

Bury Free Press

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Great Barton Primary School teacher Liz Babbage with her pupils
Picture by Keith Jones

Little voices make a dream come true

WHEN a primary school teacher suddenly found she was not allowed to get married in the church of her choice, 145 little voices joined her protest.

The invitations had already gone out for the wedding of Liz Babbage, a teacher at Great Barton Primary School, and her fiancé Gary Mills at Great Barton Church on July 24.

But when the vicar said it could not happen because the couple do not live in the village, Miss Babbage wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury – and so did the 145 Great Barton primary pupils.

In total secrecy they wrote individually to the Archbishop and within weeks the couple were given special permission.

"I am thrilled. I was quite worried about it and was very touched when I found out. They somehow managed to keep it a total secret,"

said Miss Babbage, Year 4 teacher and co-ordinator for music, religious education and English.

"I wanted to get married in Great Barton because it is where I work and Gary used to work at Thurston Upper School.

"I spoke to the churchwardens when the vicar was on holiday and they thought it would probably be all right but when the vicar came back he said we would need a special licence. By then the invitations had gone out."

After her wedding Miss Babbage, who has taught at the school for five years, will be moving to Oxford to be with her new husband so it will also mark her last term at the school. "They are real stars and very generous children," she said.

"It's a lovely thing to remember them by."

New Bury football club

A SECOND senior football club is to be launched in Bury St Edmunds for the start of the 1999/2000 football season.

Bury Football Academy FC, which

was accepted into the Schweppes Essex Senior League on Wednesday night, will share facilities with Bury Town FC at Ram Meadow. ● See back page

Man sues oil giant over 'his idea'

INTO BATTLE WITH SHELL

by Richard Hamer

A BUSINESSMAN stands to net millions of pounds if he wins an on-going battle with oil giant Shell.

John Donovan's David and Goliath battle centres around his claim that Shell's Smart card customer loyalty scheme was his idea.

Mr Donovan, of Bradfield Combust, says the idea was pinched from a concept mooted in confidence by him, but Shell says it stemmed from a different source.

And, while 52-year-old Mr Donovan is suing the multinational over its alleged misuse of confidential information and refusal to credit him as the scheme's creator, Shell is making a counter-claim for damages against Mr Donovan's company Don Marketing, for breach of a confidentiality agreement.

Geoffrey Cox, for Mr Donovan, told the High Court on Tuesday that Shell approached Mr Donovan in 1989 for ideas to 'jazz up' its flagging Collect and Select free gift promotion.

Mr Donovan, who has lived in Bradfield Combust for 12 years, devised a joint loyalty card scheme, by which Shell would join forces with a select



John Donovan

consortium of other major retailers, in different fields, so customers could collect credit points and claim free gifts more quickly.

In 1990, Shell took an option to develop the plan in the future, under terms of confidentiality which had governed their past dealings.

Seven years later the Smart card, incorporating Mr Donovan's ideas, was launched, said Mr Cox.

But when he claimed payment for his contribution, no money was forthcoming.

Mr Cox told Mr Justice Laddie that Shell's witnesses seemed to have developed 'corporate amnesia'.

"You may get the impression from these witnesses that Mr Donovan was treated to some extent as one of the general run of nuisances who would pester the company with information of no value," he said.

"In fact, Mr Donovan had a long, trusted and successful record with Shell as an adviser on promotions dating back to the early 1980s."

The case is set to continue until Monday.

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