

# The Riverporter

ST IVES AWARD WINNING  
NEWSPAPER

Issue 44: 27 September 2019



A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

## Thank you for the music ...

**T**housands of music lovers spent four days enjoying some of the 24 free concerts of the fifth annual Old Riverport Jazz & Blues Festival which is organised by St Ives Town Team.

The weather also played its part, especially on Saturday when hundreds enjoyed the sunshine, music and ice creams on The Quay.

### Come Together

Some of the areas best Musicians enjoy coming together to play the Festival, mainly due to the appreciative audience and also for the friendly atmosphere.

As Johnny Boy Wright of Split Whisker wrote 'Thank you for putting us on again this year, it was a fantastic gig, and totally packed. I enjoyed watching a bit of John Verity afterwards too. Love the atmosphere you have created in the town, everyone's having such a great time.'

### Fascinating Rhythm

Each year The Festival brings new acts to town. This comment from one of them summed up their experience. 'Thanks for having the Rhythm and Blues Band at The Old Riverport Jazz and Blues Festival. It is a gig that will be forever remembered by the band as it was an exceptional afternoon/evening. The best we have had for a long time.'

The Town Team organisers were very pleased with the high quality of the

music - it's impossible to pick out the highlights as there were many.

### Substitute

Sadly not everything went to plan. One artist put the wrong date in his diary and The Dolphin Hotel decided to cancel their Sunday concert late on Friday. The Team are very grateful to the Corn Exchange for providing a substitute venue at the last minute. This meant considerable unexpected costs for the Team with a venue and band to pay for, but once again the public played their part.

A bucket collection on Saturday raised £250 towards the costs and the concert, by another new Festival artist Val Sinclair and Turquoise, was enjoyed by a large audience.

### My Kind of Town

The reason the Town Team started the Festival wasn't just to hear good music but to help keep our town alive and support our businesses. The format of working together and sharing the costs has resulted in a boost for the economy. Hotel rooms, restaurants, takeaways and pubs were either full or very busy helping to create a lively, busy kind of town.



*Clockwise from the top: Stella Hensley in her wonderful illuminated cloak, John Verity, crowds on The Quay, Libby and the St Neots Big Band, and the Barefoot Doctors.*

The Town Team would like to thank everyone who took part in the Festival, performers, venues and the generous public. In particular the Team would like to thank the sponsors Ellis Winters Estate Agent and the Oliver Cromwell pub for their whole-hearted support.



TO CONTACT THE RIVERPORTER EMAIL: [EDITOR@THERIVERPORTER.UK](mailto:EDITOR@THERIVERPORTER.UK)

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# Hello Ratty!

From our Environmental Correspondent Heidi N. de Tries

Well, have I got some great news for you



Photograph Rob Adamson

this time my lovelies. We all love Ratty from the Wind in the Willows right? Small, warm, furry – what's not to like? And we all know he's not really a rat but a Water Vole don't we? Of course we do.

The trouble is he's rare and endangered. Why? Because of persecution from the 'nasty' Mink and the disappearance of Ratty's natural habitat – lush reedy margins along our waterways. And so he is protected – and how! As a local company found out.

Hanson's are digging out sand and gravel at a furious rate between Needingworth and Over to meet the current demand from the construction industry. Working with the RSPB, who are planting reeds as they go, they are creating a huge wetland nature reserve. Believe me darlings it's huge – I've seen it. But wait! Suddenly they had to stop. Why? Water Voles were in the way. What did they do? They had to follow the government's rules and – you won't believe this – they had to trap all the voles, about 38 of them, and then translocate them to already established areas of the reserve, out of danger from the diggers. Sounds expensive? I'd say. They worked out that each vole had cost them approximately £38k! Wow! – such is Hanson's commitment and due diligence to ecology and the protection of endangered species. I say, 'Hats off to Hanson's!'

**Two footnotes from Heidi:** Go see Ouse Fen for yourselves. It's quite a walk round but very impressive – Google Ouse Fen Nature Reserve. Or, closer to home, contact Heidi at *The Riverporter* to find out where you might see (or hear) Water Voles on our own river (with permission of the landowner). Welcome back Ratty!

Heidi x

## St Ives Fundraisers best in the land

The St Ives & District Fundraising Branch of the British Heart Foundation (BHF) have had a great few days. Over the weekend members Jean Chandler (Chairman), Helen Hunter (Treasurer) and Anne Strong were awarded the top prize for fundraising for the BHF.

Labelled as big hitters by the BHF they are described as three sweet old ladies who are nothing short of a fundraising juggernaut. Since being formed in 1983 they have raised more than £500,000 for the BHF. Jean was quick to point out that it's due to the generosity and work of all the people who have helped raised funds locally, which now includes the Town Team which raised £445 at their Charity Concert, the last event of the Jazz & Blues Festival.

Thanks go to the Lounge for supporting the event, the audience and the bands, The Tomb Raiders and The What's That Band for donating their fees.

## News from St Ives Day Centre



On Wednesday 25 September, Neil McKittrick, High Sheriff of Cambridgeshire visited St Ives Day Centre. During his visit, Neil chatted to volunteers and members of the centre about what volunteering and attending meant to different people.

One of the volunteers, Lucy, was presented with a certificate to celebrate the fact that she has been helping at the centre for 30 years. Morrisons supermarket, a great supporter of the Day Centre very kindly donated a large selection of cakes for everyone to enjoy.

**St Ives Day Centre is actively recruiting volunteers and if anyone is interested, please call the centre on 01480463444**

The picture shows Maureen (volunteer), Denise (Morrisons), Neil McKittrick (High Sheriff) and Wendy (volunteer).

## Amphibians on the loose

Not one, but two, amphibious cars visited St Ives on Saturday. Their crews enjoyed a drink and the music on The Quay before zooming off up stream.



The fundraising continues with a BHF Quiz Night at the Dolphin on Thursday 17th October at 7.30 pm. For details ring Jean on 01480 469557. Pictured below are left to right: Helen Hunter, Jean Chandler, Stacey Lowry General Manager of The Lounge, Anne Strong and Roger Kuch of the Town Team presenting a cheque for £445.



## ERIK ON BREXIT

Erik and his new friend Dogbot (no relation to Maybot) were most concerned that the Animal Welfare (sentencing) Bill had been dropped due to prorogation of Parliament, that they went to see the eleven hounds of the Supreme Canine Court. They were pleased with the ruling from President Baroness Chihuahua of Richhound cancelling prorogation and reinstating free dog biscuits.





## Dear Erik PAWS FOR THOUGHT

Get it off your chest, email *Erik* at: [editor@theriverporter.uk](mailto:editor@theriverporter.uk)

**Dear Erik,**  
My wife Jane & I are part of The St Ives & Huntingdon Friends Group who raise funds for East Anglia's Children's Hospices. We'd be most grateful if you'd advertise the following details of our Quiz Night in The Riverporter as we need as many teams as possible to take part.

**QUIZ NIGHT AT ST IVES RUGBY CLUB**  
7 Somersham Rd. PE27 3LY  
Friday 11th October at 7.30pm.

Teams of up to 6 people • Tickets £5 pp  
Fantastic raffle prizes • Plenty of parking  
Bar • Bring your own snacks

**Tickets available from Time for Health, or by contacting Tony on 07523 917402**

We do so hope you can help us, as it's such a good cause. Thanks, **Tony & Jane Reynolds**

### Congratulations Riverporter

Your coverage of the Anglia In Bloom awards ceremony was comprehensive and prompt. many days later the AIB web site had absolutely nothing except the menu. **Colin**

**Dear Erik,**  
I have just noticed a leaflet asking for views on improving the amenities in Warner's Park. However am surprised that the council have still not yet addressed the problem of loose gravel at the play park which I reported on a month ago. They need to sort out their priorities! **Gordon**

**Dearest Erik**  
Ref; Heidi's last article. I was moved to poetry.

*Gentle meander in princely bark,  
This Heidi's preserve.  
For her companions,  
Handsome fellows all,  
Reserv'd?  
Riverside romance  
In slender skiff,  
Amuses de chef  
Taken on satin cushion.  
Making gentle ripple  
'Neath flicking soft willow,  
As we go. Anon*

**Editor:** Not sure what you've taken Anon but Heidi's words certainly had an effect. Anyway Heidi has sent this.

### HEIDI'S CONFESSION

Heidi has brought to our attention that rather than the District Council shelving the idea for a third river crossing (see last issue) it was in fact the County Council. Later, the leader of HDC, Graham Bull, proposed the funding for the Feasibility Study for the crossing at the Mayoral Assembly and this was seconded by the leader of Fenland District Council.

Heidi has apologised profusely for misinforming our readers and promises to pay more attention to her contacts in future.

We have nevertheless restricted her prosecco allowance. **Eds.**

**Dear Erik,**  
My wife Cathy and I attended three Jazz & Blues events and they were all very enjoyable. The whole town had a buzz about it that many British towns would envy. I hope that the additional aggro caused by the Dolphin's determined bid for total self-destruction hasn't put the Town Team off doing it again. Perhaps nothing can save that particular whale. **Jon.**

### How far do the T-shirts go?

**FESTIVAL REACHES DUBLIN**

James normally charges a huge fee for 'fashion shoots' but did this one free!

**Stewart AND AUCKLAND**

**Dear Erik,**  
Just went down to Auckland's harbor and got a randoimer to capture this pic of me squinting in the sun. Cheers **Andrew Eaton**



**COPE FORUM**

Cambridgeshire Older People's Enterprise

The next COPE meeting for members in and around St Ives will be held on Friday 11th October 2019, 10.30-12.30. Please also note the new location of the meeting: The Ace Suite, St Ives Corn Exchange  
**Brian Reynolds, Chair, St Ives Branch**

**Dear Erik,**  
I hope you enjoyed the weekend as much as I did. I can imagine you dancing on two legs on the Quayside. I particularly loved the groups playing in the Lounge. Your boss was swaying a little more than usual, though I assume from playing with gusto over the whole weekend! We owe a great vote of thanks to the Town Team for organising it too. Next time Erik, if you need some ear muffs I've got some. Here's to jumpy legs! **Denny Gaudin**

## COUNCIL & COMMUNITY NEWS

### Watch out for the Thomas Cook scammers!

The Riverporter has learned that following the collapse of the Thomas Cook company, crooks are telephoning people posing as the Thomas Cook refund team. These crooks will ask you for your card details in order to give you a refund ... needless to say a refund is the last thing you'll get and also the last time you will see your money. **Beware if anyone calls you looking to refund money, never give your card details on the phone.**

### Busy week for our Police ...

As a newspaper we scan the weekly police reports items of interest to St Ives and while there is often something, it's not unusual that the list is quite sparse. So in receiving this week's list we were surprised to see a lot of issues that our police have had to deal with. For a change we thought we'd print the full list, the number published is a crime number and if anyone feels they may be able to help, the police would love to hear from you. ....

**Burstellars** – Police are investigating the theft of a green 'Carrera' bicycle from the garden of a house on Burstellars at around 8:30 pm on Tuesday 17th September. (Ref 35/67674/19)

**Bridge Street** – Police received a report of a theft and an assault in a shop in Bridge Street that happened at 4:15 pm on Wednesday 18th September. (Ref 35/66936/19)

**Harding Way** – CCTV recorded images of an attempted burglary by three males outside a business unit on Harding Way, early Thursday morning, 19th September (Ref 35/68165/19)

**Priory Road** – A blue Mini was damaged whilst it was parked in a private car park on Priory Road on Thursday morning, 19th September. (Ref 35/67666/19)

**Warner's Park** – Police are investigating the robbery of £10 from two teenagers by an unknown male at around 10:00 pm on Thursday evening, 19th September. (Ref 35/67420/19)

**Meadow How** – A red VW car crashed into the fence of a house late Thursday evening, 19th September. The car was abandoned but later disappeared. A check by officers discovered that it had no valid road tax. (Ref CC-19092019-0585)

**Ramsey Road** – An unknown person damaged a car parked outside a showroom on Ramsey Road at midday on Friday 20th September. (Ref 35/67409/19)

**Bridge Street** – Police were called to Bridge Street in the early hours of Saturday 21st September, in which a male was arrested for carrying a bladed article. (Ref 35/67615/19)

### Will the new car parking upgrade really help our town centres?

HDC issued a long statement from Councillor Marge Beuttell, Executive councillor for operations about the council's new car parking upgrade. The gist of which is that the new technology will allow drivers to pay for what they use and encourage more people to stay longer in our town centres. Marge's statement said 'Our market towns are extremely important to us and the vitality of the district as a whole'. She went on to say that ... 'We have listened to residents, having undertaken a major public survey on car parking in 2017. The most important factors to residents when we asked for the public's input were convenience and value for money'.

Now all of that may be true but the comments from many members of the public here in St Ives and other towns in Huntingdonshire suggest that this new 'upgrade' is not only being badly received (probably the reason for Marge's letter) but a revenue raising exercise.

What is clear is that HDC haven't really listened to businesses who are desperate to have parking charges reduced not increased. Everyone will welcome not having to guess how much to put in the meter before going shopping but it makes no sense to have minimum charges that put off people from nipping into the bank or for a paper.

If the council were really serious about supporting our market towns they would introduce free periods for the first hour or two. This would at least encourage people to come into the centre of town rather than just visit the out-of-town stores. Without this sort of compromise our town centres will continue to decline. It is possible - you only need to visit Ely to see how effective free parking is for a town's economy. It would be more honest and probably more effective for HDC to raise our taxes a little to cover the loss of car parking revenue, which may not be that great if more people shop in town and spend more time and money there.





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# Oh what a perfect day!



Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves on Saturday on The Quay.

Above: Two and a half year-old Mia danced. Right: Town Team members Margaret King and Sheila Stones (Chair) enjoyed ice creams.



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