

Foulness Island

February 2019

Did you see that survey the other day which reported that people with religious beliefs, a strong faith in their God, live longer and are on the whole happier? I don't suppose for one moment there's any way of proving or disproving this. But faith in God makes us realise we are part of his creation, that we are not on our own, that we have a part to play in this world. We are not self-made men or women, and the gifts that we have come from God. When Jesus was asked to name the chief commandment he began by saying, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind."

And he goes on to add, "Love your neighbour as yourself." If we love our neighbour we are likely to be at peace with them, and Jesus doesn't

mean the bloke living on the other side of the fence. Let's face it, there are times when it may well be particularly difficult to get on with that bloke. Take it to mean 'everyone around us'. People who look for the good in others must have a far less stressful life than those who constantly criticise their fellow man. OK, we may be let down from time to time, but at least our overall attitude to others is positive. We look for the good in others, we look to see how we might help others – surely this is a much more positive attitude to life than that displayed by the person who keeps himself to himself, rarely speaks to a passer-by, keeps his garden gate firmly shut and seems to do nothing for the community in which he – well, you can't say 'lives', as he can only 'exist' in that community. He's certainly not a part of it.

We're advised to be aware of our strengths and weaknesses. Whatever we may feel are our shortcomings, we are of value to our neighbours. Faith can give us a sense of belonging; it certainly gives us an inner strength. When the soul is in good heart, then the body generally benefits.

Mr Leon Dobson

It is with sadness that we note the recent passing of Mr Leon Dobson on Christmas Day last year, two days after his 96th birthday. Leon was one of the old school of Foulness residents and he will be much missed, particularly for his knowledge of the island.

Leon was born on Foulness and he married Joyce in 1954. He always enjoyed gardening, his boat and fishing. It was a matter of pride to keep his garden tidy, and in television programmes made about the island the garden is where you can see him.

He was a skilled craftsman, took an interest in the wildlife around him and was a staunch supporter of the FCAS, attending open days and enjoying talking to the visitors.

In later years he did not enjoy good health but he was to be much admired for the determined way he went for a 'daily constitutional' and he continued to keep abreast of events not least by means of a daily newspaper. His family must be grateful for the enormous help given by friends and neighbours in recent years in particular.

Our thoughts are with Joyce and his family as they come to terms with his loss.

In Memoriam

*In February
we remember*

Freda Arnold

Ernest Batten

Audrey Bird

Vera and Walter Hume

Betty Lilley

Bernard Rawlings

Alec Willsmer

Gone but not forgotten

Monthly Worship

Our next meeting will be on Sunday March 3rd at 9am when we shall be marking the beginning of Lent in the following week. For further details please ring 217836.

Foulness Parish Council

Due to the issue regarding the recording of meetings, the Parish Council continue to hold two separate meetings.

We are holding an informal meeting with QinetiQ, the DIO and the MOD which commences at 7.00pm on the night of Council meetings. This is for the Parish Councillors and the Parishioners of Foulness Island only. This is followed at 7.15 pm by a Parish Council meeting.

The Council did not hold a meeting in January but we would remind residents that elections for Parish Councillors will be held in May.

QinetiQ Report (which would have been published at the January meeting).

Early Start: 6 & 7 February – 08:30 at DAT

Water Interruption – Saturday 19 January: On Saturday 19 January there will be an interruption to the water supply whilst maintenance works are carried out. This is scheduled for approximately 1 hour between the times of 11:00 and 13:00. STS will be notifying affected residents.

Havengore Bridge Works – 23 & 24 January: The contractors will be on site on 23 and 24 January to service the bridge and repair the current fault. Residents should expect tests lifts and short delays to traffic.

Our thanks to Nicki Uden,
Community Liaison Office for this report

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Thank you

Joyce, Pam and Linda would like to thank those who sent messages of sympathy on the recent sad death of Leon. Your care and kindness was much appreciated.

Please note that if this newsletter reaches you in time, the service for Leon is at St Nicholas' Church, Gt Wakering, on Friday 25th January at 1pm.

Foulness Conservation and Archaeological Society

You will see elsewhere in this newsletter the notice of our Annual General Meeting, a meeting that is legally required. Do come and join us; there's nothing madly formal about it.

Before we know it, we shall be reopening for the 2019 season, and trying to educate people who have odd ideas about this place. We even had someone on the phone the other week, admittedly not from England, who had the idea that Foulness had a hydro-electric power station. Seen any torrents of

rushing water lately? No, and we don't want to, either.

To help us cope with these visitors, we would receive with pleasure any offers of help in the Centre – come along to the AGM and have a chat afterwards: you could help meet and greet or, if you feel more self-effacing, tuck yourself in the kitchen or even chain yourself to the sink – whatever, you'll be very welcome. We don't bite.

Have you tried?

The Cherry Tree at Stambridge now that it has been revamped? This pub is now under the umbrella of Pie and Pint Inns and has been extensively (and perhaps expensively) altered in recent months. The former entrances are now seemingly locked and entry is by a side door, via an outside eating/drinking area and a loudspeaker letting you know what music to expect inside.

Once indoors I was first assailed by a smell of fish but, that aside, you discover that what seemed to be a former old pub has now been more or less gutted to offer a large eating area and possibly, tucked in a corner, a small drinking area. Several people who used to like eating in the former conservatory

were driven away by the noise when curtains and carpet were removed – there was nothing to absorb that noise. At least curtains are back now, which helps, but on the evening we visited the diners were not great in number and were well-spread, so the greatest noise came on occasions when someone courteously got up from their table to answer their phone: they may have taken the noise away from their own party, but the rest of the diners could hear the conversation loud and clear.

There is no booking system unless you are a party of more than 5, or it is an 'occasion' like Mothering Sunday or Easter. They offer breakfast, lunch and dinner. Porridge is priced at £3.95 – it ain't that costly in my kitchen – and a full English at £10.50. The Sunday lunch menu looks pretty much like the normal menu with the addition of a roast, with roast sirloin demanding an extra charge. You can choose to have one, two or three courses.

They do a "Wine Wednesday" when the bottle of wine, if you are taking a main course, is priced at £9.95, whereas normal prices range from £16.20 upwards. Wine is also available by the glass, two different

sizes. There's also a Fish Friday and on Thursdays it's Pie and Pint.

There's a gluten-free menu and several vegetarian dishes to choose from, if that is your taste or need.

At the bar there is a decent choice of beers as well as lagers. Once at our table we noticed that there is a proper salt and pepper pot, not sachets, and there are linen table napkins. So far, so good, but when you come to study the menu you find another change from past times: whereas the previous menus used to have at least one dish that was imaginative or out of the ordinary, what you are offered is now what would be termed 'pub food' – indeed that's how it's described on the website. You know how it so often is – you are either overwhelmed by things you really would like to eat, or you can look at a menu and utterly nothing catches your fancy.

We both enjoy dessert and just one glance at the menu made it clear that we'd have to choose wisely or we'd be too full. Matters were not helped by the swift arrival of a small loaf of seeded bread, still warm, and two pats of butter. So we opted to share a portion of whitebait (£7.25) and this made an acceptable starter.

My partner then chose a steak and ale pie (£14.45) – he always does, as I don't make pies! – which came with its own little jug of gravy and my 'luxury fish pie' was £15.95. I found the advertised prawns, salmon and white fish, but nary a trace of the smoked haddock. The 'seasonal vegetables' were sensible: broccoli and carrot batons with a little shredded cabbage, just enough not to overwhelm.

We were quite right about feeling full. Having enjoyed the pie my partner had to limit himself to ice cream, priced according to how many scoops you choose. If you go to the *Cherry Tree* do leave room: the dessert menu can involve a visit to the sweet trolley where there is displayed a wonderful selection of gateaux, the sort where it always seems a shame to be the one responsible for spoiling the look by having a slice! It was the sort of display where you're spoiled for choice. We may well find ourselves back at the *Cherry Tree* some time, but not with the same sense of wonder about the menu as we used to have.

All the menus are on their website, as well as the wine list, so you can make your own mind up.

Foulness Newsletter

Thanks are due to several people over the past month or so: to those of you who have given a donation to start us off for this year, and to the person who went the extra mile and supplied Denise with a Tide Table when she'd not been able to get one. Thank you to one and all.

Foulness Conservation and Archaeological Society

The Trustees of the
Foulness Conservation and
Archaeological Society

invite all members and supporters
of the Society
to the Annual General Meeting
which will be held on
Tuesday 12th March
at 7.30pm
in the Heritage Centre

Have things changed in 20 years?

Snippets from our magazine

February 1999: We learned that there would be a Christingle Service at church, the first one for Foulness.

The January Quiz Evening had raised £184 for Riding for the Disabled, and one regular supporter's employers had doubled you read ?

that sum through corporate giving. The Parish Council reported from its January meeting on repairs to the roof of the Village Hall and at the meeting there had been complaints over problems with the electricity billing. We were told that road repairs at Avocet should be finished by the end of January. Were those the repairs on which we held a sweepstake on the final finish date, which proved to be in April?

Foulness Tide Times

February

	AM		PM	
Feb 2	09.49	5.2	23.11	5.2
Feb 3	11.30	5.4	23.51	5.4
Feb 9	02.37	5.5	14.56	5.4
Feb 10	03.07	5.4	14.56	5.4
Feb 16	08.44	5.0	21.30	5.0
Feb 17	09.57	5.3	22.38	5.3
Feb 23	02.36	6.1	15.00	6.0
Feb 24	03.18	6.0	15.44	5.8

Have you read ... ?

The Unsafe Structure by Jerry Bilt
Scared to Death by Terry Fyed
Small Essex Towns

by Stan Ford and Lee Hope
Girls on Top by Sue Premacy
Who Dunnit? by Miss Terry

2018 Weather Report

Month	Churchend West	Churchend East	Courtend
Jan	55.5	74.75	57.5
Feb	50.5	51.0	41.0
March	76.5	110.5	70.5
April	63.0	63.25	41.0
May	27.0	41.35	65.5
June	08.0	01.2	00.5
July	30.5	28.0	26.0
August	73.5	101.5	92.0
September	34.5	48.0	45.0
Oct	42.0	38.6	24.0
Nov	54.0	59.0	58.5
Dec	37.5	51.0	50.0
Total	552.5	668.15	571.5mm

The difference between the readings can be explained perhaps by the siting of the rain gauges or by the fact that Courtend is clearly a more desirable place to live.

Two weather events dominated 2018 – firstly we had a spell of cold weather and snow for a week at the end of February and the beginning of March. The snow fall was made worse by a bitter easterly wind which drifted the snow. Some people called it “the beast from the East”. The rest of us called it “Monday”.

Then there was the hot dry June and July and we all remember the accompanying mosquitoes as we enjoyed a record-breaking hot summer.

For the record, the hottest day was July 27th when the temperature reached 31.7C. The coldest day was February 27th at -3.6C and the wettest day was March 16th with 25cm of rain. There were 216 days with no recordable rain.

And do remember the old Foulness weather saying:

If the clouds over Southend get blacker and blacker
Heed the forecast from Tomasz Schaferknaker

Situations Vacant

Last month we asked if there might be someone in the Courtend area who would be prepared to deliver the magazines, eleven times a year, maybe a dog walker or another fit person. We guess you were all busy at the end of December/beginning of January and perhaps didn't have time to read this as thoroughly as you might have. Please, is there anyone who would be prepared to take on this community task? Please ring 217836 if you could do it – perhaps even job-share?

Used Stamps

Just a reminder that Denise can always pass on used stamps, British or Foreign, to a deserving charity – they sell them off by weight to raise funds. Just tear them off the envelope leaving a little margin around them; those that are cut through the perforations are of no use. Thank you to those who remembered when the Christmas cards came through the door. I know it's more likely these days that we'll get e-mails or printed franking, but don't forget the stamps!

And finally Why do supermarkets make the sick and the ill walk all the way to the back of the store to get their prescriptions while

healthy people can buy cigarettes at the front?

- Why do people order double cheeseburgers, large fries and then a diet Coke?
- Why do banks leave vault doors open and then chain the pens to the counter?
- Why do we leave cars worth thousands of pounds in our driveways and then put our useless rubbish in the garage?
- Why don't you ever see the headline "Psychic wins Lottery"?
- Why is 'abbreviated' such a long word?
- Why is it that doctors and solicitors call what they do a 'practice'?
- Why is the time of day with the slowest-moving traffic called 'the rush hour'?
- Why didn't Noah swat those two mosquitoes?
- Why do they sterilise the needle for lethal injections?
- You know that indestructible black box that is used on aeroplanes? Why don't they make the whole aeroplane out of the stuff?
- Why don't sheep shrink when it rains?

Items for publication, (an advert, an opinion, news, 'free to a good home') are always welcomed. For inclusion in the next newsletter, items should be with Denise at Hall Farm by the 18th of the preceding month.