

A Wansford character...

‘Good humour, love and hard work will always prevail’

Wansford, along with other agricultural communities, in the past had its fair share of characters and people with strong personalities born into austere times.

Introduced into this community was a man who had experienced even harder times. Born on a farm near Hanover, Germany, before the Second World War, Vic Mueller had no knowledge of the fascism that engulfed the country. He was drafted into the German army that fought its way to the gates of Moscow.

During the chaotic retreat from Russia, facing starvation or certain death at the hands of the now advancing Russian army, he used his knowledge of the countryside to survive.

He escaped to the American sector of the divided Germany and subsequently found himself in a prisoner-of-war camp at Nafferton.

Seconded out to work on farms, Vic took employment at The Grange, Wansford. He learnt to speak almost perfect English and met his future wife Jessie Dodgson.

He eventually became the mainstay of the farm and fitted into village life perfectly living in one of the very basic cottages on The Row.

He used a Lambretta scooter for conveyance. Being a big man and Jessie, who rode pillion not a small woman, the scooter was well loaded down to say the least! Together they made a trip to Hanover on that scooter to trace Vic’s roots, but all his large family, brothers and sisters were gone, killed in the war either by starvation or the advancing Russian army.

Vic and Jessie had no children, but they loved children.

Vic never had a harsh word for anyone; if the Russians were mentioned he would purse his lips and shake his head but no more was said.

Jessie was a great cook which suited Vic down to the ground as he loved his food, sometimes recalling how he suffered near starvation in the war. Jessie was a few years older than him and often referred to Vic as ‘that young monkey’ with a loving smile on her face.

They later moved into one of the council bungalows and by this time had acquired a Reliant three-wheeler.

Vic retired from The Grange after many years of hard work.

He was well known in the district for his good humour and zipping about in his



beloved cream coloured three-wheeler. When Jessie passed away Vic took on the role of chief cook and put on a fair bit of weight, but he remained active, always full of life and jollity. He passed away peacefully in his favourite chair by the window of his bungalow after enjoying a good lunch and tidying his home, which he always kept immaculately clean.

His ashes are now scattered on a small island in the lake at Tythe Farm, where he loved to come and feed the wildlife.

Thus ended the life of a great character; a foreigner - even an enemy—who overcame all adversity and hatred.

A man much loved in the locality who became a shining example to us all in that no matter the adversity we are faced with, good humour, love and hard work will always prevail.

Terry Hardcastle

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Cygnificant success with swan health problem

When I first came to live at Tythe Farm, Wansford, eight years ago, the lake had a pair of Canada geese which nested on the island, rearing healthy broods of goslings.

In the spring, mute swans would occasionally appear but were quickly chased off by the now resident Canada geese. My husband Terry had to explain to me, a city girl, that either the geese or the swans would make a nest, not both as one would not tolerate the other.

By the fourth spring, I decided to intervene and every time any Canada geese appeared, I would attempt to chase them away, mostly by running round the lake, flapping my arms and making loud whooping noises, sometimes roping in the help of a reluctant Terry to perform a pincer movement around the lake.

Eventually our hard work paid off and a pair of mute swans built a nest and hatched seven cygnets. But sadly when the cygnets reached about six weeks old, all but one of them died.

Last year in 2020, we again repeated our routine of scaring off any geese and were rewarded with the return of the mute swans, who went on to hatch nine cygnets. However when the cygnets were about six weeks old, again one by one over the next few days all nine of them died.

We found a place in Thirsk which offered post-mortems on wildlife and they were happy to investigate the cause of the deaths. We dropped off two of the cygnets which had been stored in our freezer and eventually received a report stating that the cygnets had died because of an infestation of several different types of worms, some of which had eaten through the young birds’ oesophagi.

We searched the internet to find some swan



The most recent family of swans.

food with had an added wormer but although there was plenty of medicated food for poultry, ducks and geese, there was nothing to be had for swans and because swans can only feed on water, these were not an option.

We did however find a suitable bird worming powder called Flubevet and, following the recommended amounts to mix for geese, we combined the worming powder, swan food and warm water. After a couple of failed attempts to dry it out, the first batch turning into a huge biscuit and the second turning mouldy, we found that by not attempting dry out too much in one batch, it would dry out quite nicely on top of the Aga.

So this year, after the mandatory geese scaring, our swans hatched four healthy cygnets. When they were about four weeks old, we began feeding the swans over the next seven days (it was impossible to separate the parents from the babies).

Happily our efforts paid off and all four cygnets are now about three months old and we have the great privilege to being able to watch these once little balls of fluff grow into beautiful, graceful creatures, giving us endless hours of pleasure. **Susanne Hardcastle**

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Goodbye to restrictions

Wansford Village Hall supporters celebrated the end of national Covid restrictions with an afternoon tea party in the hall.



Picture by
Driffield &
Wolds Weekly

Best wishes to Keith, Marie and family

Following the news that the Trout Inn has been put up for sale, members of the Skerne & Wansford Parish Council have expressed their appreciation for all that Keith and Marie Robinson have done for the villages. They have been good friends not only to the residents but also the wider community, the Wansford Village Hall and both churches; The Trout Inn has been the cornerstone of many celebrations and events. Keith is the East Riding's longest-serving landlord and one of a handful of people in Wansford who can say they were raised in the village and attended Wansford School.

The parish council knows that all residents will join them in extending their very best wishes for the future to Keith, Marie and their family.

Casual vacancy on council

There is a vacancy on the Skerne & Wansford Parish Council caused by the resignation of Coun Gill Grassam, of Wansford, after several years' service.

The vacancy can be filled by co-optation and the next meeting takes place in Wansford Village Hall on Tuesday September 21 at 7.30pm.

Anyone interested in the role should contact the clerk Mrs Maria Cawthorne on

Sandwpcclerk@yahoo.co.uk by Monday September 13.

It is an exciting time for the community and council as it is about to embark on a partnership with renewable energy specialist, Harmony Energy. The partnership will bring many benefits to both of the villages in the parish over the ensuing years.

Meetings are held six times a year on the third Tuesday with the next one on September 21.

Beverley Ramblers make final cut

Beverley Ramblers have expressed walkers' gratitude to the parish council for its financial support in helping them tidy up the permissive path between Wansford and Whinhill locks. The Ramblers received a £150 grant from the parish authority and, up to the final cut made in August, have spent a total of £209.10 on the hire of mowing machines.

Latest oil price

The latest ex-VAT oil price achieved by the Humber & Wolds bulk buying co-operative was 40.5p. For joining details contact Billy Waites at william.waites@btinternet.com

All that jazz at Skerne

A jazz and blues evening is planned for 7pm on Saturday October 16 to take place at Skerne Church with music from Michael and Martyn.

Tickets are £10 to include a glass of wine and a pudding.

Contact Catherine Bristow on 07774 402577 or Margaret Brennand on 252157 to book places.

Plea for wool

An appeal for wool comes from Margaret Brennand, of Skerne, who has crocheted hundreds of squares for the special care baby unit at Hull Royal Infirmary.

The squares are swapped between mother and baby to help them to bond. If you can help please contact Margaret on 252157.

New faces on the parish council

Two new members were co-opted to serve on the Skerne & Wansford Parish Council at its July meeting, and a new clerk takes over from Jill Pick in September. All will be well known to many members of both villages but for those unfamiliar with them they have each given a brief round-up of their connections to both the parish and wider community.

Coun Lee Cawthorne:

As a resident of Wansford for more than 20 years I feel it's only over the last four years while I've been teaching, currently at Beverley Grammar School, that I've really felt part of the village and so more qualified to sit on the Skerne and Wansford Parish Council.

Before I retrained as a teacher I worked in the pharmaceutical and medical device industry which led to me living mostly in Essex for several years and involved a lot of foreign travel but I'm hoping that my experience of project management will come in useful as the parish council embarks on a new phase of developments in the villages.



Coun Charlie Dewhirst:

I live in Wansford with my wife and two children and work for the National Pig Association, representing the interests of pig farmers across the UK. I grew up in Nafferton before spending 15 years in London pursuing my career. During my time in London, I served for eight years as a borough councillor in

Hammersmith & Fulham.

Having returned home to East Yorkshire three years ago, I moved to Wansford and it is a privilege to serve on the parish council and support our fantastic local community.

Recently I have been elected to represent the East Wolds & Coastal Ward of the East Riding of Yorkshire Council sitting alongside Jane Evison and Jonathan Owen.

Clerk Maria Cawthorne:

I've lived in the village for more than 20 years and thought it was about time that Jill was allowed to put her feet up. As a stay-at-home mum for the last 18 years and a regular patron of the Trout Inn I've got to know Wansford and its residents quite well, mostly fellow dog walkers, and can't imagine anywhere

better to have raised our three boys.

I'm looking forward to supporting councillors at an exciting time as it looks forward to new projects that will enhance both villages and improve facilities for residents.

I will be taking over the reins fully in September but I'm not too worried as Jill has promised to be on hand for when I get stuck!



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