

HETHERSETT HERALD

Archive Edition

March 2007 - Edition 3



Archive Editions of Hethersett Herald

WELCOME to the third of Hethersett Herald archive editions where we look at the village in years gone by in an e-magazine format. This time we look at the very newsy month of March 2007.

An Outstanding School

HETHERSETT Woodside First School is top of the class after a stunning Ofsted report which ranked it as “outstanding” in 26 out of 27 categories and “good” in the 27th.

Staff and pupils are celebrating the achievement that puts them in the top 5% of schools nationally.



The school was praised throughout the report for its consistently high standards and outstanding achievement, with all pupils making very good progress whatever their starting point.

There is also praise for “outstanding teaching and an exceptionally rich curriculum contributing to pupils’ huge enjoyment of learning with learning being made very interesting.”

The children are singled out for special mention: “Pupils volunteer ideas and opinions with remarkable maturity. They have a strong sense of justice, their behaviour is impeccable and their understanding of mutual responsibility and healthy lifestyles is extraordinary for their age.”

(Continued on Page Two)

Ofsted Joy For “Outstanding” School

(continued from front page)

Head teacher Helen Lamb’s leadership is described as “excellent and exceptionally skilled and supported highly effectively by other managers and governors with the governors keeping an exceptionally close check on the school’s work.” Helen is pictured on the right.



The school received “outstanding” for every single overall category – overall effectiveness of the school, achievement and standards, personal development and well-being, quality of provision, curriculum and other activities, care, guidance and support and leadership and management.

“This is an outstanding achievement for our school and we are very proud. I’m very pleased that Ofsted recognised that we go the extra mile to support every single pupil. Our school aim is excellence and enjoyment and that is reflected 100% in the report.

“The success is a tribute to the hard work and excellence of strong teamwork with children, parents, staff and governors working together with superb results, it is truly a privilege to be part of it, “ Mrs Lamb said adding that the school was also very proud of its close links with the local community.

The Ofsted inspectors have written to the children to thank them for their hard work.

“We enjoyed meeting you enormously. Thank you for being so kind, considerate and helpful. We know you rate your school highly and we agree with you and your parents; we think you go to an exceptionally good school,” the inspectors said.

The Woodside Ofsted report follows closely on the heels of impressive reports for Hethersett Middle School and Hethersett High School.

There’s more news from Woodside school on page five.

Hethersett High School has also been praised by OFSTED Inspectors with students being acknowledged for "making an outstanding contribution to the school and local community."

There was particular praise for the school council and the support given to younger pupils by year 11 students. Overall the school was rated as "good"

Matrimonial Bliss - But Not Here

A NEW comedy musical playing in London in April is based on the idea of a former Hethersett resident.

Gabrielle Vautier (pictured on this page) came up with the original idea for a satirical musical featuring a wedding that doesn't quite go according to plan. "A Karaoke Wedding" is held amongst the gurgling sound of a coffee machine and with vows exchanged over a karaoke machine.

The musical is described as a satire of love, loneliness and latex. Despite the high divorce rate, Bernadette and Dave are still desperate to enter a life of matrimonial bliss.

The couple win a fantasy wedding in a radio competition but things don't go according to plan. The musical takes a cynical look at the materialistic madness surrounding 'the most important day of your life.'

A Karaoke Wedding was originally written, rehearsed and performed in just seven days with a community cast of 32 at the Network Theatre in Waterloo. Due to its success it has been re-written and is now being performed with a professional cast of 16 at the Union Theatre in Southwark.



Gabby Vautier, whose parents Bonnie and Basil still live in Hethersett, will direct the show with the music, lyrics and musical direction from Harry Blake. "A Karaoke Wedding" is based on a story by John Hilton.

Gabby is a member of the London Fringe Theatre Network and in the past has choreographed and directed. She has appeared on stage at the Maddermarket Theatre in Norwich and previously worked as an audience researcher for the Tricia show as well as with Gloria Hunniford.

She studied drama, theatre, television and film at King Alfred's College in Winchester and is at present community project manager with the Young Vic Theatre, working with the local community. She has also studied Shakespeare at the Globe Theatre.

On the next page is a review of the musical written by the Peter Steward at the time:

Review of A Karaoke Wedding

"Fantastic Musical Theatre," "This was fun fun fun right from the first toe tapping number to the big song finale," "The pleasure is unending; the amusement is laugh-out-loud," "A karaoke wedding is a must see," "The lyrics of Harry Blake were close to brilliant. I defy anyone not to leave the Union Theatre with a big smile on their face, "very funny, satirically perfect," "Don't miss this. If you do, the next chance to see it will probably mean paying big ticket prices in a big theatre."

These were just some of the reviews received for A Karaoke Wedding from august sources such as The Stage newspaper, Time Out, Theatreworld and the Southwark News.

All I can say is that I concur entirely with their sentiments. The show is raucous, colourful and choc full of satire in the most poignant way.

It traverses both the gender and generation gaps with some excellent numbers and biting lyrics from Harry Blake. John Hilton's play is comical, wry, witty and uplifting, but above all it never becomes mawkish and always maintains a high level of fun.

Word obviously got around because the theatre was virtually full for every performance and it is easy to see why. The show could have degenerated into slapstick - it never did. It could have lost its way - it never did.

A tightly knit musical put together on a budget that is first class entertainment all the way. You always know that is the case when the time flies - and it certainly did.

A special Mission Breakfast was held at Hethersett Methodist Church when Penny Bakewell, who is currently home on leave from Ghana, spoke about her work with the Serving in Mission Group (SIM) among the Sisala people.

Thirty people enjoyed a Continental breakfast before hearing from Penny about her work in the Sisala region – a vast area of 5000 sq km and 85,000 people. She explained that the first Sisala Bible Church of Africa was “planted” 27 years ago by SIM and since that time a further eight churches have been set-up.

Most converts to the Christian faith come from an African Traditional Religion background. Penny also explained the power of Islam in the area and the attempts to introduce dialogue and debate between Christians and Muslims. Much of the work involves motivation and mobilising with the training and teaching of leaders to pass on their knowledge and care to congregations.

Children Make A Blooming Success

CHILDREN and parents from Hethersett Woodside First School joined head teacher Helen Lamb and chairman of Hethersett Parish Council George Beckford to plant a tree to help launch Anglia in Bloom 2007.

A 12 foot Whitebeam was planted in the school's grounds and pupils from the school council also planted a number of perennials and shrubs around the tree.

The symbolic planting coincided with similar events throughout East Anglia to help launch this year's competition:

"Despite the cold this is the official first day of spring and the launch of Anglia in Bloom which saw us receive a silver award last year. This year we will be going for gold," Mr Beckford said.

Over the past few months the school has been working closely with the Hethersett Environmental Action Group (HEAT) with volunteers helping to tidy-up the grounds as well as installing hedgehog boxes and making a variety of other improvements.

"HEAT and the Friends of the School group, along with scouts, brownies and guides have been working very hard to improve the environment both at the school and in the village," Mr Beckford added.

Mrs Lamb praised the efforts of HEAT: "It is very important for our school to be



George Beckford and Helen Lamb at the Woodside School tree planting.



George Beckford with some of the Woodside children at the planting.

part of the community and involved in the excellent work that HEAT are doing both at the school and in the village,” she said.

Other improvements already carried out in the village include new flower beds on the B1172 to help add a splash of colour. Numerous other projects are planned before the Anglia in Bloom judging takes place.

Chairman Breaks Into Verse

CHAIRMAN of Hethersett Parish Council and leading environmentalist George Beckford is so concerned with the dangers of climate change that he has published a book of poems on the subject.

George (pictured opposite) has collected together poems written over a number of years and brought them together in an anthology entitled “Per-Verse-Sonal.”

“Experts assure us that pollution of our atmosphere is still increasing and unless we reverse that trend our world is heading for chaos.

“All of us contribute to pollution, directly or indirectly. The poems deal with climate and the 3Rs – Reduce, Re-use and Recycle – and how we can do our bit,” he said.



It is the first time George has put all his “green poems” into one anthology.

“Except for one new poem, these have been previously published but have now been brought together to emphasise the points made and to alert people to likely outcomes.”

The anthology contains 23 poems with titles such as: “Climatic-Dramatic,” “All Change”, “Attention Brings Redemption,” “Sustainability,” “Waste Not, Want Not” and “Zero Waste.”

The books have been sent to all the schools in the village and can also be borrowed from Hethersett Library.

On the next page is one of the poems which is reproduced with George's kind permission:

Our Green Land - A Poem By George Beckford

Rural protection. What does it mean?
Not merely preserving the current scene,
Global warming we need to stall,
If the universe is to support us all.

Local Plans properly conceived
For our countryside to be relieved;
Planners made to toe the line,
So planning decisions turn out fine.

Now it's plan, monitor and manage,
All required to reduce the damage,
Sequential approach has been decreed
And affordable housing for those in need.

Development preferred on a "brownfield" site,
With "green fields" then sewn up tight,
Making the most of urban land,
the countryside allowed to take its stand.

Sustainable, it all must be,
Housing to comply with PPG3,
Density then just fundamental,
And parking space co-incidental.

Key targets set, Best Value obtained,
Windfall allowance must be claimed,
Better design, individual or local,
Architects eyes on these be focal.

Everyday actions more in line,
Progressively green these must define,
Close to home, as well as a broad,
Results will bring their own reward.

One out on a shopping venture
Finds congestion in the City Centre,
perhaps relieved by Park and Ride,
Where cars are left upon the side.

Public transport to provide relief
Convenience there beyond belief
Some might say, while others disagree
And some just resent paying the fee.
Quiet lanes and cycle paths,
Designed for safety, and some laughs,
Speed management another device,
Compliance with which will suffice.

Quality councils, parishes may form
If, to certain criteria, they conform,
Market towns set for regeneration,
With money to fund the inspiration.
With ever step upon the way,
Reduce pollution, remove decay,
It could be large, it might be small,
Please, just don't do nothing at all.

© George Beckford - February 2007

Easter Church Services Announced

Hethersett and District Churches Together will be distributing special cards throughout Hethersett, Little and Great Melton over the coming days leading up to Easter week.

The cards, which proved so popular when distributed at Christmas, will give details of church services from Palm Sunday to Easter Day being organised by the Church of England, the Methodists and the Roman Catholics.

They urge local people to “come with us through the week that changed the world.” The cards also give contact addresses and numbers for representatives of all three churches.

St Remigius Parish Church will be shut over the holiday period as improvement work continues. Church of England services will therefore be held at a number of venues throughout the village.

Services over the Easter period are as follows:

Palm Sunday – 8 a.m, Holy Communion in Hethersett Church Hall; 8.30 a.m, Mass in Attleborough Roman Catholic Church; 10 a.m, Mass at Wymondham Roman Catholic Church; 10.30 a.m, Children’s Church at High House Farm, Great Melton; 10.30 a.m, parish communion with procession and passion gospel to Hethersett Old Hall School Barn; 10.30 a.m, Palm Sunday Morning Worship at Hethersett Methodist Church; 6.30 p.m, Evening Worship and Communion at Hethersett Methodist Church; 6.30 p.m, Holy Week readings and music in Hethersett old Hall School Barn.

Wednesday in Holy Week – 7.30 p.m, Chrism Mass at St John’s Roman Catholic Cathedral, Norwich.

Maundy Thursday – 10 a.m, Holy Communion in Hethersett Church Hall; 6.30 p.m, Holy Communion in Great Melton Church; 7.30 p.m, Mass of the Lord’s Supper in Wymondham Roman Catholic Church; 7.30 p.m, Maundy Thursday Communion in Hethersett Methodist Church.

Good Friday – 10 a.m, United procession of witness from St Remigius Church Car Park to Hethersett Methodist Church; 10.30 a.m, all age worship and Hot Cross Buns at Hethersett Methodist Church; 2 p.m, Meditation in Hethersett Church Hall; 3 p.m, Solemn Liturgy of the Passion in Wymondham Roman Catholic Church.

Easter Eve – 7.30 p.m, Service of Light in Little Melton Church; 8 p.m, Easter Vigil Mass in Wymondham Roman Catholic Church.

Easter Day – 8 a.m, United early morning communion followed by breakfast at Brooke Methodist Church; 8 a.m, Holy Communion in Hethersett Church Hall; 8.30 a.m Mass in Attleborough Roman Catholic Church; 10 a.m, Mass in Wy-

mondham Roman Catholic Church; 10.30 a.m, Easter Celebration, all age worship with communion at Hethersett Methodist Church; 10.30 a.m, Easter Communion in Hethersett Old Hall School Barn and Little Melton and Great Melton Churches; 6.30 p.m, Easter Evening Worship in Hethersett Methodist Church; 6.30 p.m, Easter hymns and carols in Hethersett Old Hall School Barn

Successful Quiz For Dance Funds

Fifteen teams took part in a quiz at Hethersett Village Hall to raise funds for the Yvonne School of Dance.

The general knowledge quiz was organised by Roger Morgan and Mike Anderson and was won by The Pringles.

Proceeds from the quiz, a raffle and games held during the evening will go towards the dance school's spectacular event at Norwich Theatre Royal in April 2008.

The dance school teaches classical ballet, tap, modern theatre and acrobatics to all ages from three to adult and has been in existence since 1984. The Bi-annual dance spectacular showcases the school in a colourful extravaganza which also raises money for charity.

The dance school also held a special presentation and medal examination day at the Walter Roy Theatre at the Hewett School in Norwich.

The afternoon consisted of group medal performances staged in full costume. Over 100 pupils were involved with the performances watched by a live audience and UTD examiners.

At the end of the day certificates and special awards were presented to pupils who had taken examinations over the past two years.

Awards for the highest overall achievement went to: Juvenile section – Rosie Watts, Charley Bond and Samantha House. Junior section – Megan Tovey, Sophie Cooke and Kirsty Howard. Senior section – Katy Walker, Joanna Keane and Harriet Parsons.

Highest mark in single subjects: Ballet, Joanna Keane; Tap, Molly Howes; Modern, Katie Andrews; Acrobatic, Katy Walker.

UTD Awards of excellence went to Katie Andrews and Freya Cooper.

On the Village Beat

Hank Remembered

Hethersett has been remembering award winning Norfolk TV cameraman Eric Hancock who has died at the age of 64.

Gentleman "Hank" worked for the BBC Look East in Norwich for more than 30 years and lived in Hethersett. He started his stint with Look East as a sound recordist and then cameraman, He joined the BBC after leaving the RAF.

In 1985 he was honoured by the Royal Television Society with a Cameraman of the Year award and this was followed by a Lifetime Achievement Award in 2001. Tim Bishop, Head of Region at the BBC said: "He was simply Hank to everyone from royalty to receptionists across the East of England and people who worked with him will miss his warmth and wisdom."

Skydive For Charity

Hethersett's Anne Barber will be skydiving with the Red Devils in July in order to raise money for the Jubilee Sailing Trust.

Anne was seriously injured in a car accident more than 30 years ago and has suffered from a loss of balance ever since, At the time of the accident Anne had a love of sailing and the Jubilee Trust was responsible for her enjoying five voyages to places such as Bermuda and Scotland.



"It's good to have this chance to give back to the trust a small fraction of what it has given to me," she said. Anne, who is 59 and a clerical support worker at the acute stroke unit at the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital, will be skydiving on July 24th with her son Mark.

Hethersett Athletic Suffer a Hiccup

Hethersett Athletic Ladies bowed out of the Eastern Region Women's League Cup in a dramatic quarter-final tie against Premier Division Cambridge City. The match ended at 1-1 after extra-time but Hethersett lost 5-4 on penalties. Meanwhile the men's first team's title hopes were hit when they went down 5-1 to Norman Wanderers.

On the Village Beat

Pancakes on The Menu

Hethersett and District Churches Together enjoyed pancakes on Shrove Tuesday at Hethersett Methodist Church before launching a number of Lent Groups that, over the coming weeks, will follow a course on “Can we build a better world?”

The course will cover issues as diverse as slavery, friendship and prayer and will commemorate the passing of the Act for the Abolition of Slavery in 1807 instigated by William Wilberforce. The recent barn dance in Little Melton Village Hall raised £110 from a raffle for the East Anglian Air Ambulance. Other money from the event will go towards providing Easter Cards to be distributed throughout the village to inform residents of church services over the holiday period.

Lent Lunches

A series of Lent lunches is being held at the Methodist Church from noon to 2 pm on Saturdays throughout March. Any profit from these events will go towards church funds and World Vision. Young people from the church will also be organising a family lunch on 25th March with donations going to the Pennies-4-Poverty charity. The annual plant sale in aid of Hope and Homes for Children will be held outside the Methodist Church on 19th May.

Forging Links With Sport

Hethersett Middle School is looking to forge links with local sports organisations. The school was recently awarded the Sport England Activemark for their work on PE, sport and swimming and is now looking to build on this:

“We are always looking to increase the range of sports on offer and are keen to forge links with outside sports organisations which the children can join,” said Head Teacher Andy Whittle.

A number of the school’s youngsters already play football for Hethersett Athletic Football Club and the school and football club are looking into the possibility of all weather training facilities at the school. It promises to be a very busy few months for the school as it prepares to move to Junior Status in September. A new school logo has been designed and will be included on school uniform in the future. In the meantime pupils will be enjoying three science days.

Call For Youth

HETHERSETT is looking for new members for its youth parish council. Youngsters between the ages of 11 and 19 are being encouraged to come forward to reflect the needs and wishes of young people in the village.

The youth parish council, which has been in existence for well over a decade, meets monthly at the Jubilee Hall in the village under the auspices of Hethersett Parish Council.

“Being a youth parish councillor, gives youngsters a chance to learn how local democracy works and also gives a voice to the youth of the village,” said parish clerk Ian Weetman.

To qualify for membership youngsters should either live in the village or attend one of the village’s schools.

Colourful Village

HETHERSETT will be awash with colour during the summer as flowers and plants brighten up the local environment.

Once again the village will be holding a Hethersett in Bloom competition with sections for gardens, patios, tubs and baskets. Judging of this year’s event will take place on 16th June.

Following this a number of villagers will be opening their gardens to the public on Sunday 1st July.

Clubs and Societies and a New Village Handbook

The public will learn more about voluntary groups in Hethersett when the parish holds another clubs and societies day in September.

The last such event was held three years ago and proved extremely popular.

Due to space availability the event, which will be held in the Village Hall and run from 11 a.m to 4 .m on Saturday, 29th September, will be restricted to 36 non profit making organisations from the village.

A new edition of the Hethersett Handbook will be published later this year. The last handbook was published in 2004 and much of it is now out of date.

The publication will again list local societies and groups with contact names and numbers.

“We will be largely following the tried and trusted format of previous editions,” said parish clerk Ian Weetman.

It is hoped the handbook will be on sale at the parish council stand at the clubs and societies day in the Village Hall on 29th September

Cricketers Prepare For The Season

Hethersett and Tas Valley Cricket Club has been busy preparing for the new season with indoor nets at Easton College.

The ambitious club, which has its own ground at Taswood Lakes at Flordon, will again be running three Saturday teams in Divisions Two, Seven and Ten of the Norfolk League. They will also have a Sunday team in Division Two of the Norfolk League and will be competing in the Challenge Cup, the Wensum Cup and Wicklewood Shield in addition to midweek and evening friendlies.

The club will also be running youth teams at Under-11 and Under-15 levels with the former playing in the Norfolk Alliance Junior League and the latter in the South Norfolk Community League.

“Having secured promotion three years out of four, the club now has its sights firmly set on rising to the Norfolk Alliance. We boast superb facilities including two pitches, a purpose built pavilion with bar, showers and full coaching facilities.

“We are particularly keen to attract new players looking for a fresh challenge whether they are experienced player disenchanted with their present club or its lack of ambition or juniors and parents looking for a game,” said club secretary Richard Ellis.

A pre-season working party will be sprucing the Flordon ground and clubhouse and the club’s first inter-club practice match will be on 14th April.

The club will also be undertaking a May Bank Holiday tour of Nottinghamshire with three games in the local area.

Hawks Prepare As Well

Hethersett Hawks/Swinton and Co’s cycle speedway season begins on Sunday March 11th with a South-East Youth League match against Ipswich on the Memorial Playing Field (3 pm). Training evenings have been arranged for March 6th and 13th with regular Tuesday Club Nights starting on 20th March. All of last year’s committee were re-elected at the Annual Meeting with the addition of Philip Adams as rider representative.

Sixteen-year-old Jazz Abbott, who will also be racing for Norwich in British Premier League, has taken on the role of Youth Team Manager. Hawks will be without last season’s top scorer Mick Skinner who has moved back to Leicester but this gives a great opportunity to the Club’s clutch of promising youngsters as the Club returns to the top flight of regional racing after a year’s absence.

Concern Over Vandalism

Vandalism at Hethersett's Scouts and Guides Headquarters is costing thousands of pounds.

The cost of repairs to windows and the roof is draining much needed money away from the scouts, guides, cubs, beavers, brownies, explorers and rainbows that regularly use the hall.

"When you see the results of vandalism it makes you feel sick. Many people put a great deal of effort into the group. We see the youngsters themselves blossom and grow in confidence and we teach them citizenship and how to care for others and then vandals spoil it for them. They see the damage that has been caused and get very upset and we have to explain how some people get pleasure from damaging the hall," said Group Scout Leader Bernadette Ball.

Since September the headquarters has had its roof damaged on a number of occasions as well as windows smashed and fires lit in its grounds. The latest damage to the roof has cost £2200 to repair with the money coming from group funds:

"We are trying to improve and update the hall. Now we have to spend the money on repairs rather than improvements. It really does go against the grain to have to spend money on repairs. The hall was originally built by parents for the youngsters of Hethersett to enjoy," said group treasurer Paul Barrett.

Eighteen months ago a serious break-in at the hall saw every cupboard entered and ransacked.

The group has reported the latest spate of vandalism to the police and received advice from Norfolk Constabulary's crime prevention department. Apart from spoiling the fun of others vandals are also running quite a risk.

"Whoever is damaging the panels could easily fall through the roof and suffer serious injury," Paul added.

Paul and Bernadette are also insistent that the vandals will not win: "We are determined to keep going whatever happens. The vandals will not beat us. We would appeal for help from the public and ask people to keep their eyes open and report anything suspicious to the police," they said.

Apart from the vandalism, the group goes from strength to strength with over 120 youngsters from the age of five to over 18 taking part in regular scouting and guiding activities. Last year the hall celebrated its silver jubilee, having been built in 1981.

The group is also looking this year to celebrate a centenary of Scouting. The first ever scout camp took place on Brownsea Island at the beginning of August, 1907.

Top British soprano Elizabeth Watts, who originally comes from Hethersett, has been chosen to represent England in a world singing competition in Cardiff.

Over 1000 people applied for the 25 places available in the contest. Hethersett On the Web has spoken to Liz who will be giving a special concert at Hethersett Methodist Church in the autumn. Editor Peter Steward spoke to Liz exclusively for Hethersett on the Web



A Hethersett Girl At Heart

WHEN top British soprano Elizabeth Watts takes to the stage for an international singing contest in June she will carry with her memories of growing up in Hethersett.

“Liz” has been chosen to represent England in the prestigious BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition.

The contest is open to singers aged between 18 and 36 and looks for vocal talent, musicianship and communication skills. This year over 1000 singers applied to take part with 677 from 64 different countries being auditioned. From these the field was whittled down to the final 25 who will represent countries as diverse as England, Australia, Bulgaria, Chile, Russia, Sweden, Japan, China, Canada and Brazil. The winner will receive a trophy and £15,000 and there will also be a chance for the audience and television viewers at home to chose their own favourite.

Liz is at present busy preparing a very complex programme for the finals which can be seen on BBC Television.

Liz is still only 28 and regarded as a “relative baby” in opera circles. In a very short time, however, she has made her mark but believes her best is still to come: “I don’t think I will reach my peak as a performer until the age of 33 or 34,” she said.

That statement could be borne out of modesty as Liz is no stranger to success. Last year she won the prestigious Kathleen Ferrier award in a competition held at the Wigmore Hall and named after the famous Lancashire contralto who died in her forties. Liz has also taken numerous other prizes in the operatic field.

She grew up in Hethersett and her first stage performance was at the age of six in the musical Stargazers at Hethersett Methodist Church. She has a number of vivid memories of the village and its people and attending the local churches and

being brought up in a musical family. Her mother Rosemary was involved in local politics as a member of and then clerk to the parish council.

“I remember being in a Christian worship band at the Methodist Church. We also always sang together at home as a family. I suppose we were a bit like the Von Trapps,” she laughed.

Today Liz lives in Croydon and admits she loves “the buzz” that she gets from London but sometimes feel rather cooped in:

“I do miss the lovely open spaces of Norfolk. I suppose I’m still a country girl at heart but a country girl that feels very happy and fulfilled.”

She attended Woodside First School in the village before moving on to Norwich High School and becoming a chorister at Norwich Cathedral before gaining a first class hours degree in archaeology from Sheffield University.



Archaeology and opera may on the surface seem to be completely diverse subjects but Liz believes they are mutually complementary.

“Taking an archaeology degree taught me how to think. Archaeology deals with the depths and breadths of humanity and prepares you for life. I soon learnt that to be a real performer you have to be a real package. I was passionate about it but realised I needed to add colour, dynamics, facial expression and fully interpret what I was singing about.

“I did lots of singing at Norwich but I really wanted to be a serious Shakespearean actor in those days. I didn’t realise that you could be a full time opera singer. I suppose I had a dream of being a singer from the age of about 17 and I also had a dream of representing England at Cardiff and, fairly early on in my time at Sheffield, I realised I wanted to be a singer.”

Liz is living proof that dreams can come true. She has already appeared at top concert hall venues in this country including the Wigmore Hall, Birmingham Symphony Hall, London Colosseum and the Aldeburgh Festival and also performed in San Francisco, Boston, New Mexico and Poland.

“Whilst in Sheffield I taught choristers and took part in a number of small con-

certs. I have always loved to act and sing and was having singing lessons in the classical style and learning how to fill a theatre with my voice.”

In 2002 she won a scholarship to the Royal College of Music where she followed the Advanced Opera Studies Course at the Benjamin Britten International Opera School from where she graduated in 2005 with a distinction as well as the Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother Rose Bowl which is awarded annually for outstanding achievement.

In 2005 Liz joined the English National Opera, making her debut as Papagena in Die Zauberflöte (The Magic Flute) by Mozart.

Liz has also made regular appearances on Radio 3 and been featured in articles in The Stage and Independent on Sunday newspapers.

She believes that a single-minded attitude has helped her to find success: “ I have worked really hard and am very focussed. I suppose you could say I am a single minded person with drive and determination.

“I never under-estimate how lucky I am to be doing something I love and having the gift to be able to communicate the music. I think it is a very good thing that opera has become popularised and brought to a wider audience.”

As well as singing opera, Liz loves to talk about it. When asked to nominate her favourite singers she is quick to respond: “Maria Callas and Placido Domingo,” comes the answer almost immediately.”

When it comes to composers she is quick to move from the classicism of Mozart to the more contemporary work of Alban Berg via Richard Strauss.

There is also no doubt in her mind about her favourite work: “That would be the Marriage of Figaro by Mozart. It’s the perfect marriage of music and libretto, just pure genius.”

This year she had the privilege of playing the part of Suzanna in Mozart’s opera at London Coliseum and has also performed the role of Barbarina.

Liz also believes that physical fitness and looking after herself contribute to her success. She is a keep fit fan and regular goes running.

“It is very important for me to look after myself physically. Singing certainly invades my personal life. I cannot go into a smoky atmosphere or stay out late and even when I’m having some time off I have to keep practice up.

“I have a great group of friends and family who keep my feet on the ground. I will never get too big for my boots. I am going to give Cardiff my best shot and I’m just going to try to be myself. But I know that even Divas have to do the hovering.”

We will let you know how Liz gets on in future editions of Hethersett Herald Archive magazines.

Hethersett Herald

Hethersett Herald is a monthly publication looking at all aspects of village life with news, features and comment. It is put together entirely by volunteers and is an independent publication with no allegiance to any political or religious group.

Hethersett Herald is published around the first of each month on www.hethersettherald.weebly.com.

Hethersett Archive is part of the Hethersett Herald group of publications and uses material written about the village in the past, presented as if it is happening now.

Hethersett History will be an e-magazine looking at specific years in the past.

In Our Next Edition

OUR next edition of Hethersett Herald Archive takes a look at what was happening in the village in April 2007. We report on the coming production of Hethersett Players.

There's also success as four Hethersett Athletic footballers are picked to represent Norfolk.

We also carry an obituary about Fred Tuck, who was an outstanding supporter of Methodism.

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