

THE HILDERSHAM ISSUE VII EXPRESS

AUGUST 2005

Including the **HILDERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL NEWS**



HILDERSHAM VILLAGERS GATHERED AT HILDERSHAM HALL ON THE 10TH AUGUST 1892



HILDERSHAM VILLAGERS GATHERED AT HILDERSHAM HALL ON THE 24TH JULY 2005

HILDERSHAM SUMMER SOIREE

On Sunday July 24th, the Hildersham Parochial Church Council (HPCC) invited parishioners and their friends to a **SUMMER SOIREE & BUFFET SUPPER** in a marquee in the magnificent and picturesque setting of Hildersham Hall. About 75 villagers and their guests enjoyed this very happy gathering and had an exceptional evening together. I take this opportunity on behalf of all those present to offer both Brian and Ruth Moore our most sincere thanks for both their generosity and for allowing us all this unique experience; great thanks must also be expressed to all our wonderful ladies for the sumptuous spread. It is always very special to be able to share these treasured moments and memories with family, friends, and such good neighbours.

As the cover photographs suggest, this was also a special moment in Hildersham's history. As 113 years ago on the **9th August 1892**, Hildersham villagers gathered to "**WELCOME HOME**" the owner of Hildersham Hall and his new bride back from their honeymoon. It was decided it would be lovely to try to replicate this 1892 photograph, so after a Pimms and Canapé reception everyone assembled outside the marquee for a group photograph. However, at this very moment the heavens opened and saucer sized rain drops began to fall; therefore only a very quick photograph could be taken, however, even this as you will see later, matched the weather back in August 1892.

Our story really begins in '**Dickens**' London, where a young man named **John Knowsley Thornton** (who was born in 1845 in Northampton, the son of the *Revd John Thornton and Anne Knowsley from Yorkshire*), began his career as a Surgeon. As his career took off, on the **1st December 1873**, he married **Eleanor Phillipa Paterson** in Kensington; they lived in Park Street, Mayfair and had several children. In an 1879 Dickens Directory of London, John is listed as a *Surgeon for Inpatients* at the **Samaritan Free Hospital for Women and Children** in Portman Square. We also know that he was a Kidney Stone specialist, as he wrote several medical papers on the subject and the "**Thornton's Sign**" is still listed in Dorland's medical dictionary. In the 1881 census, the family is still recorded living in Mayfair, yet between 1881 and 1886 they had moved to **Hinxton Grange**, Cams., {with their children *Ernest Wyndham Thornton (b.1874) Lucy Knowsley Thornton (b.1878) and Mary Knowsley Thornton (b.1881)*}; we know this because Eleanor's death is recorded at the Linton Registry Office in September 1886. The first connection with Hildersham comes on the **29th May 1889**, when **John Knowsley Thornton** bought Hildersham Hall and its 72-acre estate for **£6500** from the **Mary Inglis**, the widow of **Major-General William Inglis** (d.1888). In the 1891 census for Hildersham, John Knowsley Thornton is listed as a widow and a Surgeon registrar, living at Hildersham Hall, with his son Ernest, from the same census we know his two daughters were living in a house in Paddington, London.

Sometime between 1889 and 1892 **John Knowsley Thornton** met and fell in love with the **Hon. Mary Agnes Windsor-Clive**, she grew up at **Oakley Park**, Bromfield in Shropshire. Mary is the Great-Great-Granddaughter of **Robert Clive, 1st Baron Clive of Plassey**, better known as "**CLIVE OF INDIA.**" Mary's grandfather **Robert Henry Clive** married the **Hon. Harriet Hickman, Baroness Windsor**, daughter of the **5th Earl of Plymouth**, Burkes Peerage, records that our Mary was at this time actually 35th in line to the throne.

On the **18th July 1892**, John Knowsley Thornton (aged 47) and Hon. Mary Agnes Windsor-Clive (aged 36) had a very stylish society wedding at **St George's Church**, Hanover Square, Mayfair, still popular today for celebrity weddings; afterwards they honeymooned for three weeks at another of Mary's family country estates at **Hewell Grange** in Worcestershire. While they were away John's son **Ernest** and **George Henry Potter**, John's Land agent and farmer of Manor Farm organised their home coming to Hildersham. I think this is delightfully described in an article in the:

CAMBRIDGE CHRONICLE 'Town & County' section of the 12th August 1892: -

HILDERSHAM

HOME COMING OF MR AND THE HON. MRS KNOWSLEY THORNTON

Mr and Mrs Hon. Knowsley Thornton arrived at Hildersham Hall from Hewell Grange, on Tuesday afternoon (*9th August*), and had a most warm and pleasant welcome from the villagers and those employed at the Hall. An arch of flowers and evergreens, with the words, "WELCOME HOME," spanned the entrance gate, which was closed, and when the carriage arrived the horses were taken out, amid the cheers of the assembled villagers, and the carriage was drawn down the drive by a team of men and boys, the bride and bridegroom being covered with a shower of bouquets and flowers as the carriage passed through the gate. The church bells rang a merry peal of welcome, and the bride passed into her new home under a porch gay with flags and evergreens. On Wednesday, the whole village was entertained at tea in a large tent in the grounds and during the afternoon the married and single men had a cricket match in the Park and the Linton Band enlivened the proceedings while races and various sports took place.



Mr Knowsley Thornton thanked the inhabitants for the kindly welcome given to his bride and himself on the previous day, and expressed the hope that though he was himself almost a new comer amongst them, the present happy gathering would be but the beginning of a long and happy life for himself, his wife and family, of which the kind welcome they had received gave pleasant promise. All the arrangements were most successfully made by his son, Mr Ernest Wyndham Thornton, ably assisted by Mr Potter, and the only drawback was the cold east wind and cloudy sky.

The following April, Mary gave birth to a son, named *Clive Knowsley Thornton*, sadly he only lived for 9 hours. On a much more happier note on the **5th May 1896** they had a daughter called *Mary Gertrude Knowsley Thornton*. John died on the **3rd January 1904** aged just 58, he is buried with his son in a beautiful plot near the churchyard wall by the south porch.

Mary loved Hildersham and the Hall, she lived here for almost 30 years to the day, but eventually the Hall became to big for her and she finally sold the Hall on the **12th August 1922** to *Lady Eveline Frances Miller* for **£5500**. Mary died 5 months later on the **9th January 1923** at her daughter's home in London.

This is just one of the many lovely stories associated with the people who have lived at Hildersham Hall; and who knows perhaps in another 113 years, the then



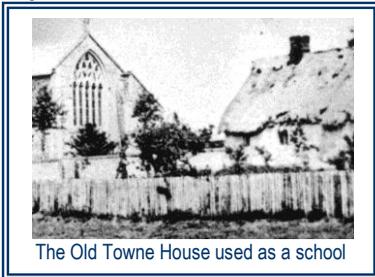
Baby Mary Thornton in a Donkey Cart

owners of Hildersham Hall, might stumble across a copy of the 1892 and our 2005 photographs. Then on one of their special occasions, they will gather their neighbours and friends around them and replicate the scene once again, who knows they might even find this story. Hildersham as a village, changes very little over the years, it is only the people that live here that change.

Those who attended the evening soiree will have noticed a laminated copy of the 1892 photograph on their tables, there are a limited number of these available to anyone who would like one on a first come first served basis. The photographs of the evening itself are now available on the Internet, along with ones of the [Picnic at Furze Hills](#) and those of the [Victory Thank You Day](#). You can access these from the links at either the Pear Tree or Hildersham Church websites, however, if you have trouble with these or would like to be automatically e-mailed whenever the photographs change, please feel free to e-mail me on a.westwoodbate@btinternet.com

EDUCATION IN HILDERSHAM

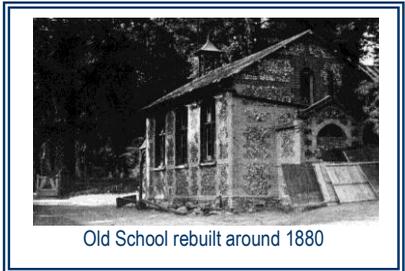
At 10.30am on Sunday 28th August, there will be a Family Service in the Old School Wood followed by a barbecue to celebrate the arrival of the new specially designed sign. In the past, we have looked at some of the schoolmistresses that taught at Hildersham, and as time goes by and I learn more about the parish, it is clear that **HILL TOP COTTAGE** was where most of these young single ladies actually lived. Here however, I think it would be appropriate to give you a quick resume of what we know of how education developed in the parish. We know from the Domesday Book of 1086, that Hildersham was given to **Aubrey de Vere, the Earl of Oxford**. Around 1150, the **de Vere** family built our beautiful church, and at the same time they sent tithes to **HATFIELD BROADOAK PRIORY** (Essex), which they also founded around 1135, records show that this was worth 5 marks in 1291 and that some of this money was spent on education. Many Antiquarians believe that England's first historian was **Matthew Paris** and that he was born in Hildersham around 1200, if



The Old Towne House used as a school

this is actually the case, it would be lovely to think that some of this money provided for his education. On the **21st January 1217**, Matthew Paris became a Benedictine monk and chronicler at **ST ALBANS** and his great masterpiece was entitled the **"Chronica Majora."** From early court records at the **CUL**, we know that in 1524, money was left for four boys to go to School, and by 1579 and 1601 Hildersham had un-licensed School Masters. From early local government reports on education, we know that in 1818 the Parish Clerk

Thomas Willshire kept a School for 30 boys & his wife taught girls to read & sew, while an evening School was held for young men; this was held in the old **"Towne House"**. In 1833, there was a Day School with 10 pupils, for whom their parents paid. Between 1847 and 1851, a day school and a Sunday school had been set up in a building south-east of the church. The Parochial School was supported in 1864 by contributions from Parishioners and in 1879 by the **Rector Robert Goodwin** & **"School-Pence."** It was rebuilt in 1880 for up to 111 children. Attendance between 1898 and 1914 fluctuated around 40. The



Old School rebuilt around 1880

School had separate mixed & infants departments in 1914. But by 1919, attendance had declined to c.20. Many children went to Abington Primary School, and in 1928 when it had only seven pupils Hildersham School was closed. Despite much local opposition, it was eventually pulled down.

HILDERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS 8TH JUNE & 13TH JULY 2005

The first thing we need to do is warmly welcome our new Parish Clerk, **JULIA ALEXANDER**

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

A) HILDERSHAM CHURCH PAINTINGS: The Parish Council was informed by the Parish Heritage Warden that the Hildersham Parochial Church Council had contributed along with the Linton & District Historical Society and the Cambridgeshire Collection to the purchase of a set of scans of a *“Folio Volume of drawings by Thomas Fisher from 1802”*, in this there are 15 unique views of Hildersham Church *[There will be much more about these drawings in the coming months]*.

B) STAGECOACH BUS SERVICE: It was reported again from the floor, the problems that are being experienced by several Hildersham residents in getting some stagecoach bus drivers to stop to either pick them up or drop off them at the Hildersham Bus Stops, this has also involved some very rude and abusive language. This matter has been reported to Stagecoach; and their Operations Manager has assured the H.P.C. that there is absolutely **NO EXCUSE** for drivers not to stop at Hildersham. Therefore, if anyone finds that a bus does not stop where it is supposed to, they should take a note of the **TIME**, the **BUS VEHICLE REGISTRATION NUMBER** and if possible the **BUS DRIVERS NUMBER**, and you should then report the incident to both a Parish Councillor and phone **(01223) 423578** and speak to **ALAN WOODS**, the **Operations Manager** at **Stagecoach** or write to him at **100 Cowley Road, Cambridge, CB4 0ND**. The more evidence they have, the quicker they can stamp out these completely unacceptable incidents.

RECYCLING GREEN BOXES:

The recycling of bottles, tins and newspapers in the recycling green boxes is very worthwhile, as Hildersham received a cheque for **£56.49** based on kerbside tonnage received between October 2004 and March 2005. Therefore the more residents that take part in this scheme and the more waste that we recycle the more we will receive back and the more money we can spend on parish maintenance.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT – COUNCILLOR JOAN SMITH:

A) S.C.D.C. CAPPING: Councillor Smith reported that the SCDC expected to hear the outcome of their appeal against the threat of capping by the 18th July – Since then they have lost their appeal and the imposition of a rate cap has been imposed. Full details of this are covered in their press release on the Internet on the 20th July 2005; it is entitled **“CAPPED, BUT STILL DETERMINED TO SERVE RESIDENTS.”** A brief extract states: - *“Parliament has confirmed that SCDC is among eight councils that will have their spending on services “capped” this year. The District Council’s spending is to be capped by £2.6 million, which equates to almost a fifth of our original 2005/06 budget. As a result, council tax bills for average (‘band d’) homes in South Cambridgeshire will fall from £140 to £92.93 for the District Council’s services. This is a reduction of £47 for the year, or 90 pence a week. Meanwhile, the Parliamentary Order requires SCDC to send out new council tax bills - an exercise which itself will cost council tax payers around £75,000.*

B) SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL: Councillor Smith raised the issue of **SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL**, it was pointed out currently children from Hildersham going to Linton Village College, have a safe route to school, as there is a good footpath and no need to cross the road. However, children from Abington are provided with a bus, as they do not have a safe route to school, as they need to cross the road as the footpaths changes side on the way to Linton. Moreover, children going from Hildersham to Abington School neither have a safe route to school or a bus provided, this is clearly an anomaly and Councillor Smith agreed that this needed further consideration. This situation arose from a discussion over the possibility of the footpath from Hildersham to Abington being made into a Cycle

Way. It was agreed that this situation needed a lot more consideration and should be carried out along with the A1307 Junction changes.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT – COUNCILLOR JOHN BATCHELOR:

A1307 HILDERSHAM JUNCTION: Councillor Batchelor reported that he and the A1307 study group are now looking at the feasibility of changes at the turning at Hildersham along the lines of what was described in the last Parish Council report. However, while it was clear that there would be no funding from the County Council, as there is not yet! a poor enough safety record at this junction, there was a possibility of putting in a bid to the Granta Park Phase II development scheme, under the supporting local infrastructure funding initiative. Councillor Batchelor agreed to take this forward as well the possibility of a safe crossing for cycles and pedestrians.

VILLAGE HALL REFURBISHMENT UPDATE:

TABLES & CHAIRS: As we are all aware the Tables and Chairs in the village hall are in need of replacement for both comfort needs and health and safety reasons. As a small parish the funding stream is very torturous and extremely limited, the Parish Council have therefore decided to offer villagers the opportunity to sponsor the purchase of some of these new chairs. The agreed sponsorship price for these sturdy, yet far more comfortable chairs is to be **£30 per chair**, with the opportunity if you so desire, to have a sponsorship plaque attached to the back of the chair for an additional fee. Obviously the more sponsorship we can achieve the more new chairs we can purchase or the extra money put to other worthwhile needs. This scheme can only be of benefit to everyone that uses the village hall and I strongly urge everyone to support it.

REFURBISHMENT CONTRACTORS: Requests for refurbishment quotations have been sent out, this similar to the funding stream requests have proved to be problematic, as several local firms seem unwilling to under take this work.

VILLAGE MAINTENANCE:

Firstly, I think we should all show our appreciation and gratitude to Councillor Ian Cutter for all his hard work and enthusiasm in chasing all these problems with the various council departments, and it this alone that has seen many of these projects move forward.

PARISH COUNCIL NOTICE BOARD: The 50 year old Parish Council Notice Board looks resplendent following its refurbishment as part of the Parish Council Golden Jubilee celebrations, this was paid for by the generosity of a group of villagers.

AREAS UNDER CONSIDERATION: Councillor Cutter has been working closely with the new manager, Mr Bob Howard of the Highways department on the following matters: -

- ❖ The verge along Blench Lane to Mulberry House requires attention.
- ❖ The grass area opposite the village hall, a long time area of concern is to be top soiled, re-seeded and **“KEEP OFF THE GRASS”** signs erected as a temporary measure to allow the grass to rejuvenate. The long-term solution of preventing overspill parking still needs to be resolved.
- ❖ The path between the church and the crossroads has been extensively worked on; this path will always pose an ongoing problem, because of the nature of the surrounding trees and shrubs. The feasibility of a curb is being looked at, but again there is only a limited amount of available council funding. District Councillor J. Smith informed us that it should be added to the highway dept. “sweeping list.”
- ❖ The problem of lack of kerbing and the erosion of the verges is a problem that exists in parts throughout the village; this is particularly acute north of the river in front of Chime Cottage, right up to the Church Cottages. The long-term possibility of achieving council funding for this repair project is also being investigated.

- ❖ The recent heavy rainfall again showed up the shortcomings of the village drainage system in extreme weather conditions. The Parish Council is going to arrange an extensive drain cleaning initiative and consider ways of improving this long-term problem over the coming months.
- ❖ Mr G. Franklin is investigating various types of reinforced grass netting to be used in the Recreation ground, as this basis of the feasibility of its use as an overspill car park.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

<u>Planning No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Property</u>	<u>Details of Proposed Plans</u>
S/1305/05/F	5 th July	West Lodge Kennels	Dormer Windows
S/1268/05/F	5 th July	Green End Farm	Change of use of barn to storage
S/1269/05/F	5 th July	Cooks Penn Farm Barn	Change of use to Carpenters Workshop

For decisions & more details, see Parish Council Notice Board

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

RECREATION GROUND GATE: A new gate is required at the entrance to the Recreation Ground, initially the Parish Paths Partnership will be contacted, but we may need to purchase one ourselves.

INCIDENT IN THE VILLAGE:

The following incident took place in the village, and the Parish Council and the landowners felt this it was something that villagers ought to made aware of: -

A strange man (*rough looking, dressed in long coat and hat*) was seen in a garden in Hildersham on Saturday 9th July. He ran off when he was spotted and has not been seen since. His intentions for being in the garden are unknown!! Now summer has arrived, our doors and windows are open and our children are on their long summer holidays playing in gardens and in the recreation areas. We should all remain vigilant and if we see any suspicious people or cars in the village, please take down as much information as you can and pass it to a parish councillor or the police directly.

DOG EXCREMENT: Not a very pleasant thing to discuss at the best of times. It is however completely beyond my comprehension that any responsible adult would allow their animal to defecate in the parish recreation ground, in the full knowledge that this is set-aside as a safe playing area for the village's children; they might as well carry a loaded pistol. All **RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERS** should as a matter of course pick up any excrement that their animals naturally have to pass; it is the few irresponsible dog owners that give everyone else such a bad name. The suggestion is a sign on the gate and a special bin; I think it would be far better in my opinion to put a sign on the gate for visitors, stating it was a *"Recreation Ground"*, rather than put anything about dogs or excrement - perhaps am I being naïve? However, the parish clerk has been asked to look into the prices of a specialist *"Dog Excrement Waste Bin"*; and we are informed that as long as this is located next to the road the council will empty it. These are both expensive and rather unpleasant, the obvious question is where we would locate such a bin in our small village?

OLD SHEDS: It has been brought to the Parish Councils attention that several old allotment sheds and the old cricket shed in the recreation ground have parts made of asbestos. While this is relatively safe in its inert state, it is obviously wise to dispose of this as soon as practical in a proper and safe manner. The parish clerk will therefore be in contact with specialist asbestos removal companies to get a quotation for the work.

MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICE:

The Mobile Library Service is looking to make changes. It proposes to still stop outside Hildersham Church but instead of Tuesday between 10.55 and 11.10 - it will now come on Wednesday at 10.55 - 11.10. This is only a draft proposal. If anyone has any objection they should contact David Allannach by telephone on 07850 101479 or by email David.Allannach@Cambridgeshire.gov.uk before the 31st August 2005. The Changes would not take effect until January 2006 and would be publicised 6 weeks before.

If you have any thoughts or comments on any of these issues, you are more than welcome to raise them at the next Parish Council Meeting taking place at
7.30 PM ON WEDNESDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER 2005

HILDERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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HOWEVER, THE REPORTS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS ARE ALWAYS BASED ON THE PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES

A LARGE PRINT VERSION OF THIS EDITION WILL BE AVAILABLE IN BOTH THE PEAR TREE AND THE PARISH CHURCH