



*Horningsea Advent calendar - day 24!*

## **Horningsea Herald**

**Issue #147 January 2021**

**For further information on Horningsea visit our village website at:**

**[www.horningsea.net](http://www.horningsea.net)**

**To contribute to the Herald, please contact the editor by the 25th of the month at:**

**[horningseanews@googlemail.com](mailto:horningseanews@googlemail.com)**

## **Advance Events**

### ***Church plans for 2021...***

Horningsea Church will make tentative plans for some events to take place in the late spring, summer and autumn, In particular we want to keep the idea of "Eco Church" and "Forest Church" alive. So watch this space! If you have any ideas of events you would like to see in the church or churchyard please contact the Church wardens.

### ***Thank you from St Peter's Church***

Thank you ... to everyone who took part in the Carol Service - singing, playing, reading, bell ringing, setting up the tech and running the Zoom! It was a great success and if you missed it you can still see it on YouTube!

<https://youtu.be/NeRnc4ZiwhA>

Thank you ... to everyone who took part in the Advent Windows - by decorating your window, by searching them all out, photographing them and posting the photos on Facebook (watch out for the full set of photos to be posted soon).

Thank you ... to the Parish Council who gave the Parish Charities a sum of money to enable the fruit and veg in the Church Porch to have some added Christmas extras.

Thank you ... to all those who look after the Church and churchyard all year round (you know who you are!).

Thank you... for supporting the Church throughout the year - remember the church is open each Wednesday and Sunday for private prayer. We aim to have "live services"

on the second Sunday of January, February and March, and will aim to expand on this once we can creep out of the Covid restrictions. There will be "live" services in Fen Ditton on the 1st Sunday and in Teversham on the 3rd Sunday. Each Sunday there will be a Zoom service which is open to everyone to join from the comfort of your own home!

## [Horningsea past and present](#)

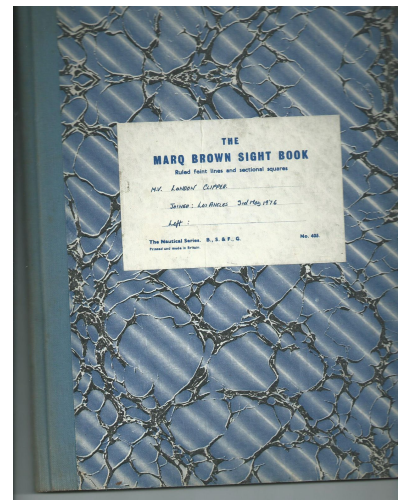
### *The sky above Horningsea: My life with the stars*

*John Wilson*

This morning I was watching the news as it was showing an interview with Professor Brian Cox who was talking about the newly established "Dark Sky parks" where light pollution is reduced to a minimum. Sadly most of the UK is covered by areas of light pollution which blank out the stars or at the best reduce their brightness in the sky. You only have to look South East from the village and there is good example of the lights of Cambridge being reflected into the sky.

My thoughts turned back to the late sixties. I was on a cargo ship crossing the Pacific heading to New Zealand from Panama, my watch was 12 to 4 in the early hours of the morning. There was no moon and the skies were just a blaze of stars, and apart for the quartermaster and the engineer down below in the engine room there was no one else about.

Low down above the horizon and heading towards us was an aircraft on much the same course as ourselves. You could see his warning lights getting higher in the sky as he passed over us before dropping towards the horizon ahead, before disappearing from sight. I expect he was traveling at 500 miles per hour against our 14 mile per hour. You couldn't help but feel a little envious that his trip would possibly be over a period of twelve hours while ours was to last three weeks. Towards the end of my watch I had switched the radar on to check for the position of a pinnacle of rock which stuck up like a shark's fin from the depths of the Pacific ocean. It wasn't very big and we needed to pass well to clear it. The instructions were in the "night orders" to call the Captain and post extra look outs at around 4am when it was expected to appear. I should point out that we were living in an age when on the radar was to only be started under his orders. The reason being he didn't want to wear it out. Invariably when it was needed it wouldn't work through lack of use!



Sure enough the pinnacle of rock was sighted a little after four and all went back to normal. As navigating officer it was my responsibility to make sure the ship was in the right position at the right time, so it was with a certain amount of relief that I went to my bed

My thoughts turned to the plane that had passed over us earlier. They would at that time have had a navigator, and many instruments that he would have used would have mirrored our own, although more electronic instruments were creeping into their cockpits, however, he would still have had his bubble sextant to take star sights.

Little did any one of us know that in about twenty years we would start to see the introduction of GPS (global position systems) which electronically gave you a continuous position anywhere in the world. Now when you ask people where they are on the planet they will either look at their car sat nav or iPhone and be able to tell you within a few feet their current position.

Farmers drill their crops to within a couple of feet of where they want them to grow and ships and aircraft know their exact position, and are able to project a course to their next destination in microseconds. This is a very recent state of affairs, for prior to this we had to navigate at sea with the aid of the sun and stars to obtain a position which at the best would be within a mile of your real position, much as navigators back to Elizabethan times did.

Before going to sea I spent a year at Navigation College learning the basics of navigation, before starting a four year apprenticeship as a deck officer in the merchant navy. We learnt about celestial, navigation, chart work, the mysteries of spherical trigonometry and even that the shortest distance between two places on the earth is not a straight line but a curve. Yes even between the Plough and Fleece and the Crown and Punchbowl which may explain some of the routes taken by villagers late at night.

With regards to navigation, once you were away from land, navigation involved using the stars, planets and sun. This combined with the aid of astronomical tables, spherical trigonometry and the readings of altitudes of heavenly bodies above the horizon using a sextant, along with a very accurate time reading from a clock set to Greenwich mean time, known as a chronometer, you could work out your position and then find a course and distance to your destination. Chronometers were very accurate clocks, and you usually had two or more. They would be wound at the same time each day by the same person. Also each day the radio operator would obtain a time signal from Greenwich so they could be checked for accuracy, you may have heard the "pips" just before the news on the hour. It didn't matter that they didn't show the exact time each day, but the rate that they lost or gained was important so in the event of losing communication, you could apply the "daily rate" to obtain the correct time. Today we probably all have watches which are more accurate.

This whole process was then calculated with logarithms, there were no calculators, and it took about half an hour to work three sights. Even then, it was only star sights that gave you an instant position. These were taken just after sunset and before sunrise at a time when you could see both the stars and horizon and were made up of the brightest stars and planets around the horizon. The resultant position was in the form of a "cocked hat" where you could reasonably place your position in the middle of the interceptions deduced by these calculations. Sun sights gave you only a position line and had to be collated with a further sight of the sun later in the day or run up to the Latitude which was observed at Noon when the sun was at its highest point in the sky

and directly on your meridian. So you can see the advantages of the modern GPS system we now have. Children can soon tell you where we are at a click of the phone or even the "three word" system. Ships still carry all the tables, almanacs, sextants and chronometers, in the back of some locker, because if everything fails it is back to basics.

The other thing you learnt was to find your way around the night sky. Being able to identify different stars that were listed for navigation; was essential, many have Arabic names and they are all listed in the nautical tables. You had to learn different pointers where one star led to another, either by constellations or their individual brightness or colour. Many of them you may be familiar with, the pole star, Sirius at the bottom of Orion or planets such as Jupiter, Mars and Venus. While the moon of course is very present. The moon was used for navigation purposes but has fallen out of favour over the years. It is always a spoiler by lighting the sky and obliterating other stars or by its erratic course over the heavens. However, it is the easiest to observe and many happy hours have been spent on watch looking at its ever changing phases.

Later on in my career I spent my time in the North Sea, Navigation was more by the modern methods of GPS, Decca Navigators and the local knowledge used in pilotage. The stars seem to fade in importance, only being used to check the accuracy of your compasses each day if you could see through overcast skies, so it is only recently that I have started to cast my eye up to the heavens to try to remember the names of all those old friends long neglected over recent years.

I remember the panic when we were told in the early 80s that we might have to drag out our sextants and sight tables again, also again when the Americans displaced the data from the GPS satellites during the trouble in Middle East in the 90s

My sight book still lies on the book shelf already left ruled up for the next sight, however I think it is pretty safe where it is now, but now I have to remember which star is which to teach my grandchildren.

## ***Letter from Lockdown***

*Richard Pleasants*

I am sure that you were as shocked as I was to see disturbing images on the news a couple of months ago that appeared to have been shot using a drone or helicopter fitted with a night-vision camera. The images showed the ghost-like forms of people - possibly 50 or more - milling around in some kind of box-like confinement. As it turned out, these horrifying images were not revealing some kind of evil people-trafficking operation, but nonetheless the perpetrators were brought to justice, fined heavily and warned not to have any more parties.

It hit me with considerable gravity last week that I may have already been to my very last party. Admittedly it was a goodie. Bumping and grinding our way into the small hours with flashing lights and smoke machines and music to make the windows rattle, and almost no teenagers standing around grizzling about 'Dad Dancing' ('That is so,

like, wrong, innit?'), everybody hugged and kissed each other as the clock struck midnight. Can you imagine?! Actually touching everyone else in the room?

These days I find many parties involve talking about cars with paunchy men in pink shirts or listening to nice ladies with slightly furry cheeks telling you about their grandchildren. But it wasn't always like this. The first party that I remember was just on fifty summers ago, and it was where I met my first girlfriend.

She was a very good light trainer. All the controls were in the usual place, so one could practice all the normal manoeuvres – passion, jealousy, histrionics, blame, reprisals, forgiveness, reconciliation and back to the start again – in relative safety. She handled normally, but as everything happened at such a slow speed, there was no real chance of anybody being badly hurt or getting into trouble. There was, in fact, absolutely no chance at all of the latter.

There was one party where the host came careering in through his French doors on his ride-on lawn mower and did two quick laps of the living room before shooting off into the garden. The shag-pile was never the same again. And there was one where somebody climbed up and threaded the host's bicycle over his own chimney, where it remained for several weeks. There was one where five of us ended up sleeping in the same bed (more details on request subject to age and status), and in the morning someone discovered that there was a light trail of sick all the way up the stairs and into the bathroom. 'I'll clean it up. I'm a doctor', said Nigel, who had slept in the middle. I've never been clear of the connection between these two statements, but he used the latter one frequently, sometimes in situations that would now see him prosecuted for assault, had he not drunk himself to death in the interim. Nonetheless, no one argued. He scrubbed away, with a bucket and cloth in one hand and a slice of toast and marmalade in the other - swapping hands frequently.

And then of course there was fancy dress. Tarts and Vicars, Tarts and Tramps, Tarts and Pretty-much-anything. Any excuse in fact to slip into some black stockings and suspenders - and that was just the men. One memorable 'do' was a two-garment party at St John's College. A pretty petite blonde whom I knew, wearing only diminutive denim hot pants and a scarf, came trawling towards me with one hand on her hip and a wicked smile on her face. As she reached me, she drew her arm back and slobbered me across the chops with all the force that she could muster. 'That's for everything you've ever done!' she yelled. I didn't question her at the time, but I'm sure she had her reasons.

Although I never had a party at my parents' house, simply because they never, ever went out, we've had a few blinders in our own houses, some of which involved live bands - but this does depend on who you live next to. At about one o'clock in the morning, I once had to sidle up to the lead guitarist between numbers. 'The neighbours are complaining.' I told him. He looked at me questioningly. 'They're the ones in the front row stamping their feet and shouting for more' I added.

'Can we stop soon?' he asked beseechingly, 'My fingers are bleeding.'

But the best party was one that I didn't actually want to go to. I had just finished at university, and had carelessly accumulated an excess of girlfriends during the final year or so. I'm not proud of it, but it's surprisingly easy to slip into - term time and vacations are different lives - but understandably I was now coming under pressure from various quarters to grow up and commit. I had returned to my parents' house to consider the issue, and had enjoyed a light supper with lashings of garlic salad dressing, when the phone rang. A friend of mine who ran a night club told me that there was a private party there that night after a charity fashion show. 'Loads of gorgeous girls!' he added.

I declined, citing a) a superfluity of girlfriends and b) a superfluity of garlic as my principal reasons, but he wouldn't hear of it. 'Pick me up at 9:30' he yelled and put the phone down. I realise now that a large part of his keenness was to do with having left his car in town the night before, and his needing a lift back to it.

He wasn't ready of course, so I had to chat to his mother. (a night club owner who lives with his mother? There's probably a lot more since lockdown). I remember clearly that she was talking to me about dogs when it happened. A voice in my head said 'You're going to meet your wife tonight'. I should say at this point that I don't hold with voices in the head, and that this was the first and last time that it has happened.

We settled at the club and I watched people arriving, only vaguely conscious of my 'premonition'. It was certainly true that there were a lot of appealing women there, but no one who warranted the status of... Wait! Then I saw her coming down the spiral staircase into the club, and knew without a shadow of a doubt that this was her.

She sat with her nose in the air looking angry, and completely oblivious to all around her - particularly me, for whom sparks were flashing around the walls. If I drew near to her I felt a magnetism that was unbearable, but that energy morphed into rage and jealousy when I saw the ring. I hated him - whoever he was.

I've never been good at the 'cold hit' so I stood paralysed for hours as midnight came and went. I knew that at any moment she would up and leave, and that would be it. All my prejudices about premonitions confirmed: they don't exist. But then a slightly older woman came up to me and asked me to dance. I agreed, and she said 'It's funny. There are lots of girls here tonight who would like to dance, but nobody's asking them.'

'Really?' I replied 'Like who?'

'Like her.' she said, nodding towards the girl who had entranced me all evening.

'Fair enough.' I said and immediately abandoned her on the dance floor and, finding all my reserves of courage, asked the girl to dance.

We've been together for forty one years and my heart still gives a jolt when I see her coming downstairs. And the ring? Just there to ward off unwanted attention.

But here's my point. We've got to be able to party again soon before we forget how - or, more to the point, why - to do it. A party is one of the few phenomena that has the

capability to change the whole course of your life in a matter of hours - and not just by dint of falling off a second floor balcony in a drunken stupor.

## **Horningsea Planning**

### ***Traffic calming update - Horningsea Parish Council***

*Jessica Kitt - Horningsea Parish Council*

As you may be aware, Horningsea Parish Council is continually looking at ways to make the road through our village safer. The recent 40mph buffer zones installed at each end of the village and the sign that flashes up your speed have definitely helped raise awareness of the speed limit and slow some drivers down, but the problem still persists.

The current area of focus is the stretch of the High Street from Scotsdales up to Sunnyside. Read the attached leaflet for more information and to find details of the survey to provide your valuable feedback (by 16th January).

### ***Back to the future - will it stink?***

Margaret Starkie, Catherine Morris

We have been re-reading Horningsea Parish Plan (*attached to this email and also available on the link below*). A celebration of the village in 2010 and aspirations for the village culminating in an even better future by - you've guessed it - 2020.

[https://scambsmoderngov.co.uk/documents/s52943/Horningsea\\_Parish\\_Plan.pdf](https://scambsmoderngov.co.uk/documents/s52943/Horningsea_Parish_Plan.pdf)

The Plan came together after nearly two years of consultation among the residents and an energetic Steering Committee led by Frank and Bert. It is worth reading just for the pictures and the village history dating from dinosaur droppings producing coprolite to the "new houses" on Priory Road in the 1950s. But it is the vision for how Horningsea would look in 2020 that really resonates. No one could have predicted what this year would be like. Yes, Horningsea is still a picturesque and tranquil village (except when boy racers burn up the high street during the lockdown) and it still has a thriving community. During the ten years of the Plan the HRA has organised many community events, the Parish Council has made great strides with speed curbing measures, the arts and music have flourished and communications are good through Horningsea Herald and the website. The expectations that fewer people would travel by car because of improved links to the other villages and improved public transport have not yet materialised (we are still grumbling about the buses) but the County Council has Greenways planned. Covid 19 has put paid to many of the village activities but the prediction that community spirit would continue to thrive was well justified.

However, no-one could have guessed that in 2020 we would need to fight to keep an area of precious green belt from morphing into a sewage farm. Back in 2010 aspirations for improvement to sewerage infrastructure was at a very local level; we wanted to see fewer spills and blockages in the village. There was no reason to think that Honey Hill would once again be put forward by Anglian Water as a site for a new



plant - all that had gone away in 2007. We were further reassured in 2015 when the current site at Milton was "future proofed" at great financial cost.

During this summer many residents in both Horningsea and Fen Ditton campaigned to try to prevent a move to Honey Hill, completing the online consultation form, emailing, writing and attending virtual meetings at which AWA was represented. The consultation finished in September and Anglian Water Authority has recently published its Phase One Consultation Summary Report. While one of the pie charts indicates that 73% of respondents prefer no relocation of the sewage works, when asked to choose between the three sites on offer another pie chart shows Honey Hill was preferred by 52%. There is little detail of how these observations were reached; were all communications other than the response forms considered? The fact that the "Who responded" map shows only four in Horningsea is rather suspect (they've since told us it refers only to those that gave their post-code but that is hard to swallow).

There is no indication in the report of which site AWA is going to choose in late January 2021 but we should not wait until then. If AWA thinks that 52% prefer Honey Hill they may take the easy option. Now is the time to question the data in the report, to emphasise that a decision should not be made on a referendum where population and demography will bias the results but on the concerns raised by the responders on the effects on biodiversity, traffic, environment, impact on local amenities and smell. No-one contributing to the Parish Plan in 2010 could have imagined that by the end of the coming decade we might be facing the consequences of moving a sewage plant to greenbelt close to an SSSI.

So before 2020 ends, voice your concerns over this report to AWA and to the "big guns" who might influence decisions - your MP, District and County Councillors, environmentalists and the media. Question the data in the report, how it was derived, how much significance they attach to numbers, how they have analysed the qualitative comments. You can contact AWA by e-mailing info@cwwtpr.com or by post at Freepost: CWWTPR.

The Parish Plan predicted that in 2020 *".....access across open countryside as far as Wicken Fen is widely enjoyed."* Let's make sure that in 2030 that is still true

### **Horningsea Road Closures**

#### **18th-22nd January - 20:00 to 06:00 each day**

Horningsea Road will be closed during the evening/night. The letter is attached and details below.

20:00hrs and 06:00hrs 18 January to 22 January 2021	Horningsea Road and Horningsea Road (C210), Horningsea	B1047 – A1303 – A1134 – A1309 – A10 – Car Dyke Road, Waterbeach – Cambridge Road – Chapel Street – Station Road – Clayhithe Road – Clayhithe Road, Horningsea – High Street – Horningsea Road and vice versa
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## **Notes**

### ***Ultrafast Fibre Internet - Voucher scheme to bring fibre direct to your home***

*Rob Balm, Chris Lindley*

There's a government scheme to bring better internet to rural villages. A few of us are trying to use this scheme to help bring this to Horningsea.

Horningsea has modern fibre (optic) cable to the cabinet in the village. This is unaffected by damp weather and allows very high speeds. However, much of the last "hop" to your house will be using ancient BT wiring which may even be aluminium, rather than copper wire. This wire may have been in place for decades and slows down the speed dramatically. Having fibre will bring the full speed directly to your house and will future proof your internet connection for many years to come.

If we (as in Horningsea) have enough interested houses or businesses then a provider will be able to implement this to each house and every applicant will get a voucher that should cover a great deal of the cost (perhaps as much as 100%). You may have seen this on Facebook or had a flyer through the door.

The voucher scheme is available as long as we apply before March 2021 (or when funds run out).

So let us know if you are interested in full fibre internet by emailing [ultrafast@horningsea.net](mailto:ultrafast@horningsea.net) with your full name, address and postcode. There is no obligation in doing so at all.

For more information, please read the attached leaflet.

### ***Horningsea Parish Council meetings for 2021***

*"The Parish Council meets every second month on the last Wednesday at 7.30pm in the Village Hall (May, July, September, November, January and March). "*

*For the foreseeable future meetings are being held virtually. Email [clerk@horningsea.net](mailto:clerk@horningsea.net) for an invite.*

- 20th January
- 24th March
- 26th May
- 28th July
- 29th Sept
- 24th November

Meetings may be rearranged due to external events, but you can view "Horningsea events/meetings" on the Horningsea Herald calendar:

<https://goo.gl/4592dL>

You can also add it to your own calendar directly using the following link:

<https://goo.gl/MrNWfg>

### ***The Mary Muhr Award for the greatest contribution to the cultural life of Horningsea in 2020.***

The Church Council unanimously agreed to award the Mary Muhr prize for 2020 to Chris Lindley for his contribution in producing the Horningsea Herald each and every month in 2020 - twice a month during some of the most difficult lockdown days. Chris' contribution has enabled us all to keep in touch, to enjoy the stories and articles written by people in the village and reminded us that sooner or later we will all be able to get out and about and meet up again to enjoy life in our wonderful village.

### ***Possible Horningsea Short Story Competition 2021***

Tentative plans are afoot for a 2021 Short Story Competition ... watch this space!

### ***Fen Ditton school Laptop appeal - Can you help?***

Pre-loved laptops, less than five years old, needed to help school children who have fallen behind during lockdown. Any laptops donated will be handled securely and will be professionally wiped clean ahead of use by the school

Please deliver to Fen Ditton Primary School between 10am and 2pm during the school week

Any donations for computer equipment and books would also be very welcome. Fen Ditton school finances are currently very stretched. Please email [george.devine@fenditton-pc.org.uk](mailto:george.devine@fenditton-pc.org.uk) or call 07900 325 336 for BACS details or how to donate by cheque

If you are a student at Bottisham Village College in need of help or financial assistance and you live in the village, please contact George Devine in the first instance on 07900 325 336. Bottisham Village College is also in need of money to buy webcams for students needing extra catchup tuition. Please contact Friends of BVC directly if you wish to make a donation at [www.bottishamvc.org](http://www.bottishamvc.org)

David Yandell of Fen Ditton, is developing a longer term initiative to help our local students. If you want to find out more, please contact George Devine in the first instance on 07900 325 336.

## ***Horningsea Assists - mutual aid group***

We wanted to remind Horningsea residents that help will be available for any Horningsea resident that will be shielding or vulnerable.

Ways to ask for help:

- Post in the Horningsea Residents Facebook group.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/HorningseaResidentsAssociation/>

- Email [horningsea-assist@googlegroups.com](mailto:horningsea-assist@googlegroups.com)
- Call: Graham Haynes on 07723 472858

If you want to volunteer your help then email [horningsea-assist@googlegroups.com](mailto:horningsea-assist@googlegroups.com).

Please ensure that your neighbours are well. A phone call can make a difference to somebody alone.

## ***Horningsea Parish Charities***

If you know anyone who might benefit from a grant please let the Trustees know. The Trustees are continuing to put fruit and vegetables in the church porch so you can go at any time to help yourself to apples, pears, oranges, carrots, cabbages or whatever else is on the table. The Trustees can be contacted on [ldathorningsea@gmail.com](mailto:ldathorningsea@gmail.com)

## ***Public Calendar of Horningsea events***

There's a public calendar to share Horningsea events. This is a busy little village and it can be hard to keep track of all the different events. Anybody can view the calendar with this link:

<https://goo.gl/4592dL>

You can also add it to your own calendar directly using the following link:

<https://goo.gl/MrNWfg>

## ***How to submit news to the Herald***

The only guideline for news is for events and articles that are of direct relevance to the inhabitants of Horningsea. The Herald does not accept advertising, but one off "news items" may be used to publicise local businesses. To submit news items either email "horningseanews@gmail.com" or submit them via Twitter.

<https://twitter.com/horningseanews>.

In these lockdown days all villagers are invited to send in recipes, thoughts on lockdown, photos of the village past and present, your hobbies! If it interests the editorial team then it gets published!

You must submit by the 2nd or 4th weekend of the month, the Herald being published before the first and third weekends of the month. Submission of any news items implies consent to any editing and the editorial team's decision is always final. **Always send as plain text via email.** Do NOT send formatted documents. Do NOT send articles as PDF or Word files. Stay under 700 words, preferably less. Attach any photos to the email. If you send in a PDF or image of a poster/flyer then attach a paragraph of text to go into the Herald as well.