

# The Gossip



HORNTON

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## NEW MILLENNIUM

By Philip Williams

Searching through stored boxes and paperwork for the on coming May Day White Elephant I came across Issue No. 13 of The Gossip, Spring 1994, the front page "leader" was written by Irene Harwood and entitled May Magic, and to quote:- "A few days before the May Day celebrations the trees on the village green were still just tight buds, but by the arrival of the actual day they had opened perfectly to give a beautiful crisp example of how glorious Spring is in Hornton". It described perfectly our Millennium Spring six years later, prior to this pink blaze, the village had awoken to April in the most spectacular way. Despite the excessive rainfall, from Millers Lane to Bell Street, Daffodils and Narcissi abounded, flowing over banks round the trees, even in the hedgerows, lifting the spirit to the awakening year. We do seem yet again to have escaped Winter without any major horticultural disaster. The only snow came before Christmas when the children grabbed their chance of a "bumpy ride" down the Holloway slopes. At this moment of writing I still wonder if we have escaped the notorious Blackthorn Winter. The Sloe blossom now withered and gone. Old 'Sages' mutter "Ne'er a cast a clout till' May be out...." We may finally see Harry Seigals 'White Wisteria' bloom, till now each year smitten by those dreaded nights of hard frost, Winters 'last fling'. Whether it be the fine March and wet April, but natures flora has abounded this year. Driving through the countryside, particularly in the South, Primroses, Wood Anemones, wild Daffodils on the Welsh borders and on motorway banks (always facing the morning sun) an abundance of Cowslips. In the Sherington Saxon "steps" Wild Saxafragia, and under the shelter of Gorse in our valley I spotted a few blue Hare Bells. if you feel like a walk, wander down Townsend Lane past "Diana Blue" banks of Anchusa, sprinklings of Bluebells (thanks Mrs Joyner), over the style and cross the meadow, where you will probably then become aware of a heavy, almost fruity smell. The Gorse too is in fuller flight than ever. Put your nose to it. Close your eyes; imagine you're savouring a glass of wine, Mmmm...an undercurrent of Honey and Butter.... Do I detect a smidge of Pineapple?? Mmmm... and that has to be a strong hint of Coconut...! Try it I think you will like it. Then wander down to the new brook bridge, savour the Gorse again, and if fit enough climb the slope to the ridge, see how well the fields have been resettled to pasture. Two years ago this whole area was a 20ft. Quarry. Turn and you will see the village, now surrounded by its fresh green mantle. Oh lucky folk are we.

The Swallows arrived with sightings between 19th and 22nd April, taking a well earned

feed, skimming the valley field and preening themselves after their miracle flight from Africa. I first heard the Cuckoo on 23rd April by the allotment fields, its favourite perch last year. Buzzards ride the thermals above Holloway much to the annoyance of residential Crows. I believe these majestic "gliders" are breeding in the Shutford/Epwell area.

Easter was later this year and the Church once again "bloomed" with colour after the restriction of Lent. Easter Sunday was a glorious day, and the Tulips in the Church windows opened to show their full colour. The Rev. David Addley gave a very spiritual and enjoyable service in his usual relaxed manner assisted by Lindy Bridgeman. I still enjoy the memory of Mrs. Bridgeman's "solo" on New Years day. Afraid that there would be but a handful of worshippers following our New Year revels, she faced a church so full of people there were too few seats for late comers!! A "debut" I'm sure she will always remember.

Whilst on Church matters, the Millennium Screen has found its permanent position by the Vestry with plenty of space for viewing. You will find by the Vestry door a brass switch, press it, and the screen will be lit. This is thanks to Eric Turner, who as always, works quietly and anonymously as he did when the whole Church was rewired and lit. Like a spirit in the night Tom Gibbs mended the ailing church door handle.

Mrs. Hart as from Easter has retired as has Mrs. Fox from the Church Ladies Working Party. Both have given invaluable service to the Church for many years and we owe them enormous thanks.

Bill Jeffs has taken on the duties of Church yard maintenance and has already made a marked impression, but let us not forget the many hours put in for the past few years by Glen Walther who had the difficult task of fitting in these duties between a busy working life and Football interests.

Philip Brooks is also one of our "anonymous" village workers. The results of his work can be found in the Churchyard, Tinker Tank and around the village green, whilst Rosemary Gilkes has mown the village green to perfection, which set the scene for our major spring event, May Day.

To everybody's relief we awoke to a glorious sunny morning. All forecasts to the good. By Ten O'clock the green was a scene of preparing activity. Tables and chairs, straw bales, shrubs, plants, bunting and Barbecue, delivered to their respective positions. Maypole erected, May Queen's chair and Chariot decorated. Although officially a 2 O'clock start, by 1 O'clock people were already pouring into the village. Vintage cars made a noisy entry to the School Playground to give a welcome added feature to our already growing venue. Our White Elephant stall grew by an added table

- four in all!! the input this year was better than ever. I thank all who took the time and gave so generously to make our tables of more interest. We were invaded the whole afternoon, and with thanks to my loyal chums, Ronald, Lyn and Roger, Jayne (8 months pregnant) and Simon, for their patient help and a lot of work. The final count was well worth it.

At one point during a lull, probably whilst the May Queen was being crowned, I looked about me. I saw activity in all corners of the green. Colour, people, happy chatter, music from the Morris Dancers and their accompanists. From the Church Room where Laura Pike raised many pounds, to the Pub which rocked all day, to Millers Lane which echoed to the sound of Shire Horses shoes. May Day was happening as only Hornton can do it. We are fortunate in this village to have a group of residents who each will turn out on the day, put in the effort and make this all possible. I've no need to list them, you know who they are. As the Rev. David Addley would say "God Bless you All and have another good year".

*The May Day Committee wish to thank all stall holders, Morris Dancers, Maypole Dancers and village people who played a part to make May Day a great success again this year. Money raised as follows:-*

Teas	206.00
Lucky Square	60.00
(winner Norma Tew)	
White Elephant	400.00
Barbecue	222.00
Stall rents	55.00
Shire Horse Rides	30.00
<b>total</b>	<b>£973.00</b>
<b>Less Expenses</b>	<b>30.00</b>
<b>Pavilion Fund</b>	<b>£943.00</b>
White elephant	183.20
Bar	24.00
Furniture Sale	245.00
Open Garden Bellevue	20.00
<b>Millennium Fund</b>	<b>£472.20</b>
Raffle	127.10
Skittles	64.40
<b>Small Playing Field</b>	<b>£191.50</b>
Bottle Stall	100.00
Vintage Cars	128.70
<b>Hornton School</b>	<b>£228.70</b>
Pick a Ticket	
<b>Methodist Church</b>	<b>£167.30</b>
Produce & Bric a Brac	
<b>Parish Church</b>	<b>£181.40</b>
<b>Boys Football</b>	<b>£21.50</b>
<b>Brownies Bric a Brac</b>	<b>£27.00</b>