



### Shingle Street drama

A sad ending for a majestic beast



### Where's Wiggins?

Village has a visit from some bike enthusiasts



### Down to the pub at last!

Quiz Night has village racking its brains

# inside eyke

ISSUE 11 WINTER 2012



Image Simon Sutch

## IN THIS EDITION: NEWS & EVENTS

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**PLUS** Dinner Lady Maria lets us in another quick goodie **RON CUSHING HAS BEEN DOWN TO THE MUSEUM** The School gets a starring role in the East Anglian Times!



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## From the EDITOR's shed



often regarded as being himself the heart of Eyke: Mervyn Whitmore, husband of Ann, tireless charity worker, village organiser, commentator on local and national affairs and the natural world (in All Saints News) and all-round legend. As Janna points out in her article, Mervyn was an avid recycler before it became fashionable, and long before it became the normal thing to do – and he's still hard at it. His quiet and selfless service to the community is a splendid thing, and it is a pleasure to be able to acknowledge it here.

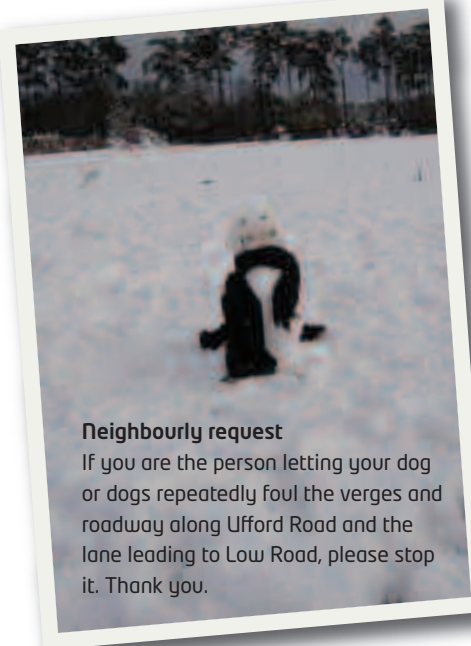
We also have a last, bright memory of the extraordinary sporting summer – which seems a long time ago now – in the shape of the Tour of England cycle race, a feature on Woodbridge Museum, and a report on progress, which has been dramatic, at the Elephant & Castle.

Hello all, and season's greetings to you. This final edition of Inside Eyke for 2012 ranges a little further afield than usual, as we publish correspondence received from Australia and France, not to mention a photo-essay from Simon Sutch on an exotic foreign visitor to Shingle St, sadly deceased... The heart of the magazine, though, is the chap who appears on the front cover and is

Thank you to those people who took the time and trouble to write in to us, and thank you as always to the team who put Inside Eyke together. Our next issue will be out in March of next year. As always, if you'd like to contribute a piece, or make a suggestion as to what you think we should be covering, please do drop me a line at [t.marr123@gmail.com](mailto:t.marr123@gmail.com).

With best wishes, Tim ❄️

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## News from Eyke CEVC

### Wendy Kelway, Headteacher

This term has seen a very exciting food week where children had the chance to learn about food from different countries and from local companies. We even got a mention in the East Anglian Daily Times which was lovely to see!

Children and teachers are now preparing for Christmas productions and the songs are being learnt and costumes dusted off! KS1 is presenting a nativity play called Shine, Star, Shine and KS2 is presenting a play about WW2 called Edith's Wartime Scrapbook.

We had some very sad news about our swimming pool heater earlier in the term; that it had been damaged beyond repair and we needed a replacement at a cost of around £6000 to £7000. We have been very lucky to have donations come in from Melton Mowers for £1,500, the Parish Council for £200, and Andrew Reid for £1000 and a

commitment from the Local Authority to give us £3000. We are very grateful that we are nearly there with the replacement fund and a new heater will be fitted so children can swim again from April next year.

The FOES group are doing very well so far this term and we have had a successful Beetle Drive and Bingo night. The Christmas fayre is on 7th December (5pm- 7pm). Some of the funds they raise will support the replacement of the heater, we hope.

Planning news: we have been granted planning permission to extend the village car park so that our parents can park safely in the morning and at pick up time. We have to put a lease in place, as we are renting the extra land, and then complete an archaeological survey before we can go ahead with the actual work. So thank you to all those who have pledged help, support and so on.

On a final note do please remind any neighbours or friends and family that any children due to start school in September 2013 must have their place applied for by the 15th of January. If they are unsure of how to do this, tell them to pop into school to see us! Happy Christmas.

### Peppermint creams Maria Hassan

With Christmas almost upon us things are becoming very exciting at school. The hall being adjacent to my kitchen I am lucky enough to hear the songs being practised daily for the Christmas performances! Believe me I am word perfect by the time it comes round to the actual performances! The recipe this time is peppermint creams, one that you could make with the children in your life and better still gift wrap them as presents. Take note though they wont last long though so a double batch may well be a good idea! Anyone wanting me to quality control test the results knows where to find me.....

#### Ingredients

- 250g icing sugar
- 30ml double cream
- ½ an egg white
- peppermint essence
- green food colouring (optional)
- 200g dark chocolate, melted

#### Method

Mix all the ingredients, except the chocolate, to a stiff paste, adding the essence and

colour in drips until you have a flavour and colour you like. Roll the paste into a sausage about 4cm across and cut it into thick slices. Neaten into smooth, even discs and dry on a sheet of baking parchment (best overnight). Dip half of each cream into the chocolate and leave to set on the paper. Double dip if you have time. Decorate if you like.

## Letter from Oz



**The editor was very pleased to receive the following letter, and delightful photograph, from Stuart Whatling in Melbourne, Oz:**

I thought you may be interested to see just how far your magazine makes it. The attached picture is of Tom and Angus

Whatling (my two boys) catching up on the latest village gossip over 10,000 miles away here in Melbourne where we have lived for the last six years. They were particularly interested in the article on their Great Grandad Frank Pooley.

The mag does nothing to dispel my wife's theory that half of the village is related to me, with Grandad Frank, Uncle Robin and Auntie Jackie all prominent, and that's only the tip of the iceberg!

It's great to see some of the village stalwarts out in force at the Fete and Jubilee celebrations, along with plenty of fresh faces.

Well done for keeping us up to date with the happenings in my little corner of England's green and pleasant land. With Warm Regards from the Colonies, **Stuart Whatling**

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## An invitation to Woodbridge Museum



Woodbridge Museum opened on the Market Hill 30 years ago and its display will lead you through the story of the town and its notable inhabitants. The story starts at area around what is now Kyson Point. This was once a Royal Manor where people came to pay their food rent to the Anglo-Saxon kings who ruled East Anglia.

Before the river walls were built the estuary was lined by extensive marshes and the beach at Kyson point provided the ideal landing place for longboats. Later a jetty was built higher up river and it is from the jetty that the town acquired the name Wuderbryge – wuder means wooden and bryge means jetty. Bryge can also mean bridge but the one at nearby Wilford was not built until after the 16th Century.

By the time the Normans arrived the town had formed around a church which was adjacent to the present parish of St Mary's. The right to hold a weekly market was granted in 1227 and soon the town was prospering by shipping agricultural goods traded in the market to London and other places in the south.

This maritime trade peaked towards the

end of the seventeenth century but, by 1800, the town was the fourth largest in Suffolk and had a barracks with about 4000 troops ready to defend the coast if Napoleon attempted an invasion.

By 1300 Woodbridge was also a shipbuilding centre, an activity which reached its height during the 17th C when men-of-war were built here.

This phase ended by about 1680 and thereafter a steady stream of commercial vessels was built, mainly for the coastal trade, until the business faded away during the 1840s. From 1881 yachts were being built but this activity ceased in 1990.

The arrival of the railway in 1859 caused a slump in Woodbridge's maritime trade. From 1882 the town was no longer classified as a port and the final vestiges of maritime trade petered out during the 1930s.

The railway also had a detrimental impact on Woodbridge's market but this survived until 1930 by which time road transport dealt the knockout blow.

After the railway arrived the population of the town declined and then remained static for almost 70 years until new employment opportunities were created in the area. By



the 1960s many of these jobs were disappearing but planning was then underway to make Woodbridge the perfect place to live for people whose employers were about to relocate from London to Ipswich. Although the population doubled, the expansion did not impact on the ancient heart of the town whose narrow streets now bustle with commerce and visitors rather than with horse drawn carts making their way from the Market Hill to the quays.

To fill in the gaps in this summary, and to get to know some of the people who live in the town, please come to the museum and be greeted by some of the team of enthusiastic volunteers who run the

museum. During the school holidays it is open every day from 10am to 4 pm and the admission charges are £1 for adults and 30p for children.

There are activity sheets for children and, for those who want more information than there is on display, there are pamphlets, books and a terminal to access comprehensive accounts of most aspects of the town.

The museum also offers pre booked guided tours and illustrated talks on a range of topics related to the town. For more information on these please contact Bob Merrett on 01394 385 572. ❄️

**Ron Cushing**



# MERVYN MAKES THE MOST OF IT

Janna McKendrick spends some quality time with Mervyn Whitmore

Growing up during the war Mervyn Whitmore has always loathed waste. He remembers his father's motto of 'waste not, want not', characterised by an old pail kept for bent nails, saved carefully for straightening and reuse. Such early memories left a lasting impression, and the principle of recycling was in his blood for

decades before it became the politically correct process it is today. For many years he has channelled his efforts into a means of raising money for local charities.

In search of recycling opportunities, Mervyn and his wife Ann have become seasoned car booters. Arriving at the crack of dawn on a Sunday at Kessingland near

Lowestoft or the more local sites of Ipswich, Friday Street and others, they spend a couple of hours scouring the stalls for items suitable for recycling, and are home again well before 11.

As a result Mervyn's garden shed is at times a veritable Aladdin's cave. As testament to his enthusiasm, recycling advertisements old and new are pinned to the door and hanging from the ceiling. There's nothing he likes more than taking something to bits,

even as large as a washing-machine, and sorting the parts into buckets, for later distribution to the relevant recycling agency. It may take him four or five hours, but "I enjoy it – that's the secret," he says. Surprisingly, individual parts are often of greater value than the item itself. Heavy plastics from some items may not generate any pennies, but they too are recycled.

EACH (East Anglian Children's Hospice) is Mervyn's favoured charity for the money he raises. Their new Treehouse hospice has recently opened in Ipswich with wonderful facilities for children and their families. Some items are passed on directly to St Elizabeth Hospice and Oxfam, while some tools, recently including a sewing machine in need of repair, are donated to TWAM (Tools with a Mission) in Ipswich. This charity refurbishes and ships tools to Africa and India to enable people to earn a living and support themselves. The listening ear of the Samaritans is also supported through the contribution of discarded drink cans, milk tops and foil.

Mervyn is a true stalwart of Eyke. As well as his enthusiasm for the efficient reuse of unwanted items, he takes great pride in the village and its appearance, and regularly sweeps up fallen leaves around the church and in front of the village hall. Villagers can also read his regular contributions to the Parish newsletter demonstrating his love of the area and his appreciation of all things natural. He and Ann have lived in Church Lane for many years in a house bearing the name 'Cesar's Palace'. Some years ago when the family included a black Labrador called Cesar, their son Adrian presented them with the plaque made specially on his travels!

Those in the know already pass recyclable items to Mervyn. If readers have tools or appliances they would like reused in aid of the aforementioned charities, Mervyn would be pleased to hear from you on 01394 460 491. And bent nails will be gratefully received too! ❄️



## The mystery of the fin whale

### Simon Sutch

This story is more Outside than Inside Eyke, but I reckon it is worth a moment or two and it is still fairly local after all



A whale beached at Shingle Street during the afternoon of Sunday 30 September and died pretty soon afterwards. Quite a few anglers round these parts would lay claim to having had such a beast on the hook but consider the following...

It was a juvenile, female fin whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*) and weighed in at 7.8 tonnes. She was 9.8 metres long (about the weight and length of a horse truck).

Quite how she ended up in our waters will remain a mystery but we can suppose that

she was mooching up the French coast, heading north and aiming to route via the west coast of Ireland to feeding grounds in the North Atlantic. There are hundreds of ship movements every day through the Straits of Dover and possibly the whale's sonar guidance system was confused by the cacophony of underwater sound created by ships' propellers. Whatever the case, she made the fatal mistake of going north-east not north-west and thus entered the dangerously narrow and shallow waters of the North Sea. Once there she was never going to turn round and find her way back out to safety.

Possibly the whale's sonar guidance system was confused by the cacophony of underwater sound

There are many obstacles all the way up to Suffolk from the narrow 'waist' of the Dover Straits. Even a few miles offshore you can, in places, virtually stand up at low tide. There are many spits of shingle just off the white cottages at Shingle Street that are not even visible most of the time and are particularly dangerous for a disorientated fin whale.

Once she had run aground, she would have thrashed about (note the bloody scrape marks on the tail end of the body) trying to free herself, and then died.

The Aldeburgh RNLi arrived very soon after the beaching but sadly too late to assist the creature. They floated the body off the spit (about 15 metres from the shoreline) at the next high tide and secured it to the shingle beach to await the arrival of the UK Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme, headed up by Rob Deaville of the Zoological Society of London.

A couple of tissue samples were taken there and then by Rob and his team but as Shingle Street is an SSSI (site of special scientific interest) they were not in a position



to perform a full on-site post-mortem without a body disposal plan being available from Suffolk Coastal. They couldn't take the whale away as they already had one on their trailer (buses, policemen, you know how it is...).

Thus we will never know for sure the cause of death but simple misfortune seems the most likely. The corpse was eventually taken away by Philip Clarke, the local knackerman of Clarkes of Melton. His more usual cargo is poultry, pigs, sheep, cattle and horses.

Philip drove her up to Stoke where she was rendered down to make somewhere between 1,000 and 1,500 litres of bio-fuel, rather a bizarre ending for such an extraordinary visitor to our shores.

In case you are wondering: the full-grown fin whale is the second largest whale on the planet, after the blue whale, and can measure up to 30 metres in length. They are reasonably solitary creatures and estimates are that they can live to 90 years and beyond. Our Shingle Street beauty was only a young 'un.

Below is a photo of the RNLi team up close to the body, giving a sense of scale and here you can see evidence of one of the cuts the Zoological Society of London scientists took. They will take these 'slices' back to their laboratories and their analysis will help towards a greater understanding of these amazing creatures' health status and lives. ❁



## Tour of Britain



Shortly after 10:30 on Sunday morning, 9 September, the Tour of Britain cruised through Eyke. The cycling extravaganza had started at 10:00 in Neptune Marina, Ipswich and was set to wind its way through sunlit Suffolk and on to Norfolk, finishing in Norwich 125 miles later.

Quite a few villagers turned out to see the participants and

applaud or shout encouragement. The first four riders were followed a couple of minutes later by the peloton or massed group of riders, and they all seemed pretty relaxed on a lovely sunny morning. What was probably the entire motorcycle fleet of the Suffolk and Norfolk Constabularies did an excellent job of closing the road for the ten minutes or so required for the cyclists and assorted support vehicles to whizz through Eyke, and then we all went home for breakfast. Hopefully the international competitors as well as the home-grown Bradley Wiggins and Mark Cavendish enjoyed their sojourn through Eyke and will count this first stage in East Anglia, of an eight stage rally totalling some 840 miles, as a good 'un. ❁

### Hullo! John and Rosy Rabson here!

We lived at The Limes, Eyke from 1978 until 2005. John was Chairman of the Eyke Parish Council for a while and also edited the Warbler newsletter with its monthly Tailpiece from our very own Mervyn. In 2005 we moved to France, but we still have a foothold in Suffolk. Our goddaughter Jane Jackson now rents The Limes from us, and takes care of our affairs in Suffolk.

Those of you who are on our Christmas greetings list will know that we spent a long time doing up the cottage in the grounds of our house in rural Burgundy as guest accommodation. The cottage is now up and running; and thereby, as the Bard says, hangs a tale. Our son Hugo served in the US Army and was deployed to Iraq and later to Afghanistan, where he suffered from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and spent time in hospital in the US. Thanks to his own determination and the US equivalent of Combat Stress, he made a spectacular recovery and is now two thirds of the way through a double Master's degree in Psychology and Family Therapy financed by

Uncle Sam. He hopes to work with other veterans to help them to return to civilian life. We were so impressed that we decided to use our cottage to raise money for Combat Stress. Formerly the Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society, Combat Stress cares for UK veterans who have been traumatised by their harrowing experiences during their Service career.

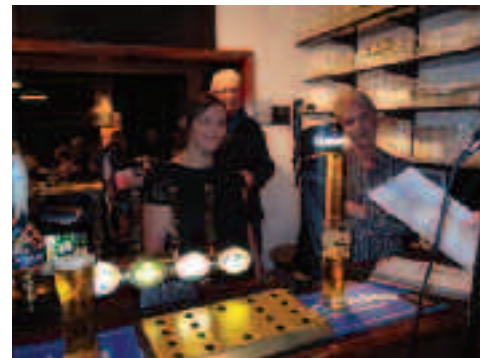
Charity Cottage offers visitors a holiday home from home with the added satisfaction of helping a worthwhile charity - because every penny goes to Combat Stress. UK taxpayers can take advantage of Gift Aid, which is the nearest thing we know to a present from the taxman. The Daily Telegraph, who run a website for expats like us, has been kind enough to publish two articles about us. And now they have kindly offered to publicise Charity Cottage in their Best of British feature. The link is <http://expatdirectory.telegraph.co.uk/france/cervon/charity-cottage/>

We now have our own website, [www.charity-cottage.org.uk](http://www.charity-cottage.org.uk), with links to Combat Stress.



## Elephant & Castle transformed...

The transformation at the Elephant & Castle has been truly spectacular, as can be seen in these contrasting pictures of the pub back in late summer and of the recent inaugural Quiz Night. Ian and Sandra have converted what was little more than the shell of a pub - and which many of us must have quietly suspected would never be a pub again - into a warm, welcoming space which is once more the social hub of the village. Food is now on the way too. Cheers! Well done to Mike Fisher and his team for their win on the night. **Tim**



Turn over for more pics >>>

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# QUIZ NIGHT

