham Parish Council and
Parish Hall

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Parish Hall

STRAWBERRY TEA
ON JULY 17

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

Parish Councillors:

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

Parish Clerk: Margaret Charman 313776

Parish Hall :

Chris Washer (Chairman)	313244
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 Terry and Ann Ringrose for the colour pages.

The Garden at Mill Cottages

Open Garden on Saturday 2nd July

Under the National Gardens Scheme

12.00 till 5.00

At the home of Jo Rouston, a garden designer

Cream teas and refreshments

