

"Some sort of periodical is an essential life-line in a village such as ours."

West Farleigh's own

# LIFE-LINE

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*Distributed freely in July 2008*

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*A periodical newsletter is on ground similar to a watershed between two river basins —half deals with the past and half looks to the future. -Anon.*



Illustration of All Saints' after Harold Harbour,

## THANK YOU HIGHWAYS?

A Village Tale.....of some success, some hope, some uncertainty and another REORGANISATION

Roy Plommer reports that he has been trying since May 2007 to get four jobs done: the weeds on the footway along Lower Road cut back fifteen inches to the inner curb to restore a safe path width; the overhanging trees trimmed and a dead one removed; the knotweed treated; and the kerb between Charlton Lane and Church Lane raised where it is only inches above the road. All - in varying ways - of safety importance to the many walkers along this road.

Until now calls every 2 or 3 weeks have achieved no action, so Roy tried a different method on May 28th this year, being the first anniversary of his original contact, and well, the next day the trees were trimmed, the dead one removed and there was a promise of treatment on the knotweed, action on the weeds and an evaluation of the kerb!

How was the previous administrative blockage overcome? Roy will only say that he tried a "different approach" to get to the right people in a now again re-organised system, and that perhaps he may have had more "flexibility" "being no longer a Parish Councillor". "The various staff to whom I reported my great frustration were very helpful, and then return calls flooded in."

But there is more. "Then it went very quiet." Roy says. "Until the knotweed drooped in the week starting 16th June. To find out more on the other items I called Highways, to be told that a new system of logging, with maps, had just been introduced and so the matters would need to be re-input. I must say a very polite and helpful man took down all the details again of the problems, but it took 25 minutes to repeat all the information, and I now have two longer reference numbers instead of one!"

Roy says that "The latest seems to be that the path weed growth is, quoting Highways "not simple to remove" and the kerb is "being examined by an operator". So overall I really don't know where we are, but I suppose two out of four is better than none. But the story will not end here!" - *Contributed.*

*Don't forget to contact Roy about his ideas for an Action Group on speed limits in the village—Ed.*

It's a welcome change to be able to report something good about Highways, but we fear that the respite is only temporary. We also watch Yalding's campaign against heavy lorries with interest. We note that English National Opera pantechonicons are regular through that village: is it because they perform in the area? We suppose not—rather it's likely to be because storage is cheaper somewhere in the vicinity, so the road-clogging mileage is logged up regardless. - Ed.

## Rev. Ruth Bierbaum

As Life-Line reported last month Ruth is taking up a new post in August. A Farewell Party in her honour is being arranged for August 10th in Coxheath. Those who would like to contribute towards a present to mark her stay here are asked to lodge contributions with Sue O'Donnell (PCC Secretary, Campana, Charlton Lane) or Stephen Norman (Treasurer, Smith's Hall)). Cheques should be payable to All Saints Church wardens.

August Deadline - July 23rd. 2008



Dear Friends,

And finally....

I will give you the treasures of darkness,  
and the riches hidden in secret places.  
so that you may know that it is  
I, the Lord,  
the God of Israel, who calls you  
by your name.

Isaiah 45 v 3

This is a promise of God to his servant (s), as spoken through the Old Testament Prophet Isaiah. It is a significant one to me because through it I have felt God calling me to minister to those with mental health problems. And this is not a step I take lightly. My roots have grown down deep in this place and taking them up is not easy. I only do it because I believe this is God's will... and after all what a promise:

*I will give you the treasures of darkness.*

As I look at those verses from Isaiah, an unexpected truth occurs to me - that it is in darkness, in the difficult times, in the bereavements and the losses, in the valley of the shadow of death, that God says he will increase my faith, your faith! That isn't what we expect, is it? Surely suffering leads to doubt and a loss of faith! I have spoken to many who have chosen that path.

Certainly, when faced with suffering, the question "Why?" can be dominant. We can't understand God's reasoning. We can't work out why he doesn't answer our prayers the way that, say I would, if I were God.

In the Old Testament, before Samson is conceived, God appears as a man to Samson's parents to tell them about the special child they will have, and when they ask what this man's name is he says "*It is beyond understanding*"... in other words it is "*wonderful*" in other words: *full of wonder*, in still other words *wisdom unsearchable*.

So maybe here is one precious jewel to be going on with, for you and for me...that we do not need to understand God's ways, for we will never do that, but rather we need to trust Him. Trust Him in the day. Trust Him in the night. That as we walk through the changes and the valleys of uncertainty, all God asks us to do is keep proclaiming His name "Wonderful". "I cannot understand you God, but I trust in your victory over death. I trust in you". And as you do that, you *will* in some very personal way hear Him calling your name and calling you "my beloved" and "my precious child".

In that simple faith, may we walk as Jesus bids, together.

With love and thanksgiving for all the years and all the encouragements.

Yours in faith

Ruth

### Farewell Songs of Praise

After 6 lovely years of ministry in the 5 PARISHES Benefice, I will be taking on the role of Lead Mental Health Care Chaplain for Medway and Maidstone from 11th August.

Please come to my final service in the Benefice on 10th August at 5 pm at Holy Trinity Coxheath. It will be a "Songs of Praise" and I get to choose what we sing, so be prepared for an eclectic selection! All welcome.  
Ruth

### Free Concert at Holy Trinity Coxheath on Tuesday July 8th at 7.30 pm.

The Bel Canto, a mixed Chamber Choir from the Ysgol John Bright in Llandudno, North Wales will be singing a wide range of music from Bach, Mozart, Faure, gospel, pop and from the shows -including Les Miserables, Chess and Rent as part of their Kent Tour. (African chants and Welsh folk songs are on the menu!) The choir, of some 18 teenagers, is led by Mrs Susan Collins (nee Susan Kelly) who grew up in Coxheath, attending Coxheath school, Cornwallis and MGGS before studying at Bangor University. Do come to support this choir who are travelling by train and 89 bus from Wales that day and staying in Maidstone for a few days whilst performing at the Maidstone International Festival of Music and Dance. (Susan's mum used to work at Stockett Lane Surgery and still lives in Coxheath) No tickets simply turn up on the night! D.J.



A private tour of Boughton Monchelsea Place and St Peter's Church has been arranged by the Farleigh's History Society on Wednesday 6 August at 2.00pm. The cost of the tour is £7.50 with the option of a cream tea for £3.50. For reservations please 'phone Jenny Finch 01622 726312 or email [jenniferfinch@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jenniferfinch@hotmail.co.uk).

The next meeting at the Bull, East Farleigh will be on Wednesday 10th September at 7.30 pm when Chris Passmore will talk on the History of Printing in Tovil. All welcome, £2.50 on the door.

## A WALK THROUGH WEST FARLEIGH (PART 2)

### *Jim Patch takes us on another of his favourite walks*

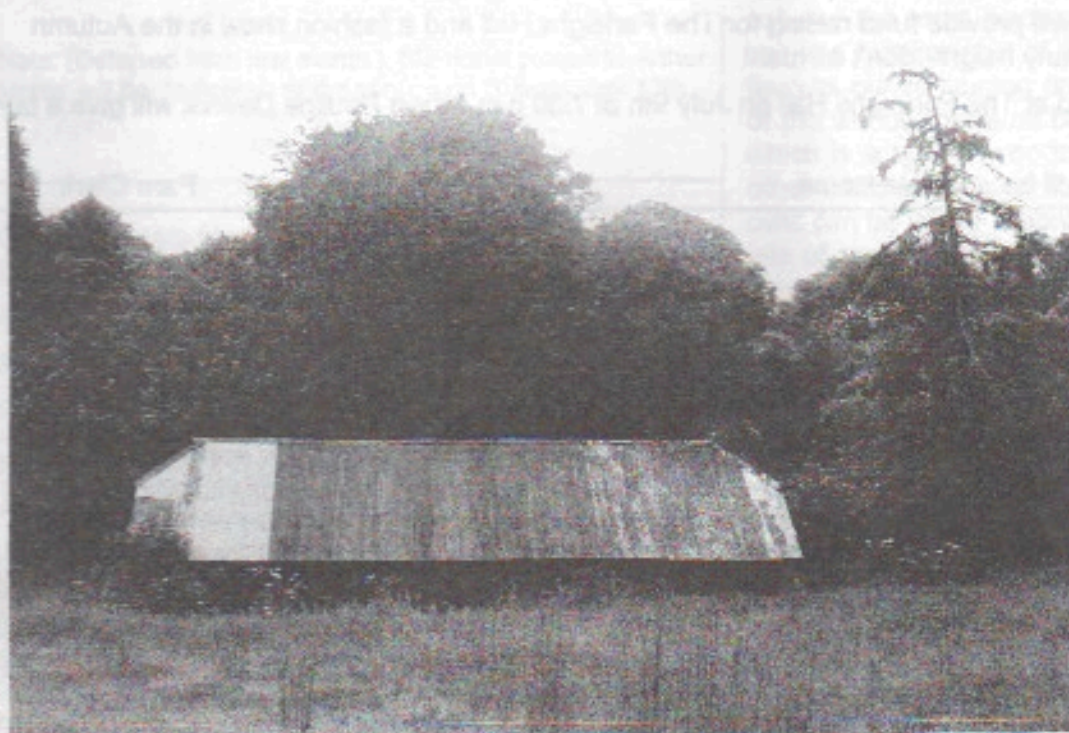
Another good place to start a walk through West Farleigh is the Good Intent. Facing the pub you go to your left and down the road, namely Ewell Lane, where you turn right. Keep well in to the side of the road because there is no path and after 100 yards you will see on the left a footpath sign pointing over a stile through the hedge.

This will lead you between an orchard on the left and a tall, mixed hedge on the right. The grass is nicely mown and in 100 yards you will find a somewhat rickety stile on the right leading to a field where the grass is a good bit longer. There is no marked path here but make for a stile in the south west corner of the field down hill, the last few yards being quite steep as the way enters a wood.

In the wood the path swings to the right then leads out of the wood round a semi derelict barn. It then goes over another stile into an arm of Quarry Wood where one is greeted by a cheerful notice saying Welcome to the Kent Wildlife Trust. Here may be seen a row of splendid old horse chestnut trees. The first tree in the row many, many years ago must have had a low branch which touched the ground and sent out roots, thus forming another tree which now rivals its parent in size.

Follow the path out of the wood and make your way through the long grass where the path is only just discernable until you meet the road which is Smith's Hill. Turn right on to the road again keeping well into the side because there is no path. It is 600 yards to the Tickled Trout. This pub was called The Chequers for something like 500 years when the name was changed partly because it was rumoured that under the old name certain doubtful drug related transactions took place.

On the other side of the road is the lovely 18th century Smith's Hall where the beautiful gardens were recently open to the public. Turn right here and 500 yards along on the left just past Jewelultra there is a path approached via a nice new kissing gate. Follow the way marks on posts through another kissing gate where you turn right on to a well constructed path between two fences which leads from the football field (you can see it on your left) up to the Hollow and thence to Charlton Lane where you can turn right back to the Good Intent. J.P.



This picture shows the barn to which Jim refers. The horse chestnut "avenue" and Quarry Wood is behind it and to the right. Technically the footpath goes behind the barn, but through neglect the way there is impassable and the path de facto comes round the front. The Cornwallis estate has planning permission to convert this barn into holiday homes. It is indeed a delightfully secluded spot.

-Ed.



## SEEKERS

The "Seekers" end of term service will be on Thursday 10th July at 6.30 pm. This is a fun family service which will be mainly run by the children and the Family Trust. Everyone is welcome - the children would love to show you what they get up to! Join us for a barbecue afterwards too.

As part of the Hope 08 initiative, the Seekers are looking for ways to help out in the community. Our first event will be a litter pick through the village but if anyone has any ideas as to what useful things the children could do on a Thursday evening, these would be much appreciated.

If you would like to know more about Hope 08, visit [www.hope08.com](http://www.hope08.com)\*

Sue Walsh

\* There's a lot on this site! —Ed.

## EVERGREENS

At our last meeting, Jack Martin gave a brief history of the Sports Club. Its early venues and members. He brought along photos and match cards. Many of the members recognised friends and family in the photos. The Sports Club has always been an integral part of the village and many of the members still live in the village. There was much reminiscing about times past!

This month on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> July, we will meet in the garden of Smith's Hall, weather permitting (we were rained off last year). Members will be contacted to arrange transport to the Hall. We will also be going to Hastings on 14<sup>th</sup> July, to see the sea and have Fish and Chips. Food has a high priority in Evergreen events! We are fortunate that some of our members are willing to drive others on our outings.

Helen Swan

## The Farleighs WI

Rebuffing the normal holiday snapshots, Martin Lloyd gave a zany illustrated talk "Seen from my Bicycle" at The Farleighs WI June meeting.

Several members are attending computer training sessions at East Farleigh Primary School. Knitting clothes for premature babies is continuing, as are weekly walks.

We will be helping with teas and cakes at the FLAG village fete on 19th July.

We will be enjoying Pimms, savouries and desserts at a garden party on July 20th at Appledore, Charlton Lane - wearing posh hats and frocks!

Dr. Jazz on September 20th will provide fund raising for The Farleighs Hall and a fashion show in the Autumn requires 6 models-any size, any height- don't all rush!

The next meeting will be held at The Farleighs Hall on July 9th at 7.30 p.m. when Pauline Dewick will give a talk on "A Fortune in your attic".

Visitors and new members will be most welcome.

Pam Clark

## News from the White House

The charitable and sporting contribution to local life from the White House Pub continues to be very strong.

A grand total of £4034 was raised in 2007 for the **Old Folks Four** and a plant sale in May raised a further £450. The profits from a **War Birds** 40's and 50's night in May will go to Age Concern. On Sunday July 6th there will be a further event in aid of Age Concern, a **Charity Walk**, starting at 10.30 at the White House. The funds raised go to the local old folks and now amount to an immense sum over the years. Further events are a **Quiz Evening** and on Sunday 27th July members of the **Petanque Club** will be competing for **Arthur's Memorial Trophy**. The White House is well known for its petanque competitions and people come from as far afield as France to take part in them. A further date for your diary is 23rd August when there will be a **Spanish Night** with dancing and music and paella and sangria.

As an alternative venue for Christian worship the Pub will again be hosting an **Evening Service**, which is at 6.30 pm on Sunday July 6th. Do come along for this informal act of worship. The following Sunday, in All Saints, a chair for Arthur Morris, late husband of landlady Jan, will be dedicated to his memory. All are welcome.



**West Farleigh All Saints, Church Lane**

6th July	8.00 am	Holy Communion
(@ the White House)	6.30 pm	Service of the Word
10th July	6.30 pm	Seekers' Service
13th July	11.00 am	Morning Worship
20th July	9.15 am	Holy Communion
27th July	11.00 am	Morning Prayer

**East Farleigh**

6th July	9.15 am	Holy Communion
13th July	8.00 am	Holy Communion (bcp)
	10.30 am	Morning Prayer
20th July	11.00 am	Family Service
27th July	8.00 am	Holy Communion(bcp)

**Hunton**

6th July	11.00 am	Family Service
13th July	9.15 am	Holy Communion(bcp)
20th July	11.00 am	Morning Prayer (bcp)
27th July	9.15 am	Holy Communion

**Coxheath**

6th July	11.00 am	Holy Communion
13th July	9.30 am	Morning Prayer
20th July	11.00 am	Holy Communion
27th July	11.00 am	Family Service

**Linton**

6th July	9.15 am	Holy Communion
13th July	8.00 am	Holy Communion (bcp)
	11.00 am	Family Service
20th July	9.15 am	Holy Communion
27th July	9.15 am.	Holy Communion

Note: (Deferred from last month.) Memorial plaque to Arthur Morris will be dedicated at the service on Sunday July 13th.

Clergy Contact Numbers: Contact Peter Walker for Baptisms, Thanksgivings, Weddings and Funerals

Rev. Peter Walker at the Vicarage 01622 747570

Rev. Ruth Bierbaum 01622 743866

Rev. David Jones 01622 741474

**New News Correspondent**

After a good stint Mags Evans has resigned as the West Farleigh correspondent for the Kent Messenger.

Jo Harfleet is the new correspondent, and while she is not as "local" as Mags she actually works for the K.M. and has been doing East Farleigh for some time.. Thus she has, as it were, an "inside track" into such matters as press photography. She can be contacted on [joharfleet@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:joharfleet@blueyonder.co.uk).

**Correction:** In last month's edition it was incorrectly stated that Borough Councillor Wilson had gained the seat locally for the Tories. This was not the case. Though he was of course elected (and each seat counts as much as any other one) Councillor Wilson did not "tip the balance" on Maidstone Borough Council as implied.—Apologies. —Ed.

Three weeks ago my wife and I watched the Black-headed Gulls which live along the Medway as they quartered the meadows in both Farleigh and Teston. They were behaving quite uncharacteristically, except that at the times of hatch of mayflies and the like they will take to swooping low, pirouetting in pursuit of such tasty and nutritious morsels. (actually we know rather little about birds' sense of taste) Watching them reminded me of the slow flight of owls as they hunt for voles in the grass.

This thought proved prophetic, for, the following week, we were able, at around 8.30 pm - so in full daylight— to watch a beautiful Barn Owl patrolling the river banks. It hunted mainly on the Farleigh side, but at times flew directly towards us along the line of the footpath. We could clearly see its dark eyes on the flat facial disc which these owls in particular have. It seemed to be staring at us, but its evasive action was completely unhurried, and seemed a natural part of its flight plan. From time to time it was out of sight, but it soon reappeared, finally with an item of prey in its talons, which it took away, presumably to its nest. Soon, it was out hunting again.

We had been told of increased local sightings of the Barn Owl—often called the white owl—this year, but this was the first I had seen along the river for some years. A national report says that numbers have increased in the last 10 years or so, from less than 1000 (when extinction was feared) to about 4000 pairs, so there ought to be a few in our locality, but it was a treat to be able to appreciate this personally.

It was felt by Kent ornithologists that the big and prolonged floods of 1999/2000 starved the birds out of their favoured low lying sites.

We have three species of owl locally, the Barn, the Little and the Tawny Owl. The last is the commonest, but the most nocturnal. Its "to-whit to -whoow" call is a familiar part of a winter's evening. The Little favours our remaining orchards—indeed it keeps out of the woods, perhaps because the powerful Tawny, which is a typical woodland bird, does not welcome other owls into its territory. The remains of other owls can be found disproportionately often in the pellets of undigested food which Tawny and other owls cough up. Down by the river the Barn Owl is probably safe from this threat, and able, let us hope, to serve up the kind of visual treat we so recently enjoyed, for a long time to come.

© Tim Hill



**JUNIOR SPORT:** The Presentation Day is imminent—Saturday, July 5th. All are welcome!

### FROM THE ARCHIVES 30 YEARS AGO—JULY 1978

In this month the village was busy preparing for its first Horse Show. This took place on the 30th of the month in the sports ground area off Charlton Lane. One of the main organisers was Mr. Ken Morgan, while Mrs. Valerie Morgan was secretary. Major Warren of Hollingbourne built the course and the tannoy came from Rochester. The event lasted from 9.00 a.m. till about 5 p.m.(!) It also included a Fancy Dress event for which both rider and horse were dressed up. Mr. and Mrs. Devenish were the judges for this event. Paul Bernhardt was the official show photographer. (Where are the photos now?)

Unfortunately the day was spoiled by desperately poor rainy weather which did not relent until late afternoon. The rain meant that many would-be competitors decided not to come and the organisers were sadly left with a surfeit of rosettes. Undeterred, Mr. Morgan announced that another show would be held in September.

### Dandelion Trust Country Fayre at Elmscroft, Charlton Lane 1.30 pm 5th July.

The Dandelion Trust needs your support: Find out more by visiting them on this their Open Day!

We note that the opening of the gardens at Smith's Hall on June 29th is also in aid of the Dandelion Trust. For some reason Life-Line has missed the chance to advertise this event, which is the second opening of the splendid gardens at Smith's Hall this season. All the gardens open under the National Gardens Scheme are worth a visit, however, and there are hundreds of opportunities remaining to us this summer. Moreover, for the first time recently, the yellow book of those openings is free this year (thanks to sponsorship) and it can still be picked up at local garden centres. This is one thing we still do well in England.

-Ed.

**Another thing we still do well is taxis...** at least in comparison with Paris, and if a recent experience we heard about is typical. Taking a taxi from the Gare du Nord (Eurostar's shabby Paris terminal) a local couple took a cab after an half-hour wait to a street on the west side of the city. The first sign of unease was when the driver asked if they knew where it was, and the second, after arriving in the quarter, when he let them map-read for him (which was very difficult owing to the lack of illumination in the car). The driver had no sat-nav, nor (unbelievably) a mobile phone. After an hour the driver resorted to asking passers-by if they knew the "Rue", but to no avail. He then abandoned his taxi and went off on foot, seemingly having given up. With the aid of a lamp-post the passengers were able to ascertain that they were now close to their destination, and finding that the boot was still open, they extracted their luggage and proceeded on foot. A 20 minutes journey had taken about 80—but the upside was they had no fare to pay! It is impossible to imagine this happening in London, at least as long as the "Knowledge" remains in force.

-Ed.

### Jubilee service in Rochester Cathedral

On July 6th there will be a Jubilee service in Rochester Cathedral celebrating the 60th anniversary of the formation of the National Health Service. The service begins at 3.15 p.m. All are welcome.

### LETTERS

Don't forget that Life-Line welcomes letters from its readers. If anyone has an issue which they wish to air, do write in to the editors. We are reminded, for instance, by the item near the top of this page, that equestrian issues have not been covered much lately in our pages.

### PARISH COUNCIL

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Monday July 7th at All Saints Church beginning at 8.00 p.m.

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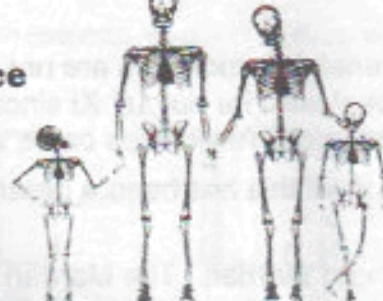
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*Apparently, Lee was inspired to arrange this advertising by the picture of fly tipping, in Church Lane, on the front page of May's Life-Line. Is this a tribute to the power of advertising, or the other way round?*

## NEW ADDRESS & PHONE NO. **Millennium Lifestyle Property Services**

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## Sports Report: CRICKET

It has not been that often when I have said that Farleigh's cricketers are not only playing well but actually winning games. This has probably been the best start for our 1st XI since the league began. We have won 4 of our 7 league fixtures so far. Our last month's victories came against Lenham, Leeds and Selstead but we lost to Milstead and Cobham. All in all this has been a great start and here's hoping we will continue to improve.

Our 2nd XI have also done well, beating Eynsford and Marden. The Marden game was particularly impressive. Chasing 232 to win Farleigh managed to score the winning run on the last ball of the innings. We also lost to Shipbourne and Horton Kirby.

We have also had two friendlies, beating the Lord Raglan and Wateringbury Parish in which we also came out on top. As always an enjoyable evening was had by all.

Farleigh have also done well in the Evening League, gaining victories over Linton Park and Hollingbourne. Our only defeat came against Bearsted. Our final game in this competition this season is Tuesday 24th at home versus East Sutton.

## FOOTBALL

Training is every Wednesday at 6.30 p.m. at Charlton Lane. Everyone is welcome!

Yours in sport,

Tel

01622 745744

### Ton up Club Winners June

1st prize -£25	Matthew Smith	2nd Prize- £15	Ron Shorter	3rd prize -£10	Christina Pollard
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### Annual Cricket Match against Wateringbury, in aid of All Saints Church.

This traditional event took place on almost the longest day, June 20th, and had its usual cliff-hanging finish. Wateringbury batted first and amassed 130 runs. West Farleigh were just able to pass this total with an over or so to go. The weather was not at its kindest, with some passing drizzle, and this kept spectator numbers—and the funds raised for the church—down, but everyone there much enjoyed the event. Many thanks to the Sports Club and participants of all kinds.

### Club Groundsman Weds on Home Ground.

The well-known local sportsman - and square groundsman— Paul Baines, and his bride chose their own house in which to tie the knot on May 25th. Of the 160 guests, around a dozen came from West Farleigh's twin village of Ringstedt, Lower Saxony, which demonstrates in what esteem the sporting and social connections between the two villages are held. The great occasion was enjoyed by all!

Soon it will be time for the Sports Club to visit Ringstedt. We gather that the trip will be by coach this year. After the bicycle, it is said to be the most environmentally friendly form of travel there is. Ed.

## BARN DANCE

Inside the Church, and therefore weather independent, the Barn dance held on Friday June 6th, was a considerable success, raising £312 for Church funds. Even more importantly, it was enjoyed by all and the band was much appreciated, as was the excellent food organised by Helen Swan. Incidentally, it was a highlight of a week in which All Saints was in use every day, confirming its potential as a venue for a variety of activities. (Also confirmed was the slimness of the cleaning team: if anyone could step forward to lend even an occasional hand the Churchwarden would be glad to hear from them!)

The bus stop/lay-by outside Goulston Bungalows on Charlton Lane is still being abused (so Life-Line is informed) by local residents who park their cars there. Often this impedes the carers of the bungalows' residents and sometimes the emergency services themselves are hindered. Do show the necessary consideration for the legitimate needs of the bungalows' residents!

**The freighter for bulky items will be by the Green on Saturday 26th July from 9.30—11.00 am**