

# Walkern Journal

NEWS OF THE VILLAGE THAT MOVES WITH THE TIMES

APRIL 1972

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

5p

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### W.I. GROUP LEADER

Mrs. Nance Ransome of Bockings is to be congratulated on being chosen as local W.I. Group leader. At the last group meeting, held at Ardeley on March 15, Walkern was represented by a contingent of 20 ladies. The meeting was the occasion for a talk on 'Royal Homes of London'.

### NO MARCH MEETING FOR W.I.

The monthly meeting of the Walkern W.I., announced for March 1, was cancelled as this was a power cut day. The February 2 meeting, at which Mrs. D. Baker of Whitwell spoke on 'A Little History of Hertfordshire' was notable for its unusual competition for the best period paper hat. Miss O'Brien took first prize and Mrs. Esmé Overman came second. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 5, when a St. John's ambulance officer will talk on first aid in the home.

### BLANKETS FOR OXFAM

The Walkern W.I. Handicrafts Group, under the guiding hand of Mrs. G.J. Cronk, Handicrafts Secretary, knitted and presented ten blankets to Oxfam last February. There must have been much hard work! If anyone has oddments of wool which they would like to give for this good cause, please either hand them as they are to Mrs. Cronk, at 5 Brockshott, or knit them into 6in squares, all plain, and the W.I. Group will make them up into blankets.

### WALKERN CHOIR ON T.V.

The choir of Walkern Parish Church will augment the choir of St. George's, Stevenage, when they appear on BBC TV Songs of Praise. Recording will be on April 19, the broadcast in July.

### OUR SUCCESSFUL PHOTOGRAPHER

Miss Nora Wright is to be congratulated for having had no less than three of her colour transparencies selected for inclusion in the 1972 W.I. national calendar.

### A HOME FOR GOOD OLD CLOTHES

Mrs. Esmé Overman has announced a charity scheme for the collection and sale of exceptionally good second hand clothing and knick-knacks. 50% of the profits will go to the Walkern Parish Church Organ Fund, the remainder to the owner of the goods sold. Full details will be published as soon as they have been finalized.

### FOR DESTITUTE CHILDREN

Mrs. Marjorie Ashurst held a coffee morning at her home, 83 High Street, on Thursday March 23, to collect for the Destitute Children's Fund of War on Want.

### RETURN VISIT OF CHRISTINA WARD

Music lovers who remember the very successful recital given by Christina Ward in Walkern in 1970, will now have a chance to hear her again. A return visit has been arranged by the Music Sub-committee of the Walkern PCC.

Christina Ward, who accompanies herself on the guitar, will give a programme of folk songs and negro spirituals at the Parish Church on Friday April 7, at 8.00 pm. Admission will be by programme for which the charge will be 50p. The recital is being held in aid of the Parish Church Organ Fund.

### COUNTRY DANCING

The Parent-Teacher Association of Walkern School are holding a series of weekly Country Dance classes at the school, on either Wednesday or Thursday evenings. These classes, which are proving very popular (the attendance at a recent session was 30) will continue until May, when they will culminate in a grand public Barn Dance on the evening of Saturday May 13.

### FOOTBALL CLUB

Derek Beadle, Secretary of the Robin Hood Football Club, reports that the team is doing its best to repeat last years' success when it won the Stevenage & District Sunday Football League shield. (The shield and medals can be seen on display at the Robin Hood). The club is looking for some new recruits. They must be genuine village lads, present or past, but hair may be long or short! Kick-off is at 10.15am every Sunday morning at the village football field. Incidentally, we understand there is talk of a new 12-team league being formed in our district.

### ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

The Walkern Branch of the British Legion now has 58 members and 40 honorary members. Our War Memorial had its stonework cleaned last year and the asphalt path was renewed. When funds are available it is planned to have the base stone repointed.

### DERBY DRAW

The Annual Derby Draw will be held as usual by the British Legion in Walkern, and tickets are now available from Major Rutherford and other members. This event is a major fund-raiser which enables the Branch to make its Christmas gifts.

### WHIST DRIVE

Keep the evening of June 1 free! This is the date fixed for the Annual British Legion Whist Drive to be held at Walkern Village Hall. The Derby Draw will take place during the course of the evening. Gifts for prizes and refreshments would be greatly appreciated by the Secretary.

### OLD PEOPLE'S HOME

Mrs. Marion Everitt held a well-attended coffee morning at her home, 'Birse', High Street, on March 3, to raise money towards Martins House, a £200,000 Old People's Home to be built at Pin Green, Stevenage under a Chauncy Housing Association scheme. Mrs. C. Bardswell is a member of the CHA committee.

### WALKERN GIRL FOR SOUTH AFRICA

Bob Bruce's daughter Mary, who married Harry Gilbert of Barton, Beds, in our Parish Church last October, is off to South Africa for a few years. Harry, an electrical engineer, has taken a job in Pretoria. The couple leave on April 14.

### SUNDAY BELLS

The people of Walkern hear the Parish Church bells from 9.30 to 9.45 every Sunday morning. They are rung from a carillon — a device which one person can operate. Playing the carillon on recent Sundays have been Jane Weston, Mr. Collis and A.N. Other. Would anyone else like to play the bells? Volunteers will be welcomed by the Rector who will show them how the carillon is played.



Anne, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Gunfield of Walkern, on the occasion of her recent wedding to Victor John Holliday.

# W J

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This first issue of the WALKERN JOURNAL appears on Easter Day 1972. The editor takes this opportunity of wishing all readers and well-wishers . . . . .

## A HAPPY EASTER

Please remember this is your own journal. If you have news which others might like to read, send it to the editor. We may not be able to publish everything, but we will do our best.

### BAPTISM

On February 20, 1972 at St. Mary's, Walkern David Henry Leonard and Loraine Hilda Jane, children of David and Hilda Halewood of 50 Moorsley.

### CHRISTENING

On March 12, 1972, at the Church of the Assumption of Our Lady, Walkern, Clare Ellen, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Tony Fagan of 45 High Street.

### MARRIAGE

On February 19, 1972 at St. Mary's Walkern, Victor John Holliday and Anne, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Gunfield of 86 High Street.

### BURIAL

On January 31, 1972, at Almond Hill, Stevenage, following a Requiem Mass at the Church of the Assumption of Our Lady, Mr. Edgar Munn, R.I.P.

### BURIAL

On February 21, 1972 at St. Mary's, Walkern, Gladys Ellen Spearman.

### INTERMENT OF ASHES

On March 4, 1972, at St. Mary's, Walkern, Digby Sherwood Baker, Priest, by the Rector, following a Requiem Mass said by Father Barnabas, SSF.

### ELECTORAL ROLL

The electoral roll of the Parish of St. Mary the Virgin is being entirely remade this year. Mrs. C. Bardswell has taken responsibility for preparation of the new roll.

### PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

A meeting of the local PCC is to be held at the Rectory on the evening of April 4.

### MOTHERING SUNDAY

Spring flowers, collected and made into posies by Miss Muriel Peacock, were handed to over two dozen children at the Parish Church on Sunday, March 12, to give to their mothers.

## EDITORIAL MESSAGES . . . . .

*From Rev. John B. Charles, Rector of the Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Walkern.*

My dear friends,

To write my first letter for the first issue of our paper is a signal honour. But outstanding amongst my thoughts is one of gratitude that the idea, which began as a monthly parish magazine, has developed into something much more worth while. A paper for the village, for all persuasions or none at all, for all ages, covering all activities, is like children writing home to a beloved mother, sharing their news and views, recounting triumphs and tragedies.

Since arriving in Walkern towards the end of last year, my wife and I have been impressed with the friendliness of the Walkern people; and for this we are grateful. It is so much easier for an outsider to feel he belongs when those who have been here a long time help him to feel he is one of them. This is a quality which is not only essential to happiness, but also for growth of personality. It is well known and widely accepted that a person grows into a balanced and useful member of a society when his home background is happy. And happiness depends to a large extent on a proper balance of freedom and discipline. There have to be rules, but no rule is ever an end in itself, only a means towards the greater happiness of the family as a whole. What is true of a family must also be true of a village.

The problem of a village is to keep its personality intact, and yet avoid parochialism and isolation. The mobility given to people by the motor car has endangered the one and hastened the other, until isolation has almost disappeared and personality lost. The remedy would seem to lie along the road of using the motor car sparingly, and creating village activities. The Walkern Women's Institute is an example of an active body; then there are scouts and guides for the young people of the village. There is some evidence that a Youth Club would be welcomed. A village seems to lack something if there is no village cricket to play and watch. Perhaps a play-reading group would appeal to some in the winter months.

In our church we have now got a Sunday School going. Three young ladies agreed to help start the venture, and there are now 21 children on the register with promises of more to come. The introduction of the Sunday School, coinciding with the Parish Eucharist, enables children to come with their parents, and yet be relieved of having to sit through a long service. Instead they go to the Rectory where they learn about the simple things of life, seeds, fields, trees and growing things, the purpose and plan of life. Now three more ladies have come forward to give help. This is very encouraging. Through this venture it is hoped our children will discover the joy of belonging in the freedom of being their true selves. Religion and life ought to be inseparable, and that is what we want the children to find out for themselves.

I cannot close my first letter without a word of thanks to Mr. Michael Overman, who willingly undertook the editorship of the Walkern Journal.

Then I would wish to thank all those who have taken out a year's subscription. A paper has to be self-supporting if it is to survive, and ought to earn a surplus if it is to develop. Those who underwrite the paper by paying 50p per year in advance are the real publishers.

With best wishes to you all for a Happy Easter.

*From Father Kevin Moran, Minister of the Church of the Assumption of our Lady, Walkern.*

With the coming of spring, we feel a bit more lively, and perhaps it is the right time for us to consider how we can become as alive as possible. This is a very personal matter and what is one man's meat is another's poison. Yet we know that the acquisition of material goods does not satisfy the immense desire we have for fulfilment. It is really only through other people, through relating to them that we can begin to fulfil this desire and begin 'to be' rather than 'to have'. Only through others do we become alive and human.

*From Rev. Jeffrey Plowman, Minister of the Walkern Free Church (Congregational/Methodist)*

Welcome to the Walkern Journal. A brave venture. In these days of TV the reading diminishes. So do real live shows (not the so called live shows of the studio). The life of our village is worth more than Ambridge simply because it's stranger than fiction and that's the truth! Therefore read the Journal to enjoy a lively interest in what is going on.

There are, no doubt, newspapers better than others for lighting fires — but the Journal will reflect the warmth of the cottage hearth and be a centre of interest in the centrally heated home. It may spark off some points of view which need airing and even fan the flame of community spirit which will do us all good!

The back lash of mass production and ready made entertainment is a do-it-yourself explosion. We don't have to live at one remove from life all the time. This Journal is in your hands — it can be a useful tool in the shaping of our village for all who would make their home in this place.

## PLEASE HELP US SAVE OUR FINE ORGAN

£2000 MUST BE RAISED

Walkern's historic old church of St. Mary the Virgin has heard a number of organs. Doubtless in earlier days there were various instruments for making music. On the details we lack knowledge. We do know, however, that in the year 1841 an Organ Fund was opened and that on August 7, 1842, John Izzard Prior of Clay Hall wrote in his diary 'Grinder organ heard for first time, played by young Bray the wheelwright's boy'.

This grinder must have served the community for thirty years for we read that in 1873, a new organ was installed in the chancel, when the gallery was taken down, that in 1877 there were additions to the south side of the chancel and to the organ chamber.

This time the instrument made music for us for a score of years. Then, in 1894, according to our parish organist, Mr. Kerry Hicks, our present organ, made by J.W. Walker & Sons of Ruislip, was installed. This two-manual instrument, a fine example of the maker's work, has been played regularly, week after week, for some 78 years, for it is the organ we hear each Sunday.

A valuable instrument, which the makers say would cost us £6,500 to replace today, the organ is unfortunately in danger of falling down. Woodworm has made a meal of the woodwork and the organ's main frame is dangerously weak.

Realising only last year the need for action, the Parochial Church Council called in experts to assess the damage and give estimates for repairs.

The minimum bill, to prevent the organ from collapsing will be close on £900. To complete a thorough job and make some important improvements will cost us not much short of £2,000.

Where is this money to come from ?

The Parochial Church Council thought over this problem at great length and came to one inescapable conclusion. There is no one else they can go to except the good people of this village, you and I.

A few of us may be able and willing to help with substantial gifts, £10 perhaps, or even £50 or £100. Many of us would like to give, but have little to spare.

We believe, however, that if all of us give as generously as we can, every penny and every pound will help swell the fund. God willing we shall raise not only the £900 we must have, but the £2,000 we would like to have.



### WORDS OF WISDOM

Our photograph shows our oldest inhabitant, Mr. Bert Carter, with his wife Katie and great grand-daughter.

Bert will soon be 93 and Katie is 89.

Asked what he thinks about life in the village today, 'The modern generation have lost their faith', said Bert. 'They think only of pleasure on Sunday. In my day there were five places of worship in our village and whole families went to church'.

Bert Carter spent 53 years in the Parish church choir, sometimes standing in as organ blower. In his day there were twelve men and fourteen boys in the choir.

Asked how he passes his time Bert said that until a year ago he worked a large garden plot. 'Even now I do some light work every day', he went on. 'Sawing or chopping wood, for example. I am never happier than when working'.

Bert Carter only retired when he was 75. He and Katie have 15 great grandchildren.

Please send your donations to the PCC Treasurer, Mrs. Alice Rubra, Wych Elm Cottage, Church End, or to the Rector, Rev. John Charles. Thanks !

## Walkern Church Centenary.

IMPORTANT CONGREGATIONAL  
GATHERINGS

ON BANK HOLIDAY.

Nonconformists from a wide neighbourhood assembled at Walkern on Whit-Monday to assist in a fitting celebration of the centenary of the village Congregational Church.

A century ago a theological seminary was established at Walkern, and, though long since merged into New College, yet in its day it did much useful work. Although it is a hundred years since a Congregational church was formed at Walkern, the building in which the people met was erected in the previous year. The record shows that the opening sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Draper, who for some three years was President of Chees-hunt College, and for a period the pulpit was supplied by students at that institution. Congregationalism in the village dates back to a much earlier period, there existing a record to the effect that soon after the passing of the Toleration Act a certificate was granted for services to be held in the house of Edward Ives, and these continued to be granted until a few years after the opening of the church, the last being for services to be held "in the rooms or in the barns of Walkern Hall farm." The trust deed of the chapel declares that in the church there are only two orders—bishops and deacons—and from time immemorial the student who has had charge of the work has been dignified by the title of "Bishop." The present "bishop" is Mr. Stanley Smith Shrubsole, of New College, who is held in high esteem by

the people of Walkern.

The centenary services were attended by friends who came on foot, in motors, on bicycles, and in various types of carriages, from Chipping, Sandon, Barkway, Knebworth, Hitchin, Therfield, Barnet and Codicote, the representative of the last place having known the little chapel for half a century.

In the afternoon the building was crowded to hear a sermon by the Rev. Professor Andrews, of New College. The introductory part of the service was taken by the Rev. Howard Staines, of Knebworth, after which Professor Andrews preached a very telling sermon founded on the words of St. Paul—"That I may know Christ." This was followed by a largely-attended tea-party in a barn kindly lent by Mr. Farr. Before the tables were removed, the chair was taken by the Rev. Dr. Burford Hooke, treasurer of the Herts. Union, and brief impromptu speeches were delivered by friends from the various churches mentioned above. These included the Revs. G. W. Organs, W. B. Osborne, Lloyd Evans, Howard Staines, Mr. G. Bates and Mr. Fred Foster, the local church being represented by its "bishop" and by its secretary, Mr. Samuel Wright.

Later, a wagon being commandeered for a platform, Dr. Hooke again presided, and conveyed to the meeting the best wishes of the Herts. Union for the encouragement of the folks at Walkern.

A lecture was then delivered by Professor Andrews on "The Puritan Ideal." It was evidently greatly appreciated, and at the close the National Anthem was heartily sung. It was announced that, altogether, about £40 had been raised towards the renovation of the little church and the placing in it of a suitable organ.

### WALKERN SCRAP BOOK

The news item reproduced here appeared in The Herts Mercury, on June 10th, 1911.

## CALENDAR FOR APRIL

### St. Mary the Virgin

Sunday	2nd	EASTER DAY	Parish Eucharist and Lighting of New Fire 9.45 am.
Sunday	9th	LOW SUNDAY	Parish Eucharist 9.45 am
Sunday	16th	EASTER 2	Parish Eucharist 9.45 am
Sunday	23rd	EASTER 3	Parish Eucharist 9.45 am
Tuesday	25th	MARK, EM	Holy Communion 10.00 am
Sunday	30th	EASTER 4	Parish Eucharist 9.45 am

Holy Communion is celebrated every Sunday at 8.00 am and every Wednesday at 7.30 pm. Also on Lesser Saints' Days by arrangement.

Sunday School each Sunday morning, beginning in church at 9.45 am, going out to the Rectory before the sermon.

Evensong each Sunday evening at 6.00 pm.

Confessions are heard on the eve of Christmas, Easter and Ascension Days between 4.00 pm and 5.00 pm; or by appointment.

### Walkern Free Church

Morning Service is held every Sunday at 11.00 am.

### The Church of the Assumption of Our Lady

Times of Masses during Easter Week: Maunday Thursday 7.00 pm; Good Friday 3.00 pm; Holy Saturday 11.00 pm; Easter Day (and every Sunday) 8.30 am.

Friday fast alms — the last two weeks of March together with the first two in April are being donated to Lenten Alms. The last two weeks of April, together with the first two weeks of March will be donated to the Fire Service Benevolent Fund

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School at the Rectory is proving popular to parents and children alike. The School opened on February 6 and the average attendance is around 18. The regular school leaders — Mrs. Anne Wittaker, Mrs Shirley Brewster, Mrs Irene Pink and Mrs Janet Graves — have their work cut out and to enable them to have a Sunday morning off now and again more volunteers are needed. Please let the Rector know if you could help. Sunday School starts 10am, the children being taken over to the Rectory from the 9.45 Parish Eucharist, leaving before the sermon.

## RECITAL BY WALKERN SINGERS

On Sunday May 14, Walkern Parish Church will be the venue of a programme of sacred and secular music by the Walkern Singers. Two soloists will be the guests of the Singers on this occasion. Daphne Graham will sing Hebridean songs with harp accompaniment, and Charles Ransome, Baritone, will sing four serious songs by Brahms. Admission by programme, 50p, in aid of the Organ Repair Fund.

## GRAND DAUGHTER

Many will remember the gay wedding, held in our Parish church last year, of Jane Muncey to Will Rosado, formerly serving with the U.S. Air Force. Jane, who now lives in New York State, recently became the proud mother of a baby girl, Leona Colette.

## WALKERN BOY

### IN NORTHERN IRELAND

How many readers know that Terry Beadle (25), son of Mr & Mrs Cecil Beadle of Moorsley, is serving in troubled Northern Ireland. Terry is a lance corporal in the Military Police.

## A PASSIONTIDE RECITAL

John Stainer's Crucifixion was sung at Walkern Parish Church on Palm Sunday afternoon, and at St. Nicholas' Church, Stevenage, on Good Friday evening, by the combined choirs of St. Nicholas' and St. Mary's, Walkern. Soloists were Douglas Marston, tenor, of Hemel Hempstead and David Moore, bass, of Letchworth. The organ was played by Terry Plummeridge of St. George's, Stevenage and the 50-strong choir (which included 15 of our singers) was conducted by our own Kerry Hicks.

## WEST SIDE STORY

Several Walkern children, pupils of Chells School, were involved in one way or another with West Side Story, which the school presented to five packed audiences last month. Seven months work went into the moving production which was notable for its choreography. Except for an outside orchestra this was entirely a school effort.

## OUR SINGERS

Apart from our own Walkern Singers, run by Mrs. Nance Ransome, five of our village folk sing regularly with the Stevenage Choral Society. If anyone else is interested, please get in touch with Mr. Kerry Hicks.

## HELP THE AGED APPEAL

Miss Muriel Peacock provided a barn at The Laurels, 80 High Street, as a collection centre for clothing and blankets for aged refugees and destitutes overseas, under the Help the Aged national appeal held on March 21 and 22.

## CONSERVATIVE A.G.M.

The Annual General Meeting of the local Conservative party was held in Walkern on Tuesday, February 29.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The various forthcoming events mentioned in detail elsewhere in this issue of WJ are summarized here for convenience. Events from May 1 on, should be sent to the editor by April 10, for inclusion in our next issue.

April 5, Wednesday.	Women's Institute Monthly Meeting, at the School Hall.
April 7, Friday.	Folk song recital by Christina Ward, at the Parish Church, 8.00pm.
May 13, Saturday.	Barn Dance at the School Hall.
May 14, Sunday.	Recital by the Walkern Singers, at the Parish Church.
June 1, Thursday.	British Legion Whist Drive and Derby Draw, at the Village Hall.

## J. A. CLARK

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