



The Friends of Thringstone



'Working together to improve our village'

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BULLETIN FOR MARCH 2021

News.

Monthly litter pick total - 140 against **118 bags** for the same month last year. There is so much more litter about and the amount of people now going into the woodlands is astonishing!

A gent and his daughter have joined our litter picking team. **Welcome Karol.**

Leader of LCC, Nicholas Rushton, has confirmed **extra funding** is being added to the 2021/2022 budget to help the litter picking groups in the Leicestershire area. They will help provide safety alert road signs for the pickers and 6' litter pick sticks and high viz vests, plus other things will be available via NWLDC. They intend to carry on picking up all the collected litter bags and fly tip as much as they can but also have concerns over people using street litter bins for household refuse. North Leicestershire Litter Pickers admin chap is now liaising regularly with both district and county councils and trying to set up some joint working to tackle the issue of litter, and avoid scenarios where volunteer litter pickers clear up areas which the council team were programmed to tackle and/or are considered dangerous.

We have concerns that supplying signage so people can pick grass verges could put volunteers in danger near heavy traffic. For interest, we do have both a generic risk assessment on file, plus public liability insurance, but don't want to test it out with someone being hit by a car because of litter picking on a grass verge near a major road.

Blue Bench - Sometime before 6pm on 6 February, the blue bench down Drury Lane was broken by youths, and the back was smashed off and was reported to the police as criminal damage. Despite trying, it was impossible to put this back on, so it has been made safe and is now literally a bench, not a seat with a back. Efforts were made to see if anybody would provide something more substantial which cannot be vandalised but we were only offered similar old wooden benches, so have asked our local councillor to look at putting a case forward to the Coalville Special Expenses fund to help us with joint funding of something more substantial..

St Andrew's - Rev Joanne Dwyer has been appointed to be the new incumbent at All Souls, North Warwickshire and is leaving St Andrew's. In an email to the church, she said 'My time with you may have been short, but it has given me a boost in confidence in my calling to serve as a priest'. When we hear who the new vicar will be, we will let you know.

Centre's news: The AGM for the centre is being held on 2 March at 19.30pm. All those members on email were sent advance notice of this so that they could, if interested, log their interest with the centre in order to get the zoom contact details. Apologies go to those without email, but there was no real way of getting all the information through to you.



The centre manager has told us that there is not likely to be a music festival this year, but whenever the centre is in a position to reopen long term, and the covid situation has eased to allow this, there could be a centre party with music and entertainment provided.

Tickets are now available for Taught A Lesson, a comedy drama by Thringstone Panto and Drama Society. This will take place on 26 and 27 March at 7.30pm online, and tickets can be purchased by ringing 0333 666 3366 or online through www.ticketsource.co.uk/tpads.

Chairs Report

Letters received: One letter enclosing a cheque for donation.

Emails received: Various from people with whom we regularly share information.

Promotion: We have **665 twitter followers**, which is the same as last month, and **1,514 facebook followers**, which is 23 more than last month.

Other: We are extremely sad to report the death of one of our long standing members, **Ron Hill**, who died on 5th February and whose funeral was 26th. Ron did a lot of work both with and for our group over the years, as well as for St Andrew's. He was also a great supporter of dogs and was seen at many of the dog related fundraising events held over the years around the area, including sales in the upstairs hall at Thringstone House. His wife, Marge, made beautiful hand knitted bears and teddies for these events, and Ron accompanied Marge and helped to set up her table.

Condolences go to his family.

Welcome to new member **Lucy Brown** who has also joined our litter picking team.

Finance Report

Gen Fund held 1st of month (bank + petty cash + float)	£2,182.59		
Income		Expenditure	
Donations	£20	Broadband	15.00
Publications		History research certificate	11.00
total income to general fund	£20		£26
		Total general fund at month end	2,176.59

Web Report

Work is continuing to try to get our website back.

Police Report

There was a break in to a house on Gracedieu Rd via the conservatory. The perpetrator ran off when seen by the occupant.

There have been several number plate thefts in Whitwick.

The police attended at a property on Melrose Road/Lbro Road corner early in February

A blue Ford RS car was stolen from a drive on Badgerscroft overnight on 20 February.

There have been continued instances of motorbikes and quad bikes in Gracedieu Woods.

There has been a spate of dog thefts. Please keep your dog safe and ensure that doors to garden areas are kept locked and that dogs aren't left on their own in easy access places.

History report

- Nita has been doing a lot of research into teachers at **Thringstone school**. This has included facebook posts asking for information/photographs relating to teachers from the 1970s, 80s and 90s, some of which were successful. She carried out a 30 min. interview with **John George**, who was head at the school for the whole of the 1980s. This information will be filed in our archives.



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- Thanks to facebook postings, we now have several new photos, including a photo of **Charles Jarvis** and his wife Mary Jane Richards and family who kept the George and Dragon in the 1890s and died of typhoid in 1900. She then remarried a man who became another landlord of the pub.
- **Anna Lindley** was head at Thringstone school from 1893-98. During her period there, she helped bring the school up to a higher standard, and was the first teacher to consider having boys as either pupil teachers (Alan Robert Crane, son of Rev. Crane) or monitors (Reginald Gee). Pupil teachers were children under 16 who wanted to become a teacher, and monitors often helped them with classes and sometimes went on to become pupil teachers. Miss Lindley appears to have suffered quite a lot with ill health, including ulcerated throats. If she was off for a few days/a week, the pupil teachers carried on for her, but if she was off longer, Miss Lee, her predecessor, came back and took over the school until Miss Lindley was well enough to recommence. We have been thus far unable to find any information on Miss Lindley in census, births, marriages or deaths other than finding an Anna Lindley born in Sheffield in 1870 who doesn't fit since she married in 1894 in Sheffield and our Miss Lindley was still at Thringstone then.
- **Ellen Chester** – Ellen Chester was from Swannington, the daughter of a farmer. She appears in the Thringstone school log books as she came as a pupil teacher on 30 November 1874. She then gave a week's notice on 12 Dec 1874. However, she reappears in May 1875 when the log book says she taught the infants, and it would appear, going on the writing, that from July 1875, she wrote the log book for the school until 27 August when the head, Miss Whitfield, resigned and was replaced. One entry says 'I Ellen Chester' so we know it is her writing. In late 1875 she appears to have had several illnesses to do with headaches and gone home from school, or in one case, went home and upset the head, Martha Price, by 'not bothering' to get back in touch as to her progress. She wasn't very popular with another temporary head teacher, Sarah Eleanor Webster, who said more than once that she needed greater confidence and lacked energy when managing classes, especially large classes, and that although she had passed her exams, these were unsatisfactory passes and she needed a deal of working to get up to the required standards, such as in a comment made in Oct 1878. However, she continued to pass her exams, and upon the termination of her apprenticeship in May 1880, she became qualified under Article 79 but not Article 60. In June 1880, the head gave her a week off to study for Queen's Scholarship exams, which she won, but she continued on at the school, even after she had left in June 1880 and came back to help as assistant teacher in August and September, a post which was made official in November. In December, she was reproved by the head, Arabella Sarrison, for talking with pupil teacher Emma Towle during the singing at the end of the school closing one morning. She continued to go to work in 1881 at Thringstone, and in January found it difficult to get from Swannington, and was late, arriving at 11am instead of 8am for one whole week, which was noted, and one day she couldn't get in at all. However, the head supported her with taking government exams which were scheduled for December 1881. She doesn't appear in the log books after March 1881. By looking through newspaper articles that in 1877 she won the Queen's Price first class and also a 2nd class award at a science and art event. Ellen ended up as head at Swannington school, where at one time she worked with Samuel Phillips May who later became head at Thringstone. She retired in 1928 and died in 1935, and we have photographs of her from her time at Swannington. Nita has sent numerous scans of entries relating to Ellen Chester in the school log book to Swannington Research for their own archives, as well as details relating to **Bertha Robinson**, who was another Swannington girl and pupil teacher.
- On 17 July 1905, due to the illness of headmaster **Samuel Phillips May**, the log book for Thringstone school records that Mr W J Gulliver took over as temporary head. This was **Worthy Jordan Gulliver**, born in 1884 in Hungerford. In 1901 Mr Gulliver was living in Leicester with his family and teaching at an elementary school, having qualified in Cheltenham. Mr Gulliver was not at Thringstone long, and went on to work for 2 years at Desford Industrial School before going to St Martin's C of E School in Leicester. He then became head at the school in Newbold Verdon. Mr Gulliver died aged 46 on 17 February 1931. As for Mr May, records show that he went back to school on 28 August 1905 after a long illness, and was taken seriously ill upon leaving school on 6



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October 1905. He died on 14 October 1905 of catarrhal pneumonia and cardiac syncope, and Mr Edgar Stanley Boulter took over on 19 October 1905.

- **Francis Ernest Needham** – we have previously mentioned that, along with Bridget Allen, Francis went to work at Thringstone as a pupil teacher in Oct 1907 at the age of 15. Both Francis and Bridget were Catholics, and there was a lot of discussion at the time with the managers and the county council over their placement at Thringstone, since they had both been to Whitwick Catholic school, there were shortages elsewhere and also Thringstone school was CofE. We have previously traced Bridget, but not Francis, but now find that he was born in 1892 in Whitwick. He married Marjorie Agnes Mighall in 1922 and they had 3 children, including one son who died aged 5. Francis stayed in the teaching profession, going to St Mary's Training College in Hammersmith having finished his pupil teacher post at Thringstone. His pay was £22 per annum for the last year as pupil teacher. He worked at Holy Cross in Whitwick from 1915-29 as a teacher before securing the headmaster's job at Measham RC School in 1929. By 1939 he was living with his family in Nottingham at 52 Bartholomew St, and appears to have stayed in that area, as he died on 29 December 1967 in Nottingham.
- **Oliver Lindley** a monumental mason from Islington House, Belvoir Road, Coalville became one of the managers at Thringstone Primary from 1904. Mr Lindley had 9 children and was born in Leicester. He married Mary Ann Scott in 1870 in Shoreditch in London and died in Derby on 25 Feb 1920 aged 76 years.
- The paperwork for Thringstone School 1909 shows **Walter Lindley JP** as a school manager. Walter was from Barlborough in Derbyshire and in 1911 is shown with his wife and 7 children living at Holly Dene, Forest Road, Coalville. As well as being a JP, for 8 years he was chair of the Coalville branch of magistrates. He was also a member of Leicestershire County Council, serving for Whitwick, and Coalville Urban Council, company secretary and commercial manager for Whitwick colliery. He died on 30 Sept 1931 at 113 London Road, Coalville, having been taken seriously ill whilst visiting his daughter in the Isle of Wight earlier in the year. He left the massive amount of £20,331 13s 2d which equates to £1.3m in today's terms. His obituary said he also had strong connections to the Leicestershire Miners Welfare Fund, was chairman of the Coalville Conservative Association, president of the Coalville Horticultural Society, member and past master of Gracedieu Lodge of Freemasons and a former vice president and committee member of the Coalville Rugby Club. During WW1, he did a lot of work with regard to special constables, for which he was awarded the MBE
- There is a mention in the paperwork from Thringstone School of Mr Merriman Jnr. and his father working on repairs at the school in 1909. Mr Boulter mentions in a letter in February that year that he had to get young Merriman in to unblock a pipe to the stove. There is also a form dated 1910 confirming that **Everard Griffin Merriman** was elected as one of the school managers. Everard Merriman was born out of wedlock to Hannah, one of the daughters of Mrs Hannah Merriman of The Bull's Head, and was a sidesman at St Andrew's in 1898. By 1911 he was living at Victoria Cottage, Main Street with his 2nd wife Bessie and son Henry aged 22. Mr Merriman had another son called Arthur who served in WW1 in the royal flying corps. Everard Merriman was a colliery bricklayer and died in 1940.
- **Sept 1908** – According to school records, **Eliza Gee** nee Wardle was appointed as caretaker at Thringstone School. Born in Swannington in 1862, Eliza was married to William Gee and lived in Main Street. It is unclear for how long she was caretaker at the school, but there is mention in the school folders of Mrs Fortnam (from Fox Row) taking over from her when she was ill at one time. This is believed to be the widow of George Fortnam who lived nearby. There is also a letter from Florrie Vesty of Gracedieu Farm about a broken desk, broken by Eliza's son John Gee (by then aged 21) by accident in January 1908. He had gone to put the desks away to help his mother. The 1911 census shows that the Gee family had had 8 children of whom 2 had died. Eliza died in August 1918 and was buried at St Andrew's.
- **Edgar Stanley Boulter** was headmaster at Thringstone from 1905-1913, and during that period, his wife Margaret died, leaving him with 4 children. In 1913 he remarried Isabella Madden, at



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which point in time his address was Forest View, St George's and he had a further 2 children. We have scanned a lot of information on him from the school files, including letters dated 1908 stating his unhappiness about being kept in the dark about things, and stating that the caretaker and teachers knew more about the managers meetings than he did which was leading to a lot of local gossip! Mr Boulter went on to work in Wigston and retired from Wigston school in May 1930. His retirement notice in local papers said that he had been a founder member of The Longstrians Association in 1922, the school having been in Long Street, Wigston, since which time the school had become a big force in county schools athletics tournaments. Mr Boulter said he had been teaching for 47 years and had been in charge of a school class since the age of 13 (presumably as a pupil teacher). He was presented with a clock by pupils and writing case and book case and a bouquet of flowers by the Longstrians. Mr Boulter died on 4 Sept 1941 at The Firs, Oadby Road, Wigston Magna.

- **James Lester** was headmaster in Thringstone from 1915-1928 and had married Derby girl, Millicent Potter, at St John's in Kenilworth on 19 July 1894. Mr Lester was teaching and living in Kenilworth at the time and despite being born in Birmingham, had lived his most of his early years in Derby. Millicent had been born on 24 June 1857 and was older than her husband as he was born on 17 October 1868. By 1901 he was teaching in Welton in Lincolnshire and by 1911, he was a head teacher at Long Clawson School. We have discovered that he had two children, William James Lester (born in Kenilworth) and Dorothy Millicent Lester (born in Mildenhall, Suffolk) and that his son William went to Australia and served for Australia in WW1. His Australian papers show the address of his parents in January 1915 – **Grace Dieu View**, Thringstone, which is written after a previous address of North Street, Hugglescote which is crossed through. Gracedieu View is the house next to the Bellway development on Loughborough Road, in which Charlie Gough lived for many years and had his small holding. This is new information. We have also discovered an obituary for Mrs Lester's father, William Potter, who died at Grace Dieu View in March 1916 aged 88 years. He had been both a slater and innkeeper of The Tankard Inn in Derby. We assume he moved in with his daughter after his wife Sarah died in 1913. He was buried at Uttoxeter Road Cemetery in Derby, with his wife, on 29 March 1916. Mr Lester's son William, who went to Australia and had been a butter maker, served in Egypt in WW1, where he caught malaria in 1916, and France where he was wounded in action in October 1917. He also suffered severe trench fever in 1918 and was sent to hospital in the UK, but served through the whole war and returned to New South Wales where he died on 14 February 1948. James Lester also appears to have lived at **The Warren, Whitwick**. He appears on the electoral register there with his wife in 1921 and 1922 but by 1923 they had moved to 35 Bridge Road, Coalville, where they stopped until 1929. The log book for September 1926 records that Mr Lester was having extra leave each day 'on account of a somewhat serious accident to his wife'. We have no idea what this was.
- **David Fitt** – Head teacher at Thringstone school in the 1970s. Some years back, Nita drew up a list of all the members of **Gracedieu Park Cricket Club** from the 1860s through to the 1930s. This was added to the writings of John Wisehall who carried on from then up to the 1970s. All this came in useful when Nita was asked if Hubert or Henry John Beeson were cricketers with Gracedieu Park. Whilst looking through these lists, we realized that David Fitt was down there as a player at one time in John Wisehall's writings. He is quoted as a good batsman who kept wicket well.
- **Grace Dieu View** – Continuing on from who lived at Grace Dieu View after the Lester family, the electoral register for 1921, which is the first one which we can access, shows Caroline Sylvia and Edmund Alfred **Holmes** there. He obviously was waiting for Esther and Charlie Gough to move out of The Bull's Head, as he became the landlord there later in 1921. **Charlie Gough** first appears at Grace Dieu View on the 1922 electoral register and stays there until his death. This reinforces our belief that the property was built by the Merriman family and stayed in their family for some time (Esther Gough was originally a Merriman). We have also discovered that Charlie Gough helped with gardening at the Gracedieu Manor estate and claimed that he had seen the ghost at the priory.

- **Hunt family** – There is a comment in the school log book which tells that in May 1893, the school admitted Affie (logged as Effie) and Rachel Hunt, aged 8 and 6 years respectively, who had **not attended any school at all previously**. This is quite astounding, but probably due to the fact that you had to pay fees to go to school. The girls were the children of Charles Thomas and Catherine Elizabeth Hunt, who were from the South Croxton area of the county. They moved to Talbot Lane/Sandholes around 1874, and had a large family of at least 11 children. Charles was a miner and died in 1900 in Coalville, but was buried at St Andrew's, his wife passing away in 1931. It is unclear what educational standards Affie and Rachel attained, but Rachel appears to have married George Edward Morris on 4 November 1905 in Ellistown and lived her life in Wood Road, having at least 5 children, and passing away in 1967. Affie married Ernest Gregory in Ellistown on 18 June 1904 and moved temporarily to Ilkeston before moving back to live in Donington le Heath by 1911 and then by 1939 to Hugglescote. She died in 1964 and had at least 3 children.
- **George Fortnam** – the school log book records his death in January 1900 from typhoid fever. George lived in Main Street, was 30 years of age, a blacksmith's striker, and had married Harriet Toone in 1892. His death left his wife with 3 children under the age of 8. George had been connected to St Andrew's, as in 1898 he was appointed a parish sidesman. His grave and that of Harriet is part of the grave for George's father, Charles Reeves Fortnam at the side of the church. The Fortnam family continued to be involved with the school. A Mr Fortnam, with no first name, was still involved with the school in 1938, as there are records of him mending a downpipe at the school which was broken.
- **Thomas White** – recorded in the Thringstone school log book, Thomas White, aged 10, died in 1903 after a stay in Swannington Isolation Hospital with scarlet fever. Thomas was the son of William and Julia White and one of around 9 children.
- **The Kirby family** are well known in both Thringstone and Swannington for their linkage with Hough Mill. The school log book shows that Amelia Kirby was a monitor, as were her sisters Martha and Mahala. Their sister Bertha became a pupil teacher for a while in the 1880s. All mentions of the family have been scanned, and shared with Swannington Research who have several pages relating to the Kirby family, and also have a copy of the family bible, mentioning all these girls. Those interested should go to <https://swannington-heritage.co.uk/windmills/mill-family-kirby/> We also now realize that John Kirby who married Emma Burton and kept a grocery shop now known as The Blue House on The Green, was brother to these girls. We also discovered that the niece of these girls, Edith Kirby, also became a monitor at Thringstone school. Her father was James, the eldest of the Kirby's.

Council report

2 years after we reported that it had been hit by a vehicle and pushed into the ditch, there is now finally a Loughborough Road street sign back at the corner of the A512 near the Bull's Head at Cross Lanes.

Work started to put in electric car charging points on The Green on 10 February. This work is due to finish on 26 March, but to charge a car at one of these points could take up to 4 hours, and will reduce the space for Thringstone Co-op and also for Ruby's

Gardening and environment

Nothing to report.

Next bulletin will be in April. Please try to keep safe