

Foulness Island

April 2017

This month, the Christian Church throughout the world will be celebrating the birth of its faith, Easter. Go to the Oxford Dictionary and you will find Easter defined as "Christian festival commemorating Christ's resurrection, corresponding to Passover, and observed on a variable Sunday".

A survey carried out fairly recently found that many people did not know what Easter stood for. To them it was just another public holiday, a chance of a few days away from work and an opportunity for either an early holiday or catching up with the gardening. For Christians, the period of Easter is considered to be Holy Days, when time is set aside to remember and reflect upon the death and resurrection of the founder of our faith.

The sign of the Christian faith, the cross, is worn today by some merely as a decoration, while for others it is a companion, a reminder of who they are and where they place their trust. It is important to them, otherwise we would not read in the papers of cases where an employee fights for the right to wear such a thing at work. It's worth remembering that Christians in the early Church were embarrassed by any statue or drawing of Christ's crucifixion, and they would not consider wearing a cross around their neck. Yet, today, the cross is seen as a symbol of victory, as Christ himself intended when he said, "When I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all people to myself".

It is right that we should celebrate the festival of Easter, THE festival of the Christian faith, but let us not forget what we are celebrating, and why.

In Memoriam

In April we remember

John Abbott

Jim Dixon

Harold Hume

Gerald Key

Peter Shinn

Margaret Tillbrook

Gone but not forgotten

Foulness Parish Council

Council Matters

District Councillor Mike Steptoe attended the meeting on behalf of the Portfolio Holder at Rochford District Council who had noted the closure of the Island's Post Office. He mentioned that, depending on whether the Parishioners would like a Post Office, there were a number of schemes available whereby funding could be provided for a part time post office on the Island. It was agreed that the Parish Council would issue a questionnaire to ascertain interest in the Post Office on the Island being reopened.

Council approved the payment requests for the month.

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council website had been activated. There was still a good deal of work to do to load all the necessary information on the site but he would be working on that over the next few weeks.

The Parish Council reviewed the Burial Ground Fees for the 2017/18 year and agreed that they should remain at the same level as for 2016/17. The fees are available to view on the website.

It was noted that there was still no news about the procedure to make compensation claims regarding the major power failure on the Island.

QinetiQ Report

Early Starts

13th to 16th March at DAT commencing 8.00 am.

New help desk number

Technical problems have been resolved and the number is 01702 383666.

Power Interruptions

Work on the power supply will be taking place in April (estimated to be from 14th to 17th)

and this will affect White City, Churchend, Courtend, Lodge Farm and Tree Farm. Notices will be issued to residents.

Water Interruptions

Work will be done on the water supply at White City and Courtend during the week commencing 20th March. Notices will be issued by Severn Trent Services. There is also a leak at Churchend that will need to be repaired in the coming weeks which could result in an interruption to supply.

Sewage Works

Work will be starting on the trench for the new power main for the sewage pump at Courtend and there will be a power interruption on 16th March to allow the switchover from the generator. Notices will be issued.

Road Repairs

The road repairs reported last month have been completed.

Gardens & Garden Waste

A reminder to residents that they are responsible for Garden maintenance and removal of Garden Waste.

Sponsored Visitor Passes

Letters and forms will be issued to all residents to update those that are sponsored under their tenancy.

John Watson
Parish Clerk
Foulness Island Parish Council
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Southend on Sea
Essex, SS2 4UZ

Tel: 07757 484225

Email:

foulnessparishcouncil@gmail.com

Foulness Conservation and Archaeological Society

At the recent AGM of the Society, we learned of the changes and improvements that have been carried out over the course of the year, in and around the Centre, especially over the 'winter closure' to the general public. It was good to note that our previously planted trees seem to be thriving.

We now look forward to being able to show you our improvements and changes, inside and out, along with our renewed displays. We shall be open for visitors again at the start of April

– see notice elsewhere in this newsletter – and you will be assured of a warm welcome if you pop along to see us. If you have visitors that weekend it will be an ideal chance for them to see our island Centre.

Foulness Tide Times April 2017

	AM	height	PM	height
Sat 1	03.45	6.1	16.11	5.7
Sun 2	04.28	5.9	16.56	5.4
Sat 8	11.26	5.5	23.51	5.5
Sun 9	****		12.14	5.6
Sat 15	03.20	5.7	15.34	5.5
Sun 16	03.53	5.5	16.04	5.3
Sat 22	09.27	4.9	21.58	5.0
Sun 23	10.31	5.2	22.57	5.3
Sat 29	02.44	6.3	15.12	6.0
Sun 30	03.29	6.2	15.57	5.8

Rubbish

In the midst of spring cleaning? This may be a good time to remind you that Denise can always pass on to a charity that makes good use of them your old pairs of glasses, and used stamps, either British or foreign, that may be looking for a better home than

the bin. Just pop them in the porch at Hall Farm – thank you.

Heritage Centre Open

**First Sunday of the month
April to October
12.00-4.00**

**First Open Day this year
April 2nd**

The FCAS is always happy to greet visitors, old and new. We are even happier to welcome volunteers who would like to help, behind the scenes or front of house. Don't feel that because you are new to the island that you're of no help – we all have to start the learning process somewhere.

Come and see us and have a word with a member during your visit, please. We are so grateful to those of you who have already offered your help.

The curse of the commentator

'I never dreamed I would be the flag-bearer. So, yeah, it's a dream come true' *Sir Chris Hoy*

'Federer's balls look like water melons out there' *Boris Becker*

'That performance has left us speechless. So let's talk about it'

Andy Jameson

'Victories always hurt more when you lose'

Mark Foster

It's Spring again ...

... well, soon it really will be, from the way we can see birds pairing up and green shoots popping through the soil. So forget the tulips from Amsterdam (if you're old enough to remember the link) but please be extra careful when exercising your dog. As you bend to 'scoop the poop' (and of course you're not one of those who doesn't bother) you will notice that the grass, hedges and trees will soon, we hope, be full of birds and animals, some of which are small and vulnerable at this time of year. They (especially the ground-nesting birds) get enough hassle from nature's predators without us making life more difficult for them.

We know that most of you are aware of your responsibilities under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act and will be able to enjoy our natural

amenities at the same time as we show respect to our wildlife.

They lived on Foulness

Mrs Amelia Cater

In the 1830s Mrs Amelia Cater was frequently called upon to act in cases of midwifery, as there was no residential medical man on the island. Her fee was five shillings for each delivery (25p these days) which was a lot of money in those days. She was easily recognizable for she seemed always to wear a red cloak and a coal-scuttle bonnet.

She died in her 80th year and was the mother of 18 children of her own. She had 49 grandchildren and 23 great-grandchildren.

She lived in a house called the Dovecote for 40 years and then in Smokey Hall (on the way to the Quay) for a further 38 years. An anecdote shows her ready wit: upon her 10th child being brought to the font for baptism, the Rev Thomas Ellwood said as usual "Name this child." Mrs Cater replied she could not presume to do such a thing as the child was his. "Mine?" said Ellwood. "Yes, your reverence," retorted Mrs Cater "for he is your

tithe and you must name him." Upon this the parson named him Thomas after himself.

Ed: a tithe is a tenth; in those days it was a tax, a tenth of your earnings or stock produced to be given to the church in offering.

Have you tried ...

The Punchbowl at Paglesham?
Churchend SS4 2DP
01702 258376

We recently fancied a meal out (to save me cooking, to be honest!) and were looking for a change from the usual sea-front eateries or the glitzy would-be 'fine dining' places.

We must confess we hadn't been out to the Punchbowl for ages but it's one of those places you can go back to, and certainly a place that seems to have a smaller catchment area to draw on than the Dragon ever had.

We went early one mid-week evening and arrived when it was dark, but found that the decent-sized car park was well-lit, with security lights coming on in areas when movement was detected.

There are several reviews on TripAdvisor, a couple of which refer to new owners, and have

the usual phrase associated with a place of this age: 'rustic charm' which makes me grind my teeth and mutter 'patronising townie'. The *Good Pub Guide* has an entry for it and tells us the building was a former sail-maker's loft. However old it may be, there is scaffolding round it so clearly there is an attempt to look after it, though what was being done we couldn't see at the time because of the darkness. The décor inside is that of a typical country pub catering to a mostly local clientèle and not aspiring to be a gastropub. There is background music but since the compiler had more or less the same taste in music as I do I can't and shan't moan!

The food menu doesn't set out to be pretentious but is a cut above the usual type of menu in a 'chain' pub. We looked at the first section of the menu and although the goats' cheese with chilli chutney looked and sounded more than attractive, the 'served in a bun' meant I'd be far too full for my planned pudding. There's about half a dozen other choices, ranging through soup of the day, nachos and something I can't read in my scribbled notes but which certainly can't be the

'peacock' which it looks like. Ah! Inspiration has dawned: prawn cocktail.

With main courses there is sirloin at £14.50, an interesting-sounding cottage pie at £10.90, gammon and eggs, and vegetable lasagna among others, but my partner opted quickly for liver and bacon which was described the other side of the table as 'melt in the mouth' and which disappeared at some speed. I chose Woodland Chicken and I don't care if it was home-made, frozen or boil-in-the-bag – it was the best-cooked chicken breast I've ever had. So often that cut is dry as a bone, but this came wrapped round a stuffing that was speckled with crispy bacon bits, along with various sorts of mushrooms, not just the usual button ones, and the whole was wrapped in a rasher of bacon or ham. The accompanying sauce was just right and my plate ended up near spotless.

I remember the comments in a recent review about 'seasonal vegetables' – well, these were clearly accepting the fact that there's nothing exotic and exciting in the garden at the moment, and we had carrot

batons, peas (OK they're frozen but there's nothing wrong with that) and broccoli cheese. The choice of potatoes was mashed, chips or – wait for it – bubble and squeak. Can't ever remember being offered that in a meal out before. It was great: lovely crust to it and plenty of flavour. Just right for collecting the last of the sauce.

When we ordered our drinks my partner found there was a good choice of 'proper' beers and, it looked as if they frequently changed. The wine list displayed on the table offered a good choice of whites, rosés and reds, along with some 'fizz'. The prices were more than reasonable; we all know about hotel mark-up on wines but these were more than acceptable. What would be needed would be a meal on a nice summer's day and then a long walk to overcome the effects of the wine before the drive back home. It is such a shame that current legislation precludes the enjoyment of much wine with a meal: the death-knell of so many country pubs.

When we came to look at the dessert menu, it made a pleasant

change to find that cheese and biscuits didn't come with a whacking great supplement. Many of the desserts were typical pub grub things, but not bad for all that. I could happily have had several of them, including the chocolate fudge cake, the crumble, an icecream sundae (which was my partner's choice and he enjoyed it so much he even wiped up the overflow down the side of the glass), a lemon meringue cheesecake, a syrup sponge and what I was told was warm cherry bakewell on 'special'. I opted for this, thinking of something like a *Mr Kipling bakewell* and chose ice cream to go with it, from ice cream, custard or cream. Then there came an apology – that it was raspberry, not cherry. OK, fine by me, but then the word 'roulade' came into the sentence for the first time. Still OK.

Now, to me a roulade is a posh Swiss Roll, with a sponge texture. What came was what the older generation would call a jam roly-poly. Again a first – don't think I've had before a pudding in a restaurant made from baked suet pastry.

Not a complaint, only a comment, as it went down well, and the ice cream was fine with it. Came home deciding to wash my ears out more carefully so I can hear in future.

It's a shame that going to the Punchbowl from here means quite a considerable journey but if places like this are not supported they will end up looking as dark and shut as the Cherry Tree was when we drove past that night.

And finally An old farmer was walking down the path to the pond when he spotted a frog. He reached down and grabbed it and was about to put it in his pocket when the frog said, "Kiss me on the lips and I will turn into a beautiful farmer's wife." The old farmer ignored this and put the frog in his pocket. From the dusty depths came the frog's voice asking, "Didn't you hear what I said?" The farmer took out the frog, looked at it and said, "At my age I'd rather have a talking frog."

Items (articles, adverts, 'free to a good home', opinions) for inclusion in the newsletter are always welcome. For the May newsletter these should be with Denise at Old Hall Farm by 18th April.