

Services at the Parish Church

Sundays 8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) 10.00 am Parish Communion (CW)
Thursdays 10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) 3rd Sunday 10.00 am All Age Communion

Thank you Christopher!



After our All Age service in May we gathered to say thank you to Christopher Palmer for his 36 years as churchwarden at St Andrew's. During that time he has served with three different vicars assisting in the running of the church; organising repairs, being vice chair of the PCC and giving general support to the Vicar. He is pictured left with two of his co-wardens over the years, Jean Doty and Margaret Fisher as well as our current Vicar, Eleanor Whalley.

Christopher will be succeeded by newly elected churchwarden, Mark Campbell, who will be sworn in at Littleport on Monday 3 June. We wish him well in his new role.

Christopher was presented with an engraved glass tankard, a voucher for the Red Lion and a garden token. His wife, Linda (the great woman behind the great man!) was given a bouquet of flowers. He also received a personal letter of thanks from the Bishop.

We then enjoyed a glass of wine or juice and of course, being the Church of England, there was cake!

We hope Christopher enjoys his retirement (from this role and the town council) although he will no doubt continue to be very much a part of the church family.

*Thanks to Alison Palmer
for the photos*



St Andrew's Wild Weekend

Many thanks to all who took part in the St Andrew's 'Wild Weekend' in May. This focused on wildlife in churches (and further afield!). At the fair on Saturday there were things to make, games to play and organisations providing information about their work.

The fun continued on the Sunday with a plastic duck race on the Lode and a Pet Service.

We made an astonishing £1296.29 for general funds and £250 for the Restoration Appeal – and a lot of new friends...

St Andrew's Events in June

Sunday 2 June
Events to Commemorate
the 75th anniversary of the

Soham Train Explosion


1.30pm
Act of Remembrance at Red Lion Square
with members of Soham Comrades Band

1.43pm
Commemorative peal rung by the
Soham Youths and friends

2pm - 5pm
Exhibition in St Andrew's Church, with refreshments
NB Soham Museum are hosting an exhibition at the football club the same day

 **CHURCHES
TOGETHER
Soham**  **HERITAGE
FUND**

Taizé Service



Thursday 6 June, 7.30pm
at St Andrew's Church, Soham
Music, candles, readings & silence
All welcome

The Bread Basket

The Bread Basket, our monthly drop-in continental-style breakfast café, run by the Mothers' Union, is next on Saturday 15th June, 10 am – 12 noon in church.

We'd love you to join us for a morning of fellowship and fun. See old friends and make new ones over a hot drink, croissant or toast, etc. all for £1.50! A warm welcome awaits you and a service with a big smile.



Little Fishes

Little Fishes meet monthly in church. Babies & preschool children are welcome (as are their grown-ups): singing, sticking, snacks & chat. June's meeting is 11 June, 1pm-2.30pm

Dates for your Diary

Coming up later this year we have a number of events. More details in future issues.

Coffee Morning: Saturday 13th July in church from 10am – 12.30pm to raise funds for St Andrew's Church and Guide Dogs.

Viva presents Sister Act: Wed. 17th - Fri. 19th July, 7.30pm in church. <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/viva-arts> & 0333 666 33 66

Outdoor Songs of Praise: Sunday 27th July. Churches Together in Soham will be hosting an outdoor Songs of Praise on the rec. at 3.30pm, accompanied by Soham Comrades Band.

Soham Winter Fayre: Friday 29th November, 6pm – 8pm. Stalls and activities in and around church. To book a stall please email aly-evans@hotmail.co.uk or phone 01638 721534.

St Andrew's 200 Club

200 Club winners for April were £5 Deborah Bullman, £10 Lynne Webb and for May were £5 Mrs C. Stroud, £10 Mrs S. Roach



- ☆ **Soham Museum Coffee Mornings** – First Saturday of each month at Soham Library, 10am – 12 noon. Bring along any items or photos of local historical interest you may have, or just join us for a chat and coffee, All welcome.
- ☆ **Soham Museum History Group** presents Bernard Olley and “100 Years of Duxford Airfield”. Thursday 4 July at 7.30pm, Berrycroft Methodist Church Hall, off Pratt Street, Soham. Members free, non-members £3.
- ☆ **Soham over 60's Club:** Every Friday at the Pavilion at 2:00pm. £2.50 a year to join plus £1.50 a week and 50p for a raffle ticket. Speakers, entertainment and friendship.
- ☆ **The Shade School PTFA Summer Fun Day:** Sunday 30 June, 1pm - 4pm. Entry £1 per family. Bouncy castle, coconut shy, Desserts R Us, tombola, cake, BBQ and loads more!
- ☆ **Soham Trefoil Guild:** New members welcome. We meet the 2nd Monday of each month at 7.30 p.m. in The Causeway Community Hall in Soham. Please come and join us for evenings with guest speakers, games and quizzes, craft and cooking and much, much more. Make new friends and learn new skills with our Voyage Award open to all members.

Items for the July Edition of LodeStar

If you have anything you want to publicise or report on please send material to aly-evans@hotmail.co.uk by Wednesday, 19th June.



Soham Beer and Music Festival

The annual beer and music festival run by Soham Staploe Rotary Club will take place on the recreation ground and in the Pavilion on Friday 5th and Saturday 6th July. Look out for more details in the next issue.

Soham Library

The Library will close for refurbishment on Friday 7 June - there will be no library service from 7 to 24 June. The nearest alternative libraries are [Ely](#) and [Burwell](#).

From 24 June, a temporary library service will be operating from a Mobile Library van located on Soham's Recreation Ground (Fountain Lane, CXB7 9PL). The Mobile Library will remain in place until the library reopens to the public in July. There will be no library charges incurred during the full closure period.



If you have difficulty accessing a library during this time and require a home visit, please call 0345 045 5225 and ask for Ely Library.

Mobile Library opening hours:

- ☆ Monday 9am to 4pm (12pm to 4pm on 24 June)
- ☆ Tuesday 9am to 1pm
- ☆ Wednesday 1pm to 4pm
- ☆ Thursday 9am to 1pm
- ☆ Friday 1pm to 4pm
- ☆ Saturday 9am to 1pm Please note, there is no parking on site on Saturdays

News from Wicken Fen

Our Nature Trail opens on 1st June, when the fen will be full of lush green foliage and fen flowers. It's a lovely summer walk of 2¼ mi. around the ancient Sedge Fen, where you'll also have the chance to see butterflies and dragonflies on the wing. Look out for marsh



orchids, ragged robin, yellow loosestrife and marsh thistle amongst the foliage.

We're still enjoying hearing the male and female cuckoos on the reserve. The male gives the distinctive 'cu-ckoo' call that we all know and love, but you may not have heard the females bubbling call. Listen out next time you are out walking at Wicken Fen. It's great to be able to hear and see these birds when their numbers are declining, and your support helps us maintain their habitats.

Now that we're feeling the warmth of the sun more often, we can really enjoy the outdoors and being closer to nature. Join us for a boat trip along the Wicken Lode if you enjoy a leisurely summer outing, or bring your bike (or hire one from our Cycle Centre) if active exploration is your thing! It's worth calling to book your boat trip at busy times (weekends and school holidays), telephone 01353 720274. Boat trips and cycle hire are available every day until the end of October.

Our programme of adult events continues with **An evening with Tony Juniper** on Friday 14 June 19:30-21:30. Join us for a lively look at the future of conservation in the UK, and how the Wicken Fen Vision is contributing to the way forward, with the newly appointed Natural England chair. The second of our series of writing workshops **People in the Landscape: the Fens** takes place on Saturday 15 June 10:00-14:00. Writer-in-residence Guinevere Glasfurd leads a half day workshop investigating the stories of our local history. We also see local basket-maker Nadine Anderson return for her popular **Rush Weaving Workshop** on Saturday 29 June 10:00-16:00, and local printmaker Judith Handley return for her second **Introduction to Lino Printing Workshop** on Saturday 20 July 10:00-16:00.

Advance booking is essential for all events at Wicken Fen. Full details and ticketing information can be found on our website: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wicken-fen

Ely Cathedral Science Festival

Have you been to see the moon in Ely Cathedral? There is still time to catch this as part of the cathedral's Science Festival until 9th June.

A spectacular science event to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the first moon landing and explore what the future holds for humanity. Lift up your eyes and experience the Museum of the Moon, a 7 metre diameter lunar replica hovering above the Cathedral's nave. Also includes an interactive 'space' exhibition including space suits and meteorites.



Admission: Includes entry to the Cathedral: Adults £9. Concessions £6. Children and full time students free. Cathedral pass holders free.



A Councillor's Comments

Thanks to Councillor Liz Johnston for sending this report from the Town Council.

As many of you already know, the local elections have taken place and each council, both Town and District, can now re-engage with the work to be done for and on behalf of Soham and its residents. There have been a few changes however. Soham Town Council has seen four of its long term members retire, George Ginn, Christopher Palmer, Geoffrey Fisher and Tony Hinsley. Whereas East Cambs District Council has seen two new councillors elected for Soham North. They are Victoria Charlesworth and Alec Jones. Ian Bovingdon and Daniel Schumann retained Soham South.

Other changes have been made within Soham Town Council. Rosemary Aitchison has ended her term as Chairwoman and everyone's gratitude was expressed by a round of generous applause from the public and councillors alike. Her successor is Charles Warner who was the incumbent Vice Chairman to Rosemary. Councillor Elizabeth Johnston is now Vice Chairwoman, and her previous chairmanship of the Community Amenities sub committee, is now ably filled by Councillor David Woricker. The final change is to the chairmanship of the Cemetery and Allotments sub committee, which is now under Councillor Glenn Dyer. We also add a warm welcome to our newly elected councillor to Soham South, David Dawkins.

Not all of the meeting was given over to internal elections however, but also included voiced opinions regarding the Eastern Gateway Exhibition and consultation which took place on the 10th and 11th of May at The Comrades Club. This was followed by other matters including concerns over the South Chapel in Fordham Road Cemetery. More information will be given after our next meeting in June. *Councillor Elizabeth Johnston*



PARISH



REGISTERS

Baptisms

5 May	Georgina Finn-Chadwick
26 May	Rosie Scott

Weddings

18 May	Stewart and Isobel Wilkie
25 May	Zoe Chapman and Ryan Neal
29 May	Michelle Peploe and Ryan Wilson

Funerals:

3 May	Isabel Henderson
8 May	Cedric Palmer
9 May	George Holmewood
17 May	Peter Thompson
21 May	Edna Boon (at the crematorium)
28 May	Huw Bevan (at the crematorium)

A View from the Vicarage

2 June 1944

As we commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Soham train explosion, my words seem crass beside those I have read from that time. The following is an extract from a report in the Newmarket Journal, published on 9 June 1944 and passed to me by George Ginn. The full text will be read at a commemorative Communion service at St Andrew's at 10 am on Sunday 2 June



Eleanor

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In a quiet Cambridgeshire town last week I stood amid scenes reminiscent of the London blitz. At 1.45 am an ammunition train was passing through the station when the driver and fireman noticed the following wagon was ablaze. Without hesitation, and heedless of the risk to themselves they uncoupled the rest of the train and began to drive into a siding. They reached a point almost opposite the signalbox when the bombs exploded. The engine was reduced to scrap metal, and where the wagon had stood appeared a crater 40' deep and 100' across. The station and buildings were reduced to rubble, and the track was completely blocked.

The body of the fireman, Mr J Nightall of Littleport was recovered from the wreckage. The driver, Mr Benjamin Gimbert was flung 200 yds and was rushed to hospital with serious injuries. The signalman of the station, Mr Frank Charles Copland Bridges was taken to hospital from the shell of his cabin. He died later in the morning. Others injured and taken to hospital were Mr and Mrs Fuller (who were caught in their collapsing home), Mr Harry George Oliver (station master), Mrs Constance Graham and Mrs Arthur Hobbs.

As daylight came upon the scene the full extent of the damage was revealed. Breakdown gangs and squads of American soldiers toiled amid a sea of bricks and rubble – all that remained of the station. Home guards stood on duty, keeping back crowds of onlookers and dazed local residents. Fields and meadows around and the streets of the town were littered with rubble and shrapnel; in a field nearby, cows and horses grazed unconcernedly, picking their way through the masonry. Firemen who arrived at the scene in darkness met an eerie sight: flames leapt from a nearby gas works throwing dancing shadows on piles of wreckage and gaping roofs. A cottage beside the station stood still – but only just. Gaping holes in the walls revealed a recently deserted interior: sheets had been flung back from a bed, and the dining room clock still ticked on the mantle shelf. At the local parish church I found pews littered with glass and plaster. The licensee of the Railway Hotel told me, 'It was the most terrible thing in my life'. I saw a little fellow who had spent the night with his grandmother. His head was bandaged, but he said he felt nothing until he awoke to find his shirt drenched in blood. The regional Commissioner Sir Will Spence was early on the scene, amid mobile canteens, army vehicles, and people working among the wreckage. Local firms whose offices had become uninhabitable were shifting typewriters and papers to new quarters. The Grammar School and public hall were open as rest centres. The Chairman of the local Council said, 'I have not heard one grouse. The people stood up to their ordeal well. We will be able to find new billets for them all.'

Later that evening I sat in a homely little parlour in Littleport talking to the mother of the hero who would never again come whistling up the garden path. Fireman Nightall was 22 and an only child. His mother told me that at 6 o'clock the previous evening he was at home chopping wood for her. 'He was always ready with a joke,' she said. 'He was not one of the best in my eyes, he was the best. He was a brave lad and I am grateful he gave his life in saving others.'

... Interviewed on Sunday in a Cambridgeshire hospital, the injured driver, whose home is March paid a high tribute to his mate and to the signalman and told how, looking along the train, as all drivers should, to check things, he saw flames coming from the bottom of the first bomb truck. He never thought so quick before, he said... All that concerned Gimbert when interviewed was not his own injuries, but the position of the widow and family of the signalman and the mother of the fireman...

The Council are to purchase two crosses in remembrance of the heroes, and a tablet is to be placed in the church in their honour.