



**Tombstone Blues**

Thoughts on churchyards



**Desert Rats**

Eyke's connections to heroes of WWII



**Quiet Lanes**

Are they finally on the way?

# inside eyke

ISSUE 13 SUMMER 2013



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**NEWS & EVENTS**

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**PLUS** Mrs Kelway bids a fond farewell at the school **MERVYN TAKES A KNOCK** Getting ready for the Fete **HOW THE PRE-SCHOOL GOT STARTED**





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# From the EDITOR's shed



Hello everyone, and welcome to the summer edition of Inside Eyke. The editorial team have been busy rounding up stories and features which we hope will be of interest, and your Editor has been carrying out rigorous and sustained research into village events. As you can doubtless see from the above photograph, taken by 'Mac' Macfarlane, research into the Elephant & Castle's Spanish Night on 1st June yielded highly satisfactory results – and the Beer Festival at August Bank Holiday is looking promising, too.

The Church is well represented in this issue: apart from our interviewee and front cover star the Reverend Janice, we also have a commentary on the churchyard (and something of a meditation on churchyards and tombstones in general) from Jackie Pooley. Moving from the ecclesiastic to the scholastic, we have an item on the village Pre-School and an affectionate farewell letter from the headteacher of Eyke School, Mrs Kelway.

On the historical front there is a piece on the Desert Rats with local interest, and we've found space for a fair few other items, too, including some which bear directly on quality of life in the village. Not unconnected to this, starting next issue, we're going to

provide a space for Readers' Rants, where you can have a good, solid moan about whatever is getting your goat at the moment. This could of course be on a national or even international scale, but really we'd prefer the local, whether it be the frequency of the bus service to Woodbridge or the quality of broadband coverage. So if there's anything you'd like to get off your chest, email or send it to me and we'll put it in print. Anonymity, I need hardly say, is guaranteed.

There are of course other conduits of news and information concerning the village. All Saints News comes out at the end of each month; there is also a website carrying council and other news at <http://www.eyke.onesuffolk.net>; and Mike Tatum's website <http://history.eykevillage.info/>, which looks like developing into a really excellent resource and storage site for local history, information and news. Mike would be delighted to receive contributions from readers

(photographs, documents and so on), so do have a look at the site and see if you could help out.

That's it for now. Thanks as ever to the editorial team, and to all those of you who took the trouble to get in touch. Please feel free to send me contributions or ideas for things that you think might go well in the magazine. All best, and see you at the Fete! ❄️ **Tim**

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Tim Marr 3 Ufford Road, Eyke  
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## Parish Council News

### Jackie Pooley, Clerk



There cannot be many occasions when a village meeting is given the entirely unexpected and welcome news that £20,000 is to be placed in the hands of the Parish Council to improve the quality of life for the residents it represents – but this was exactly what happened at the Annual Parish Meeting on 13th May.

Our County Councillor, Andrew Reid, who has worked tirelessly on our behalf, announced that a bond of this value was

being released by Suffolk County Council specifically for traffic calming works in Eyke. The bond - funded by Suncourt Property Development Ltd, who bought Bentwaters Airbase in the 1990s - was to pay for work such as this, which would be needed as a result of increased traffic when the site was developed, and had been held for some years by Suffolk County Council.

The Parish Council has had many years' experience of wrestling with the thorny issue of traffic calming in Eyke Street, with measures being installed and removed, and disagreements rife. What has become obvious, as Bentwaters Business Park has grown, is that the traffic volume is increasing, HGVs are getting bigger, and the need to agree some practical and realistic measures is becoming more urgent.

At the Annual Parish Meeting in 2012, David Chenery from Suffolk County Council Highways department talked about a "shopping list" of possible measures. These were worked on by the Traffic Working Party during the year, and once the good news of the funding was received, at this year's meeting, the Parish Council, along with Mr Chenery and Councillor Reid met again to work on a final list to be put to Suffolk County Council.

This list comprises village gateways, speed camera signs, horse or crossroads warning sign at the Church Lane/ Creasey's Hill junction with The Street, a kerb build-out at the top of Castle Hill, and two items still under discussion: vehicle-activated speed signs, and moving the 30mph limit further out at the south end of the village.

The Parish Council now awaits with interest the response from Suffolk CC.

As a footnote to all this excitement, the Parish Council is still short of one councillor, and would really like to fill the gap!

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## Mervyn's Memories

Aircraft stories from last issue have resonance for another resident



I was very interested in Robin's story in the last issue of Inside Eyke about his 'Low Level' escapade involving a Royal Naval Buccaneer aircraft. Whilst not intending to downplay his experience, I should point out that a similar thing happened to me. My own experience, though, involved a United States Air Force F-4C Phantom, and took place at ground level and within the bounds of the actual airfield itself,

where the blades of grass offered scant protection. It was just before 15:00 hours on this particular Sunday afternoon, and I was working with a few others on the 'East End', in the process of repairing part of the storm drain system.

We were suddenly enveloped in a blast of warm air as the pilot applied full power to the Phantom's two jet engines; the warm air was quickly followed by our portable fibre-glass shelter, which hit me on the ankle. All then fell quiet, the aircraft by then being some nautical miles away. I put my painful foot in a bucket of cold water, but at a later medical check-up I was deemed to be A-OK.

Robin also wrote that he had found a hand-axe on Eyke Walks prior to his escapade. In October 1972, alongside a heap of soil where a storm drain soakaway was being created, I happened to find an artefact which I later passed to Woodbridge Museum. I recall being informed that it was an Early Man's flint axe head; the museum didn't have one of its own, but had one on loan from Ipswich Museum. \* Mervyn Whitmore

**Issue 12 Spring 2013** Missed it? All editions of Inside Eyke are available to download in pdf (low resolution) version at <http://eyke.onesuffolk.net>

## Good old British Burgers Maria Hassan

Following the recent horsemeat scandal, I had lots of worried children asking: "Are we eating a horse?" Thankfully, school dinners in Suffolk have for a long time been using meat sourced from approved suppliers using the Red Tractor logo, so I was able to reassure them straight away it wasn't horsemeat in their burger. I was given the option to change to pork burgers, but choose to stick with good old British beef. So this brings me onto this edition's recipe, homemade beef burgers. For an extra special treat how about putting a mini Babybel inside and moulding the minced beef around it? Sounds yummy to me..

### Ingredients

- 540g/1lb 3oz minced beef chuck steak or any good quality minced beef
- 25g/1oz chopped coriander finely chopped
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 free-range egg yolk
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- Salt and pepper to season

### Method

Place all the burger ingredients in a mixing bowl and stir to combine. Using your hands, shape into four equal-sized patties. Preheat the grill or BBQ. Cook the burgers for 15 minutes, or until cooked through, turning once. Top each burger with a slice of cheese towards the end of the cooking time. Delicious served with a slice of tomato, lettuce and onion in a ciabatta roll.



## The Reverend Janice Leaver

Janna McKendrick gets to know Eyke's vicar

The Reverend Janice Leaver, vicar of All Saints Church in Eyke, was working in a home for adults with learning difficulties when she felt the calling to become a priest. She moved to Suffolk three and a half years ago to fulfil her vocation.

Janice comes originally from Glasgow, but spent some 30 years in Northamptonshire with her family before uprooting to our area. After her first career as a nurse, she changed tack and trained as a sign-writer. It was when she returned to nursing shift-work that she felt an increasingly

strong calling to become a priest. After eighteen months she knew she could resist no longer. The vicar of her church told her that he 'had been waiting for her' and was surprised that it had taken her so long.

The ordination process is demanding. Janice was required to attend a conference at Winchester for nearly three days of exercises and interviews. She was pleased to be accepted for three years' theological training in 2003, part-time, as she was still working in the care home. In 2006 she was ordained as a deacon in Peterborough.

After three years as a deacon and then a priest in Desborough it was time to move on.

Janice's experience of this work had started in the care home. She had felt that the residents' good physical care would be complemented by a spiritual element. As a result, she asked permission to conduct a short weekly service, attended by both residents and staff, which was received positively in the home.

Janice is now vicar to five churches - All Saints in Eyke, St Felix's and St Gregory's in Rendlesham, St Michael's, Tunstall, and the tiny church of St John the Baptist in Wantisden. St Felix's is the newest and most active of them. Janice is a proponent of the Taizé form of worship. The Taizé Community was founded in 1940 by Brother Roger Schultz who devoted himself to reconciling the different Christian churches. Last year Janice visited the Community in the village of Taizé in the Burgundy region of France. Over 100,000 young people from around the world make pilgrimages to Taizé each year where they are encouraged to live in the spirit of kindness, simplicity and reconciliation.

Following the Taizé philosophy Janice is keen to work with Christians of all denominations. She herself was brought up a Scottish Presbyterian, and her husband Bob grew up as a Roman Catholic. When they married in 1979, their Catholic service was followed by a Presbyterian blessing.

Janice says that she finds her work fulfilling and enriching. Weddings and baptisms are of course joyful occasions; funerals can also be joyful, but are sometimes more difficult. One-to-one pastoral work she finds satisfying. According to Janice, a vicar's role is to listen rather than counsel, and this brings peace of mind to many of her congregation. Being on hand to offer absolution at the end of a life, too, can also bring great comfort. Sadly there is also occasional conflict to deal with: rifts within

the church, or even within her congregations, are challenging. Janice is a supporter of women bishops – but she has no aspirations in that direction herself.

Monday is a rest day for Janice and also for Bob, who works for United Response, a charity for people with learning difficulties. This is when they take the opportunity to visit their older children and their spouses, Robert and Katie, and Liz and James, and grandson Leo, who live in Norwich.

Their youngest child, Katherine, is 18 and finishing school this year. Other spare time is taken up with bringing the vicarage garden up to scratch, fortunately a pleasurable task for them both.

Everyone is welcome to join the congregation at All Saints. On the first Sunday of the month, Janice conducts a family service, and on the third Sunday a Communion service is held. Both are at 9am. and she would love to see you there. ✨

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## Fete preview

This year's village fete will take place on the afternoon of Sunday 21st July in the Rectory garden (thanks, Oliver and Nicky!). It will be the first time for many years that Mike Fisher has not organised the event, but a willing team of helpers has stepped forward to shoulder the responsibility, and thanks to them the plan for the day has been steadily taking shape. A meeting at the pub on 20th May drew together a good number of villagers happy to volunteer their services, along with an equal number, of course, who were even happier to volunteer the services of their nearest and dearest.

As a consequence, this year there will be, among other attractions, tombola, hook-a-duck, the legendary Teddy Tombola, spin the arrow, target bowls, whisky bowling and stalls selling cakes, plants, fresh produce and books, as well as the ever-popular White Elephant stall. There will of course be music, a bouncy castle for the kids, and for sustenance a barbecue, teas and drinks. The marquees are to be erected on the Thursday evening preceding.

It's a job that gets easier the more hands there are, so if you have an hour to spare and would like to help, please go along to the Rectory at 6pm that day. Volunteers are also welcome at any of the stalls on the day of the fete, even if it's just to relieve the stallholder for half-an-hour so they can go and have a wander around. If you have any items you would like to donate to the White Elephant stall, please deliver them to the garage at the Rectory at any time in the week leading up to the fete. It should be a fantastic day – the sun might even come out, as it did last year – so please do come along and show your support. ✨ **Tim**



# My Father and The Desert Rats

In March of this year, it was announced that the government's austerity drive would result in the celebrated 'Desert Rats' losing their tanks.

The term Desert Rats was coined as a nickname for the men of the British 7th Armoured Division who fought in North Africa in WW2. They were named after the little desert-dwelling Jerboa depicted on the uniform 'flash' or badge. The Desert Rats went on to fight in Burma, Italy and North West Europe.

My father died in 1999, however a series of unexpected meetings and events have brought the memory of him very much to the fore.

Arthur Crickmay who lived in Campsea Ashe, was a Desert Rat and took part in all four campaigns of WW2. In 2009 my sister and I, armed with his photo, attended a Desert Rat reunion at Orwell Park School in Nacton. (This was where he and his squadron prepared secretly for the D-Day landings.) We propped up the picture in the foyer with the message "Does anyone recognise this face?" underneath.

To our delight we met Bob Lay, pictured top right, who, it turned out, had been my father's radio operator during the last year of the war. Bob recounted several amusing stories about Arthur ... One of which was, shortly after the D-Day landings Arthur was carrying out a recce on foot and under heavy fire. A Frenchman crawled up to him from behind a hedge and said "Would you like to buy a racehorse?" The reply was something like, "Not now I'm rather busy".

What seemed particularly extraordinary was that Bob had just compiled and published a booklet of songs the soldiers sang in the desert and on the last page described how Arthur used to sing *The Old 97* "in his rather pipey voice". By coincidence, at what was to be his last Christmas with us, my father had sung this particular song and my husband Nasser had filmed it. We felt all



Reunion at Thetford Forest, left, Bob Lay

this must mean something and there and then we resolved to make a documentary which we would call *Desert Voices*. Strung together by desert songs it would tell the story of Arthur and Bob's individual war experiences and also commemorate the lives of those who had not had the good fortune to survive to tell the tale.

With Bob's invaluable help and using my father's old letters to my grandmother, my daughter Mariam undertook the job of producing the documentary. Ninety-two-year-old Bob thought nothing of driving the five hours from Northumberland to Eyke for meetings. My son Kadri and his former school mates sang the songs which were recorded in his flat with the help of a little beer!

It just so happened that Mark Urban, BBC correspondent and former tank commander, decided to make a tank documentary of his own and also to write a book. Both focused on the lives of six men, including my father and Bob. We helped each other. While he had access to my father's and Bob's memoirs and letters, plus information gleaned from a series of interviews, our *Desert Voices* documentary benefitted from Mark Urban's



Bob Lay and Gerry Soloman at the book launch



vast knowledge and his commentary. *Desert Voices*, left, was finally cut last November. Copies of it can be bought for £5 – the money raised going to St Dunstan's Hospital for Blind Soldiers.

Mark Urbans' two-part documentary – *Tankies: Tank Heroes of WW2* was broadcast on BBC2 in January this year. The episodes were fascinating – and we felt very proud. I had never realized how grossly inferior the British tanks were and just how vulnerable the brave men in them. Interestingly, parts of the documentary, ie, a bar in Alexandria, were filmed at Bentwaters!

In April, a week after Mark Urban's book *The Tank War*, was published we held a Desert Rat Reunion Lunch here in Eyke. Bob and 97-year-old fellow Desert Rat, Gerry Soloman, were the stars of the show. My father would have been amazed! ❁ Isabelle Abu-Hejleh



chased across the field by a mass of children desperate to catch it! These highlights centre on the fact that the job of being a Headteacher is a massive one, but is made possible, not to say enjoyable, by the help and support of others. Every day is a gift where I get to spend time being part of children's lives. I still go 'out to play' every lunchtime and am then at the beck and call of all of the children – but that is the joy of the job. I have played Hide and Seek, horseys and doggies, also dib-dab and It. I have faked knowledge of football in order to referee – I think I got away with it!

## My time at Eyke CEVC Primary School Wendy Kelway

I joined Eyke as Acting Head in January 2009 and was lucky enough to be appointed Head in April 2009. I have enjoyed working at the school and am very proud of all we have achieved- not least the accolade of a 'good' Ofsted in December 2012. The children enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn and make progress, and teachers enjoy teaching them and watching them flourish. It is even more satisfying when pupils come back when they have moved to High School and say how much they liked their time in Primary School and, despite enjoying their next step in education, still miss us.

I have many, many highlights from my four-and-a-half years, including The Olympic Sports Day and Jubilee Party and watching the Olympic Flame pass through Ufford with the help of Crown Nurseries. The zip wire on my 'honeymoon' at Hilltop with the Year 5 and Year 6 residential in July 2009 was also a memorable moment. Summer and Christmas Fayres organised by a great FOES team have been fab – the Easter Bunny is a true joy to behold, especially when being



Primary school is about reading, writing and maths, of course, but it is also about life skills

I am proud of the fact that we still have a heated swimming pool when many, many schools have decommissioned them. Primary School is about reading, writing and maths, of course, but it is also about life skills - and swimming is one. To see Laura's Pre-school children in the pool, and children all the way up to Year 6 still enjoying the pool is fantastic. I am proud, also, that our school is open and approachable - it is truly our school, not my

school and families feel safe and happy to come in and ask for help, or tell us their ideas. I hope that those we have helped and supported continue to grow and in turn help and support others. True Christian values in action.

I am now moving on to a new school and will miss all of you- children especially- but am sure your new Headteacher will love you as much as I have. There are often lots of fridge magnets proclaiming messages, but my favourite one says: Teachers touch a life and open a heart. I am lucky to have had that chance with your children - thank you. ❀



in ways not possible for decades.

Ok, so it might not achieve such success, and might not work quite like I have said, but I reckon it's a good idea and, however it could be made to work, is worth a try. It seems to be one of those projects with no losers: only winners. No-one would be prevented from driving along a lane, but there would be signs (and the idea seems to be to keep

## The Quiet Lanes Initiative

Robin Pooley lets us in a new local project

Because many drivers seem not to be aware of the intimidating effect they can have on people not protected by a ton or more of metal, having a network of lanes signed to "emphasise the rights of non-motorists" would give locals and visitors alike greater confidence to walk, jog, wheel or ride knowing that drivers would be expecting to meet them.

A brief look online leads me to believe that this was trialled a few years ago in Norfolk and Kent, so if, after this trial, Suffolk can eventually develop a county-wide web of lanes, they will presumably be able to link in with a wider network.

The idea of a regional, or even national, net of such lanes opens the imagination to a whole new way of looking at holidays - (from single days-out to a fortnight or more). Individuals, couples, families and other groups could explore parts of England

these low-key) reminding drivers of the likelihood of meeting people not in cars. The results should be good for local people and businesses. It would also be good for visitors looking for the best of Suffolk.

The current plan, limited to a few parishes, includes the possibility of someone coming to Melton by train, and then, after a short stroll across Wilford Bridge, being able to walk on to the Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty using Quiet Lanes.

All households along the lanes involved, and all in The Street (since the route crosses this) have received an information leaflet about the project and about a meeting to discuss it. These leaflets are also displayed in the bus shelter and on the notice board in the churchyard. For the moment, this is the sum total of what I know, but I hope there will be more on this after the meeting and then further ahead. ❀



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# Churchyard ramblings

Jackie Pooley uncovers hidden treasures in Eyke's graveyard



The result was a comprehensive catalogue of all the names, dates and inscriptions which could be deciphered. Some inscriptions were too weathered to be fully readable, and it was clear that the job was not being done too soon. This document is kept with other church records, and the details are now on a new website about the village which you can find at [www.eykevillage.info](http://www.eykevillage.info).

I'm one of that breed (there must be a term for them) who loves wandering round churchyards, reading names and dates, wondering about the lives these people led, and somehow feeling that link to all those past generations, and to those who mourned for them. Churches are often the oldest surviving buildings within their communities, so with a little imagination it's not hard to feel the continuity of one generation after another, whatever your belief, or lack of it.

As we carried out the survey in Eyke, we felt for the families who lost one, two or even three children in their early years, and marvelled at those who lived to a great age. We wondered why Jane Questel, wife of Antoine Questel, Gent. late of St Vincent in the West Indies, was buried here in 1848. We were suitably impressed by the gloomy Victorian verses many saw fit to inscribe, and found that among those recorded here were clergymen, a high Sheriff of Suffolk, servicemen from the first and second world wars and farmers, as well as many loving husbands, wives, parents and children.

One of the most poignant to me was that of Matilda Minter, wife of William Minter, whose grave is just inside the double gates on the corner of Church Lane. She died on May 12th, 1824, aged 19, and although not all



of the inscription was readable, the circumstances of her death were obvious:

*Our child is with me, the Lord has called him too  
In my cold arms he slumber as he lay  
And waiting here until the Judgement Day  
Short is our time that you plain can see  
My dear friends prepare yourselves to follow me.*

What made this particularly intriguing was that this is a double gravestone – and the right hand side, presumably waiting for William's death, is blank. The tragedy of this little family, one which I am sure was repeated in many places, stayed with me, and recent searches on the internet have revealed a little more information. Matilda Fosdike married William Minter in Eyke in 1823 and their baby, who lived for a few days at most, was called Robert. William lived to a ripe old age, dying in Lewisham in 1878. The Minter family have a strong presence on the internet and are very keen on their family history: I have had a contact from one descendant, who has been to Eyke, but was unable to find Matilda's grave: he now knows its exact location.

Indulging my pleasure in churchyard wandering, some years ago Robin and I came across this epitaph in the churchyard at

## The Watchmaker's Epitaph

*Here lies in horizontal position  
The outside case of  
GEORGE ROUTLEIGH, Watchmaker Whose  
abilities in that line were an honour To his  
profession:*

*Integrity was the mainspring,  
And prudence the regulator  
Of all the actions of his life. Humane, generous  
and liberal*

*His hand never stopped  
Till he had relieved distress;  
So nicely regulated were all his movements That  
he never went wrong  
Except when set a-going  
By people  
Who did not know his key. Even then he was easily  
Set right again.*

*He had the art of disposing of his time So well  
That his hours glided away  
In one continual round  
Of pleasure and delight  
Till an unlucky moment put a period to His  
existence*

*He departed this life  
Nov 14 1802  
Aged 57  
Wound up  
In hopes of being taken in hand  
By his Maker  
And of being thoroughly cleaned, repaired And set  
a-going  
In the world to come*

Lydford, in Devon. It is not original: that was traced to a Derbyshire newspaper in 1786, but I think provides an illuminating insight into the way in which people wanted to be remembered, in a time when there were few ways to preserve your memory, other than in stone, in the churchyard. The stone lid containing the inscription became so badly weathered after two hundred years, that it was moved inside the church, where it now hangs on the wall, and a replacement covers the grave. ❄



## Eyke Pre-School playgroup

In 1974 a group of mums including Annie Whatling, Dianne Richardson and Pat Williams from Eyke, as well as a few from the surrounding villages got together and decided that a playgroup should be started in the village. The old schoolhouse, recently vacated, was identified as a suitable premises, and then followed nearly two years of fundraising and negotiating with Suffolk County Council in order to hammer out a lease for the building. Dads, too, were involved in decorating and generally making the house fit for its new role.



A great deal of help was provided by the Pre-School Playgroup Association, and the mums underwent training at Kelsale. Finally, in 1976 Eyke & Rendlesham Pre-School Playgroup opened its doors for the first time, to twelve children with sessions taking place on Tuesdays and Thursdays, growing to four half day sessions. Children could attend from the time they were three,

until they started school. Many readers will remember Mrs Finn, who taught the reception class at Eyke around this time. She said that she could always tell the children who had attended a playgroup when they arrived in the reception class:

they were much quicker to find their feet and settle down happily in "Big School".

Keeping the Pre School running has always been a challenge: help and support from parents is vital. Numbers can fluctuate: the setting up of a facility in Rendlesham some years ago took children away from Eyke, as did the closure of the USAF Base at Bentwaters in the early 1990s. Over the years regulations have become more numerous, and Pre Schools are now subject to Ofsted inspections, just as schools are.

One thing is certain: the Pre School is a very valuable part of the Eyke community – long may it thrive. \* Jackie Pooley



» DO YOU HAVE MEMORIES OF THE EYKE PLAYGROUP? Share them with the editor and we'll publish them in a future issue of *Inside Eyke*

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## East Suffolk Morris Men at the E&C

Drinkers enjoying a quiet Monday night pint on 17 June might have got slightly more than they bargained for, when a troupe of Morris Men went through their paces at the village pub. It's thirsty work, Morris dancing. So is watching it. Pictures by Adam Sutch

