

# Knapton Newsletter

## Autumn 2002

Welcome to the Autumn edition of the Newsletter. We hope there will be snippets of interest for all our readers, but if there is something missing for you, please let us know and we will see what we can do. Better still, of course, if you have an interesting story to tell or useful tips or information to pass on, please make contact. Speak to any member of the Parish Council (names on the noticeboard) or 'phone 01263 409930.

Our next edition will cover Christmas and the New Year and should be with you three months hence. My thanks to all our contributors, helpers and deliverers for making this Newsletter possible. **Max Barrett**

### THE CARNSER by Roger Dixon

Earlier this year, Andrew Dodds, the EDP artist, produced a picture in the paper of the 'cauncer' (his spelling) in Church Street, Kenninghall. I also found in a book of 'Broad Norfolk' produced by the EDP from letters written in 1949, two mentions of 'carnsers'. DMS wrote, "Do you mind how you go over the mill caanser, do you'll git hut", and T H Cooper of Gorleston pointed out that "the marsh road, linking Cantley ferry with the village of Langley is known as the 'caanser'". Many people know of Blakeney camser. I tried all the usual dictionaries without success, convinced in my own mind that it was an Anglo-Saxon word. So off I went to the Forum in Norwich to consult Robert Forby's great 'Vocabulary of East Anglia', published in 1930. All I could get from him was 'caunsey', although another writer gave the pronunciation as 'caansey' or 'carnsey'. Closer ....

Some of you will know where this is leading. The camser on the north side of the Street is now grassed over, but it used to be maintained as a gravel path, the grass verge clipped and the edge to the Street carefully kept sharp, rather than sloping. My earliest recollection of it is of Mr Rouse, Henry Wild's father-in-law, looking after it, to be followed after the war by Neville's father, Tom Coe.

It dates, of course, from the times before roads were properly resurfaced. You can just imagine ladies struggling in their long dresses through water-filled ruts on the roads of those days. The camser provides a dry, well-kept path to church and shop. It wasn't needed from the Hall. There were paths to the churchyard through the thick shrubbery where St. Peter's Close is now. I can remember nightingales singing in those thickets in my childhood. These paths have gone, but the camser remains. I wonder how many people call it by its ancient name.

One last thing. A search on the internet provided this from Somersham in Suffolk: "This path is on high ground and called a 'camser', an old Saxon word for high path". Well there. It's nice to be proved right!

#### ***KNAPTON PARISH CHURCH***

*Services at 10.00 a.m. every Sunday except  
September 8th (6.30 p.m. evensong) and  
September 29th - Team Service at PASTON (10.30 a.m.)*

***VILLAGE HARVEST FESTIVAL -  
Sunday 15th September 10.00 Church***

***SPONSORED CYCLE RIDE -  
Saturday 14th September 10.00 a.m. - 6.00 p.m.  
(If you would like to cycle for Knapton Church or  
the Methodist Chapel, please collect sponsorship  
forms from Roger MacPhee)***

#### **KNAPTON VILLAGE HALL**

Forthcoming events through the Autumn - please come and support your Village Hall Management Committee if you can.

**Friday 20th September 7.00 for 7.30 p.m.**

Village Harvest Supper - cost £5  
(wine/beer/cider on sale)

**Friday 15th November 7.30 p.m.**

By popular demand, a return visit by  
THE SHANTYMEN -

Cost £7.50 including refreshments.

**Friday 6th December 7.30 p.m.**

(date to be confirmed)

Bill Drayton will talk on Birds of Norfolk -  
with slides - also Christmas refreshments

**Church Flowers:** The Church is open to all and has a constant display of flowers, arranged and paid for by a small group of dedicated people. If you have talent or if you are able to donate some small amount towards the cost, Jean Watmuff, on 01263 720840 will be pleased to hear from you.

# Knapton Methodist Church

Our first item is one of mixed joy and sorrow. The Methodist Conference, which is the Governing body of our British Methodist Church, met in July and appointed our Minister, Revd. Graham Thompson, to be the next Chairman of the East Anglia District, from 1st September 2003. We are very pleased for Graham that he has been "chosen" and grateful that we shall not lose him entirely, but we shall miss his wise leadership and loving pastoral care. Our Circuit Stewards are now lost in the intricacies of the invitation/stationing procedure.

Conference Sunday – 30th June – was also enjoyable as we worshipped with our Anglican friends, sharing in their Patronal Festival at St Peter and St Paul. We are looking forward to our joint Harvest Festival Service on Sunday 15th September.

The new audio system, with an induction loop to help those who wear a hearing aid, has been installed in the chapel and with the help of our visiting preachers we are gradually getting the sound levels right.

Our Sunday School is gradually growing in size (as are the children) and we are grateful to the adults who give their time to this vital work. Sunday School meets every Sunday morning from 10 until 11 o'clock and the age range at present is from 3 to 11 years. The young people participate in a variety of activities, including craft, painting, gluing, modelling, drama and singing. When it is appropriate, the children are able to watch videos to enhance their understanding and enjoyment of bible stories.

If you would like any more information about the Sunday school, please contact Mrs. Bea Gatfield on 01263 722458.

## What's in a name? **Contributed by Don Vennell**

Family names are fascinating. Many of them relate to occupations: Butcher, Baker, Carpenter, Wheelwright, Mason, Fletcher, Shepherd and so on.

In the case of my name, the Chambers English Dictionary says "Venville: a form of tenure in parishes around Dartmoor that gives tenants certain rights to the use of land on Dartmoor". Then it says "origin obscure".

But the origin isn't obscure. The original name was Vennhild, in Anglo-Saxon tongue meaning the holding or possession of the Venn tribe. When the Normans conquered this country, and produced their record of land usage known as the Domesday Book in 1066, they altered the name to the French form: Venville.

Gradually this didn't make any sense, and the name changed, as so many others have done, to sound like something else: Vennell like Vennell, a form of small lane like a Norfolk loke. Something people knew and recognised.

Because my name is unusual, I have been able to trace the movement of the family from early Dartmoor, where they were cattle drovers, to Oxfordshire, from Oxfordshire to Birmingham tempted by the jobs that the Industrial Revolution created, and from there to Manchester to run the horse-drawn traffic from the new railway station at Liverpool Road. There, my father was in charge of the freight carried by the shipping company 'Manchester Liners' during the war.

If you have an unusual name, tracing its origins can be fun. Do you have one? Please let us know and share it with us in our next newsletter, due out in January.

## Meeting the Queen ...

As part of my duties as Chairman of the District Council, I had the honour of being presented to her Majesty, when she came to Norwich to open the Forum Library.

The Lord Mayor of Norwich, the Major of Great Yarmouth, the Chairman of Norfolk County Council, other District Chairs and I were lined up outside the Forum to meet the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh as they entered. We were introduced in turn by the Lord Lieutenant.

The Queen asked me what my area and responsibility was. I replied "North Norfolk, which has 47 miles of coastline". She said "It looked lovely when we flew over it this morning," and she moved away with a smile.

**Millennium Field and Garden:** The field and garden continue to flourish, despite some damage and vandalism. We thank those unsung folk who have helped weed and clear the hedges and trees to enable them to grow. We hope to hold another 'working party' in the near future to 'put the area to bed' for the winter. We shall be asking for volunteers nearer the time. Refreshments and lunch provided.