

# CRATFIELD NEWS

May 2022

## CRATFIELD VILLAGE PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS



JOIN US AT THE VILLAGE HALL ON FRIDAY 3<sup>RD</sup> JUNE  
2022 TO CELEBRATE  
THE QUEENS PLATINUM JUBILEE  
3-5 PM – FREE AFTERNOON TEA WITH GAMES FOR ALL  
THE FAMILY  
4PM – TREE DEDICATION  
6PM – BAR OPENS / 7PM – BBQ  
LIVE MUSIC THROUGHOUT THE EVENING

## WHAT ARE THE MOBBS FAMILY UP TO AT WHITEHOUSE FARM?

Most of you will know someone in the Mobbs family, after all there have been Mobbs' in Cratfield since the late 1800s when William Mobbs first ran the village shop and post office in what is now Old Post Office Cottage along the Street; and many of you will know us at Whitehouse Farm for our Christmas Turkeys. Over the 150 years the family has been in Cratfield we have had to adapt and change, first moving away from shopkeeping, with William's son Percy farming at Cantley Farm. Then Percy's sons, Roy and Russell Mobbs had to respond to changes in agriculture – moving from pigs and blackcurrants to turkeys and arable crops. Roy and Russell also branched into contracting, owning the first combine harvester in the district. Recently as the fourth and fifth generation, we have increasingly felt it was time for another change, for the benefit of the environment, the local community and the future of our small family farm, so we have decided to embark on a new project that involves providing more spaces for wild-life on our farm and a new venue in our community offering pop up suppers and a Sunday brunch café.

The principles of Field to Fork are already at the heart of our approach to producing our Christmas Turkeys as we continue to feed our turkeys the traditional way on home grown corn that we prepare for them each morning. However, we want to take this further and so have decided to become part of the Countryside Stewardship Scheme which will mean we can grow a greater variety of crops for the turkeys, but also rewild other parts of the farm to encourage more plant, insect and bird life.

Inspired by the success of farm open days and our butterfly meadows a couple of years ago we also want to make the farm more accessible to local people and visitors. So, we are opening **Fire and Feast Suffolk** at the farm in June. Fire and Feast is based around things that we love – local food, cooking on wood and being outdoors. While there will be a small campsite, the main part of Fire and Feast is the dining tipi. The Giant Fire and Feast Tipi will be the venue for Saturday night rustic suppers cooked over wood-fires, which we hope will appeal to local people, as well as those visiting the area, and also a Sunday Brunch Café where there will be coffee, home-made cakes, brunch plates etc. In the winter the tipi will move into our Fire and Feast Barn for cosy indoor events. If you fancy taking in the Café on your Sunday stroll, we will welcome well behaved four legged friends

too, as long as they are on a lead.

The Cafe opens on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> June, no need to book, just drop in. Rustic Suppers will be offered every Saturday evening through the summer months from Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> June, booking is advised. For more details and sample supper menu see our website [www.fireandfeastsuffolk.co.uk](http://www.fireandfeastsuffolk.co.uk) We also hope to develop a small shop area that will be selling local products and seasonal vegetables from the Fire and Feast kitchen garden. This will develop gradually and will probably be open just at the weekends.....yes things really do go full circle...back to how William Mobbs first began his enterprise in Cratfield. If you have any questions about Fire and Feast, please call us on 01986 798340.

Chris and Judith Mobbs

See ad on p21, which will change from time to time, so keep an eye out!

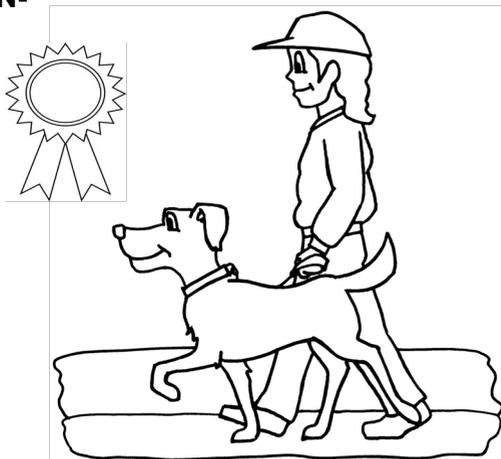
Other items to look out for in the coming weeks

**SWING MACHINE at ST. MARY'S JUNE 18TH**

see ad on page 10

and  
in the meantime

**CRATFIELD DOG SHOW SUNDAY MAY 8TH**



## All the nice girls love a sailor<sup>1</sup>

After returning from HMS Beachampton, I spent most of 1971 on course ashore in Portsmouth, becoming specialised in operations room matters, radar, anti-air warfare and fighter control – a whole new field for me. In December 1971 Candy and I were married on the Isle of Wight. She had come over to England only to find me going off to sea for three months just four weeks after our wedding.

Before then, September 1971 had brought a completely new experience. I joined HMS Ark Royal IV, at 54,000 tons full load then the largest ship the Navy had ever built,<sup>2</sup> as a fighter controller and anti-air warfare specialist. This was the top end of naval operations. Ark carried 14 Phantom supersonic fighter aircraft, fitted with AA missiles but also capable of accurate ground attack, 14 Buccaneer strike bombers, then the best aircraft of their type anywhere in the world, capable of long transits at heights of 50ft and of penetrating Soviet radar defences of the time with the small nuclear weapons of the day.<sup>3</sup> Both these “heavies” were launched at weights of over 35 tons. There were four Gannet Airborne Early Warning aircraft to give advance warning of hostile aircraft, six Sea King helicopters, armed with homing torpedoes capable of providing round-the-clock anti-submarine defence, and two Wessex helicopters for a range of miscellaneous duties, not least mail distribution.

It's hard to convey the sheer excitement of it all. To be steaming at 30 knots into the wind and launching, say, 15 aircraft in 15 minutes was thrilling. The landing back, being potentially rather dangerous, even more so. At night it was scarily exciting. You could often hear the aircraft hit the deck before you saw it. Since I had a cabin right underneath the arrester wires, I often had disturbed nights. I came to “tingle” whenever I heard the bugle call “Hands to Flying Stations” and the smell of aviation fuel and the sound of jet engines filled the air. Equally exciting, especially in rough weather, was steaming along fuelling from a large tanker 80 feet on our starboard side, with a large store ship close on the port side supplying us with food for 2,300 crew, stores of all sorts, and ammunition. Watching it all coming inboard and being stowed showed a miracle of organisation.

Our aircraft were very versatile. On one occasion we were crossing the Atlantic to exercise off the coast of Florida, when the Guatemalan army threatened to invade British Honduras (today the independent state of Belize). We were ordered to put two armed Buccaneers over the capital, Belize, 1400 miles away, to deter them. This was a big operation, involving all the Buccaneers, two to complete the trip and the rest to launch to refuel the two principal aircraft as they flew out and returned. This very involved complex rendezvous arrangement mostly conducted in radio silence to maintain security. As Strike Controller, I was responsible for co-ordinating these safely, and guiding the aircraft home to the ship five hours later – remem-

ber we had no Satnav or GPS in those days, and still used the sun and stars to navigate in mid-ocean. The operation went perfectly, completely surprising the Guatemalans, who thought again. Complicated, occasionally nerve tingling but very rewarding. There were other more relaxing rewards. After a major Mediterranean Fleet exercise in late 1971, the Fleet entered Malta for maintenance and “R and R”<sup>4</sup>. The smaller ships entered Grand Harbour – a wonderfully dramatic place to moor and show off a fleet - the day before us and couldn’t understand why it was difficult to find a girl to date. We, the Flagship, came in the next day, with many more young officers (and young pilots are especially romantic, being rather better paid!) and got a much bigger reception. The young ladies present made it plain that they had wanted to view all the available “talent” before committing themselves to 10 days of dating and dining. Perhaps I should reveal that it was during a similar visit to Port Elizabeth on the way home in HMS Naiad in August 1969, that I met Candy, just before returning to the Gulf to command Beachampton. She wasn’t talent spotting but attending a mayoral reception most reluctantly, at her father’s behest!

But with regard to the Malta ladies, RHIP<sup>5</sup> as we say in the Navy. And the old music hall song was right!

### **Jeremy Blackham**

1. 1908 music hall song called “Ship Ahoy”
2. Ark Royal IV served from 1955 to 1979, being replaced in 1982 by Ark Royal V, a smaller carrier which I commanded in 1992-3. The new carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth weighs in at over 70,000 tons.
3. Today British forces have no nuclear weapons other than the strategic deterrent, Trident.
4. Rest and recuperation, variously interpreted, depending on age and inclination! Our aircraft always flew off to a local airfield to continue flying. The rest of us stayed onboard and caught up with admin, work, training and sleep and painting the town various discreet colours!
5. Rank Has Its Privileges.



MICHAEL OLIVER

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## Cratfield Parish Council

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*Your help & support would be greatly appreciated!*

***If you would like to litter pick please contact:***

***Cllr Peter Baker Tel: 01986 798617 - village collection***

***Cllr Richard Chivers Tel: 07900 187 350 - Silverleys Green collection***



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## La Calima

We have had a house in rural Andalusia since 1994. When we spend time there it becomes our home – England is like a distant dream. Equally when we are in England, Cratfield is our home and Andalusia is just a dream. It reminds me of the story of the Chinese philosopher who had a joyous dream of being a butterfly, carefree and flitting everywhere - when he awoke, he wondered in rapture for a moment if he was a man who had dreamed of being a butterfly, or a butterfly who was dreaming that he was a man.

Covid and other matters had meant that we hadn't been able to go to Spain for over two years. The dream of Andalusia had faded and even turned into, if not a nightmare, then at least a headache. What would we find when we got there?

The trip started well – it was an easy flight to Malaga and on time. As we began to land slight alarm bells rang. It was midday and we did not descend through blue skies and land at the airport over a blue sea. There was no visibility – just a lurid smoggy cloud rubbing itself against the windows like an old yellow dog. The opaque cloud beyond the glass reflected the cabin lights back into the interior.

When the plane doors opened there was this same smog – less like Malaga in Spring than Sherlock Holmes's London in winter. It was not cold, granted, but it was every bit as murky. It was unpleasant to breathe. We picked up the hire car and drove the 140 odd kilometres to our village through a Martian atmosphere – a toxic looking ochre coloured cloud. Palm trees leered down at us from the roadside like trees from an old science fiction movie set on the Red Planet. Familiar landmarks looked alien. The white towns of Andalusia looked rusty orange in the light. More than that, as we discovered when we got to our home village, the walls were covered in rusty stains. The inescapable cloud hung over our return after two years like a judgement of doom. What had we done? What had the world done to warrant this reddish plague?

Of course, everything was fine. The house was just the same as we left it. Safe and secure – though the bottom floor was incredibly dusty with the dust of two hot summers that had blown under the door – and littered with two years of dried out junk mail.

The front door and the outside walls were stained rusty with the drops of red rain. The roof terraces were covered with red Martian dust which even the hose pipe we bought specially did not shift. It took a lot of brushing to get rid of it. The house walls will stay rouged until the distant day when we can fork out to have them painted. We later discovered that it was **La Calima** – which is what the Spanish call the red dusty rain that originates over

the Sahara. It was the worst they had known it in decades. It hung over the town for three days – people with breathing problems were advised to stay indoors. Apparently, it does not just contain desert sand but all kinds of nasty pollutants such as car fumes. **La Calima** had spread its blanket everywhere – a foretaste of what the effects of climate change could be.

Resuming the threads of our Spanish life effortlessly, we had a great stay. Returning after a month we found confirmation of the news report we had read about the UK – La **Calima** had reached these shores, albeit much reduced and tame. There was a gnat's wee scattering of dust particles on our car and on the windows of our Cratfield home.

## **Nigel Cousins**

### **Cratfield Quiz Where would you find me? Sue A Name the country where these could be found.**

1. Little Mermaid
2. Menin Gate
3. Mt Fuji
4. Ayers Rock
5. Eiffel tower
6. Machu Picchu
7. St Basil's Cathedral
8. Capilano Suspension Bridge
9. Angel of the North
10. Christ the Redeemer
11. Statue of Liberty
12. Tabletop Mountain
13. Colosseum
14. Mount Nemrut
15. Lions of Delos
16. The Golden temple
17. Aswan High Dam
18. Pouakai Crossing
19. Bran Castle
20. Burj Khalifa

Answers on p18

**St Mary's Church**  
Cratfield, Suffolk, IP19 0BU

# Big Band Jazz

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**June  
18th**

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**TICKET PRICES**

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Tables of 6 £15 per person

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## **VILLAGE HALL UPDATE – MAY**

### **Pop Up Pub first Friday of each month / 6 – 10pm with food by Cratfield Kitchen** **1st April / 6th May / 3<sup>RD</sup> June**

Many thanks to all the helpers / bar staff & organisers – we really could not keep this event going without you! If you are able to spare a few hours and help out behind the bar then please do e mail Caroline on [caroline@wisbey-brown.co.uk](mailto:caroline@wisbey-brown.co.uk)  
The village Facebook page shows the menu from Cratfield Kitchen roughly a week in advance and the bar now takes cash and card payments – but please note Cratfield Kitchen only takes cash payments.

### **Cratfield Platinum Jubilee Celebrations – Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> June**

Please see the poster on the front of the magazine with all details on – but as a reminder....

3 – 5 pm – FREE afternoon tea with Tree Dedication at 4pm and afternoon games for all the family.

6pm – Bar opens

7pm - BBQ

Live music from Tony Winn and Johnny G

### **Dog Show – Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> May**

The Dog Show is back! Do check out the full schedule either on the village Facebook page or

on the notice board at the Village Hall

or contact Rebecca Sannick for a copy – 07879 400 113.

Judging starts at 10.30 am for the pedigree classes with the fun classes to follow.

The fun classes include ‘Best Cratfield Dog’ / ‘Most Waggy Tail’ / ‘Most Handsome Dog’ and ‘Best Trick’ – to name but a few. Even if you do not have a dog please do come along as it is a great spectator sport AND there will be refreshments all day – tea, coffee and cakes and BBQ.