FINNINGHAM NEWSLETTER
WINTER 2025-26

December-January-February

The editor opines…

'Tis the season of peace and goodwill. If only! For millions peace is an impossible dream - but in Finningham it is everyday life. It comes at a heavy cost, treasure it.

You will see (on page 4) that we have a new advertiser, the Suffolk School of Art. I think some of you may be interested in the classes they run at Thornham Walks. Judith Howard-Rees wrote "If you or any of your friends fancy dropping by during the day on a Monday, Tuesday or Thursday, you would be made welcome by John and the student artists. Alternatively, and in addition, Fine Art Friday is open to anyone 7-9pm— glass of wine, nibbles, meet the artist and see the work completed by artists during the previous Monday."

There are a few tickets still available for Kristina Bee's concert. They will be sold at the door.

A peaceful Christmas to you all.

Ian Armstrong

Your newsletter is produced by Friends of Finningham. It can be read online at finningham.com. Contributions to the spring edition should reach the editor by February 20th. Email ianbacton@aol.com or phone 01449 780215.

Friends of Finningham Meeting 12th January, 2026 in the church 7.30pm

The next Friends of Finningham meeting will be on Monday 12th January in the church where we will be planning our events for 2026. Do come along our meetings are very informal and we would like to hear your thoughts and ideas for events for next year.

KINDNESS IN OUR COMMUNITY

At our Harvest Festival donations for the Stowmarket Food Bank were truly outstanding. Last year the Food Bank was so grateful to receive 21kg of donations but this year we gave the wonderful amount of 47kg. This will make such a difference to the lives of many families in our area. A thank you poster is up in the church. Come and see.

A big thank you to all the people who sponsored me and supported me in many ways for the Suffolk Historic Churches Bike Ride. I visited 10 churches (20 miles) on a very windy day but it was most enjoyable. You helped me raise £500. This will help our church and other churches like ours. Many many thanks.

As I write the next event at St Bartholomew's is Stir Up Sunday then the following weekend the Christmas Cheer Concert organised by Friends of Finningham. I'm sure we'll have a happy time together with our family community.

Please don't forget it's our Carols and Christingles service on Sunday 14th December at 3.30. See you there! Also 9.30 am service on Christmas day morning. A joyous time together.

Every Blessing to you all this Christmas and in the New Year.

Marion

VISIT A WORKING ART STUDIO

MEET A COMMUNITY OF ARTISTS **OPEN** MONDAY, TUESDAY AND THURSDAYS | 10AM-4PM

Find out about:

- Art Classes
- Fine Art Painting Course
- Monthly Fine Art Friday Art Exhibitions
- Summer programme of workshops on a Saturday

Beginners and amateur artists welcome

Set in Thornham Walks with an ancient Woodland Parking and café nearby

Visit **www.suffolkschoolof.art** for more details

Contact John Parker, Tutor & Artist to arrange a visit or pop by and see what we are doing.

suffolk SCHOOL OF.ART

16 D-E Redhouse Yard
Thornham Walks
Gislingham Road
IP23 8HH

07442 491734

www.suffolkschoolof.art

St. Bartholomew's, Finningham

Come and join us - All ages welcome

CAROLS AND CHRISTINGLES

Sunday 14th December 3.30pm

Join us with Carols and Christingles to light

In a warm church with a warm welcome!

Join us for refreshments after the service

All welcome to our Joyous Christmas morning Holy Communion service at 9.30am

News from Finningham Parish Council

Welcome to a New Councillor

The Parish Council is very pleased to welcome Mike Pope to the Council, following his successful application for the co-option vacancy at the meeting held on the 13th of October 2025. We look forward to the skills and commitment Councillor Pope will be bringing to his role, in addition to fresh perspective and new ideas, and welcome him to his new role.

New VAS (vehicle activated speed) devices

As you may already be aware, as part of the its ongoing commitment to road safety and driver awareness, the Parish Council has installed two new solar powered VAS devices.

The new VAS devices are located on Wickham Road and Walsham Road, in addition to the existing devices on Station Road and Westhorpe Road.

The Parish Council extends its sincere thanks to Councillor Mellen for providing a funding contribution from his Suffolk County Council Locality budget, which has helped to make the purchase of these two new devices possible. Thanks also to Parish Council Chairman Jonathan Charter, and Vice-Chair Perry Saunders for giving up their time to install the devices.

A fifth device will shortly be positioned on Gislingham Road, to ensure that all five roads into the village are covered, helping to create a safer environment for residents and visitors alike.

Remembrance Sunday

The Parish Council joined residents in honouring the memory of those who gave their lives in service, by laying a wreath at the War Memorial during the Remembrance service held on Sunday the 9th of November 2025. Thanks to Councillor Saunders for laying the wreath on behalf of the Council during what was reported to be a very moving service.

National Grid Norwich to Tilbury Development Consent Order

National Grid's Development Consent Order for its Norwich to Tilbury proposal, has now been accepted for inspection by the Planning Inspectorate on behalf

of the Secretary of State. Finningham Parish Council has again reiterated its strong objection to the proposal, by registering and making a written submission to the Planning Inspectorate. Our full submission can be found on our website: https://www.finninghamparishcouncil.gov.uk/

https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/infrastructure-projects/norwich-to-tilbury

https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN020027

Parish Council contact information

The Parish Council meets at least 10 times a year in St Bartholomew's Church, Finningham. Members of the community are always welcome to attend, and the agenda includes a 'public participation' item, to allow members of the public to contribute to the meeting, or raise any concerns.

The first point of contact for the council is always the Clerk, Jane Challis, who can be contacted via email: clerk@finninghamparishcouncil.gov.uk, or by calling 07796 410694.

You can find the date of the next meeting, along with agendas, minutes, and the latest news, on the Parish Council's website: https://www.finninghamparishcouncil.gov.uk/, or by viewing the village noticeboard on Wickham Road by the crossroads.

COFFEE MORNING
at
ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH

LAST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH
from 10 AM

Note - There is none in December

AT A GLANCE:

November 30 Concert: An afternoon with Kristina Bee 3pm £5

December 6 Christmas Lunch (sold out)

December 8 Council meeting, 7.30 in the church

December 14 Carols and Christingles 3.30

Christmas morning Holy Communion service 9.30

January 12 Friends of Finningham meeting 7.30 in the church

January 23 Medical Dogs, a talk at Westhorpe. £3 , 7.30

February 27 Chris Fox in concert. Westhorpe 7.30 £10

Bus Services

Finningham to Stowmarket 9.45 weekdays from Wickham Road near the Old Post Office. Return journey leaves from Bury Street (near the lights) at 1pm.

Finningham to Bury St Edmunds 320 service, Wednesdays only, 9.50 from the White Horse (westbound). Return 1.25 from Bury Bus Station stand 3.

Finningham to Eye and Diss Fridays only, 9.35 from the White Horse, return leaves Diss bus station at 1pm.

Rural Connect phone 01449 700792

Connecting Communities (wheelchair accessible) ph 01449 614271

Community Transport phone Gordon on 01379 897109

Contact the editor if you would like to place an ad.

Full page	£25
Half page	£15
Quarter page	£8

Prices are per edition for a black and white ad.

National Service – The Finale

I have told you what I can remember about three of the longer excursions in East Africa. However, I also had shorter trips.

North of Nairobi there was a farmer who let out chalets situated in her garden to Service Personnel. I visited with some of the boys from camp. She told us that she accepted visits from Army and Air Force personnel but stopped having the Army because they always ended up fighting!

She was known as Mrs Mac; probably in her 60s. She ran the farm by herself with the help of her African staff. We were served breakfast of fresh papaya with fresh cream. In her garden she grew, amongst other food stuff, papaya, pineapple and bananas. The cream came from her own cows. She took us to one of her mud huts, similar to one that I spent a couple of nights in on my trip to the Nile. In the centre of this hut was a gleaming, stainless steel contraption which was used to separate the cream from the milk. I have to say that I was impressed to see such modern equipment. Mind you, it was easy to impress me, being a Londoner who had never been to a working farm in the UK, and therefore had no knowledge of the equipment used in farms in the UK in 1958.

I mentioned in an earlier episode that I met up with some ex-pat British families. At Christmas 1958, a small group of us were invited to visit for a little party. At the end of this visit we drove into the centre of Nairobi. As we were leaving a car park, we noticed a post laying by the exit to the car park. It appears that on camp it was a tradition to adorn the billet with signs. Homes often had signs with owners/tenants' names on them. These featured in the billet and we thought the damaged post at the car park would be a splendid addition to the collection. It was about eight feet long. Made of wood. (I think my dad would have called it a piece of 4X4.) It was painted in bold black and white bands with a circular disc at the unsplintered end. On the disc was a 'No Entry' sign.

We drove back to camp in the open topped car with the post sticking out the back. We were travelling along Queen Elizabeth Way in the outside lane, overtaking a large lorry with what appeared to be a very friendly driver. We soon found that he was trying to tell us about the police car on the inside lane.

At the Police Station a white Police Inspector became exasperated with us, trying to decide if our explanations were true. It probably didn't help our case as I was wearing a paper fez and wearing a false moustache from a Christmas cracker! Eventually, he instructed the Police Sergeant to make an entry in the 'Lost and Found Book', stating "Found. One 'No Entry' sign – damaged". We happily went on our way back to camp. Regrettably, the sign did not form part of our collection of signs in the billet.

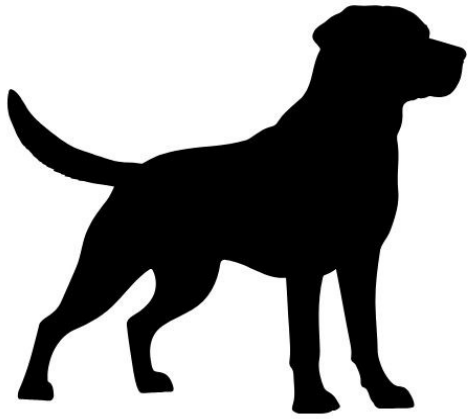
One abiding memory I have is when I visited a place which was remote but must have been an animal rescue centre. Whilst walking around with the owners we were joined by two friends; a baby elephant and a baby rhinoceros! They were no taller than my waist. Thinking of them now gives me a warm glow of love and appreciation of wildlife. To this day, nearly 70 years later, I regret not interacting with those delightful little animals. From that, I suppose, I have learnt one thing and, perhaps it could apply to you. Wherever you visit, do not come home regretting that you did not take advantage of an opportunity

David Wadlow.

Also from David: Coffee Morning

Thank you to all of you who came to my coffee morning on 4th November and were so generous. I have given half the monies that you left for me to St Bartholomew's church (they did after all lend me their mugs and urn!) and the other half will go to the Rural Coffee Car-avan.

WESTHORPE HOSTS
Dogs Saving Lives – The Work of the Medical Detection Dogs Charity



An illustrated presentation by Norma Howell

The presentation highlights the work of both Bio Detection Dogs and Medical Alert Assistance Dogs at the Medical Detection Dogs charity founded in 2008.

7.30pm Friday 23rd January 2026

£3 per person in aid of
The Medical Dogs Charity
Go to Westhorpe website for ticket details:
westhorpe.onesuffolk.net
or call Alison 07972 415205

WESTHORPE VILLAGE HALL
WITH LICENSED BAR

WESTHORPE PRESENTS:
CHRIS FOX

Award winning 21st Century Folk singer, songwriter & loop station alchemist

"Chris Fox - this fella's got something about him, he's a class act, a great writer and a fantastic performer. Just sheer Genius!" Frank Hennesey, BBC Wales

7.30pm Friday 27th February 2026

£10 per person
For tickets, scan the QR code, visit www.chrisfoxmusic.org or call Alison 07972 415205

WESTHORPE VILLAGE HALL
WITH LICENSED BAR

Shellfish Tart

At Chriistmas most of us like to put on a bit of a show and I have an idea if you are looking for something different to start your Christmas meal.

The following recipe can be tweaked to suit your personal needs and tastes. First-ly, you do not have to use puff pastry. I have used filo pastry. Take 4 pieces to fit the tart cases you are using. Brush each sheet with melted butter, lay them on top of each other and fit into the tart case. You might want to part bake the shells before adding the shellfish mixture if you want a crisper shell.

If you want smaller nibbles (I think the posh word is “canapes”) use white bread. Flatten the bread with a rolling pin. Cut out rounds to fit a shallow jam tart tray. Butter the bread rounds and put in the tray butter side down before topping with a spoonful of the shellfish mixture.

To cut down the preparation time, either use pre-shelled mussels or leave them out altogether. I just used white shredded crabmeat and prawns.

Enjoy and have a joyous Christmas.

David Wadlow

Ingredients

A good knob of butter, plus extra for greasing

2 sheets ready-rolled all-butter puff pastry

300g mussels, well rinsed

100ml white wine

2 large shallots or 1/2 small leek, finely chopped

2 tsp English mustard

300ml double cream

100g cheddar or Parmesan, finely grated

1 tbsp chopped parsley

150g white crabmeat or other shredded shellfish meat

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas mark 6.
2. Lightly grease 6 10cm tart tins. Unroll the pastry and cut out 6 circles 12-13cm in diameter. Prick them with a fork, then use them to line the tins. Trim the edges.
3. Line each tart case with greaseproof paper. Fill with baking beans. Chill for 15-20 minutes.
4. Set on a baking tray and bake for 25-30 minutes, until the edges are colouring. Allow to cool a little, remove the baking beans and paper, and bake the tart cases for a further 5 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, place the mussels in a saucepan with the white wine. Put a lid on and steam over a medium heat for a few minutes, until they have opened. Discard any that haven't. Drain in a colander over a bowl and reserve the juices.
6. Gently cook the shallot or leek in the butter for 2-3 minutes until soft. Add the mustard. Strain the mussel juices through a fine-meshed sieve. Simmer until there is 1 tbsp of liquid left.
7. Add the cream, bring to the boil and simmer until reduced by two thirds, then stir in 40g of the cheese and season.
8. Remove the mussels from their shells and stir into the sauce along with the parsley and crab/other shellfish meat.
9. Turn the oven up to 220C/200C fan/gas mark 7. Fill the tart cases with the mixture and scatter over the rest of the cheese.
10. Return to the oven for 12-15 minutes, until the cheese is lightly coloured.

KRISTINA BEE
IN CONCERT
30 NOV

CAROLS AND
CHRISTINGLES
14 DECEMBER

COMMUNION
SERVICE
CHRISTMAS
DAY

JAN 23	**Medical Detection Dogs Talk** Tickets £3 each. Starts at 7.30pm. Licenced cash bar.
FEB 27	**Live Music: Chris Fox** Tickets £10 each. Starts at 7.30pm. Licenced cash bar.