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<b>Services at the Parish Church</b>	<i>1st Sunday</i>	10.00 am	Morning Praise
Sundays	8:00 am	Holy Communion (BCP)	10.00 am Sung Eucharist (CW)
Thursdays	10.00 am	Eucharist (BCP)	<i>3rd Sunday</i> 10.00 am All Age Service

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## October at Soham and Wicken Churches

If you're reading the print version of LodeStar, Soham will already have held its Harvest Festival with a collection for the Foodbank on 1st October at 10am. If you're reading it online at the end of September there is still time to come along to that or the Songs of Praise that afternoon at 4pm. Pets are also welcome to that service and there will be tea and cake afterwards.

Our sister church, St Laurence's at Wicken celebrates its Harvest Festival on 8th October with a lunch in the following week and we have a couple of fun fundraising events this month as well.

## Last Night of the Proms' concert



Saturday 7th October, 7.30pm  
St Andrew's Church, Soham

with

**Newmarket Town Band**

Tickets £7 from 01353 721920  
[www.sohamandwicken.org.uk](http://www.sohamandwicken.org.uk)

## Harvest Ceilidh

In aid of St Andrew's Church, Soham: Ceilidh and  
Ploughman's Supper

Saturday 14th October 6.30pm at St Andrew's School,  
Soham

Folk music by The Cyriacs with dancing led by a caller.  
Please bring your own drink and glass. (Squash provided)

Tickets from Jo: 01353 723452. Adults: £10 Children: free



## Wicken Harvest Festival

**Wicken Harvest Festival:** Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> October at 6.30pm with Wicken Brass Band and displays of harvest produce donated by local farmers.

**Wicken Harvest Lunch and Auction:** Sunday 15th October, 12.30pm at Wicken Village Hall.

Tickets £9 from Sonia on 01353 727140 for 3 course lunch and tea/coffee. Veggie option available. Please notify any other dietary needs when booking.



## Soham Commons

As mentioned in the Councillor's Comments section on page 4 there is some debate about the future management of Soham's commons. As a background to this, here is a brief history of the commons.

The commons date back to the medieval system of farming known as the open field system. Typically, a village would have three large fields around it each divided into many smaller strips of land which were farmed by the villagers as tenants. They would pay rent to the Lord of the Manor and also work on his land. The fields would be farmed in rotation, for instance one field would be used for barley oats or legumes (beans etc), one for wheat or rye and the third would be left fallow (empty of crops but used for grazing so the land recovered and was fertilized by the animal dung). The following two years these would be swapped around until they returned to the original pattern.

As well as these strips of land there were areas of rough grazing known as commons where the peasants were entitled to graze their animals.

In many places as agriculture and society changed the land was enclosed by larger landowners and the system came to an end with many commons being lost. Indeed, in Soham in the 17<sup>th</sup> century the Lord of the Manor, Sir Thomas Chicheley tried to take over the commons but was defeated in a court case and the commons were ordered to be held in trust for the people of Soham, securing their future.

During the Second World War, the commons were requisitioned by the Agriculture Executive Committee and afterwards a decision had to be taken about their future. The Shade Common had already been ploughed and crops grown on it so it was taken over by the Ministry of Agriculture and later sold to Cambridgeshire County Council. This is the land where the Shade School now stands. East fen, Qua Fen and Angle Common were returned to the town.

The commons and horse fens (one at the end of Mill Drove and the Wet Horse Fen on the other side of the bypass) are now owned by the current Lord of the Manor, Timothy Clark and administered by Soham Town Council. They are still used for grazing horses and cattle from May to October with owners of the animals paying for them to use the land. These days they are also used for leisure and are popular places to go for a walk or feed the ducks on Qua Fen Common.



## Prickwillow Ploughing Festival

Prickwillow Engine Museum in conjunction with TWH Clarke & Son, Farmers are holding a Ploughing Festival at the Museum, and Green Farm on Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th October 2017. The Ploughing Festival includes working horses, vintage tractors, and a Classic Car and Commercial Vehicle Show. There will also be industrial engines, live music, and a Raptor display, plus refreshments, Real Ale Bar, children's rides, activities, and displays, craft & trade stalls. Adults: £7.50 each; children under 16: Free (with an adult). Adult two day pass: £12.00



- ☆ **Winners of the St Andrew's 200+Club** for September: Matthew Fisher £5 Molly Smith £10, G. Fletcher £15, Pam Cole £25
- ☆ **80s / 90s Night charity event: 27th October**, 7.30pm to midnight at Soham Comrades Club. £5 a ticket in aid of Road Traffic Victim Support. Raffle prizes welcome
- ☆ **Soham Museum Coffee Morning, Saturday October 7th** – bring along any items of local historical interest you may have, or just join us for a chat and coffee, **All welcome**. Soham Library, 10am – 12 noon
- ☆ **Saturday October 21st, Soham Museum Open Day**, Methodist Hall, Berrycroft, CB7 5BL, 10am – 4pm
- ☆ **Thursday November 2nd, Soham Museum presents:** Dr Martyn Thomas talking about the Fenland Ague, the disease endemic in this area throughout the nineteenth century. Methodist Hall, Berrycroft, CB7 5BL at 7.30pm. £2.50 admission, members free
- ☆ **The Berrycroft 60+ Luncheon Club** is on the third Wednesday each month at the Methodist Church Hall, Berrycroft. Tickets are £6, contact Leslie Watchorn 01353 721669 or Audrey Palmer 01353 721054
- ☆ **Items for the November 2017 edition of LodeStar** should be submitted by Wednesday 11th October. N.B. This is earlier than usual – sorry for any inconvenience Please send material to [alison.evans7@btopenworld.com](mailto:alison.evans7@btopenworld.com).

## Viva Productions

Viva has two shows this autumn:

### **Disney's Beauty & The Beast Jr:**

a Viva Youth musical based on the original Broadway production

At the Performing Arts Centre, Soham Village College

26-28 October at 7.30pm (+ a matinee at 2pm on the Saturday 28 Oct)

Tickets £12 from

<http://www.wegottickets.com/viva-presents-disney-s-beauty-the-beast-jr>

Or contact the Viva Box Office on 01353 722228 / [vivayouth@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:vivayouth@hotmail.co.uk)

### **Brassed Off**

proudly featuring Soham Comrades Brass Band

Viva Theatre Group at the Performing Arts Centre, Soham Village College

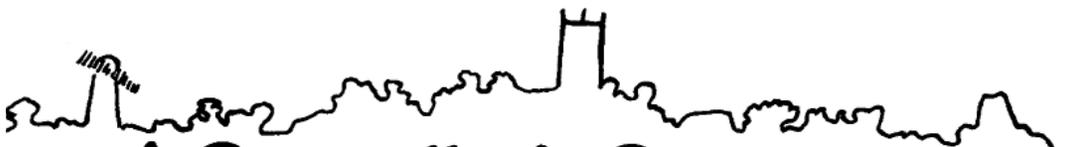
9-11 November, 7.30pm

Tickets £12 from <http://www.wegottickets.com/viva-presents-brassed-off>

Or contact the Viva Box Office on 01353 722228 / [vivayouth@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:vivayouth@hotmail.co.uk)

It is 1994 South Yorkshire, Grimley Colliery faces the threat of closure and the future of the brass band seems uncertain. With the miners torn between redundancy packages and the picket lines, band-leader Danny's hopes of winning the national brass band competition seem like a distant dream. But the arrival of flugelhorn-playing Gloria brings hope, romance and controversy to the Yorkshire brass band on the brink of collapse.

Featuring rousing live music (Soham Comrades Band) including Rodrigo's Concierto de Aranjuez and Jerusalem, Brassed Off is a funny and heart-warming drama that reaches stirring heights. Passionate and inspiring – a celebration of human endeavour and community spirit in triumph against all the odds.



# A Councillor's Comments

At our September Meeting there was no one speaking in the slot provided for Public Comment Time, but we had a very pleasing introduction to our meeting in the form of MS Morwenna Woodbridge who demonstrated her Standard Bearing skills. It had been hoped that weather permitting she would have done this outside the Pavilion for us, but that was not to be. Nevertheless she performed those movements well, despite being in a restricted situation. We also learned of her range of voluntary work done for the benefit of the community, for which she received the "Pride of Soham Award"

Item to consider co-option onto the council: There was one applicant for this position who gave his reasons for applying for this post. He was then questioned by council members who submitted their individual votes and it was found his application was not accepted.

There was also someone within the council needed to represent Soham on the Wicken Fen Community Liaison Group.

Application for Financial Support: One application for Marie Curie. The council members recognised that they did a splendid service, but they were not forthcoming about the amount of work they did for Soham.

Commons Management Update:\* There are various bodies involved in the concern of Soham's unique commons. And there is a forthcoming meeting to discuss the management of them. There seems to be an impasse of this at the moment, but this meeting is a great opportunity to sort all the problems of responsibility once and for all. Added to this item was the question of what happened to the Shade Common. Commons are supposed to be left as they are, but this is not the case regarding the Shade Common as it has been built on with more building planned. At what point did common land become owned property to be sold off?

Request from Thrift Soham (Community Land Trust): They were requesting support from the council for housing stock that could become available from the Eastern Gateway development. It was pointed out that we had previously given that support, but we did so anyway, although it was also questioned, how we could support something that has not taken place yet (the final approval of plans for the Eastern Gateway). Involved in these proposed plans is the transfer of some allotments to another location which has caused some concern. The secretary of state has to give his approval to this, and the council will see that allotment holders being deprived of their plot will get a suitable replacement. *Councillor Ginn* \*See Commons article on page 2

## Beer Festival Update

In September Soham Staploe Rotary Club presented cheques to the beneficiaries of the Soham Beer and Music Festival held back in July. Mark Wilson from East of England Ambulance Service received a cheque for over £6700 and expressed the appreciation of the charity for the sum raised. Maureen Harrington and Sandra Sachi were also present representing Pos+ability, the other main charity benefiting from the event who received over £800. President Bill Rind accompanied by Blushed Studios Steve Thompson shared in the handover of funds.

The guides and scouts had also run a successful BBQ at the event which added £950 to their funds to be shared by all the Rainbow, Brownie, Guide, Beaver, Cub and Scout sections who use the Soham Scout & Guide community centre on the recreation ground. of Soham Rotary Club would like to thank everyone within the community in Soham who supported the event.

# PARISH REGISTERS

## Baptisms

September 3rd	Isaac Neil Starling Burch
September 10th	Louis James Alexander Irvine Alfie Joseph Lee Irvine Bobbie Frederick Darren Irvine
September 17th	Oscar Steven Gilbey Claire Elizabeth Gilbey

## Weddings

September 9th	Bethany Murfitt and Peter Broughton
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## Funerals

August 29th	Cecily Wilkins
August 31st	Rosemary Turton
September 25th	Anthony Knott
September 29th	David Harvey

## Contacting St Andrew's Church

Our vicar is Rev'd Eleanor Whalley. You can get in touch with her by calling the vicarage on 01353 725948, or by emailing [sohamwickenvicar@gmail.com](mailto:sohamwickenvicar@gmail.com)

Details of St. Andrew's Church Sunday and weekday services; wedding and christening/baptism information and news of events can be found on our website [www.sohamandwicken.org.uk](http://www.sohamandwicken.org.uk)

## Soham Winter Fayre



We are now taking booking for stalls at this year's Soham Winter Fayre. This will take place on Friday 24th November from 6pm – 8.30pm at St Andrew's Church, Soham. Our friends at Soham Heritage and Tourism have arranged fairground rides outside and are bringing Santa with them so this is a popular event for families. Stalls are £10 plus a prize for our raffle. Please email Jamie at [jamieh@waitrose.com](mailto:jamieh@waitrose.com) or message the Soham Winter Fayre Facebook page to book a stall.

# *A View from the Vicarage*



## **Harvest**

As those of you who've visited the vicarage will know, I've a variety of pictures adorning my walls. They're such a mixture that it's hard to say which one I like best: there's a story behind each of them; each has different associations; each one speaks to me in a particular way.

As we enter this harvest season, I've been sitting with a version of Jean-François Millet's *The Gleaners* that hangs in my sitting room. Millet's original was unveiled in 1857; a 112 x 84cm oil painting that caused scandal in his then contemporary Parisian society. In the aftermath of the French Revolution, the middle and upper classes saw Millet's unflinching depiction of peasant life as a promotion of Socialism: grinding poverty in the foreground, abundant harvest and a prosperous city behind, swathed in sunshine. So unpopular was Millet's work that it sold below its asking price (3000F instead of 4000); now it's a treasure in the Musee d'Orsay. How fashions change!



My version is a slightly smaller print given to me last year by Serena Gilbert, a parishioner in St Neots. She'd produced her own take of Millet's painting, and the vicar had used it at a harvest service the first year I was there. It had lain forgotten in the vestry for

some weeks afterwards, and Serena picked up how taken I was with it. Not someone to flaunt her extraordinary talent, she retrieved it herself and quietly had a print made. She left it tucked behind the photocopier in the church office, away from prying eyes. 'I left something for you,' she said casually. 'It's for your ordination. I thought you'd like it'.

Like it? I loved it. One of the many criticisms levied against Millet's work was that it wasn't religious. To me, it's profoundly religious: religious in the best sense; religious in the sense of highlighting injustice; speaking up for the voiceless; shaking those of us who live comfortably out of our comfort-zones.

As we celebrate harvest this year – and celebrate we should, of course – let's not forget the context in which our celebrations take place. Whilst some of us sit down to harvest suppers, UNICEF estimates that around 27-28% of children in developing countries are underweight or stunted; as primary schools in Soham invite local church ministers in to lead harvest assemblies, reports tell us that about 72 million children of primary school age in the developing world were not in school in 2005; 57% of them were girls. In the momentary 'Indian summer' in which I type this article, large swathes of our world are reeling from the devastation caused by natural disasters: wind, rain, earthquakes and tidal waves have swept away not just this year's harvests, but homes, communities, livelihoods and thousands of lives.

Millet's tacit cry for justice screams as loudly as it ever did. Faith calls us, surely, to respond. *Eleanor*