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Fortnight of Fun and Games

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STORE WARS

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| Left: the soft computer generated image, produced by PIP Architects, failed to illustrate the true nature of zinc cladding. Plans submitted excluded any view from the garden of 1 Cromwell Terrace, which will be severely affected by the new extension, as the simulated image (right) shows. Residents produced this image for councillors to assess the true impact on neighbours. | 

To contact The Riverporter email: editor@theriverporter.uk
The Michaelmas Fair in the Town Centre is a familiar sight to everyone and there has been a fair here for centuries it seems. It is now run by the Scarrott family and John Scarrott is a familiar figure to many of us.

Their link to fairs started back in the late 1800s by John's great-grandfather, Jack Scarrott who ran a boxing booth in the South Wales Valley, which developed on to steam-driven rides. It has been passed down to my grandad, my father and myself.

The heyday of boxing was in 1920 and it was really how boxing started off. The boxing booth was a tented stage with a boxing ring inside it. The fighters would do displays there and the crowd would be invited in to see the fighters. In those early days, members of the crowd would even be allowed to challenge the fighters themselves.

When the sport of boxing became more popular, boxing booths at funfairs died away and were replaced with steam-driven rides. The first ride brought in to the Scarrott fair was known to have been a carousel of galloping horses. As technology progressed electric rides came in. If the rides that they used then were still around, in good condition, they would be worth a lot of money.

John's father (also called John) later took on the dodgems and the running of fairs which now travel around Northamptonshire, Milton Keynes and Cambridgeshire, coming every October to St Ives. The running of the fair has always been a family concern and now John's own children play an active role in the Scarrott business; an entertainment venue filled with modern rides ... as well as many of the traditional ones.

In the days of his grandfather and great-grandfather, before television funfairs would have been even more popular than they are today, according to John. But he believes the magnetism of a funfair will never really vanish - 'there is always a new generation of kids coming to the funfair and when you see the delight in their faces, you realise fairs will always be new to someone. I have seen the same families, three generations of people, using our fair. It is nice when you hear someone say - my dad used to take me to this when I was a kid and now I take my little lad'.

Above: John Scarrott at the Dodgems. Below: Councillors throw coins for the children to collect. Below left: Children enjoying the free rides with councillors.

Traffic grinds to a halt

I'm not a Facebook user but occasionally it can be useful. The other day I wanted to find out the reason for all the traffic in St Ives being gridlocked for most of the morning. I couldn't find the reason on local radio or traffic websites, so decided to look at our local social media pages.

It's fascinating, not just because it's so instant - someone usually posts a comment quickly - but because there is a mixture of humour, ranting, anger and sad to say completely biased and in some cases racist remarks. I decided to highlight some of these comments (right), I have taken a snapshot of them but removed who said them and I think you will agree it highlights two things. Firstly it explains what was happening on the street and secondly the power that social media offers everyone to make a comment.

Traffic grinds to a halt

I've been sat on a bus for over an hour and that's been getting from copperbeach close in t' town.

Burst water main by busway crossing and probably traffic avoiding the A14 Hemingford accidents coming through town. Abandoned car to walk children to school and turned around to go home after taking 40 minutes to go from audrey's lane to westfield school!

I am still stuck in it coming from Huntingdon it’s taken me an hour to get from the Texaco garage to Houghton turn off and then a further 15 minutes to get from Houghton turn off to the start of the Houghton Hill I work on the other side of St Ives something tells me I will not be getting to work before 10 a.m.

Must be because of Morrisons and McDonald’s lol 😂😂 😂

The above comment is, I think, intended to be humorous but I’m not sure about the one below!

Its due to out of control immigration. Walk down the queue and ask how many of those drivers were actually born in St Ives....

This comment was funnier ... Stagecoach these days

There were many comments about Stagecoach, mostly unfavourable, although it should be said that satisfied customers rarely make comments. I thought this post amusing but not the post from a lady who decided to use public transport to go to Addenbrookes.

It highlights the problems of public transport that offer a proper alternative to the car.
Dear Erik,

I feel I must write to express my disappointment that a tradition which allowed the fair families to park their caravans on the Waits has suddenly stopped. For years the fair people have enjoyed staying on the Waits and been welcomed by local people. I spoke today to a couple of Fair people who express their unhappiness at being forced to relocate to a field on the edge of town, without the usual facilities and special location that they have enjoyed for years. He spoke of the children enjoying feeding the ducks but now feeling pushed out and unwelcome. I want the fair people to feel welcome and to enjoy their brief stays in St Ives and don’t want to lose their and our traditions. Why and who sought to interfere with this tradition?

Anne Strong long time St Ilian.

Editor - we have asked the council and are awaiting a response. See the next issue.

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Interestingly HDC Planning dept have received a planning application to combine the floor area of two existing shops on Sheepmarket giving a large sales area over 1,700 sq ft. The two shops are Nos 7 and 8. The British Heart Foundation and Nationwide Building Society. The application contains plans to merge the two sales floors and construct a two-story extension to the rear and also requests a change of business use from A2 to A1. This classification is for general retail and specifically excludes hot food sales, banking and office services so it could mean that the Nationwide Building Society is going, and we’re not getting another restaurant.

What’s going on there is anyone’s guess, but to add to the intrigue the only company name that can be found on the application is a dormant company that has registered accounts for many years with a capital of just £1.…… which some may say indicates a secret being kept.…… Fascinating! (The expiration of the planning application is 31st October)

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Revised TOWN COUNCIL NEWS

MORRISONS BUS DELAYED

With £240,000 in the bank from Morrisons for a bus service, it could be months before a service is available. Paul Nelson from the County Council told the Town Council and representatives from Needingworth, Hemingford and Fenstanton that a proper service may be delayed until after March 2019. That’s because the New Mayor of Cambridgeshire will take over the responsibility for bus services in March. Current proposals seem inadequate and with services being cut throughout the area it needs a coordinated approach to make the most of this money. The Riverporter will be following developments.

As reported in the last issue the council’s Promotion and Publicity Committee will be no more. The full council agreed to this without any debate which is surprising considering the councils record on promoting the town and its events. The Bridge will continue to be delivered to every house for the time being however discussions about an on-line version only are being had.

The council agreed to buy one electric speed sign to go on Marley Road to deter speeding and to spend up to £2,000 on a new website for the council. Councillors also agreed to support a competition to find a Poet Laureate for the Town - so look out budding poets!

The County Council report mentioned that £20 million needs to be cut from their budget however the District had only £1.6 million to save. Cllr Fuller said that it was likely the government would be helping shire counties with additional funding and that HDC were well placed to find the cuts without any services being stopped. The Riverporter has been told by another District Councillor that it could mean more staff reductions, which may affect services. He also mentioned that a meeting had been arranged between the Mayor, himself and Jo Lancaster (MD of HDC) to discuss collaborative working between HDC and the Town Council.

A new police sergeant for St Ives has been appointed to replace Sgt Street, who retired in the summer, but they will not take up the post until November.

Following a question to the Council from the Snowman Festival organisers, the Town Clerk said that there will be new Christmas light along The Waits, but not on The Quay.

Zak and his Sack

It was 9am Sunday morning 7 October and this young man, Zak, was carrying a sack of gravel to John o’ Groats from Land’s End to raise £2m for charity. Sadly he didn’t send us details of his efforts, but hopefully he’s still on track.

Tales from the Darkside!

Last year the St Ives Quayside was omitted completely from the Christmas Lights Committee’s plans and we are told that this year there are no changes. This is surely a major omission! Our lovely Quay and the view of the bridge are major attractions to town visitors and the home of many of the town’s events. While it would be wonderful to light the bridge itself we can understand that this may be a difficult job but The Quay has enjoyed many years of Christmas lights, so which Bah Humbug Killjoy decided that this should be no more?

The Robin Hood

I understand the owner isn’t Merry anymore

Why’s that then?

He’s moved to Nottingham

Is he the Sheriff’s man?

Above: Sue Chan, from Sydney wearing her 2017 T-shirt on a trip to Alice Springs, hence the flies!

Left: John Boland, cousin of Festival organiser Chris Lewis, wearing this years T-shirt in Auckland.

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The RIVERPORTER

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Forward thinking agents are reacting to this trend by ensuring tenants are not forced to use unregulated sites out of sheer speed and convenience. In addition, for landlords seeking to secure verified and reliable tenants willing to care for their property and able to make timely rental payments, agents with tailored Proptech solutions are a much more attractive proposition. Over the next few years, UK landlords and estate agents will face considerable pressure to make securing a rental property more convenient, reducing the bureaucratic burden and making it easier for all parties to communicate. In today's fast-moving society with tech-savvy consumers expecting products and services to be delivered quickly and efficiently, the time is ripe for landlords and intermediaries to embrace the future of property rentals and help drive the lettings industry forward.

At Ellis Winters we already meet this demand with our innovative software solution for both Landlords and Tenants - for more information, please call our team on 01480 388888.