

Easton Village Newsletter

Issue 95

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FARMER BURTON'S COUNTRY TALK

As I write this article (23rd July), the sun is shining which is a great relief because, as you can imagine, it has been very worrying with the amount of rain and lack of sunshine. This has made crops late ripening and increased disease risk. I hope that a late return of sunshine may save the harvest. From the 1st to 22nd July we have had only an average of 3.5 hours of sunshine a day - that's half the normal amount - and recorded over 80mm of rain. If the rain continued, the wheat would start to grow in the ear (the part of the crop that holds the grain), greatly affecting quality and price. I grow milling wheat (i.e. for bread and flour); it costs more to grow and greater care has to be taken, and if it does not make the grade then it's sold for animal feed which would cut the profit greatly. America is having a dreadful harvest because of hot weather so prices on the world market have gone up, which is good for us arable farmers but not for dairy farmers, who are in dire straits at this time. In August they will get a pay cut of 2p per litre, which will mean they will be paid only 58p for 4 pints of milk, but it costs over 61p to produce, so a loss of 3p on every 4 pints. Please support British dairy farmers or we will lose them, which would be a great loss!



The wet weather has enabled me to catch up on paperwork and game-keeping jobs on the farm. One bird that has become a big problem is the magpie, a member of the crow family. This bird is a scavenger and predator, with few friends - and that includes the RSPB!! Magpies have an instinct to kill and in the breeding season they will systematically hunt hedgerows and your garden for eggs and nestlings to feed their young. They will take eggs and kill defenceless chicks (as Kathy Yates witnessed last year). One friend from Suffolk has a magpie problem and no longer has birds to feed at his bird table or hears songbirds in his village. These Magpies have tripled in numbers in the last 30 years with the RSPB saying they are a big problem. I try to catch magpies in Larsen traps (which are legal in the UK). These are essentially a cage with 2 compartments: a previously caught magpie is kept in

the decoy compartment (where it is kept fed and watered daily) and this attracts other magpies (and sometimes carrion crows and foxes!) into the other compartment. These birds are very clever and even the best farmer/game-keeper struggles to keep numbers down. A few years ago my Father had one of these call birds released by an unaware person (probably a townie in multi-coloured wellies!) only to find it in the cage the next day waiting to be fed!

49 CLUB

The June draw this year was won by Tom Brand.

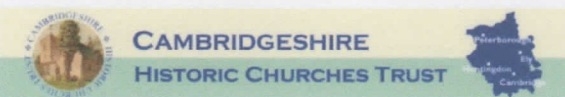
SERVICES DURING AUGUST

5 th August	-	9.30 a.m.	Sunday Worship
12 th August	-	6.00 p.m.	Evensong
19 th August	-	9.30 a.m.	Eucharist
26 th August	-	No Service at Easton.	

Nearest services: Spaldwick (9.30 a.m.) or Ellington (11.00 a.m.)



John Jolly would like to thank all those residents in Grange Croft and Stonely Road who gave so generously to the recent house-to-house collection in aid of Marie Curie Cancer Care. The sum of £32.56 was raised to help support their 2,000 nurses who work with terminally ill cancer patients and their nine hospices.



The CHCT annual "Ride + Stride" event takes place this year on Saturday, 8th September. Funds raised have been down in recent years but as this is the major fund-raising event for the Historic Churches Trust and with the loss of the WREN grant, they are especially keen to increase income from

the day. They will be helped by the National Churches Trust who will be promoting the event nationally, but they need your help too! In just two hours, you could walk around ten churches and college chapels in Cambridge or cycle to the same number in the countryside. And you know it does you good! The Huntingdon Deanery organiser is Peter Gould (891043) and detailed information about the event is available on the CHCT website (www.rideandstrideuk.org) from where the necessary forms can be downloaded. Encourage your friends and family to join you on a fun day out and raise money for our parish church and the County Trust that supports it!