

HISTORY RECORDER'S REPORT FOR THE VILLAGE OF HAWSTEAD MAY 2007

Last year, Joan Cook gave her last report as History Recorder and took up the duties of Clerk to the Parish Council, replacing Robin Whitfield in September 2006. Robin's last Annual Parish Meeting was the one held on 11th May 2006. Joan Cook began her report with two connected situations that have been the subject of much discussion and action over the last year.

Firstly, the questions surrounding the ownership of Cullum House were resolved satisfactorily. Following a period of tenancy, the property was sold and in April 2007, the Directors of the Diocese approved a £100,000 grant to Hawstead Parochial Church Council/ St. Edmundsbury Way Benefice for the village hall. This was followed by the signing of the lease of the land for the new building between the Parish Council and the Community Council in May 2007. Previously, the design of the structure had been chosen by ballot and representatives of the Community Council Committee visited the factory making the oak frame building in June 2006. The planning application was made to St. Edmundsbury Borough Council in July 2006.

The sale of Cullum House was the last piece in the funding process and was the culmination of fund raising activities throughout the year, starting with the annual plant sale on 20th May 2006 and followed by a picnic on June 10th on the green. Also in June, a stall was manned in the Abbey Gardens.

The Village Festival and Flower Show on 3rd September took place on a very windy day. A strong gale in the morning meant extra work to secure the tents but fortunately it abated for

the afternoon of the show and for the music later that evening, Other events were a stall in the Guildhall in Bury on Dec 2nd; the Dec 9th Christmas market in the church; Easter Day egg hunt; annual plant sale 26th May 2007, A monthly draw started in August 2006, together with the sale of hall roof tiles. The Community Council also subsidised the Dec 21st village Christmas lunch and the Dec 29th trip to the pantomime (Aladdin in the big top in Nowton Park). The Community Council AGM is to be held on 31st May 2007.

Apropos of Cullum house, the last year also marked the passing away of Elsa Kilpatrick, on 12th May 2006. She lived at Cullum House for over 40 years and was a stalwart of the village. Among other things, she was the instigator and first chairman of the Hawstead Community Council Committee in 1971. A tribute was published in the June 2006 issue of the Hawstead Journal. A tribute to Norman Fearon, who we lost in December 2005, lay reader for 5 years at Hawstead Church, was published in June 2006. Lesley Pettitt, sometime tenant of Mill Post Farm on Wepstead Road, died in January with a memorial service held on 15th February 2007,

The Parochial Church Council passed new rules concerning the care and maintenance of tombs, headstones and memorials, under advisement from the diocese. Our curate, the Rev Rob James was ordained as priest on 25 June 2006 and in June 2007 moves to a pastoral position in Gloucestershire. Tony Hillman stood down after 15 years as Church Warden and Lay Elder in March 2007. Suffolk Historic Churches sponsored cycle ride on 9th September again included Hawstead. The Harvest supper was held in the Barn at Church Farm House on 23 September 2006, Christmas carols and readings were given in the church on 17th Dec. The Aquarius Singers performed Faure Requiem on 1st April (palm Sunday). At the Parochial Church Council AGM on Wed 28th March, Lesley Carey and Simon Miller were appointed as church wardens,

Although outside the village boundary, at a meeting on 28th November 2006, the town council approved a traffic management experiment in Gypsy Lane/Hardwick Lane that had a knock-on effect in the village. The order came into effect on 4th December 2006, One of the consequences of the making the two roads one-way was to make the access to and from the hospital, the A14 and the eastern side of Bury more difficult. Traffic increased through the village and along Whepstead Road and Bull Lane in Pinford End as commuters found alternative routes. On 21st March, following consultations and a petition, the town council agreed to suspend the order, reflecting the strong local opposition, There was an appeal, heard on 25th April, which upheld the rescinding of the original order.

A large pot hole on the bridge at Pinford End was mended in August 2006 together with verges on the lanes, Bull Lane was resurfaced in March 2007, Broadband speeds have been increased to Hawstead from the Sicklesmere exchange to 8GB. Broadcasting of digital radio in B St. Edmundsbury area is now accessible in Hawstead The 18th January began with a gale force SW wind. In the afternoon, the temperature was a mild 13.5C and the wind increased, resulting in 3 mature trees being blown over and minor damage to buildings.

The tenants of village's local hostelry, the Metcalfe Arms, left at the end of October 2006 and it was hoped that it could be re-opened by Christmas. However, problems with legal issues with the demise of London and Edinburgh Inns and now owned by Oxford Hotels and Inns Ltd meant that the new tenants, Nigel and Ann Pink, could not start the refurbishment and repairs until March. The latest information is that the pub may be ready to open shortly.

Local elections were not required for the Parish Council on 3rd May, since there were only 5 nominations for the 7 available places.

For the second successive year, traditional May Day celebrations were held at 4.30a.m., with the Green Dragon Morris group dancing on the corner of the village green at the top of Bells Lane and followed by breakfast at Fyletts Manor Cottages.

The Council Tax bill for Hawstead houses was increased by 4.5% for 2007/08 compared to last year. This was made up of an increase of 4.5% to Suffolk County Council, an increase of 2.9% to St. Edmundsbury Borough Council, an increase of 8.6% to Hawstead Parish Council and an increase of 5.0% to the Suffolk Police Authority

Finally, as recorded by the Land Registry, in the year to 1st May 2007, there was one house sold in the post code 5NH (Bull Hill), 2 houses sold in the post code area 5NJ (The Pound) and 1 house sold in the post code area 5NS (Whepstead Road).