



Lois Weedon and Weston Newsletter



May/June 2015 – May Day Edition

From the Editor

As usual preparations for this edition are gathering pace as we head towards the May Day Bank Holiday week-end. Apologies to those contributors who missed the deadline this time. I hope we can catch up for the next edition.

With just a few days to go it will all be over. I tell myself that every year as I start to fret about the last minute preparations for the May Day Fair on the Bank Holiday Monday. The number one concern is the weather and I can't control that. So fingers crossed and some helpful prayers please and we hope to have another bumper year. A massive thank you to everyone who has worked so hard to make it happen (again !!!) and for all the kind donations of books, toys and tombola prizes. Sadly this year's event will not be started by The Great Weston Run but I am assured that it will reappear next year, and we have cart-loads of great stuff to keep everyone entertained.

Following the General and Local Elections on May 7th, the Annual Parish Meeting is a little later than usual on Monday 18th May. Everyone in the community is encouraged to attend this meeting at which representatives of the various Village Organisations will present brief reports; we also hope to have representatives from our recently elected local councillors and the local Police Community Support Officer.

In the past few weeks there has been some very sad news of the passing of two long standing residents: Frank Wills and Sir John Greenaway. Our condolences go to their families.

The next edition of the newsletter will be in July 2015 and all material for that edition should be given to me by Saturday, 20th June 2015.

Paul Smith, 8 Vicarage Rise (01327-860626)

Email: loisweedonpaul@gmail.com

Dates for your Diary

(For details of some events - see inside the newsletter. Later events, details to follow)

Mon., 4 May	May Day Country Fair, Weston. Details on page 3
Sat., 9 May	Barn Dance in aid of Astwell Benefice – Weston Barns . Details on page 8 (Followed by Rogation Sunday 10 May)
Mon., 18 May	Annual Parish Assembly, Weston Baptist Chapel. 7:30 p.m. – All welcome. Especially organisation leaders
Sun., 17 May	"Messy Church " – Lois Church, 3:30pm on wards
Sun., 24 May	Church Benefice Picnic – 1pm – 4pm - Millennium Field, Lois Weedon
Thu., 28 May	Dinner in the Village Hall with Guest Chefs, the Gladwin Brothers details on page 7
Sat., 6 June	Church Summer Fete – at the Rectory, Lois Weedon. All funds raised go to the Church
Sun., 19 July	"Pets at Messy Church " – Lois Church, 3:30pm on wards – Special blessing for pets
Sat., 5 Sept	Horticultural Society Annual Show – Details in the next edition

Winners of Village Hall '100 Club' Lottery

March 2015

April 2015

Skip Sheppard	75	Jeremy & Karen Wilcox	68
David Abbott	90	Anne Marshall	4
Joy Kirkham	12	John Archard-Jones	49

The lottery is drawn once per month at the WI meeting. Prizes are £25, £10, £5.

Rachel Smith (01327 860626)

Best Village Competition

The Parish Council has entered our village into the Best Village competition (again!!) and the judging takes place within the next few weeks. This is not just about having a tidy, litter-free, picturesque village, although I am sure that helps, but it is as much about being a vibrant active community with lots going on for all ages. It is clear that the joint communities of Lois Weedon and Weston are very active and last year we actually won the "Best Small Village" award, having won "Highly Commended" in 2013. The Parish Council was encouraged to enter the competition again this year. Please support them in this effort.

Paul Smith, Acting Clerk

Parish Council

Here is a summary of the Parish Council meeting held on **March 30th** in the Baptist Chapel, Weston. Full minutes of council meetings are posted on the Village Notice Boards. If anyone would like more detail or would like to read the actual minutes on any matter, please contact the Acting Clerk, Paul Smith.

Meeting held on 30th March, 2015, 6 councillors and plus the Clerk but no members of the public were in attendance. Major items discussed:

Planning and Licensing Matters:

S/2014/2549/TPO – Old Manse, Weston – tree works [SNC approved];

S/2015/0108/FUL – 4 Helmdon Road, Weston – single storey extension [SNC approved];

S/2015/0153/FUL & LBC – Manor House, Plumpton – swimming pool [Awaiting approval after inspector visit];

S/2014/2108/PA – The Farm, Weston – Barn Conversion [under appeal]

Finance Matters: Payments were approved for Clerk's salary, Expenses and Car Scheme donation. Accounts to date and performance against budget were accepted.

A review of the Parish assets had been undertaken. One of the picnic tables in the Millennium Field was considered beyond repair and should be removed. The netting intended to avoid footballs etc. being kicked out of the field was in need of replacement – this is the subject of a grant funded project. The bus shelters need ivy removing and some panels need replacing. One of the benches, on the path between Lois Weedon and Weston had been damaged. Before undertaking further repair, it was suggested that this location could be offered to the family and friends of Hilda Wilkins who want to erect a memorial seat. The Council is now looking for a volunteer to undertake some of the work necessary in painting benches, repairing bus shelters and doing other minor repairs around the Parish.

Part of the asset discussion related to the one or two memorial seats in the village that were explicitly NOT Parish Council assets and were maintained by the people who originally erected them. It was noted that at some time in the future the Parish Council may have to consider undertaking the maintenance of the benches and adopting them as parish assets.

A Preliminary Internal Audit had been undertaken and the report submitted to the Council which was accepted. It was noted that there were no matters arising from the internal audit and the clerk should be thanked for his hard work in ensuring all matters were in good order.

Website Update –Development is underway, funded by a grant from SNC, however initial requests for website content from village organisations and members of the community had not resulted in much response. Further encouragement will be noted in the Newsletter.

Council Elections, May 7th, 2015 – Notices of forthcoming elections had been posted on the notice boards and distributed via the email lists. Of the current Parish Council, 3 councillors indicated their intention not to stand for re-election: Cllr Cockrell, Cllr Archard-Jones and Cllr Wilde. The Clerk reminded councillors that in order to be quorate, at least 3 candidates should be nominated

Footpath SD24 – Following an update report and discussion it was decided that the Council would write to the Rights of Way Officer asserting that footpath SD24 has always been in its current position and to confirm that there was significant local opinion to support that view.

Date and time of next meeting: Monday 18th May - Annual Parish Meeting: 7:30pm in the Baptist Chapel to be followed by the Parish Council AGM at 8.00 p.m.

Everyone is encouraged to attend the Annual Parish meeting at which reports will be presented on behalf of all the various Village organisations

*Paul Smith, Acting Parish Clerk,
Tel: 01327 860626 (E-mail: wwwparishclerk@gmail.com)*

VACANCY FOR PARISH CLERK

Weston and Weedon Lois Parish Council has a vacancy for a Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (joint post). The Parish Clerk is responsible for the administration of the business and finances of the Council. Council meetings are held at least six times a year in the evening and attendance at the meetings is essential, there may also be occasional special meetings.

Applications are invited from suitable qualified and/or experienced persons, although training is provided. Enthusiasm is an important requirement for this post which should also be viewed as a way of serving your local community. There is an appropriate stipend for this position. Applicants must be computer literate with good communications skills and a friendly and positive outlook. For details and further information please contact either:

Paul Smith Acting Clerk/RFO (01327 860626) David Elkington, Chairman, (01327 860886)

May Day Country Fair - 2015

34th Year of the Lois Weedon and Weston May Day Fair Monday the 4th May, Helmdon Road, Weston NN12 8PX

One of South Northants Great Village Events Open To All

Entrance to the Fair, including free programme, is £2.00 for adults, £1.00 for children, Car Parking free,



The fair is busy from 10am but is opened officially at 12 noon with the crowning of the May Queen by our guest of honour, **Major Jack Stanley**, Chaplain at RAF Croughton. This will be followed by the traditional Maypole Dancing by the children of St Loys CEVA Academy, Lois Weedon. This year's May Queen is **Ella Palmer** and her attendants are **Natalie Middleton** and **Bella Basford**, will arrive at 12.00 in a suitably grand vehicle. The children of the school also designed the front page of the May Day Programme.

The Crowning Ceremony will be followed by a **fun-run** for the younger children: Years 1-2; 3-4, 4-5. That race starts at 1pm, just turn up on the day at the main field and pay £1. Organised by Friends of St Loys School.

Raffle tickets are on sale throughout the day (draw takes place at 4.00, the official closing of the show)

Prizes include **2 Tickets to the Cropredy Festival**, courtesy of Fairport Convention, **Two Race Weekend Silverstone tickets for either British Superbikes or British Touring Cars**, **2 Tickets to any One Day Cricket match during the 2015 Cricket Season** thanks to Northants County Cricket; **Two tickets to Northampton Saints vs London Welsh (May 9th)** courtesy Northampton Saints Rugby Club plus several other prizes (including Fairport Convention's latest CD !!!)

There is the usual substantial and varied **Craft Fair** under cover in the barns with 30 plus stalls including a huge **Tombola**, **Toys** and **Book** stalls, **crafts** and **food** stalls, **Candy floss**, and **Ice Cream**

In the main field there will be lots to do and see for the whole family, including the amazing **falconry display** and, in their new livery, **donkey rides**, thanks to Jan and Pete Parmenter.

Other displays include **Catanger Llamas**. Mary Pryse will also be demonstrating spinning of the llama fleeces. We are especially pleased to announce our **Companion Dog Show** with Pedigree Classes and Novelty Classes. Judging starts at 1.30pm and will be followed by our ever popular **Terrier Racing**. At the time of going to press we are still hoping that there will be a sheep-shearing display but availability of the "right kind of sheep" has yet to be confirmed

Refreshments are available throughout the day with teas and coffees and cakes in the refreshment barn, **Wine** courtesy of Miss Julie Tynn and **Cider** courtesy of local cider experts, **3C's Cider**, **Hog Roast** and **Burger Bar** and 'Foodie Stalls' in the Barns.

Summary of this year's attractions include.

- Brackley & District Band
- Donkey Rides
- Classic Cars & Bikes
- Companion Dog Show
- Llama Display
- Terrier Racing
- Brackley Morris Men
- Falconry Display
- Bouncy Castle
- Swings and Roundabouts
- Welly Wanging Competition
- Plus other side shows and attractions

What happens to the money raised by May Day ?

May Day is now in its 34th year and in that time has turned over something approaching £240,000, at least half of which has been profit which has been distributed among various Village organisations. The event is one of the few Village activities that brings significant outside involvement of non-residents into the community and without this extraordinary effort and the funds it raises, the various organisations and activities within the village would need to find funding from elsewhere or might not even exist. Members of the various Village organisations participate in one way or another before and on the actual day, helping make the event a success.

After each May Day, once all the money has been counted and the bills paid, the May Day Organising Committee meet to consider the distribution of funds. It has become customary for the various Village groups in need of funding to write to the Committee to request a suitable donation. Each group that has benefited in the past from a May Day donation in the past will receive a letter inviting them to apply for any funding they require, stating the amount required and the purpose for which the money is to be used. The following is a list of some of the organisations and local causes that have benefitted from May Day funding over the years.

Bell Ringers, Car Scheme, Diamond Jubilee Celebrations, Drama Club, Film Club, Fireworks Displays, Football Club, Lois Weedon Church, Churchyard strimmer, Playgroup/Pre-School, Plumpton Church, Village barbecue, Village marquee, Millennium Playing Field, Parish Council (various projects), Replanting of Daffodils, Senior Citizen's Christmas Lunch, St Loys School, Village Hall, Village Newsletter, Weston Community Project/Baptists Chapel, Youth Club

New groups or any which feel they have been overlooked are encouraged to make themselves known to the Committee by writing to me, *Paul Smith, Chairman, May Day Organising Committee (01327 860626)*

Weston & Weedon Horticultural Society

Give advanced notice of their

ANNUAL SHOW

And

FOOD & DRINK FESTIVAL

SATURDAY 5TH SEPTEMBER 2015

Details in next edition



Super Fast Broadband Update - Fibre-optic cable laying is now complete !!!

The good news is that our project to bring fibre-optic broadband to the upper Tove valley has been completed and the inspectors have given their seal of approval to our accomplishments.

Everyone in the villages of Abthorpe, Astwell, Bradden, Slapton, Lois Weedon, Wappenham and Weston and all the properties in-between should now be able to get £10 per month, unlimited, better than 30Mbps broadband

Our project has cost £250,000 to implement and we have received £108,658.07 in grant aid.

There are currently **410 premises** (94 in Lois Weedon & Weston) benefiting from the toils of the volunteers from your own communities who have done a grand job connecting people up. Considering that there is likely to be an average of 7 devices connected to the internet per household, that makes nearly **3,000 using the system at peak times**

Yes there are still jobs to do and yes, there are loans to be repaid but the infrastructure we have built should provide very fast, reliable internet connections for quite some time to come

Frank Wills

Frank passed away on March 10th just a few weeks before his 80th birthday. He lived almost all of his life in Lois Weedon and Weston and will be remembered as one of the village “characters”. His stroke robbed him of being able to spend his retirement in the garden and greenhouse though for a few years he continued to cultivate his begonias and always enjoyed the Annual Show.

We would like to recognize the truly inspiring level of care and assistance which was given to Frank by friends and neighbours, members of Weston Chapel, the British Legion, SSAFA and.... In fact, there are so many people who regularly provided help in a whole range of ways that it would be impossible to name everyone here. To all of you, please accept this acknowledgement and a huge “Thank you” for all your loving care which made it possible for Frank to continue to live at home in the village for so many years which was his dearest wish.

As we all know, Frank was a complex character who often seemed to have no difficulty in expressing his feelings. However, he may not have verbalized his gratitude to you. But, we can assure you that he appreciated all that you did for him.

It was heart warming to see so many at his funeral and to know that Frank was cared for and accepted by the community for himself just as his family had always loved him.

Mary & Dorothy

The following is the eulogy given by William Sitwell at Frank's funeral (reproduced, pretty much, verbatim !!)

I was in my early teens when I got to know Frank. He was working as gardener to my parents Francis and Susanna Sitwell at Weston Hall. It was the 1980s and during the holidays I would often wander through the garden and stumble across Frank. He might be digging in one of the squares, surrounded by neat box hedging in the old walled kitchen garden. Or he'd be on the mower, ploughing up and down across the lawns. Whatever he was doing he'd stop. He'd put down the fork, or stop the engine and we'd chat. Whatever we'd talk about, we'd inevitably laugh. Well I'd laugh and he'd wheeze and then cough wretchedly; no doubt the result of his incessant smoking. Whenever we chatted he would roll a cigarette.

Our conversations were always entertaining and often filled with him dispensing advice to me as a teenager. If I could remember the content I certainly wouldn't repeat it here. Save to say that, for example, whilst he wasn't exactly 100 per cent successful with the fairer sex, he was very keen on egging on the likes of myself and my brother in that regard.

And he was always generous. Generous with advice, the horticultural variety proving rather more useful. Generous in handing out seeds, or onion sets. Generous in the pub, he would always offer me a drink. In later years he would keenly invite me to his house for a whisky mac. And generous with literature. He'd tell me he'd left a book for me in the tack room. Mind you, it wasn't Shakespeare.

Of course, as we all know, much of Frank's conversation was taken up with moaning. ‘Bloody wind,’ he'd always say. Which made me laugh. I found it ironic that someone whose job entailed being outside most of the time would be permanently irritated by the weather. Indeed, Frank's constant wheeze, his terrible cough and his back, almost bent double, was, I always thought, a terrible advert for a life spent working outdoors. But Frank had a twinkle behind the eye and he never failed to amuse me. And so the news of his death really saddened me. I've lost a friend. And this village has lost a wonderful character. Indeed, in many ways, this county has lost an extraordinary figure. This, country, in fact, has lost what is surely another of that rare breed of people who have spent their whole lives in the same village, rarely straying far beyond the boundaries of their small communities. For Frank lived and died in Weston/Lois Weedon. This was his world. London was a far off idea. He regarded people from Wappenham as foreigners.

Frank Ernest Wills was born in Weston on March 31st 1935. And one extraordinary fact is that he lived with his mother Jessie until, aged 91, she had to move to a care home. He attended the village school where his fellow pupils included Basil Hinton and Clyde Burbidge. In those days there were some 35 children educated in either the infant or senior room. Frank wasn't exactly a model pupil, but he was even less interested in sport. His days would start early morning as he and the likes of Basil, would fetch milk churns from Jack Webb up at the farm and distribute them round the village before walking to school for the first lesson. After school the lads would sit on the green pelting stones at the school bell, trying to ring it. ‘If we got caught we'd get the cane,’ recalled Basil.

The holidays were spent partly attending Boy Scouts as Cubs, run by one Mr Baisley in Lois Weedon, or simply wandering and playing in the fields and woods. They would be out for hours, looking for moorhen's eggs in the ponds or playing among the trees. Dressed simply in shirt, pullover, socks and shoes they didn't wear hats. That's because anyone foolish enough to wear a hat would soon have it pinched and thrown up into the trees. ‘I lost quite a few hats,’ says Basil, ‘and so did Frank. Which didn't please our parents.’

Frank's own father was a countryman. A farm worker and small-holder. Frank's education, meanwhile, continued at Brackley Secondary Modern. Along with Clyde and friends, the children would take a taxi to their new school driven by a man called Harold Gibbons, to Helmdon where they took a train to Brackley.

The Education Act of 1944 extended compulsory education until the age of 15 and so as soon as he could leave he did. Aged 15, Frank reported to the headmaster and informed him that he had secured work and so he left school. That first job was at Weston Hall, my family home. And there, for the next three years he worked as under-gardener to Bernard Stevenson, husband to Gertrude, the housekeeper to my grandparents Sacheverell and Georgia Sitwell, for over 50 years. These were Frank's formative years. He

loved gardening and horticulture and it became a vital part of his life. And the knowledge he picked up over the years and the wisdom he imparted to others prove his keen intelligence. Then at the age of 18 Frank did his National Service. He was sent to Catterick in North Yorkshire for training in the Royal Armoured Corps. And then Trooper Wills was dispatched to Germany, to the town of Lüneburg where he joined 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars. He may have been far from home, but he shared a Centurion tank with Basil Hinton (and also Jim Waddington, who travelled to Frank's funeral from his home in Doncaster). Frank was a gunner, Basil the wireless operator. And he was, says Basil, 'a good soldier and an excellent gunner.' Frank was disciplined, passed all his tests and fitted in well with the other men. It was a role of which he was always proud. He remained a member of the regiment's association for the rest of his life, always reading their newsletters as well as being a keen member of the British Legion. Indeed anyone who watched him holding and lowering the flag, in his position as Standard Bearer, at Remembrance Sunday in the church at Lois Weedon, with his white gloves, perfectly pressed uniform and medals might have been forgiven for thinking he actually fought in the Second World War.

Out of the forces and Frank gained work, not in gardening, but like so many, on the Great Central Railway. His role was as fireman. That is to say he stoked the fires for the steam engines. He would drive to Woodford Halse on his Francis Barnett motorcycle and work long 12-hour shifts between Sheffield and Marylebone. The work then moved him to Blackpool, but, far from home, he wasn't happy. So he left and came back to Weston where he found work once more as a gardener. For many years he worked at Lois Weedon House and for the various families who lived there: The Richards, the Woods and the Greenaways. Of course he managed to fall out with most of his employers. As Ivor Jones, who worked under him and from whom he says he learned so much, told me: 'He always called a spade a spade.' Indeed, Frank always said what he thought. And he could have a terrible temper. Clyde Burbidge remembers him chasing a boy at school who had been teasing him; a boy called Roy Rush. He ran after him with a pair of garden shears. 'If I catch you I'll cut your bloody ears off!' he screamed. But he was caught and caned by a teacher before he could catch Roy Rush. Many years later he was once cutting the grass in the churchyard at Lois Weedon and had paused to roll and light a cigarette. 'I don't think you should be smoking here,' admonished a local, passing by. Frank looked at the graves around him then said, 'Well no one's come up to complain yet.'

And as every landlord of The Crown, where Frank would always be found on Friday and Saturday night and Sunday morning, would vouch, he was firm in his opinions about beer. He once ordered a pint of Hooky for Basil Hinton, but the ale proffered was cloudy. Frank was appalled: 'You can't give a man a pint like that. And a Weston man as well!' he shouted. Neither was he impressed with my efforts to learn to play the drums. 'You should take your bloody drums to Grumblers Holt,' he told me.

Few will forget Frank on the night back in the 1980s when a howling gale threatened to sweep away the tent at the Weston and Lois Weedon Horticultural Society's Annual Show. 'We're all going die,' he wailed. The Society, of course, was another passion. He was a stalwart Secretary to the show for decades. In years when lack of interest threatened its existence he scaled it down and ran it from the village hall one year and the Baptist School room, the next. He loved to exhibit his vegetables and flowers. His dahlias and chrysanthemums swept the board – in this village and others - and his house was filled with silver cups. His knowledge and expertise saw him requested as a judge at other shows and at home his pride and joy was his begonias. Frank's participation in the village show was curtailed after he suffered a stroke in 2003, but he never failed to make his presence felt, driving around the show on what my kids call his Granny Zoomer.

And anyone keen to see him was always made welcome at his home. His old friends Basil and Clyde visited frequently and Clyde never failed to do his shopping on a Friday. Indeed who among us could believe the power of friendship, kindness and loyalty that could last like that for over 70 years?

And while I mention those who have cared for Frank – the doctors and nurses, those who came to his home and helped him on a day-to-day basis and friends such as Dave Clark - I must highlight Penny Spademan. Frank was devoted to Penny and her selfless care for Frank is an example to us all.

Now I should of course mention Frank's sisters, Dorothy and Mary. With seven years between Frank and Dorothy and 18 between him and Mary it would never be a normal sibling relationship. But they kept in touch and while Dorothy became a teacher and Mary (who moved at California) a doctor, Frank never let them forget that he was the older brother. And knowing Frank, perhaps no one should have been surprised at the shock he experienced when Dorothy married an Indian gentleman called Sharm. I'm told by the family that my grandfather, Sir Sacheverell, made a point of meeting Sharm to talk about India, the news of which rather improved Frank's disposition towards him. But he wouldn't have any truck with the food of Sharm's heritage. At a family party for 280 guests there was one firmly English plate of food. And I'll never forget the horror Frank expressed to me at the idea of spending Christmas with Dorothy's family: 'Bloody curry!'

Frank was a country person, a true villager, and a character. And he displayed the true colours of a character by always saying crossly: 'I'm not a bloody character.'

Frank Ernest Wills. Expert gardener, brother, uncle, stalwart villager, soldier, friend and Englishman, we'll miss you.

William Sitwell

RABBIT

THE FORK SHED

Thursday 28th May 2015
Dinner in the Village Hall with Guest Chefs
the Gladwin Brothers
of the RABBIT and SHED London restaurants
Using ingredients from their own farm in Sussex

<p style="text-align: center;">MENU</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mushroom marmite, confit egg yolk</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Grilled asparagus dippers, chorizo, toasted almonds Tempura sand eels, wild garlic</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BBQ Nutbourne lamb, broad bean hummus, minted royals</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strawberry, chocolate, meringue & hazelnut sherbet fool</p> <p style="text-align: center;">WINES</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Nutty Wild Nutty, Meadow Sweet Bellini Nutbourne Sussex Reserve</p>
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Dinner including wines: £45 per person
7pm for 7.30pm

Hosted by William Sitwell.

Tickets available from John Archard-Jones Tel No. 01295 760 378 or via Email john@archardjones.co.uk
(proceeds are being raised in support of the Horticultural Show)



Come and join us as a Parish Constable!

Are you community focused and want to give something back? Do you want an exciting, challenging, dynamic role?
Then come and join Northants Police as a Parish Special Constable!

Parish Special Constables are part-time, voluntary, fully warranted police officers who are dedicated, through choice, to policing a specific area or parish.

In return for 16 hours duties per month, we will provide you with training and full uniform and give you the opportunity to come and join us to conduct policing duties in your local area.

You will work with the local Safer Community Team to conduct a variety of policing duties in your area and really make a difference in your community.

This really is one of the most rewarding voluntary opportunities available!

So visit our website at: <http://northantspolicespecials.co.uk/> or email us at specialsrecruitment@northants.police.uk to find out more or to apply today.

We look forward to welcoming you on board!

BARN DANCE

Featuring the famous "ODDSOX"

Saturday May 9th



AT WESTON BARN

HELMDON ROAD, WESTON, NN12 8PX

6.30 pm

Dancing from 7.00pm

BAR AVAILABLE

TICKETS (INCLUDING SUPPER)

£10 ADULTS - £5 FOR CHILDREN

FAMILY TICKETS £25

(2 ADULTS & up to 3 CHILDREN)

Contact Frank Hunter 01327 860597

or Rev Carole Peters 01327 860798

Held in aid of the Astwell Benefice