

Warner Mansions correspondence 2020 (CB)

THURSDAY 26TH MARCH 2020

LETTER TO FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN, U.S.A.

Dear Martha and All the Volunteers at the Warner Mansion

What turbulent times we are living through at the moment and life here in Hickling is far from normal. The plans we all made in January and the worries we had, now all seem a trivial and distant memory. Usually at this time of year in Hickling the sky is grey, the wind is howling, the rain fall heavy and it is cold.

This morning the sky is blue and without a cloud in sight; the sun is shining; and the temperature is 15 degrees. The newly born lambs are skipping around their mothers; the hares can be seen running across the fields; the birds are singing; the pheasants in their pairs by the hedgerows; the swans are gliding along the Canal and the daffodils with their golden heads stand proudly at the entrance to the village and in the grass verges. Hickling looks really beautiful this morning.

However, the population is nowhere to be seen.

Corona Virus has spread from China and across Europe and has now reached our shores and it is on its way to America. We are being told we will hit our peak in about 3 weeks time.

Every person in Great Britain is having a life changing experience. The over 70yr olds and those with health problems have already been isolating for almost 2 weeks. Schools, colleges, theatres, cinemas, restaurants, cafes, retail shops, universities, gyms, churches, leisure centres etc are all now closed. All sporting events have been cancelled. Unless you are a key worker [eg in the health service or in food production] you have been requested not to go to work . Many people are working from home and parents are schooling their children.

Wherever possible no one goes out of their homes unless it is for essential food shopping or to get fresh air and exercise. When we are out, we must keep at least 2 metres apart from each other. A vast army of healthy people have joined the Voluntary Service to help their local community and the whole country is pulling together to try to delay or to stop the spread of this deadly virus. A pandemic so large and so deadly has not been experienced in this country for hundreds of years.

In Hickling Churchyard there is a small area which is known as the 'Plague Pit'. It is believed that the plague reached Hickling in the early 1600's but how many died here is not recorded. A nearby village has records of 23 of its residents dying at this time due to the plague. Hickling may have lost a similar number who would have been buried quickly in a large pit. 400 years later the swift burial or cremation of those dying of the Corona Virus is a problem we will have to address shortly.

Now there is an effort to get thousands of ventilators manufactured and companies such as Dyson have turned their production over to the making of these vitally needed pieces of lifesaving equipment.

Each day the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, along with specialist advisors speaks to the nation to inform us what the Government is doing; what they are requesting we do to keep safe; and to give us an update on the Corona Virus spread.

Technology is helping us all to keep in touch; helping to educate, socialise and inform.

Hickling is a small rural village but not immune to the virus which has now reached even the isolated Highlands of Scotland.

Hickling has always had an enviable community spirit and this is continuing throughout this crisis. We are extremely lucky to be in a rural area with no high rise flats and all homes have a garden

There is an active neighbourhood watch scheme where people are receiving regular e mails

One resident lives in the 'Old Bakery' house and has for many years been interested in traditional bread making techniques. He has been making daily loaves and leaving them outside his house for people to pick up.

People have been telephoning, doing food shopping and picking up medicines for the elderly and those completely isolated.

There are free book and DVD pick up and drop off areas

Everyone is supporting each other in the knowledge that many of us will contact the virus but hopefully no one will lose their life. We are all endeavouring to be careful and responsible.

We do not know how long this will last but on a positive note most of us find ourselves with a bit more spare time to do the tasks which we have been putting off doing for ages. We will all have clean and tidy houses and magnificent gardens!!!

Thinking of you all in Farmington during these uncertain times. Where possible keep isolated and stay safe and continue to keep in touch.

Yours sincerely

Carol & the Hickling History Gp

Ps. you have my permission to put a copy of this letter in the Hickling Display in the Warner Mansion Museum

On May 17, 2020, at 2:52 AM, Carol Beadle wrote:

Hello Martha and all our friends in Farmington

After over 2 months in lockdown because of the Covid 19 outbreak we are all finding lots to keep us busy and occupied whilst in isolation. Since we have all been very careful and obeyed Government instructions and guidelines I am pleased to say that thus far there have been no corona related deaths in Hickling.

As I write this we are slowly and with caution being brought out of the lockdown. However, there are still reports of about 500 corona virus related deaths each day in Britain and we are only a small country. Each one of those deaths is a loved member of someone's family and this is sad as far too many people are having their lives cut short by this virus.

Celebrations, Events and fund raising activities have all been put on hold in Hickling and even the recent VE 75yrs Celebration Day did not go as was originally planned. Villagers, however did celebrate it as best as they could whilst still keeping socially distanced and on their own property. There were lots of bunting and flags in patriotic red, white and blue. Family Picnics were held in people's front gardens attended just by those who lived in the household.

Perhaps the annual Scarecrow Weekend in September will have to be cancelled or managed in a different way. Village breakfasts, jumble sales, film nights, WI meetings, quizzes and all other community activities are on hold until we are told we are safe once more to mix socially.

The wildlife in the area is enjoying the lack of humans invading their territory and the area around the canal which runs through the village is looking extremely beautiful; with the ducklings and signets with their parents taking their first journeys on the water. There appears to be a lot of blossom on the fruit trees and the sun seems to be shining more than usual for this time of year. We are not seeing the planes flying in the sky, and there is little traffic travelling through the village. The Church, pub, Village Hall and Wharf café are all closed and we are wondering when they will be allowed to be opened once more. Perhaps life will never be quite the same for us in Hickling ever again

We would be delighted to hear how life has changed for you in Farmington. Has the Mansion been closed to visitors? Has daily life in Farmington changed much?

A parcel is on its way to you to celebrate Governor Warner's Birthday from the Hickling [the birthplace of Fred Maltby Warner]

Sending you our best wishes

Carol and the members of the Hickling History Group.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Martha Taylor

Date: Tue, Jul 7, 2020 at 3:36 AM

Subject: Re: FROM HICKLING ENGLAND

To: Carol Beadle

Hello Carol,

I'm so glad to hear that everyone in Hickling was very diligent during the lockdown and that you are coming out healthy! If all has continued well during these past 2 months, you must be even more active by now. Things in our area of Michigan were very serious for many, many weeks and people were quite scared. We were one of the epicenters in the United States-not something to be happy about-but things have finally improved somewhat. Almost all events and gatherings have been cancelled through the summer and even into fall. The Warner Mansion is still closed and will remain so until probably at least 2021. Our bustling downtown has been quiet and still, until just recently when some of our restrictions were lifted, but the streets remain quite empty. Because the virus was so intense in the Detroit area, most people still stay home and very willingly wear masks when going out in public. I must tell you that your parcel has not yet arrived. Our postal service has been very irregular for the past few months due to covid and the many mail carriers who were ill. Sometimes a letter we would send to a nearby town would take over a month to arrive! Delivery is improving, however, and I keep watching for the package. We shall be sending one to you soon as our local post office has finally reopened. Please forgive the tardiness of this email. My computer broke during the lockdown and all I have for communicating is my phone-and it's not as easy to type with. It has also just been difficult to put down in words all that has happened. But I shall write again with more details soon! Sending our dear friends in Hickling all of our very best wishes from your Farmington friends across the pond ❤️ Martha Taylor

Sent from my iPhone

To: Martha Taylor
(Warner Mansions, Michigan)
10/7/2020

10 July 2020

Hello from your sister village, Hickling

The pretty purple and pink image of the Covid 19 Corona Virus is now recognised by us all and I wonder why they have made something which is so harmful look so attractive. The virus has affected everyone in Great Britain and we in Hickling, like other communities across our country are living very different lives to what we have been used to.

All playgroups, nurseries, schools and colleges have been closed since mid-March. Children in Hickling are being home schooled with guidance from the educationalists. Our Government is hoping to have children return to education in September albeit with restrictions and distancing measures in place. One wonders what the long term effects will be for these children who have not been able to socially interact with their friends; who have not been able to visit recreational parks and playgrounds; who have not been able to visit zoos, theme parks and museums; who have not been able to participate in sporting activities and who have perhaps been spending far too long in front of a computer screen.

Many in Hickling have been working from home and perhaps many may continue with this new way of working. For some people, who were unable to work from home, the Government has set up a scheme which pays 80% of their wages. However many key workers including doctors, nurses, police and fire service workers, food retail staff, refuse collectors, delivery people etc have continued to work throughout this crisis. As Hickling is a rural village, we have seen our farmers continuing to work, the

milk has still to be delivered to the cheesemaking factory, the hens still supply the eggs for the egg farm and in nearby Melton Mowbray, the Pork Pies have continued to be made. Just like when Fred was born here in Hickling, the locally produced milk is used for making our World famous Stilton Cheese. Please look for it next time you visit your local supermarket on the speciality cheese counter.

Hickling has become a quiet village in recent months, with the local pub- The Plough closed; the cafe at the Canal Wharf closed; the Church doors locked; and the Village Hall, where so many community events take place, also closed

People, however, have been able to walk along the numerous footpaths or along the Canal towpath with the opportunity to enjoy the wildlife, the fauna and the scenery of our beautiful area.

Slowly places are being allowed to re-open. The Plough Pub and the Wharf Cafe who are now following new safety guidelines opened this week. It will be a while before we can hold meetings and events in our Village Hall. The annual Scarecrow Weekend Event which is held each year in September has been cancelled and no doubt other forthcoming village events such as the Jumble Sale and Christmas Fayre will not take place.

Hickling's older generation have been quick to embrace modern technology. Many now do their weekly food shopping online with items being delivered to their door. The Hickling Standard magazine appears now on screen and so I will not be sending you the paper copies I usually do. We are fortunate enough to live in a community with neighbourhood schemes which keep everyone up to date with what is happening and in contact with each other

I wonder if life will ever be the same for any of us again wherever we live in the world. Perhaps this experience has taught us to appreciate what we have, our health, our family and friends and the countryside around us.

If anyone in Farmington is interested in learning more about the History of Hickling and its people we have an excellent website. Information is being added all the time and Fred Warner has a whole section. Please look at this website hicklingnottslocalhistory.com

Take care and keep safe

Carol

Hickling History Group

Hickling Village