

Letters to the editor

We would love to hear from you – contact us at County House

POLITICALLY CORRECT

This year marks the bicentenary of the death of political writer, activist and inventor Thomas Paine, who died on 8th June 1809, in Greenwich Village, New York.

My introduction to Thomas Paine was a visit to his cottage in New Rochelle, New York, in 1966; where I learnt that he was born in Thetford, Norfolk, on January 29th 1737.

Thirty years later I discovered his Lincolnshire connections. In 1762, as an excise officer based in The George Hotel, he was assigned to gauge ale casks in Grantham. After twenty-two months he moved to the Alford out-ride, where smuggling was rife. A year later, Paine was unjustly dismissed from the service – but he was later reinstated and served for six years in Lewes, Sussex.

Paine emigrated to America on 4th July 1774, where his political writing, including his best seller 'Common Sense', greatly influenced the politicians and events leading to the Declaration of Independence and the formation of the United States of America.

In recognition of the contribution his inspirational literary works made to the establishment of the United States, the New York state legislature gave Paine the 300 acre farm in New Rochelle, where his cottage remains to this day.

Paine later returned to England, but following the publication of his controversial 'Rights of

Man', he fled to France. He was deeply involved in the French Revolution, was imprisoned, drafted 'Age of Reason' and narrowly escaped the guillotine.

He returned to the USA in 1802, where he remained in poor health, penniless and friendless until his death.

Political activist, Thomas Paine, believed in social reform and equality for all. Many of the freedoms and benefits we enjoy today originated from his pen and publications.

Joyce Stevenson
Bourne

In Reply

Having just read the January edition of the magazine, I write firstly in response to the letter from David Edwards in Perth. I do not think his parents' address in Holbeach would have been Fren Road, I think it would have been Fen Road. This road links up with Barrington gate where the Post Office used to be located.

Jenny Paul
Spalding

ROOM WITH A VIEW – STAR LETTER

I am a true Yellowbelly and home is in an area of the county where the views from all the windows are across open flat fields. In the distance I can see the outlines of other homes.

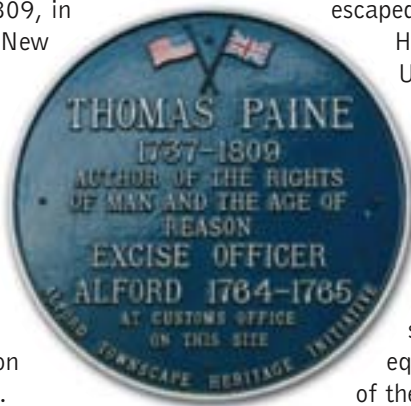
In the night sky I see the lights from these homes. Undiminished by street lights I watch the waxing and the waning of the moon and the wonderful stars. I can see the floodlit spire of Holbeach All Saints church and the sleek outline of the leaded spire at Long Sutton. I see

the red lights of the Power Station at Sutton Bridge and the pulsating one on the Spalding Station. I also watch the twinkling orange lights on the distant A17 road.

However, for most of the year there is one swathe of night sky where there are no lights. However, as Christmastide approaches, one small beacon of light appears in that part of the sky. It is the illuminated Xmas decorations on the tower of Sutton St James church. That small light in the dark sky shines out the true meaning of Christmas. It is so thought provoking, it renews my faith, it gives me peace and makes me think of the many past happy Christmas's spent with my family. Last year the light remained on until almost Lent approached and every night I watched it and it evoked fresh thoughts.

Please may I through your magazine convey my thanks to the church people of Sutton St James, they cannot imagine the pleasure their annual chore gives to me. May I also thank the many people, who, in November, unknowingly allow me from the comfort of my home to enjoy their firework displays.

Jenny Paul
Spalding



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book voucher for the star letter of the month

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