

VICAR'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

The Christmas Eve Carol Service at Ravensthorpe has a great reputation. Last year was our first experience of it and it lived up to all we had been told to expect.

This year Madeleine and I will come even earlier to be sure of a seat.

Compared with all the other things that are going on in the world, many of them terrible, Christmas can seem like a distraction, enjoyable but not really connected. Yet that is the meaning of Christmas. The birth we celebrate was hardly noticed at the time, yet Jesus went on to change the world forever.

May this Christmas for all of you be richly blessed and fruitful

John Tennant

PRESENTS FOR NEEDY CHILDREN

CAROL SERVICE

Once again you are invited to bring presents for disadvantaged children to place under the tree at the **Carol Service at St Denys on Christmas Eve at 5.00pm**. Please mark the presents for a boy or girl with approximate suitable age.

The tree has again been generously donated by **Trevor and Pat Foss**.

RAVENSTHORPE UNITED CHARITIES CHRISTMAS DISTRIBUTION

Application for the above are now due and should be made in writing by 7th December to either of the following:

Mrs D Patrick 1 Wigley Cottages

Mrs S Blakelock: 12 Bettycroft Close

All Senior Citizens living here are eligible, also any students who have just begun their first year at College or University.

ADVENT FESTIVAL SUCCESS

THE FESTIVAL held during the last weekend in November was a huge success despite miserable weather on Sunday which may have kept some potential visitors at home. As it was, over 300 adults visited the exhibition of Christmas Nativity Crib sets in St Denys Church with 53 sets on display.

On the Friday before opening day a group of children from Guilsborough Primary School visited the exhibition. They brought tears to the eyes of their teacher and the organiser, Gill Douglas, when they sang spontaneously "Away in a Manger" on seeing all the cribs.

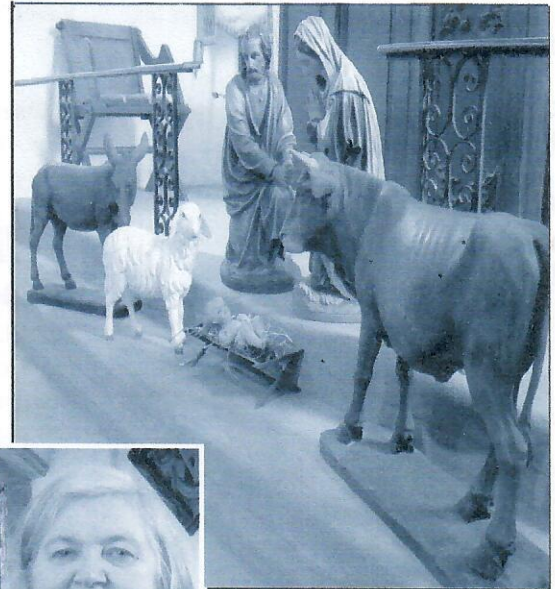
There are not enough words to express the thanks due to **Gill Douglas** who inspired and organised the whole event. Gill arranged the loan of all the cribs from local churches, individuals and families.

The cribs came from all over the world, Sweden, Germany, USA and Mexico, with a match-box size from Ecuador....to mention only a few.

Our sincere gratitude to all those who lent their precious cribs for the occasion.

Gill, who designed the displays and arranged them, also carried out most of the publicity with articles in local papers and interviews on Anglia TV and Radio. In every way an outstanding effort.

In the Village Hall refreshments and light lunches were organised by Lin Hudson in support of the Mini-Christmas Market and Raffle. There were so many others who helped in a variety of ways.



above: The Ravensthorpe Crib
left: Gill Douglas
Photos courtesy of Chris Freeman

Thanks to all who donated Raffle prizes.

The St Denys Church's own crib set was augmented by the anonymous gift of a lamb which arrived in time for the Festival.

In order for the lamb to be in scale with the other animals the sculptors in Naples 'phoned the donor to enquire "the size of her ass." 18 inches we are told!

Whilst the Festival was not totally about money, the proceeds were very encouraging. The final total raised for church funds will be published later -but should be around £1,700 or more.

**WOMEN'S INSTITUTE
MONTHLY MEETINGS
IN THE VILLAGE HALL
THURSDAY 16th DECEMBER 8pm
CHRISTMAS PARTY**

**THURSDAY 20th JANUARY 8pm
"STORY BEHIND THE PICTURE"
by Susan Edwards
NON-MEMBERS INVITED**

**FREE DELIVERY AROUND THE
VILLAGE - HURRY!**

CHRISTMAS TREES

**HOLLY WREATHS & MISTLETOE
TURKEYS & COCKERELS**

**AND A RANGE OF MEAT FROM
LOCAL FARMER IAN BRODIE**

**ORDER IN ADVANCE OR COME
AND CHOOSE YOUR OWN**

ring: 01604 770466

or call at:

**Hawtoft Farm
on Guilsborough Rd**

PLAYING FIELD

THE BONFIRE NIGHT was a great success and a most enjoyable evening, thanks to the support of the village and beyond. Thanks also to the organisers and the skills of our resident "pyrotechnologists," Messrs Lewis, Foss and Hickman!

It has always been the aim of the Playing Field Committee to at least cover the costs of this event, a task made more difficult by the requirement to pay £160 for separate insurance. Thanks to the generosity of donations to the travelling bucket, the costs were just covered ensuring we'll be back next year.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM of the Ravensthorpe Memorial Playing Field was held on Tuesday 16th November.

The Committee is pleased to report a stabilisation of the finances in 2003-4, following the difficulties faced in the previous two years as a result of the increases in insurance premiums.

A new Chairman, **Martin Wilkes**, has been elected for 2005.

Alan Worthington, the retiring Chairman will remain on the Committee.

XMAS BONUS LOTTERY

December draw for the Odds-200 Lottery takes place on Thursday 9th December, on the evening of Xmas Pantomime "Festival Frolics."

The December draw will include the Xmas bonus 1st prize of £100 (open only to yellow ticket holders), in addition to the monthly ticket prizes of £50 and £25.

Yellow annual tickets are still available and for £6 you can be included in the 6 draws from December to May, including Xmas bonus.

Support your Playing Field

"FESTIVAL FROLICS"

VILLAGE HALL 9th DECEMBER
A GREAT NIGHT OUT FOR THE FAMILY
AND A BRILLIANT XMAS PANTO BY THE
GRAND THEATRE OF LEMMINGS

TICKETS £5 EACH FROM THE POST OFFICE

**YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS PLEASE
DEADLINE FOR FEBRUARY
ISSUE IS 23rd JANUARY**

Contact Editor John Mott, 16 Church
Gardens, Ravensthorpe Tel 770618 or
email: clive.jcapr.T21@btinternet.com

GRAVEL EXTRACTION

The Representation Forms must be completed and returned to Northamptonshire County Council by 9th December. **ACT NOW** if you haven't already done so.

Following the well attended meeting of the Parish Council on Wednesday 17th November, where the issue was fully discussed an Action Group (RAGE) was formed.

Every household in Ravensthorpe should have received Representation Forms and advice on how to take action.

For further help or information, please ring ☎01604 743515 Or 770975.

To increase the pressure write to your MP, The Rt. Hon. Tim Boswell and your County Councillors Ben Smith and Jim Wade.

WELCOME RETURN of the Village Produce Show

In 2002 we celebrated the Queen's Golden Jubilee with various events, one of them being a very successful produce show. We are planning to have another show next year (2005) again organised by the Womens' Institute and, as before, open to all who live in Ravensthorpe and Coton.

There will be an opportunity to show your gardening, cooking or your creative skills, so please join us as an exhibitor or visitor.

Either way, put the date in your diary, that is Bank Holiday Monday 29th August 2005. The schedule will be available from our Post Office early in the New Year -

**SO GET BROWSING THROUGH
THOSE SEED CATALOGUES!**

Margaret Lewis

TALBOT BUTLER WARD

£800 was raised for the Ward at the Coffee Morning at Ann Fowlers' home on 22nd November. Thanks go to everyone who contributed in so many ways to make this event a success.

Very special thanks go to **Doreen Buck** who organised the event as she has done for many years. The effort and time Doreen devotes to this and other causes in the village is greatly appreciated.

DOG OWNERS PLEASE NOTE

With the nights drawing in there has been a noticeable increase in the fouling of village paths, pavements and grass verges.

Dog owners, please take with you one or two plastic bags and clean up the mess so that all of us can enjoy our walks.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

35 shoe boxes were donated by the village to this cause. A total of 174 boxes were filled and donated in this area. **Lorna Jones** wishes to thank all donors for their generosity and hopes to do even better next Year.

CHURCH SERVICES

ALTAR FLOWERS
AND BRASS ROTA

Sunday 5 TH December	11.00am	Family Service	Mrs Ann Fowler
Sunday 12 TH December	11.00am	Holy Communion	Mrs Rosemary Gee
Sunday 19 TH December	8.00am	Holy Communion	Mrs Rosemary Gee
Friday 24 TH December	5.00pm	Carol Service	Mrs Yvonne Reeve
Saturday 25 TH December	11.15am	Holy Communion Christmas Day	
Sunday 26 TH December	10.00am	Benefice Service at Hollowell	
Sunday 2 ND January	11.00am	Family Service	Mrs Yvonne Reeve
Sunday 9 TH January	11.00am	Holy Communion	Mrs Yvonne Childs
Sunday 16 TH January	8.00am	Holy Communion	Mrs Yvonne Childs
Sunday 23 RD January	11.00am	Holy Communion	Mrs Wendy Bates
Sunday 30 TH January		Benefice Service at Thornby	
Sunday 6 TH February	11.00am	Family Service	Mrs Barbara Glossop

Vicar: Rev'd John Tarrant, Guilsborough. tel: 743508