

The
Wreningham
Golden Jubilee
Memento
1952-2002



Cover: portrait of the Queen courtesy of Camera Press Ltd

Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee 1952-2002

In her accession speech in 1952, the Queen declared: "I shall always work, as my father did throughout his reign, to uphold the constitutional government and to advance the happiness and prosperity of my peoples, spread as they are all the world over". She spoke of "this heavy task that has been laid upon me so early in life".

It is a task she has undertaken faithfully and unflinchingly through good times and bad for fifty years. The emphasis of the Golden Jubilee is different from that of the Silver Jubilee, twenty-five years ago. If in a sense the nation thanked the Queen in 1977, then in 2002 the Queen wants to thank the nation.

The focus is firmly on the young people of the country, and particularly in schools. The Golden Jubilee is a time to look at the Queen's fifty years, but also to look at all the changes that have occurred in Britain in the last fifty years.

It is an occasion for parties and celebration, for giving to charity in the name of the Queen and a chance for Britain to take stock and to recognise the good fortune of having had fifty years of unstinting service from a constitutional monarch.

A History of Jubilees, By Hugo Vickers

This is the third *Wreningham Jubilee Memento*. The first was published in 1887 to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria. The second was published in 1977 to celebrate our present Queen's Silver Jubilee.

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Wreningham Golden Jubilee celebrations

Monday 3rd June 2002 was announced as a National Holiday to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. Queen Elizabeth succeeded her father King George VI on 6th February 1952, and was crowned on 2nd June 1953.

In January a parish meeting was called and a small committee of five people agreed to put together an informal programme. With other people, the church and the social club each agreeing to take on responsibility for some items, this worked well. The programme was planned on a low cost basis and in such a way that various age groups could opt in or out of the activities as suited them. Fortunately the weather was ideal, not too hot, and it stayed fine until it was time for afternoon tea and then only rained for a short time so the barbecue in the evening was able to go ahead.

SUNDAY 2nd JUNE

The church had been decorated and was left unlocked (which these days is not normal). The flag was flying from the top of the tower.

6.30 pm A Celebration 'Songs of Praise'

MONDAY 3rd JUNE

Again the church was left unlocked, but the main activities were centred on the village hall.

10 am Those who like to walk assembled at the village hall car park and went off on a local ramble, taking most of the morning.

10.15 am People with children too small to ramble met at the village hall and went on a pushchair-friendly treasure hunt, returning to the village hall to take part in craft activities including making their own royal crown.

12 noon The bar was open and ploughman's lunches were served.

1.30 pm The 'Best Dressed Cycle' was judged. Both adults and children were invited to enter this.

2 pm An informal game of rounders took place on the playing field followed by a Boys versus Dads football match.

4 pm Afternoon Teas were served at the village hall.

8 pm The bar was again open, music was laid on and a barbecue provided.

The way that this celebration was programmed meant that most people joined in at some point during the day. It was inexpensive, the only cost to people being the ploughman's lunch and barbecue and whatever drinks they had at the bar. Afternoon tea was provided free.

We wish to acknowledge the donations made by Bernard Matthews Foods Ltd (of Great Witchingham) and G M Baldwin (The Nurseries, Mill Lane, Wreningham). The sums donated plus income on the day totalled £313.94, the expenses claimed came to £147.82, leaving a sum of £166.12. This money was held over towards the cost of publishing the Golden Jubilee Booklet.

The Wreningham Millennium project

The Parish Council called a public meeting on 23rd October 1998 to discuss what the village should do to mark the millennium. A number of suggestions were put forward and at the end of the evening a committee was set up to look at and decide which of these options to take forward. The committee consisted of Mr I Howlett (to chair this on behalf of the Parish Council), Messrs S Durant, N Harvey, D Long, G Mutton, D Whiterod, Mrs J Nudd, and Miss C Minns.

After discussion and investigation the committee decided at their January 1999 meeting that their primary objective was to be a millennium clock to be fixed to the church tower, and a bank account was opened to receive donations. By the April meeting there was over £2,500 in the funds, including a donation from the Parish Council of £1,000. It was not possible to get any grant from the National Lottery or Millennium Awards Funds so the committee knew that they had to raise in excess of £5,000. Fund raising events were planned alongside the appeals for donations. The School did a sponsored 'Tell the Time'. Mr Wells had offered a flight in his plane which was raffled off. Mr Harvey organised a sponsored Tandem Ride and the full committee set about organising an Art Exhibition.

The total raised or given came to £6,911.15. Although most of the work was carried out by commercial firms, some voluntary work was done by Mr Alfred Howlett. The clock was in place for 0.01 am on 1st January 2000 and was dedicated at a service at 3 pm on Sunday 2nd January 2000. The donation from the Parish Council was handed back as the response from the village and others associated with Wreningham had been so great that we did not need the money. Surplus funds are held by the Parish Council for future maintenance of the clock. There is a plaque in the church listing the names of all those who made donations to the millennium project.

The Millennium memento

Wreningham Parochial Church Council decided that to celebrate the year 2000 AD, they would like to present the children of the village with a memento. In order to fund this they made it their Lent Project. Each household in the village was written to, asking for the names of any children living there, and 58 names were eventually supplied. Not all the families were interested. It was decided to design our own mug and 100 mugs were ordered showing on the front a Chi-Rho Cross in a circle, with the words 'Wreningham' across the top and round the bottom 'All Saints'. On the reverse was the village Wren logo with 'Year 2000' underneath. The mugs were presented to the children by the Rev. Clive Styles at a party on 29th October 2000. Surplus mugs were sold to interested people.

Wreningham Village Hall

The site was donated to the parish in 1947 by Mr Burton Bullimore Long of High House Farm, for the purpose of providing a village hall. The first hall, a nissen-hut from Hethel airfield, was opened in 1951 and connected to mains electricity in 1952. Prior to that lights were supplied by a tractor and dynamo. In 1954 the floor from the gymnasium at Hethel airfield was fitted in the village hall – the present stage floor is made of timber from this original floor.

In November 1976 it was decided to build a new village hall, big enough to take a badminton court. This was to be a brick building, but by January 1978 it was realised that this would be financially out of reach and a portal frame was investigated. Plans and the confirmation of grant was recorded in May 1978, even so there was a problem providing enough funds to satisfy grant requirement and fund raising was stepped up and donations and interest-free loans appealed for. The old hall was sold for £312.50 and removed in early 1979, and the builders, Ernest Burrell & Sons, moved in. A Loan Bond scheme was launched as one of the ways of raising money and had its first draw in October 1979. A second issue was made in 1982 and these continued until the late 1990s when the loans were finally repaid.

The first *Wreningham Mardle* a bi-monthly village hall newsletter was edited by Mike McGregor and came out in October 1981 in time to give details of the first event in the present village hall – a Christmas Celebration. This newsletter is still published and distributed free to every house in the village.

In 1983 a Social Club was formed in order that we could hold our own drinks licence and a provisional licence was granted in February 1984. A full licence was applied for and granted in March 1985. In 1985 Keith Skipper officially opened the bar which was then in part of the existing kitchen.

At the Annual Meeting in November 1983 the patchwork group who met at the hall presented the meeting with a wall-hanging representing the legend of the name of the village – this now hangs on the back wall of the main hall. An active drama group 'The Ashwren Drama Group' used the hall for some years and in 1985 they helped to buy second-hand spotlights and dimmer controls. The group rested between 1995 and 2002 when they began planning a pantomime for their comeback performance. In 1986 a Youth Club was formed. This eventually had to close due to lack of helpers but was restarted in 2001 and now has a waiting list. In 1987 regular monthly Saturday Country and Western dances were introduced by the then chairman Mr Brian Nixon. Ballroom and Sequence dances started the same year on alternate Friday evenings. Both these activities were run very successfully for about ten years but have now ceased.

In 1989 a planning application was made for an extension. Fund raising was greatly helped by a bequest from Miss Margaret Preston who died in May 1991. The extension, which now houses the bar, the Margaret Preston Room, and a store, was officially opened, again by Keith Skipper, on 2nd July 1993. The Social Club still meets two or three evenings a week in the Margaret Preston Room and is a social focal point for all age groups.

The village celebrated fifty years of a hall on the present site in May 2001. The hall was decorated with bunting and flags, and people encouraged to dress in 1950s costume for a dance to Jonathan Wyatt's Big Band sound on the Saturday night. On the Sunday the hall hosted an indoor street party, with the bunting still criss-crossing the room, tables down the centre offering traditional 1950s-style food, and games around the outside at 1950s prices, using old penny coins.

This year it was decided to plaster the walls in the main hall which until now had been painted block-work. Regular groups using the hall today are: badminton, pilates, yoga, kick-boxing, short mat bowls, jive dance, flower club, youth club, drama, social club and the village school.

Chairmen of the Management Committee over the past twenty-five years have been:

Mrs B Douglas	1976-1977
Mr D Nudd	1977-1981
Mr I Dobson	1981-1983
Mr J Hanton	1983-1984
Mr I Dobson	1984-1985
Mr B Nixon	1985-1988
Mr P Wilkinson	1988-1993
Miss C Minns	1993-

All Saints Church, Wreningham

Wreningham Church is now one of a group of churches known as the Upper Tas Valley Benefice. The Rev. Clive W J Styles has been Rector since March 1999. He is assisted by Mrs Jenny Cooper, Lay Reader. Previous clergy were:

Canon Ernest S Fardell	1896-1954
John B Gordon	1955-1961
Geoffrey Whitehead	1962-1969
Henry Brierly	1969-1986
Horace Busk, Team Vicar	1974-1980
Jolyon Bradshaw	1981-1989
Keith Crocker	1988-1994
Simon Stephenson	1990-1998

- 1981 Church bells rededicated by the Very Rev. Gilbert Thurlow, Dean of Gloucester.
- 1989 Bookcase made from Mr Henley Curl's bequest, and installed in the Church in his memory.
- 1989 Flower Festival held in the Church and repeated in 1992, 1996, 1999.
- 1990 Church floodlit during Christmas period for the first time.
- 1990 Miss Olga Ward told us about the present state of All Saints Church, Zimbabwe; funds raised to support building of new church.
- 1996 Tower roof completely restored at a cost of £22,000; grants were received from English Heritage, Norfolk Churches Trust, Historic Churches Preservation Trust, and the Manifold Trust.
- 1996 Student Cross pilgrims from Essex to Walsingham call at Church for refreshment; this is now an annual event.
- 1997 Purchase of a piece of farmland to extend the burial ground.
- 1998 Visit by Mr Patrick Bwanya, lay preacher from Zimbabwe.
- 1999 Installation of the Millennium Clock by Hayward Horological Ltd from Suffolk.
- 2000 Clock dedicated on 2nd January at 3.00 pm.
Oak flower bowl carved by John Behm in memory of Miss Irene Gray.
Graveyard extension consecrated by the Bishop of Thetford.
Booklet about All Saints produced by Kerri Dobson as the result of a school project.



Watercolour of Wreningham Church by S Sewell RMS

The All Saints Church bells

Records show that there were four bells in Wreningham Church as early as 1552. The earliest (the third) of the present bells was cast by Brazyer at the Norwich Foundry in the 15th century and was inscribed + QUESIMUS ANDREA FAMULORUM SUSCIPE VOTA (we pray to thee, Andrew receive the vows of thy servants). It was recast in 1878 by John Warner & Sons, London, and weighs 5 cwts 0 qtrs 17 lbs. The treble bell weighs 2 cwts 3 qtrs 13 lbs and has a cast inscription THOMAS NEWMAN MADE MEE - 1712. The second bell weighs 3 cwts 3 qtrs 12 lbs, with a cast inscription THOS NEWMAN MADE MEE - 1714 - F. GOOCH, C.W. The tenor bell is inscribed THOMAS NEWMAN DID ME CAST ILE SING HIS PRAISE VNTO THE LAST - 1712. It weighs 6 cwts 3 qtrs 24 lbs. Newman's foundry was at Norwich but he is supposed to have travelled, setting up his foundry wherever there were bells to be cast.

In 1977 the Parochial Church Council applied for a faculty to carry out renovation, which was granted, and work was started in preparation for removal of the bells from the tower. The plan involved the use of as much voluntary labour as possible. The bells were lowered inside the tower and transported to Taylor's bell foundry at Loughborough where the canons were removed, plates made, and the bells drilled in preparation for bolting to new headstocks. Crown staples were removed and fitted with new clappers and fittings. They were then tuned to a peal and returned to Wreningham. New headstocks and fittings were made and fixed by local craftsmen, including the late Mr John Pruce, who played a major part in this work. The bells were then replaced in the tower, the bell-frame having been repaired and treated, and a safety cage fitted to the lower ladder. Pulley blocks were also made locally and new ropes have been fitted, and the vestry has been renovated to complete the scheme. Thanks are due to the Barron Bell Trust which contributed £200.

The new headstocks have been given in memory by relatives and inscribed as follows:

1. DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF ANDREW JOHN RICHARDSON, 1963-1979 (YOUTH)
2. IN MEMORY OF ALICE PANSY ROWE, 1888-1972 (SCHOOL TEACHER)
3. IN MEMORY OF ROBERT HERBERT NICHOLS, 1898-1978 (BELL RINGER)
4. IN MEMORY OF JOHN ROBERT HANTON, 1889-1973 (CHURCHWARDEN)

The Church of All Saints, Wreningham, Zimbabwe

James Hay Upcher, born in Wreningham in 1854, was the second surviving son of the Rev. Arthur Upcher, Rector of Wreningham from 1852-1896. Educated at Haileybury and Trinity College, Cambridge, he was ordained in 1877 and ministered in Suffolk and Norfolk. In 1892 while Rector of Sculthorpe, he felt the call of God to missionary work overseas. Bishop Knight-Bruce, first Bishop and Founder of the Anglican Church in Rhodesia, was in London looking for young men to serve the Church in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). Hay Upcher's first duty in the capital, Salisbury (now Harare), was to build the first brick cathedral (much of it with his own hands and with the assistance of the only other Anglican priest in the country) to replace the original 'mud hut' cathedral. He ministered all over the country, serving variously as Canon, Archdeacon and Vicar General of the Diocese of Mashonaland, and served as Army Chaplain during the Boer War taking part in the relief of the siege of Mafeking with Lord Plumer's Troop in April 1900. He was invited on more than one occasion to become the Bishop of Mashonaland, but declined.

In 1900/1 tribal wars broke out in the area of Enkeldoorn (now Chivhu) 100 miles south of Salisbury. The second Bishop, William Gaul, went there with Archdeacon Upcher. In answer to their prayers for peace the disturbances ceased. Bishop Gaul asked the Archdeacon to establish a Church Mission in the area: this he did and named the Mission Wreningham after his birthplace.

In September 1989 Olga Ward, great-niece of James Hay Upcher, travelled to Zimbabwe to trace the life and work of her great-uncle, who had died there in 1931. At Wreningham she found a new church was being built on the site of the 1901 All Saints Church. After an open-air Eucharist within the walls (then only a few feet high) she was asked if she could help to fund the building. In February 1990 Olga was welcomed by the Wreningham Norfolk Parochial Church Council and gave them a gift from the Wreningham Zimbabwe Mothers Union, a hand-embroidered traycloth which now hangs in Wreningham church. She told them about the Wreningham Zimbabwe request for financial help for the new church. For the next six years the PCC raised and dispatched funds to Wreningham Zimbabwe.

In February 1997 Olga suddenly heard that the Bishop of Harare would dedicate the new church of All Saints Wreningham on Sunday April 13th. The Norfolk churchwardens, Dennis Long with his daughter Rachael and Margaret Wilkinson with her husband Philip, accompanied Olga to Wreningham Zimbabwe. Philip made a film of the most moving and inspiring Dedication Service and Eucharist – over a thousand in the congregation with many local choirs. The film was shown in this village and copies distributed to parishioners of both Wreninghams. Presents for the new church were taken from Norfolk, and Margaret read and gave to the Bishop an address from the Bishop of Norwich. The Bishop of Harare expressed the enormous gratitude of all his people for the visitors' journey from England to participate in the service, and for thus cementing the strong link between the two Wreninghams which gave so much joy and encouragement to them all.

Today in 2002 the PCC is still supporting the Wreningham Church of All Saints in Zimbabwe wherever possible with regard to the difficult situation there at the present time.

Wreningham School

In 1977 there were big changes at the school as it was changed from a primary school to a first school. The school had over 100 pupils during the 1970s but in July 1977 children aged eight and over were transferred to Mulbarton Middle School leaving just 39 children at Wreningham school. The three mobiles were removed leaving the original buildings to provide two classrooms. In 1979 the original buildings gained new heating with the installation of calor gas central heating.

Indoor toilets became available in 1989! After a long campaign by parents and governors an extension was built to house indoor toilets for children and staff. A shower was also provided. 1994 saw building works to extend the infant classroom and provide new cloakroom and storage space.

In 1995 the LEA were once more reviewing the status of Norfolk schools and the school system. With the advent of 'Key Stages' the First, Middle and Upper school system did not fit well and governors at Wreningham were keen that our school should become, once more, a Primary School dealing with children at Key Stages 1 and 2. The children then move on to Secondary school at age 11, Key Stage 3. Ultimately the governors' discussions bore fruit and in September 2000 our school once more became Wreningham VC Primary School.

The discussions about Wreningham school status also provided a building plan which, despite Primary status, has yet to be undertaken. In 2002 there are four mobile classrooms back on the playing field and 93 pupils at the school.

The school head teachers have been:

1957-1981	Mrs Joan Lambert (formerly Miss Balls)
1981-1984	Mrs Vivien Horobin
1984	Mrs Audrey Pollard (County unattached head)
1985-1995	Mrs Sheila Palmer (Mrs Palmer died July 2001)
1995-1996	Mrs Claire Ogilvie (acting head)
1996	Mrs Annabelle Rose (acting head) & Mrs Linda Moyes (County unattached head)
1996 -	Mrs Lynne Wright

Notable events in Wreningham 1977-2002 *since the Silver Jubilee*

(These facts have been compiled as accurately as the information would allow. We apologise for any errors or omissions.)

1978	Silver Jubilee Memento launched in Village Hall by Mr David Richardson.
1979	Bells lowered from church tower and taken to Taylor's foundry at Loughborough.
1981	Conveyance of Rectory playing field to the Parish Council for village use. Rectory, last occupied by Rev. Henry Brierly, sold by the Diocese as a private house. Death of Mr John Pruce. Church bells rededicated by Dean of Gloucester. First event held in the new Village Hall. Death of Mr Percy Coleman, formerly of Pear Tree Farm.
1982	Death of Mr Alfred Howett snr.

- 1983 Death of Mr Donald Ireland.
Mr Kenneth Hanton retires as Chairman of the Parish Council after 21 years, and is succeeded by Mr Christopher Brighton.
Death of Mrs May Howlett, landlady of the Bird in Hand for 56 years.
- 1984 Bird in Hand closed with plans to be turned into a private house.
- 1986 Rev. Henry Brierly leaves Wreningham.
Mr William Wells becomes Chairman of the Parish Council.
- 1987 Bird in Hand reopened as Free House and Restaurant.
The Great Storm: severe winds cut a swathe through East Anglia, destroying many acres of woodland in Thetford Forest and leaving its mark on Wreningham
- 1988 Coleman family give up milk round.
- 1989 Rev. Jolyon Bradshaw moves to Bermondsey.
Deaths of Mr Henley Curl and Rev. G Whitehead in Surrey.
Wreningham featured on Radio Norfolk (Past, Present and Future).
- 1990 Death of Mrs D Folwell, founder member of Wreningham & District Women's Institute.
- 1991 Dr David Bellamy visits village set-aside land, part of which is now Long's Wood and the rest is in a country stewardship scheme.
Death of Miss Margaret Preston.
First 'Open Gardens' held.
Children's play area built on the playing field.
- 1992 Death of Miss Joan Ford.
Mr Stephen Richardson becomes Chairman of the Parish Council.
- 1993 Survey of memorials in Churchyard and Church by churchwardens.
Death of Mr Harry Minns of Church Farm.
Home Watch scheme started in village by the Parish Council.
- 1994 Rev. Keith Crocker moves to New Catton.
Roman coins unearthed on farmland at Wreningham, dating 32 BC–170 AD.
Long's Wood planted; public opening 19th June by Mrs Rosemary Tilbrook; the wood extended in 1998 and 2000
- 1996 Schoolchildren hold first Teddy Bears' Picnic in Long's Wood.
Methodist Chapel closes; opened 1904 at a cost of £400; last service 17th November.
- 1997 Dedication of new church at Wreningham Zimbabwe by Jonathan Siyachitema, Bishop of Harare, attended by churchwardens of Wreningham Norfolk.
Past Days in Wreningham published by Mr B K Day.
- 1998 Rev. Simon Stephenson moves to Hingham.
Wreningham School Centenary celebrations.
Mr Neville Howes retires after thirty years as Clerk to the Parish Council.
- 1999 Rev. Clive Styles becomes Rector.
Death of Miss Irene Gray.
Mrs Julie Miles becomes Chairman of the Parish Council.
First Art Exhibition held.
Installation of the Millennium Clock.
- 2000 Wreningham VC School returned to primary status.
Graveyard extension consecrated by the Bishop of Thetford.
- 2001 Retirement of Mrs Mabel Ireland, who ran the village sub post office for 43 years.
Death of Mr Colin Spratt.
- 2002 Death of Mr Gerald Baldwin.

Wreningham as it is in June 2002

Wreningham is considered to be in a green belt area so there are no large residential developments. The population today is 513 living in 208 houses. The total area is 1,542 acres. Most people go out of the village to work.

There is an elected parish council, which has a budget supplied by part of the council tax on residential property. The present chairman is Mrs Julie Miles. Their responsibilities include the maintenance of public property in the village, such as the war memorial, the village sign and the playing field. The present village hall was opened in 1981. It is run by an elected committee and is a registered charity. The Church of All Saints is now part of the Upper Tas Valley Benefice. Services are held there two or three times a month. The Rector is the Rev. Clive Styles. The church's day-to-day care is in the hands of an elected Parochial Church Council. The Wreningham Rectory is now a private house. There is a Fuel Trust, a registered charity which owns land and investments, the proceeds of which are given to qualifying inhabitants in the form of credits against their electricity bill. Wreningham VC School is now a primary school. Seventy-five pupils attended on 2 June 2002.

At the centre of the village is the Wreningham village sign, erected to commemorate the Queen's Silver Jubilee. This stands on the site of the old Reading Room, established by Miss Mary Upcher, sister of the Rev. James Hay Upcher, founder of the Church of All Saints, Wreningham, Zimbabwe. There is no longer a post office since the retirement of Mrs Mabel Ireland in 2001, but there are still two telephone kiosks and two post boxes. We no longer have a village dairy, but there is still delivery of milk and newspapers. The library bus calls once a month. There are no shops but there are bus services to Wymondham and Norwich, and a dial-a-ride service. High House Farm and Pear Tree Farm are now private houses, and a small development of houses has been built at the latter. Wreningham Community Woodland opened in June 1994. The rectory playing field is used for cricket and other sporting activities and includes a children's play area. There is an active Women's Institute. Many groups and societies including the Social Club meet in the village hall.

The Bird in Hand is now a thriving Free House and restaurant; the proprietor is Mrs Carol Turner. Spratts Coaches Ltd is a coach hire business. Messrs S V Harvey & Son are builders. Mr W S Wells has a timber craft business. The mill premises are now occupied by Travis Perkins Ltd, builders' merchants. There are still two nurseries, G M Baldwin and D Fairman.

The farmers in the village are:

Mrs V Peel – Hill Farm

H G Minns & Son – Church Farm, and land at High House and Pear Tree Farm.

Mr P Saul – Elm Tree Farm

V D Long & Son – Fir Grove

E G Whiterod & Sons – High Common

Bernard Matthews Foods Ltd – Glebe Farm

Mr R N Bothway – The Poplars



This document is compiled and published by the Wreningham Golden Jubilee Committee

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