

# A WALK ROUND POTTERSPURY (East End)

Our starting point is the Village Hall. The Hall was originally funded by the men returning from WW1, It started out as an ex-army wooden hut and was brought down from the Barracks at Weedon.



*E1 Village Hall pre 1984*



*E2 Village Hall post 1984*

In 1984 it was bricked in, and the basic electric heating superseded. Recently “State of the art” audio visual equipment has been installed. All this ensures maximum use of the facility.

Making our way down Church End a short way, we cross over and enter the grounds of No.27 Church End. Prior to 1984 was the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vicarage. Many of us can recall fetes, and other events, being held in the gardens.



*E3 Village Fete 1970*

The grounds also contain the tallest trees in the village (redwoods) This is in common with many vicarages in our locality (e.g. Greens Norton).

Part of the gardens, formerly the Tennis Courts were given over for a small housing development from the early sixties. They face outwards on to the High Street and Church Lane.

Leaving the garden by the back gate, into Church Lane. The stone-built houses on the far side of the lane are quite old but have been extensively modernised.



*E4 Church Lane*

Approaching the bottom of the lane the new Rectory built in 1984 is on our right. This is the latest Vicarage of the three in the Village.

Pass through the gates into the Churchyard and follow the footpath to the left and down some way to the top of the steps. On our left is the Mill, now turned into a dwelling. There had been a water mill on this site prior to 1086.



*E5 Potterspury Mill*

The large house “The Quay” on the other side of the Brook was constructed in 1986 for Mr Wintle whose hobby was sailing!

In the churchyard is the grave of John Hellins FRS Assistant to the Astronomer Royal, Vicar of this church and founder of the Village School.

We enter St Nicholas Church through the porch.

One of the main columns of the Church is Norman, dating back to pre-1170. Most of the Church is 13th to 14th Century. There were fine boxed pews, removed in 1990 and replaced by chairs to enable more use to be made of the area.



*E6 St Nicholas Church*



### *E7 Lower Church End*

Leaving the Church to our left, we emerge into the grassed area and the site of the Old Elm. There used to be a circular seat round its base.

In the 1980s Dr Martin from the Steiner School at Potterspurty Lodge held outdoor theatres here.

This part of Potterspurty is an interesting mix of mainly older properties. Cross over the bridge and go past the row of cottages on our left.

This brings us to Woods Memorial Hall, the Manse, and the Chapel, the present building being erected in 1780.

Returning along Church End we pass No 6. This was previously the Blue Ball Inn. Dating from the late 16th Century, it is thought to be the oldest house in Potterspurty.



*E8 The Blue Ball*

Come back over the bridge, on our left, is the original Old Vicarage. Rumoured to have suffered from the brook flooding.



*E9 The Old Vicarage*

Continue up the hill. The District Council built the houses on our left just after World War 2 and those further up in the late 1930s. We now come back to the Village Hall. Turning left into Furtho Lane there is a new detached house on the corner. Next door, No. 1 Furtho Lane, was in use as a general store and dairy until the late 60s.



*E10 Furtho Lane*

The District Council built most of the remaining properties in this area, at the same time as those in Church End. Go past the junction with Grafton Close, and you come to a more recent development by a Housing Association.

Furtho Lane continues as a bridleway across the fields to Furtho.

Returning to The Village Hall, take Poundfield Road to our left, after the houses we pass the site of the Village Pound.



Continuing up to the junction with the A5, there is a pleasant grassed area, with a wrought iron seat, and the Village Signpost.

*E11 Seat Poundfield Rd*

Behind this area, is a very large house, known to many as “The Mansion”, but named Potterspury House. Now a restaurant and spa.

Retrace our steps back down Poundfield Road and on the left, behind the high stone wall, is another new development Mansion Gardens.



### *E12 Mansion Gardens*

Turning left up the High Street keep to the left and enter the Cemetery through the attractive wrought iron gates. If you can, spend a few quiet minutes, wandering quietly amongst the headstones, in very pleasant surroundings.

Leaving the Cemetery by the other gate into Homestead Way, and on the left is No. 1. A cottage, once again the only old property in an area of modern housing. The other houses in this area were built in the late 60s and early 70s. the development being known as the Limes Estate.

Bear left up North Way into Mays Way - named after Mays Café which stood on a large part of the land. The kerb line of the entrance and exit are still visible on the Watling Street. It is reputed that Glenn Miller’s band were here when they heard of his disappearance.



### *E13 Chettle Place*

To our left is Chettle Place, a housing association development, but we turn right, then right again into Brownswood Drive. On our left is the much-extended John Hellins Primary School.

The Cottage Stores faces us in the High Street. Originally Woods Farmhouse, the shop moved here in 1969 from 1 Furtho Lane, and it also houses the Post Office.

Cross over Woods Lane, which has a small development at the bottom, we have Coach Yard on our left. This was the site of the garage for Smiths Coaches. They ran a service to Wolverton Works and the School Bus to Deanshanger. Many of the present villagers will remember travelling to School with “Ginger” Vickers as their driver.

Previous to becoming the coach garage, there had been a ropewalk located here.

Opposite the Coach Yard was the site of the Old Smithy. This was still in use as such till the late 60s. The buildings were then used for the manufacture of printed circuit boards.



*E14 The Smithy Potterspury*

This is now the site of Nos.71/73 High Street

The next house is “Corn Cottage” formerly “Home Farm” Roman pottery kilns were unearthed here in the 1970s

*E15 Corn Cottage*

Continue along the High Street. The old houses on both sides were originally thatched. The bungalows further along were early ones in the development of The Limes Estate by in the 1960s

At the side of 104 High Street in Church Lane, the first door on the left is the entrance to “The Old Social” which was the Village meeting place, prior to the building of the Village Hall. Once a week, it was also the visiting doctor’s surgery. Parish Council Meetings were also held here prior to the late 60s.

This takes us back to the Village Hall.

*Roger Pye Aug 2019*