

Talk@Sileby

Village Newsletter



42

Winter 2015

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If you would like to give your feedback, articles or letters these can be sent to the Editor

The advertising rates for Talk@Sileby are listed below

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Inside front/inside back cover £105.00

Back cover £135.00

These prices are per issue. 10% discount for booking and paying for three insertions in advance

Front Cover Picture: A snow covered Redlands School. Photo Helen Root.

Your community magazine is delivered to every home and business in Sileby, that's about 3800 addresses!

It is published 3 times a year: Spring around Easter time, in the summer and in November just prior to the Christmas lights "Switch on".

We have no political or commercial or religious allegiances and aim to be impartial and independent. We are entirely self-funding through advertising revenue. We are here solely to promote Sileby, its businesses, residents, clubs, societies, associations, schools and churches. All items and pictures are copyright Talk@Sileby unless otherwise stated.

Talk@ ileby, By Sileby people. For Sileby people

Next Issue will be Spring 2016. Copy and
advert deadline is 28th February 2016.

Copies of Talk@Sileby

Copies of Talk@Sileby can be obtained by post at a cost of 50p per issue which includes p&p..

Please make cheques payable to: Sileby Village Newsletter

Back issues of Talk@Sileby can be viewed on the internet at www.sileby-village.co.uk

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this magazine are the views of the contributors and not necessarily the views of Talk@Sileby.

SILEBY PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

The 61st Annual Exhibition presented by the Sileby Photographic Society, and staged at the Community Centre, was officially declared open by the Mayor of Charnwood, Councillor John Capleton, on Monday, 19th October.

Lionel Blower, President of the Society, welcomed the Mayor to the week-long Exhibition who, in turn, congratulated members of the Society on their quite magnificent efforts in being able to present an Exhibition of such high quality and on such a scale. Councillor Capleton then proceeded to present the awards to the winners of the competing panels of 6 prints and 6 digital images entered by invited Societies, and these were Leicester Forest Photographic Society and Beeston Camera Club respectively.

All the exhibits entered by Sileby's own members had earlier been judged by Peter Yeo, FRPS, DPAGB, APAGB, a distinguished photographer in his own right, who commented on the very high standard of prints and images on display which had presented him with no easy task when choosing the eventual winners of each category. He then presented the awards to individual Society members.

A record number of 272 prints in all categories had been entered covering a diverse and comprehensive range of subjects reflecting individual photographer's interests and preferences. There were 163 projected images produced by Sileby's own members, plus panels of 6 images each from 10 other local Photographic Societies. The audio visual show, entitled *'The National Parks of Great Britain – Part 2'* provided superb viewing and evidenced the wonderful landscapes and notable features which this country can proudly boast.

The Exhibition was very well received by members of the public evidenced by very positive feed-back and visitors had turned out in numbers reflecting an excellent attendance throughout the week.



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The editorial committee would like to wish all our readers a very happy Christmas.

Sileby's Christmas lights are due to be switched on on Friday 4th December, the fun starts at 5:30pm. The activity takes place on Brook Street and a reminder that the road will be closed for the occasion and bus services will not be circulating round the village. There will be children's activities and the countdown to the lights activation. Following this the community centre is opened where a range of groups from the village will be exhibiting to raise money and provide information. It's always great to see so many villagers attend this event and is the highlight of the community year.





In this issue we publish a poem written by a local resident. Do you write poetry? Do you want to share your poems with the community? If so then please send them to the editor (see page 3 for contact details). We will include them in future editions.

We must also say a big thank you to all our volunteer deliverers, without you there would be no magazine in peoples living rooms.

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-Karen B

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-Nick C

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Church **News**

Christmas Church Services

Baptist Church

Sunday 20th Dec @ 6pm

Family Carol Service

Friday 25th Dec @ 10.30am

Christmas Day Family Service

St Mary's Christmas Services

6th December 4:00pm Christingle

20th December 11:00am Family Nativity Service

24th December 4:00pm Family Carol Service

6:30pm Traditional Carols

11:30pm Midnight Communion

25th December 10:30am All Age service with short Holy Communion

Statement of Accounts 1-10-2014 to 30-09-2015

Receipts

Balance v/forward £2011.06

Advertising Income £2960.00

Other Income

Payments

Printing Issue 39 £918.00

Printing Issue 40 £1040.00

Printing Issue 41 £918.00

Other Expenditure £10.72

Cash in hand £39.28

Balance at Banl £2045.06

£4971.06

£4971.06

I am satisfied that the above summary of the Annual Accounts as checked against individual receipts and invoices accurately records the financial transactions of the committee for the year ending 30th September 2015

D R Haswell, Auditor

SILEBY TENNIS CLUB

This year Sileby Tennis Club have been holding special Sunday Tournaments at their Springfield Road Courts. In May it was "Summer Time", June saw the "French Open", July was the traditional Strawberry and Cream Tea, and August the "American Open". We also had two Open Days. One in March when special discounts were available for anyone joining on the day, and another in June. The Club's Championship Finals Day was held in September and some of the matches have still to be completed so there will not be a Presentation Evening until next January or February.

The Club has two men's teams in the Summer Leicestershire League. The Men's 1st team will be promoted to division 3 next year, having been division 4 champions this year and the Men's 2nd team will be promoted to division 7 next year having come 2nd in division 8. There is also a mixed team in the Summer. During the Winter the two men's teams are still playing.

The Club play all the year round and during the Winter months on Sunday Afternoons and are ready to welcome all members and visitors to come down (visitors are £5 and members free). Next year the club will be looking to recruit more ladies. Juniors are also urged to play with parents and coaching can be organised with "Inside Out Tennis".

So think 2016 will be the year to Play Tennis at Sileby



The Final Chapter ...

there was a library ...

Sileby Community Library

We are pleased to report we are nearing the end of our story. The Sileby Community Library Group have successfully registered the Library as a charity with the Charity Commission and the Trustees who will work to ensure the library is correctly run are in place. The transfer from Leicestershire County Council to Sileby's community will be from **Monday, 14th December 2015.**

We have great volunteers already in place, but will always require more volunteers to help us in keeping the library running. Any help or support is welcome. We are looking for volunteers to run groups, clubs, workshops. Interested? contact Sarah patrick42sarah@aol.com

Look out for exciting news of our launch events around Christmas and into the New Year. Thank you for your support in 2015 and we look forward to seeing you at the Library in 2016!



Find us on Facebook—Sileby Community Library or look at our website

www.silebylibrary.org



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kitchen sink! If we don't have it in stock, we can probably order it for you.

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LIFE AT THE "MILL"

 On reading Lynne Root's article on Finsbury Avenue in the last Talk@Sibley edition, I recognised some of those people mentioned as having worked at Melody Mills, I too worked at "Melody" as it was known.

During the late 1960s myself and my wife, together with our toddler Daughter, lived at 41 Cossington Rd. The cottage was owned by Melody Mills. We had been lucky enough to rent the cottage from them. I was a Maintenance Electrician there, and presumably given some priority in renting. The cottage was two up/two down, a lounge and kitchen downstairs with two bedrooms upstairs, the larger to the front, and the other overlooking the overgrown rear garden and the Raw Paper Store of Melody. Between our cottage and the Paper Store was a brick built incinerator where the Company's rubbish was burnt. If you were unlucky they would be "burning" at the very time that your washing was out. When the incinerator was not in use it became the playground for very large rats. They would stray towards the nearby properties. If the situation became too bad then Melody would send their nominated "Rat Catcher" together with his two Jack Russells. He would also, as a last resort, carry cyanide powder. I don't think that would be allowed now!

The cottage had one cold tap in the kitchen. There were no inside toilets or bathrooms in Victorian cottages. Hot water was provided by a saucepan or kettle on the gas stove. The toilets for Nos. 37, 39 and 41 were in a block of brick and slate buildings. They were in an area at the front of the cottages, about 10 yards (9metres) from our front door. As for everyday washing, it was done in the kitchen sink. Baths had to wait till we visited our parents.

Despite the lack of facilities (those problems weren't unusual then) we loved it there. It was made even more bearable by the "reasonable" rental terms. We were paying 14 shillings (70 pence) a week. I can't remember whether this included Rates (Council Tax). Even in those days I am sure that the rent must have been a bargain.

Another plus point was the location. I could be at work in no time. A short scramble through the rear garden, into the Paper Store, a quick walk through the Print Shop and I was "clocked in". More than 4 minutes late and you lost a quarter of an hour pay. My duty as Maintenance Electrician was to give Breakdown Cover during the night shift, 7.30pm till 7.30am. If there was an electrical fault during those hours which resulted in production being lost, then a deputation, which would include the Nightshift Foreman, would make their way to No. 41. They would try to gain my attention by knocking on the door or if that failed to break my slumbers then stones thrown at the windows would be tried. A final attempt was with the clothes line prop tapped against the bedroom window. One of these would always work. Remember they couldn't communicate by 'phone, we didn't have one. That wasn't unusual then. As for mobiles – only in Sci-Fi films.

Melody Mills owned various properties in the village. Some on Finsbury, two I believe on Highgate Rd., and numerous on Cossington Rd. There was a clever reason behind owning these properties. Skilled wallpaper manufacturing operatives were to be found in the North of England. "Melody" needed that skill. To entice those families to Sileby they needed to offer accommodation. It worked. An influx of skilled labour arrived.

When the wallpaper industry vacated Sileby those houses were offered at auction. A few were bought by existing Melody Mills (Harlequin) tenants.

The passing of that industry and the employment it created left Sileby in a much poorer position.

Pete Campbell




The factory, just off Cossington Road



The Raw Paper Store

Introducing Ken Jones, Talk@Sileby co-ordinator and Chair

 In our committee there are three people who can claim the distinction of being Sileby born and bred – Lynne Root, who has just joined us, Robert Butler – and our Chair, Ken Jones. Ken has lived in the village all his life – four different homes, but all in the Cossington Road area.

Eighty years ago he was born on Cossington road – he attended local schools, leaving Humphrey Perkins Grammar school in 1951 when he was 16. He joined Melody Mills (wallpaper manufacturers - *Question - why "Melody"? Answer - "Always in tone" !*) as an office boy, earning £1/10s (150p) a week. At that time there were about 50 staff, some in administration, the majority being directly involved in the manufacturing, one order-picker and four packers coped with the output.

In 1955, after completing his National Service Ken returned to work in the offices of Melody Mills – and married Muriel, a Syston girl, who worked in the Sileby doctor's surgery.

The business grew and Ken was promoted from the office to manage the warehouse and distribution – and his working week became ten hours longer!

Melody continued to grow fast, driven by demand for the innovative ready-trimmed, washable wallpaper, and became an important player in the wallpaper industry. To cope with the extra demand a night shift was introduced, and eventually another factory opened in Anstey – which became Anstey Wallpaper. Two new warehouses were built at the Sileby factory, and another rented in Thurmaston. In time, even more warehouse space was needed; Ken designed a new super-size warehouse to be built by Charles Street Buildings on Wanlip Road, Syston – this was rented to Melody Mills.

In a little over 30 years the despatch department had grown from four packers working in a small building with a corrugated tin roof to a state-of-the-art warehouse, nine articulated lorries and other smaller vehicles – delivering direct to customers the length and breadth of the U.K. – and a vibrant world-wide export market.

Sadly this booming industry was hit by The Recession, and forced into receivership. The business was rescued by Walker Greenbank and the Melody brand disappeared, to be replaced by "Harlequin"; distribution moved to Milton Keynes, and the Anstey Wallpaper production moved to the former Ladybird Books factory in Loughborough.

In Sileby and Anstey the factory sites became housing estates – here in Sileby we have Harlequin Road and Melody Drive – in Anstey, Melody Avenue – reminders of yet another flourishing industry which is no longer in the village.

When Ken retired in 2000 he wanted to contribute something to the village which had served him so well – he was delighted to be asked to fill a vacancy on the Parish Council. In 2003 he (and the late Roy Brown) were elected to represent Sileby on the Borough Council, which led to Ken becoming the Charnwood delegate on the Consultative committee for East Midlands Airport, and chairing the Charnwood Road Safety Committee.

His most memorable moments? Ken told me that shortly after his election to represent Sileby on the Borough Council he had met the Prime Minister – this, together with walking through Cossington Meadows with Sir David Attenborough on the occasion of the official opening of the Nature Reserve.



Now retired from the Borough Council, Ken has taken several other roles in village life. He is still on the Parish Council, but also a Trustee of Homefield College, a governor of Highgate Primary School, co-ordinator of the Talk@Sileby magazine and has been Chairman of the Gala Committee for the last three years

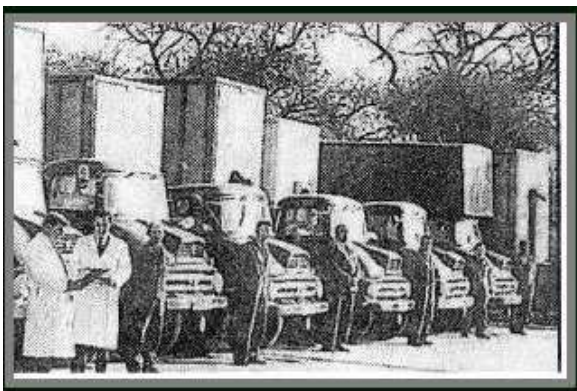
As we all know, our smaller village libraries have become an expensive luxury for the community – Ken is a member of the Committee working towards keeping the Sileby library going, in the hands of the community – he stressed to me that most of the credit should go to the young ladies working on the team – “they are really amazing”

Ken captained Syston Rugby F.C., and for many years held the record for the most Syston 1st team appearances – over 300 games – before becoming President of the club. He played Cricket for Sileby, and has been President three years - to his enormous delight, in 2014 the team won the County Cup. His active playing career over, he still derives much pleasure from watching the team, with a beer in his hand, on a sunny Saturday afternoon.

For many years Ken followed the England cricket team around the world. He’s been twice to Australia and Sri Lanka, to South Africa and Antigua, and five times to Barbados! To his great sadness, his age has brought his globe-trotting to an end .

Now eighty years old, Ken is gradually reducing his active involvement in village organisations, (“before I become more of a hindrance than a help” he told me) but continues to take a keen interest in the activities of the village. He told me that he is confident that “the village will continue to grow and develop in the best interests of the residents”. I feel sure that his knowledge and experience will be valued by us all for many years to come.

Lorry fleet in the 'sixties



I can't believe that the end of 2015 is fast approaching. It was a pleasure to attend the recent Highgate Medical Centre Patients Participation Group coffee morning recently. The topic for discussion and advice was preparing for winter. It was great to see so many village residents there and to see everyone so engaged in thinking about their own health. Congratulations to Dr Lakhani, his team and the PPG for being so proactive.

I was also delighted to attend Kay Machin's 90th birthday celebrations at the Conservative Club. She was surrounded by family and friends and it was a well-deserved celebration. Happy Birthday Kay – we are looking forward to your 100th!

I will be visiting Sileby Redlands Primary School in November to find out their latest news and discuss school and education matters.

It was good to catch up with local farmers, including those from near Sileby, recently at a meeting organised by our local NFU representatives. We discussed a range of issues including the need for prompt payments by the Rural Payments Agency, the significant pressures faced by dairy farmers, rules and regulations affecting their businesses and work to prevent bovine TB. As with many other constituency meetings I have written and spoken to Ministers about the issues raised to ensure they are aware of the views of local residents.

I continue to respond to residents' queries on planning matters – both on new planning applications and concerns about ongoing building projects. I am also very conscious that there are a number of areas in the village where there are parking concerns too. Whilst I am working with local councillors to see what can be done about this problem parking I would urge residents to think carefully about where they are parking and any nuisance or obstruction they are causing to others.

Many people will know of my great interest in mental health. I have been working for almost two years now with a team of volunteers on what has become the Loughborough Wellbeing Project. The project involves a Wellbeing Cafe once a month on a Friday evening from 6pm-8pm at Loughborough Library. The age range is 18-30 but this is flexible. Support workers are welcome to attend with their clients/service users as this may help them coming along for the time being.

Although called the Loughborough Wellbeing Project they would welcome those from further afield. And they have been pleased to have the support of Homefield College. For more information please e-mail loughboroughwellbeing@gmail.com

I know that across our local area there will soon be many wonderful Christmas events going on organised by hundreds of hard working and dedicated employees and volunteers – from school concerts to special shopping events to Christmas Tree Festivals. I look forward to visiting many such events and, when the time comes, wish you and your family a happy and peaceful Christmas and all the best for 2016.



A.G. & D. RICHARDS

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A. G. Richards, B.Sc., M.C.Optom. & D. Richards, B.Sc., M.C. Optom.

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I have recently been scanning some old family photographs and found the attached of the Sileby Town Silver Band in which my grandfather, Ernest Clarke, played trumpet/cornet. On the main picture of the band he is shown on the back row, second in from the left. He is also shown on the smaller photo of four individuals as the one third from left. I am sure other members of the Sileby community may recall the Silver Band and may have a relative pictured in one of the attached. I hope they are of interest.



COUNTY COUNCIL NEWS

"Let's work together": that's the message from the County Council, as it looks to tackle the major challenges facing Leicestershire. The most recent edition of the magazine "Leicestershire Matters" gave details of the Council's approach, faced with continuing cuts and increased demand for care services.

There is some encouraging news: despite having made over £100 million of savings, with more to come, the Council is still working hard to make a real difference to people's lives, such as the 6,900 adults receiving long-term care and support commissioned by the Council, and the 480 children in care who are being looked after. The lives of 3,000 vulnerable families are being transformed with Council support.

The Council is keen to work with a range of partners. Examples of this include co-operating with the City, Borough and District Councils to boost jobs and oversee planning and transport by setting up a combined authority. There is also work with the NHS, to join up health and social care services more effectively, such as through the new falls service and the Lightbulb project, which provide targeted support. Work with communities is progressing, for example with the community-led libraries, the first of which were set up earlier this year, with more to follow, such as here in Sileby.

Council Leader Nick Rushton has said: "It's clear that the new Government wants us to continue to make major savings. That means we'll work with partners and consider new approaches, to achieve the best outcome for our limited budgets... We've saved more than £100 million over the last five years and, as it was likely that austerity would continue, we'd planned to save a further £87 million over the next four years. However, it is becoming clear that we'll have to save significantly more than that."

Further details are expected in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement.
Richard Shepherd, County Councillor—Telephone: 01509 413903
Email: richard.shepherd@leics.gov.uk

SILEBY PARISH COUNCIL

We welcome three newly co-opted members to the Council - Mr Dennis Collins, Mrs Julie Walton and Mrs Pauline Skorik. We still have a vacancy on the Council so if you are interested in applying to be a councillor, please write to the Clerk with details about yourself and what you feel you can offer.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS - The Annual Christmas Switch On will take place on Friday, 4 December commencing 5.30 pm. There will be entertainment for the children - we do hope you can come along and join in the fun.

LONDON TRIP - A trip to the Imperial War Museum has been arranged for Monday, 14 December departing 8.00 am outside the Maltings on the High Street - the coach will return, leaving London at 6.00 pm. The

cost is £20.00 (this is on a first come, first served basis). If you wish to book please bring the money into the Parish Council Office, 41 High Street, Sileby on a Wednesday between 10.00 – 12 noon.

DOG FOULING - This is still a major problem in the village, especially on the Memorial Park. The majority of dog owners are responsible and pick up the poop, but there are some owners who think they should be exempt from cleaning up after their dog. This is so inconsiderate when the mess is left in a public park, where children play, and football is played most weekends. We have a stock of 'Dog Poop' bags available in the office – please feel free to call in for some.

SILEBY PARISH COUNCIL COMMUNITY AWARDS

These awards are to recognise those individuals and teams in Sileby that have made and are making a positive contribution to Sileby life, and are showing leadership, initiative or commitment in the local community.

Categories:

- Young Person of the Year in Sileby Award
- Good Neighbour in Sileby Award
- Sileby - Lifetime Achievement Award
- Sileby Team of the Year

Awards will be given for an exceptional contribution, performance or commitment in the past year. The Lifetime Award is for an exceptional contribution, performance or commitment to Sileby over a period of at least 10 years.

Criterion:

- The award can only be given to people who live or work in Sileby or a team that works in or represents Sileby
- The nominator must live or work in Sileby
- No serving Councillor or Officer may receive an award

Awards will be made at an awards ceremony to coincide with the Annual Parish Meeting

Process:

Nominations with details in support should be submitted in writing to:
Mrs R Richardson
Clerk
Sileby Parish Council
41 High Street
SILEBY
Leics LE12 7RX

by Monday, 31 March 2016



Your Letters

Send you letters to the editor. Please include your name and address (not for publication if you wish).

Dear Editor,

I would like to say "Thank You" to Sileby Parish Council for making the Village look so pretty this year with the wonderful hanging baskets. Also "Thanks" for putting a new seat in the Peace Garden. This was a welcome sit down for walkers on the last Health Walk in October.

Christine Thompson

Pictured below is the first volunteer day of the brook clean up, rubbish and weeds were removed to improve the look of the village centre and to reduce flooding issues. The day was organised by the local flood warden and he is hoping to repeat the day in late November ready for the Christmas light switch on due on Friday 4th December.



FRIENDS OF HIGHGATE P.P.G.

The Friends of Highgate Surgery (Highgate Medical Centre Patient Participation Group) are an eager group of patients who would like to make villagers aware of the many facilities available, not just at the surgery but throughout Leicestershire. To do this we have held coffee mornings in the Community Centre with a special theme. In April the theme was "Health and Wellbeing - Take Control". One of our committee members gave a brilliant talk (at the last moment due to the speaker not turning up) about mental health. There were also various items from the surgery nurses to help give advice. Also launched on this morning were the "Health Walks". These walks were sponsored by Charnwood Borough Council and were no longer than one and a half miles long. The idea of the walks was to encourage people of all ages to "get out and meet new friends". We always ended up having a cup of tea and cake or biscuits at either the Green Place or St Mary's Church. We hope to organise these walks again next year. Also planned were "arm-chair" exercise classes at Dudley Court. These are now taking place and are enjoyed by everyone.

In October we held our latest coffee morning, the theme being "Winter Wellbeing and Choose Better". Here we had speakers from Age UK, V.A.S.L. (Carers Organisation) and a pharmacy lecturer advising us how to keep well during the Winter. We also had a surprise visit from the Education Minister, Nicky Morgan. All the money raised from the coffee mornings Grand Raffles either goes to charities or to the Surgery to help to buy special much need equipment.

Next year we will be aiming at all age groups and genders by maybe having a "Health and Beauty" Evening with experts on diet, keeping fit and beauty tips.

Although we have a full committee we need everyone to support our

"Special Days".
We will look forward to meeting everybody at the Winter Wonderland in December when we will be having a Tombola, Bran Tub for Children and Jewellery Stall.



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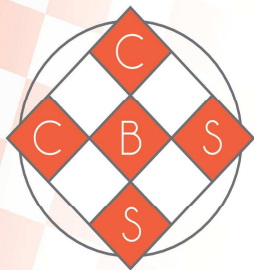
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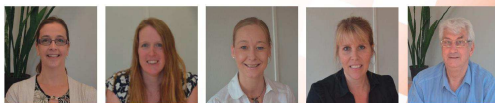
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A CHARM OF GOLDFINCHES

Three or four years ago we bought bird feeders, filled them with sunflower hearts, and awaited results. Bluetits arrived first, then great tits, coal tits, greenfinches – then the occasional goldfinch and bullfinch. Dunnocks, pigeons and doves, and the occasional house sparrow cleaned up the fragments which fell to the ground – we were well pleased, enjoying watching the birds, and having the satisfaction of knowing we were helping the bird population



To our delight, over this summer we have seen several families of goldfinches – the youngsters begging their parents to feed them – on one occasion we counted more than twenty assorted small birds, including at least twelve goldfinches, feeding on and below our feeders. The occasional house sparrow became a small family.

In the last ten days they have virtually all disappeared – only the very occasional visitor – clearly very nervous. We were mystified – until we caught the culprit in the act.

Cats have learnt that if they silently sneak up towards the feeder from a certain angle the panicked birds fly into a dead end from which they cannot escape – then crash into a window, falling stunned to the ground – the hunter easily collects his prey, retiring to some safe place to consume it.

We are devastated – by feeding the birds and perhaps helping increase their numbers we have simply presented the local cats with some sport and an easy meal.

This is happening because a cat can creep silently – a tiny bell on a cat collar gives birds a little warning that a cat is about – hopefully enough time to make an escape. I quote the RSPB website -

“A correctly fitted collar and bell can reduce cat predation by a third, according to new RSPB research. The study, undertaken by volunteer cat owners from across the UK, tested the effect of different collar-mounted warning devices in reducing cat predation within gardens.”

I can say nothing more – except, if you have a cat, please consider fitting it with one of the safe collars, with a bell.

<http://www.rspb.org.uk/makeahomeforwildlife/advice/gardening/unwantedvisitors/cats/collarthatcat.aspx>

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- Outside catering for business lunches & meetings, parties, christenings and funerals; special diets can be accommodated
- For more information, opening times and sample menus visit our website www.whiteswansileby.co.uk or contact Theresa Miller on 07900 621904 or 01509 814832.
- Number 2 bus stops in Swan Street, right outside the pub!

This article first appeared in the Christmas edition of the Stockade in 1991. Fig Smith was a fine musician, well known in Sileby and beyond for his musical talents. He was part of the band formed during the late 1940's called the Gregorians or 'The Gregs' for short. They played at many a dance initially at St Gregory's Church hall, hence the name, and at the Unity Hall which was at the bottom of Swan Street. Fig was also choirmaster, and organist at St Mary's Sileby for many years. There will be many folk in the village who will recall him playing for their wedding, and that includes myself, and recall while the congregation would be waiting for the bride, they were treated to some wonderful playing, by Fig, not only hymns but a wide range of music, especially from the popular musical shows. If the family were on holiday, or called somewhere for a drink and there was a piano, well that was Fig taken care of for the rest of the night. Maybe this article will have stirred memories of the Gregs and Fig.

A Sileby Christmas Carol Music and Words by Fig. Smith

Little child of Bethlehem, Born of Mary mild,
In a manger for a bed, Sleepy Holy Child,
Star shone over stable where Baby did lay,
Little child of Bethlehem 'sleep on the hay,
Lowly Birth for Ring of earth, Jesus lord, we love.

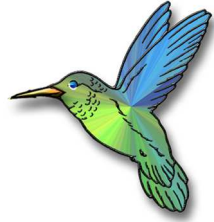
Little child of Bethlehem soon was a little boy,
worried Mary many time, Sometime gave her joy
Jesus Son of Nazereth be with us each day
Watch o'er us and be with us,
Jesus we pray.
Every day we alway say, Thy will
be done
Bethlehem Child now King of Earth
Blessed Mary's Son.

Little Boy grew tall and strong,
Man of Galilee
Telling words of love to all, even
you and me
Bad men came and kill him on
Calvery's Hill
Easter morn he rose from dead,
Jesus lives still,
Little Child of Bethlehem died for
those he love
Make us worthy Mary's Son,
Worthy of Thy Love.



Where have all the Martins gone

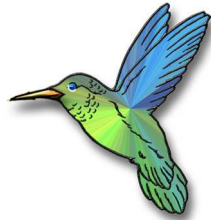
I look back to when I was a boy
Those memories fill me with so much joy.
The house martins under my mothers eaves
So many, like floating autumn leaves.



Lying on my bed, watching through the window pane
Those martins tending their nests in sun and rain.
Those tiny birds flying back and forth
Coming from so far south to my house in the north.

In early spring they would suddenly appear
Filling skies so blue and clear.
Flying high, skimming low, catching insects as they go.
Tumbling, falling, nature's finest aerobatic show.

Working so hard on the go all day
Building nests of mud and clay.
Never stopping always on the wing
Of all Gods' flyers, the martins king.

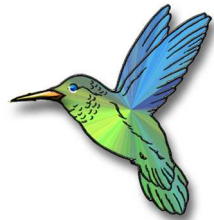


I'd see tiny heads peeping from the nest
Parents ever more active, never a moment's rest.
Later on those fledgelings fly
To swell those thousands in the sky.

Early autumn in flocks and groups
Like vast armies of endless troops.
Gathering together on cables and wires
Waiting until the sun has lost its' hottest fires.

As autumn drags on, one day you'd see
The sky would be empty, that's how it used to be.
The martins have flown to a sunnier clime
But come spring, they will be back to this house of mine.

But now the sky never seems so blue
Like my clouding eyes it is a more sombre hue.
No longer in spring the martins' twittering song
Like my years they seem long gone.



As my life now passes slowly by
I don't think I will ever again see those martins fly.
Now summer's quick the winters long
Please, please tell me, where have the martins gone ?

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

Soldiers who died in the Great War as named on the Sileby War Memorials in Chronological order.

Men who died 100 years ago.

Very sorry to those of you who remember the lads on the centenary date they died,
Reffin, Betts & Johnson should have been in the last Talk@Sileby.

25th SEPT LANCE CORPORAL ALPHONSO REFFIN
2213 1st/5th.Bn, Leicestershire Regiment
1901 Census age 8 living **Seagrave Road, Sileby**
1911 Census age 18 living **Seagrave Road**, Boot and Shoe worker.
1915 Entered France 28th February 1915
Son of Jane Reffin of 86 **Seagrave Road** and the late Thomas Reffin.
Awarded:- 1915 Star, British War & Victory Medals.

13th OCT PRIVATE CHARLES EDWARD BETTS
3295 1st/5th.Bn, Leicestershire Regiment
1901 Census age 7 living **Swan Street, Sileby**
1911 Census age 17 living **Swan Street**, Boot Shaper
1915 Entered France 28th February 1915
Son of Edward and Catherine Betts.
WW1 Service Records, Charles Edward Betts, 66 **Swan Street**, Sileby.
Awarded:- 1915 Star, British War & Victory Medals.

14th OCT PRIVATE FRANCIS (FRANK) JOHNSON
3261 5th.Bn, Leicestershire Regiment
1901 Census age 9 living **Back Lane, Sileby**
1911 Census age 19 living **Swan Street, Sileby**
1915 Entered France 29th June 1915
Son of John T and Anna Betts
WW1 Service Records, Francis Johnson, 13 **Swan Street, Sileby**.

18th DEC CORPORAL CHARLES WILSON
6895 1st.Bn, Leicestershire Regiment
1901 Census age 17 living **Duke of York, High Street, Sileby**. Born Oxford, Brickyard Worker.
1902 Awarded Queens South Africa Medal + Cape Colony & South Africa Clasps.
Feb 1904 to Mar 1906 India the transferred to Army Reserve
1907 26th December Charles Wilson Married Sarah Ellen Foster.
1911 Census age 27 living 16 **Albion Road**, with Sarah.
1914 Mobilized and posted to 1st/2nd.Bn Leics Reg. Entered France 9th Sept 1914
1915 Appointed L/Cpl (unpaid). In April, appointed L/Cpl (paid). June, Appointed acting
Corporal 26th November 1915.
Awarded 1914 Star, British War & Victory Medals.
St Mary's Magazine November 1915:- After having been in London Hospital for some time,
owing to being gassed, Lieutenant Wilson DCM? (not found) is now at home in **Albion Road**.

Continues...

Geoff Rose

3rd FEB PRIVATE JOHN STAPLES
1916 12029 8th.Bn, Leicestershire Regiment
1901 Census age 8 living **Barrow Road, Sileby.**
1911 Census age 18 living **Barrow Road**, Brickworks.
1915 Entered France 29th July 1915.

Son of Herbert and Eliza Staples of 67 **Swan Street**, Sileby.
Awarded:- 1915 Star, British War & Victory Medals.
The War Diary Records: The enemy heavily shelled the village for about ½ hour....one shell fell and exploded near gateway of courtyard killing and wounding several men, other men killed and wounded in other parts of the village. 9 of the 8th Leicestershire Regiment were killed in all.

26th MAR PRIVATE THOMAS SELLERS RILEY
1916 4220 1st/5th.Bn, Leicestershire Regiment
1901 Census age 7 living **Barrow Road, Sileby**
1911 Census age 17 living **Swan Street**, Brickworks labourer.
1915 Entered France 11th December 1915.
Son of Henry and Elizabeth Riley.
Awarded:- 1915 Star, British War & Victory Medals.

6th APR LANCE CORPORAL JOHN WILLIAM WELLS
1916 16368 2nd.Bn, Leicestershire Regiment
1901 Census age 9 living **Back Lane, Sileby**
1911 Census age 19 living **Swan Street, Sileby**, Tile maker.
1915 Entered France 3rd June 1915
1916 Killed in action Mesopotamia Basra (Iraq) 6th April 1916.
Son of John T and Sarah Wells.
Awarded:- 1915 Star, British War & Victory Medals.

15th APR PRIVATE JOHN GAMBLE
1916 16369 2nd.Bn, Leicestershire Regiment
1901 Census age 18 living **Back Lane, Sileby**
1902 John Gamble married Edith Maria Johnson.
1911 Census age 27 living **The Banks, Sileby.**
1915 Entered France 4th May 1915
1916 Died Mesopotamia Basra. Tigers website: Home address Hobswitch.
Son of Alfred and Elizabeth Gamble
Awarded:- 1915 Star, British War & Victory Medals.

11th MAY PRIVATE WALTER SHARP
1916 16405 "D" COY 1ST.Bn, Leicestershire Regiment
1901 Census age 16 living **Cossington Road, Sileby**
1903 Walter Sharpe married Kate Lowe.
1911 Census age 26 living **The Banks, Sileby**. Clicker with 4 kids.
1915 Entered France 20th May 1915. Kate Sharp passed away 7th July 1915.
1916 St.Mary's Mag: July 1916 Walter was a widower and leaves 5 children.
Awarded:- 1915 Star, British War & Victory Medals.

Heroes



Pte WILF BATES



Pte SID WHITTINGTON

I am running out of Heroes – More Wanted!

Victory Europe Street Party Photo's

Have got these:

SF-P13 Ratcliffe Rd

SF-P15 Wellbrook Ave

SF-P34 Cemetery Rd

SF-M1 The Banks

SF-P29 Charles St

SF-M53 Cossington Rd

SF-M33 Waring Shop

SF-M54 Mucky Lane

SF-M55 Wellbrook Ave

But none on Church side of Brook:

King Street

Swan Street

High St

Barrow Rd

Seagrave Rd

Mountsorrel Rd

Are there any out there please?

Mr Seal (photographer) lived bottom of Ratcliffe Rd, did he take these photos?

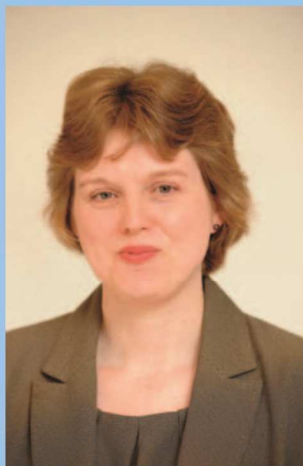
Highbridge: Congratulations for the good send off photograph and informative history lesson in the last issue. It brought back memories of happy days trainspotting etc. One game was crossing the bridge there and back without touching the floor (you could put hands and feet in the diamonds) Don't remember netting (possibly on outside) on sides in late 40's / early 50's?

Hope to get all folders of Sibley photo's back by Christmas to update the index and master sheets on **www.sibleyfaces**. Pre 1960 some have been out there along time.

Many thanks to all who have helped identify 100's of faces, we wish you all a very Happy Christmas and all the best in the New Year!

geoffreyrose@yahoo.co.uk

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