

**A Statement of Neutrality**

THE Flying Pussy is justly famous for its unbiased view on all matters in contention. However, this column cannot ignore the great literature of past centuries, or the wisdom it transmits to our own times.

Take, for instance, three lines from a poem about country people, and the countryside, by Edward Thomas, who died of gunfire in 1917.

'[He was a man]... Who loved wild bird and beast, and dog and gun For killing them. He had loved them from his birth, One with the other, as he loved the earth.'

The FP believes that, even in our censorious age, love is infinitely more useful than its pusillanimous alternatives.

And humour is too; take this example from Charles Dickens' Pickwick Papers:

"When you're a married man, Samuel, you'll understand a good many things as you don't understand now, but whether it's worthwhile goin' through so much to learn so little, as the charity boy said when he got to the end of the alphabet, is a matter o' taste."

A little understanding is by no means a dangerous thing, and the alphabet, dull as it seems, provides the little blocks with which we can all build our fortresses.

**'W1 VEY'**

This vehicle 'number' plate is a familiar sight in

# The Flying Pussy Column



West Somerset. The owner is Robert Heywood, a local farmer. He tells this column that he is often greeted by friendly waves from passing motorists, who apparently enjoy seeing the proud emblem of a local town on the highways and byways of the Deane and beyond.

Mr Heywood also tells us of an extraordinary occurrence on his recent trip around the world.

Having asked a bloke in Australia if he was English, he got the reply '...no, mate, I'm a Yorkshireman.'

It transpired that this Yorkshire-bred Australian had, not long before, made a trip to Wiveliscombe, a place he had known in his youth, and remembered seeing the 'wivey' number plate parked outside Thorne's.

How was the registration number obtained? It required a wait of more than 20 years, until the 'W' prefix came into force in 2000. Robert offered a reward of £100 to the first of a group of ten friends who could acquire the registration WIVEY on his behalf.

They all started telephoning on the dot of midnight. Quite by chance, his own call, through an operator, got connected to the DVLA

before anyone else's. The switchboard had been jammed solid.

It took a long time to contact his friends' perpetually engaged numbers to tell them they could stop phoning.

Buying the reg plate 'W1 VEY' didn't leave much change out of £1000.

**Heard in the town**

The observation: 'There's something odd about that Flying Pussy picture!'

The response: 'The cat's wings compensate for the fact that it's only got one foreleg to stand on.' (Rather like this column - Ed.)

**Correspondents in the 10 Parishes**

Items of unusual occurrence, intrigue and comedy from the 10 Parishes will be welcomed, and can be emailed direct to the Flying Pussy's own address, which is flyingpussy@hotmail.co.uk. The FP would be particularly pleased to hear from any Australians who live in the area (see the final item below).

**R (Reg) Peugeot writes**

I recently leaked blue fluid while I was parked at [a medical establishment] (its name has been withheld to protect the innocent - Ed.).

My owner sent out a plea for assistance. Several nurses came and stood around, scrutinising my entrails. None of them, however, was able to make a diagno-

sis. Eventually, a little pot (of the type usually reserved for owners' fluids) was produced, and a sample of the leak was captured.

On my return to Wiveliscombe, Mr. Jones took one look at the pot, diagnosed 'loss of screen-wash', and quickly rectified the situation.

My sample is now a part of Wivey folk law; it will go on display at Wiveliscombe House. In due course, it may tour the 10 Parishes.

P.S. My shockabsorbitis was dire in the autumn rains.

**More about ferrets from Swampy**

If Pepsi and Ted, our pet ferrets, were living in the wild they would go to live in an old rabbit warren, or abandoned badger set. And no! That would not be a step up from our house! Ferrets enjoy being with other ferrets- they get on well together.

The female, the gill, comes into season twice a year and if she is not mated she can become ill unless she is injected by a vet.

A litter is 7 to 9 kits, and it is difficult to find good homes for them all. So we try not to breed them. The hob (male) is usually a bit bigger than the gill but both make good pets.

They are also good at working. The idea is to put nets over the holes of warrens and then send in a ferret, usually the gill, and the rabbits run out and are caught. The hob is sent in to get the gill out if she decides to stay in there.

But sometimes we forget to put a net over one of the holes and she escapes. They usually come back when we call their names. To find the ferrets under the ground we put a little beeping transmitter on their collars, so we know where to dig for them if they go to sleep.

Never put your head close to a rabbit hole to look for a ferret. I knew a man who did, and the ferret grabbed his nose and hung on for a long time.

It was painful, but I must say he looked very funny with a ferret hanging from his face.

Beware the wildlife of Wiveliscombe!

**A rumination on England's Ashes win**

Let us have one final celebration of the summer's victories to cheer us through the dark winter months. Viz...

Q. What do you call an Australian who has 100 runs against his name?

A. A bowler...

Q. What is Australia's idea of a hat trick?

A. Scoring three runs off three balls.

This type of Q&A was standard issue in Australia for more than 15 years and was invariably aimed at England cricketers. How good it is to be able to reciprocate!

Is there no end to Wiveliscombe's sense of the appropriate?

**Limerick**

The FP's request for limericks has spawned a separate article!

# Musical events at St Andrew's

MUSICAL events have always featured in the range of activities at St Andrew's Church, Wiveliscombe.

Following the refurbishment of the organ and demonstration of the excellent acoustics of the church, these musical events have become more regular.

There is an annual organ recital every spring plus a variety of other recitals and concerts. For example, last year there was a jazz concert, two choral concerts and the organ recital.

The programme for 2006 is already taking shape with confirmed dates for an organ recital on May 13th at 5pm by the organist from Wells Cathedral and a harp recital on July 8th at 7.30pm by Elizabeth Jane Baldry.

Watch the noticeboards, newspapers and magazines for details of these and other events. Our aim is to complement the music, which is available elsewhere in the area.

To be certain of knowing about the music at St. Andrew's add your name to the mailing list by contacting either The Rectory Wiveliscombe (01984 623309, graham@owen31freeserve.co.uk) or Ann (01984 624075, anndennis@orange.net) giving your name, address, telephone number and e-mail.

**FOR NEW & REPLACEMENT**

**DEANE JOINERY LTD**  
Registered Company No. 4509533

**DJE**

- STAIRS
- DOORS
- WINDOWS
- UNITS
- MOULDINGS

Style Road  
Wiveliscombe  
Somerset  
TA4 2LL  
01984 624245

*'wishing all of Wiveliscombe Seasons Greetings'*

**MATT REID**

**SCHOOL OF MOTORING**

- Fully Qualified patient instructor
- Dual controlled car
- Flexible pick-up between Wivey and Taunton
- Competitive rates
- Extra 1/2 hour FREE with first lesson

Tel: 01984 624467  
Text: 07815 456481

**Up on the Farm**

IT is great to be writing in the 50th issue of The Messenger - congratulations to all who put it together, it is always very interesting.



I began my bit when foot and mouth hit Britain. It was an event that was devastating to the farming community and the local economy in the Wiveliscombe area.

One of the most important things that came out of it for me was the huge amount of support we farmers got from everyone. I enjoy keeping you up to date with highs and lows of farming life and will continue until someone tells me to stop!

It is the middle of November, warm but drizzly, and by the time you read this we will be in the depths of winter!

The weathermen insist that we are in for a hard, cold winter with major disruptions because of snow, but we have heard it all before.

Actually it would be good to have a cold spell so long as it remains dry. Animals do not mind the cold if they can stay dry, it's the combination of cold and wet conditions they do not like. We keep some of the cows and the bull out until after Christmas if the weather stays reasonable.

We have brought the calves in, weaning them from their mothers. The heifers go in one pen and the bulls have joined the one we had to bring in early, so he is happy.

After a bit of pushing and shoving they soon remember each other and settle down. There is always a pecking order though; someone is always the boss, even with a young bunch of calves.

They will be fed the silage that was made in the summer and hopefully it will be of good quality and then they will need little else.

The better the silage made the cheaper the winter feed bills will be. This is very important, especially to the dairy farmers, who only get about 15 pence per litre for their milk before costs . . . how much do we pay in the shops?!

Recently the South West Shorthorn Club had its second herd competition and there has been a huge increase in the number of entries in each class. We do not know the results until the end of the month and so I will let you know if we are lucky enough to get a mention next time!

This year we have had a lot of prize money given by local firms such as Mole Valley Farmers and Genus as well as Lloyds Bank and we are very grateful for their support.

The beef industry as a whole is struggling and any help to encourage farmers to stay in farming and improve what they have to sell is very important.

Our club has a new car sticker and so if you see a car with The Cow in front is a Beef Shorthorn, that will probably be me! I hope you have a happy healthy end to 2005.

Gill Turner

# Old friends

ON 4th September this year, Roy and Joan Newick were delighted to meet many of the St Andrew's Church congregation when they returned to Wivey as part of their golden wedding celebrations.

They were married in St Andrew's in August 1955.

They enjoyed meeting Alice, Bill Rayson's widow, Betty (nee Greedy), Mr Valuks, Mrs Rowe, Dixon Luxton and other people known to Roy or whose parents he had known.

Christine Hendy went out of her way to show Roy and Joan around Ensign, where Roy grew up and where he started his continuing interest in railways!

Originally, Roy came from Higher House Farm, Brompton Ralph. Joan was evacuated to Holcombe Rogus from Coventry. However, they didn't meet until much later through family links.

Roy was at Roy House, Taunton Road, Wivey, now known as Ensign from 1934 until 1947. He attended Wivey Primary School and Huish's Grammar School in Taunton. He was a server and chorister at St Andrew's from 1938 until about 1948. His parents moved to 44 Ford Road in 1953 and later, in 1975, to Dorset for

their final years.

Joan became a nurse and midwife in Exeter, Taunton and London. Later she was a GP practice nurse and an ambulance nurse.

Roy's father Dick Newick worked at Arnold and Hancock's Brewery, was a Special Constable and sidesman at St Andrew's church.

During the war, Roy recalls that travel by bus to school in Taunton was not helped by gas powered buses which often broke down at Preston Bowyer!

At Roy House, the field at the rear is now fully developed with housing. But during the war this area was full of army personnel and vehicles, mainly American, when Roy was introduced to chewing gum!

In 1942 a great aunt from West Ham was bombed out, and arrived at 3am one day and stayed until her final days at Roy House!

Harold Elliott was a Lay Reader, and has been known to write a sermon in the signal box where he worked at Wivey Railway Station!

Roy and his family have three children and five grandchildren. They have moved around through the banking business to Chard, Bath, Swindon, Gillingham (Dorset) and Shaftesbury, retiring to Stratford upon Avon in 1990.

**JONES' AUTOMOBILE ENGINEERS LTD.**

17 West Street, Wiveliscombe, Somerset TA4 2JR  
Telephone: (01984) 623216/623577  
Fax: (01984) 624894

**Wivey's long established Tyre and Battery Specialist**

ALL LEADING BRANDS SUPPLIED  
CARS - LIGHT COMMERCIALS  
4x4s - AGRICULTURAL  
MICHELIN - BRIDGESTONE - DUNLOP  
AVON - HANKOOK - PIRELLI  
All at very competitive prices

We also have a well stocked Car Accessory Shop, a good selection of Tools, Wellington Boots — Children's and Adults, Clothes, Boiler Suits & Work Boots

We would like to take this opportunity to wish all our customers a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

**UNIPART** UNIPART APPROVED CAR CARE CENTRE

**CAR CARE CENTRE**