

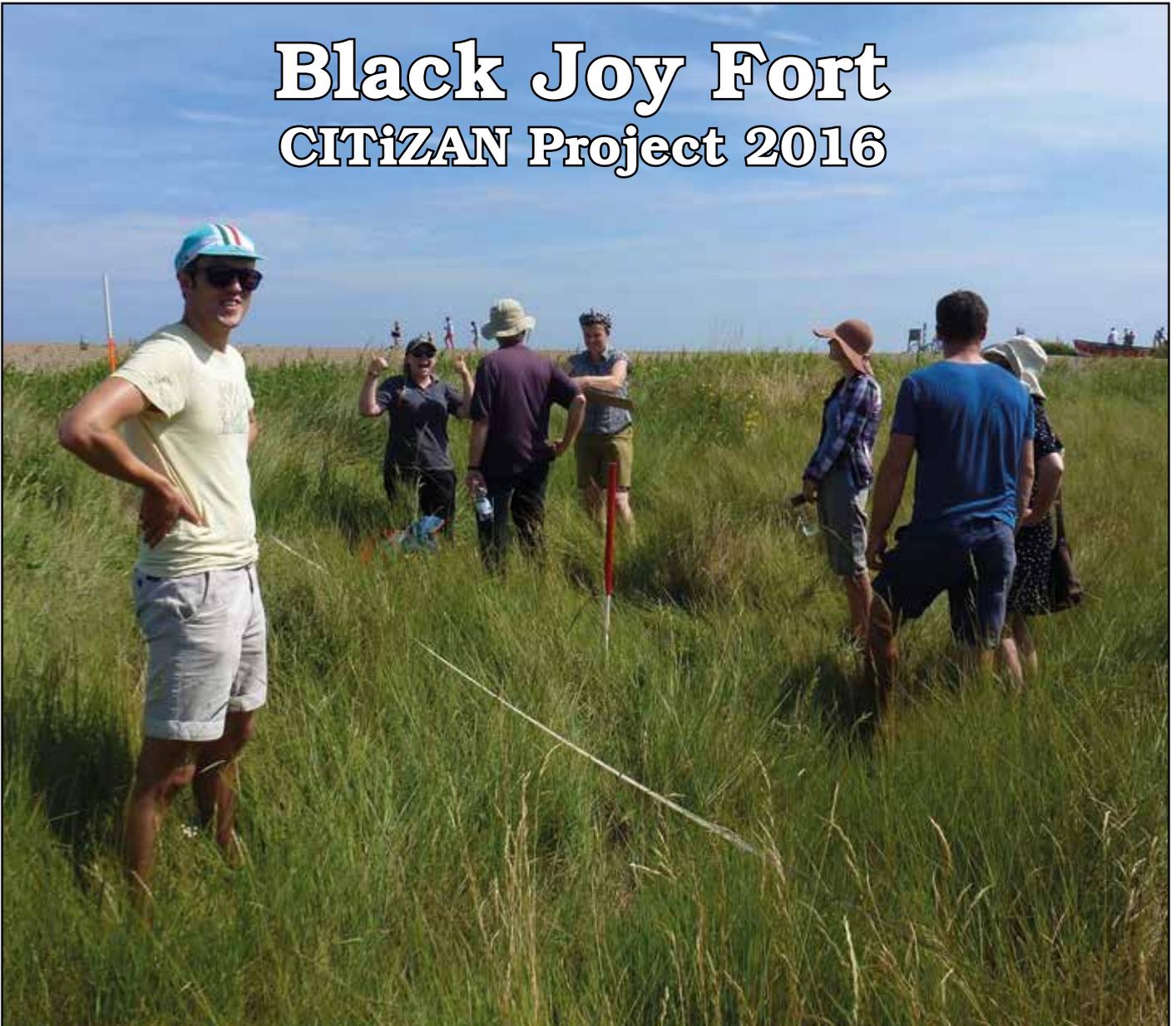
BAHS Newsletter

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January 2017

Black Joy Fort CITiZAN Project 2016



CITiZAN stands for the Coastal and InterTidal Zone Archaeology Network. It has been set up in response to the threat of erosion and storms to our coastal heritage and is managed by a team of archaeologists from Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA). The Project aims to preserve, by record, archaeological

features and sites around the coast and estuaries, with the help of volunteers using modern technology. The project came to Cley over the weekend of 22nd-25th July.

On the Friday evening, there was an Introductory Session at the NWT Visitor Centre, in the Aspinall Rooms. There were only about a

dozen people present. Unfortunately, the project organiser underestimated the journey time from Newcastle to Norfolk and so never made it! After a bit of a delay, a colleague took to the floor and explained the work of CITiZAN and gave details about the Cley event. John Peake then gave a comprehensive history of the 16th century

Black Joy Fort, based on his extensive knowledge, photographs and maps.

On Saturday afternoon, the lead organiser – having found his way to Cley – set up a mini exhibition and video in the CITIZAN van. This was parked by the beach as a contribution to the Cley Arts festival (and to the Cley Church fete which was being held that afternoon). He had conversations about Black Joy Fort with about thirty people, most of whom knew nothing about the ruin.

On Sunday, a group of six was divided in two. A member of one group 'found it fascinating as, although I had been over the remains before, this made me look at them in much greater detail'. The readings recorded by the group were taken back to London and, in due course, it should be possible to compare their findings with earlier sketch maps of the area.

A few participants gathered on Monday to discuss relevant App technology. They were shown how to use one such App by which they could record any tidal changes that affected the ruin. They then walked along the beach in search of other items to record but most of these were C20th remnants from WW2. It seemed that the use of App technology was a significant factor in the funding and evaluation of the project.

Diana Cooke

Front page: marking out the base line under the watchful eye of Ben Cartwright

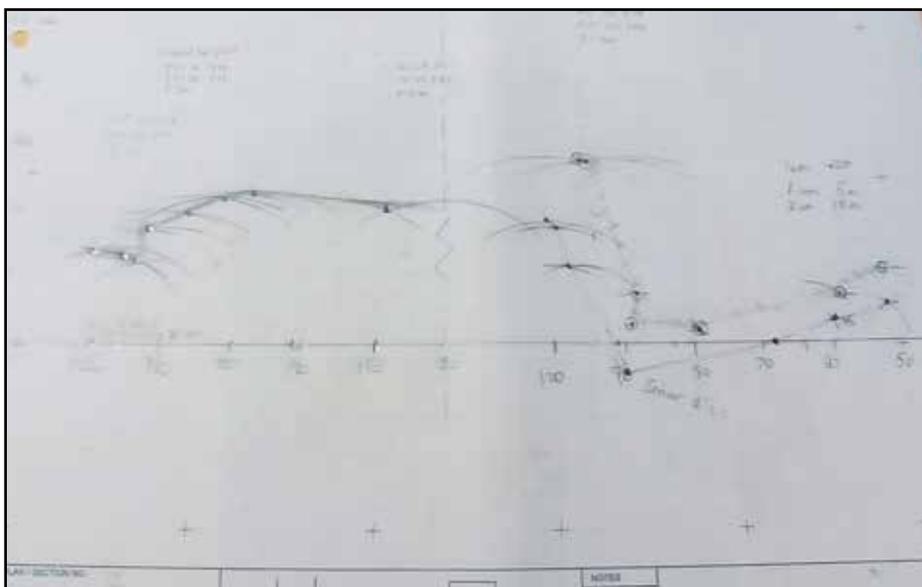
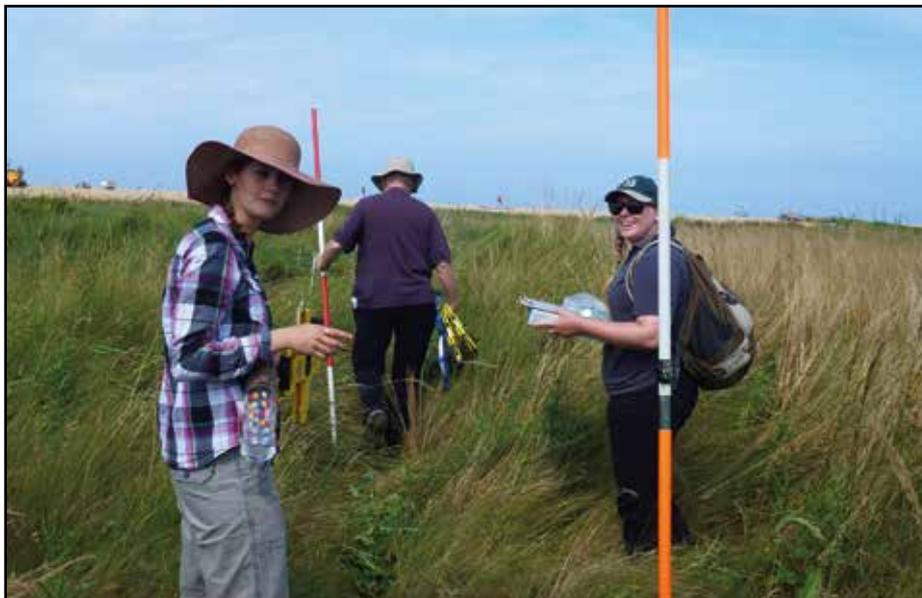
**This page, top: on the way back
Middle: raw results from one survey**

Bottom: Jonathan Hooton tries out the Allan-Williams turret for size. It fits!

Thank-you Peter

Due to ill-health, Peter Wordingham has had to stand down as Chairman of the Blakeney Area Historical Society as from the last AGM. His place has been taken by Richard Kelham as Acting Chairman until the next AGM in October. We extend our grateful thanks to Peter for all that he has done for the Society over the years and wish him a speedy return to good health.

This does mean that the committee is even more depleted than before; we desperately need new blood, particularly for the History Centre. Any member interested in becoming more involved should contact Diana Cooke secretary@bahs.uk or phone 740320.



News from the History Centre, 15 years on

Pam Peake

2017 marks the 15th anniversary of the History Centre; one year in the Portakabin followed by 14 years in our custom-built room at the rear of Blakeney Village Hall. The official opening of the Centre was performed by the late Chris Barringer and Bernard Crowe on 9th March, 2003 and since then we have gone from strength to strength.

Initially the Centre supported both the BAHS annual research courses, Glaven Historian articles and members' private research while nowadays it is more frequently used by local residents of all the lower Glaven Valley villages, holiday visitors, parish councils, newspaper reporters and descendants of former inhabitants. Times are changing and the History Centre adapts to meet all these challenges by continuing to provide a valuable community resource, freely available to all.

Throughout all the early years we managed to open regularly twice a month with additional openings in the summer. However next year, 2017, with too few volunteers, there will only be one public opening a month between March and October inclusive. Access to the records at any other time will always be possible on demand by booking a private opening.

Recent Research

Recent research and enquiries over the past six months covered a wide ranging series of topics. The variety was amazing and just goes to show how invaluable the resources are. There is nearly always something on everything for everyone!

Sarah Harley completed her project, 'The Hut' at Natural Surroundings, Bayfield Hall, and this all came to fruition with the publication of a comic, charting the history of the Hut in a rather unusual but novel way followed by 'Art, Conversation and Refreshments' in the wildlife garden of Natural Surroundings mid September.

Blakeney Hotel records were used to glean information and colour for a non-fictional, creative writing course being held in Cambridge.

Other topics included identification of initials on a dog tag, George Briggs's brass in Wiveton Church, the fate of the Heinkel, a ruinous barn



Black Joy Fort has held the imagination of local historians for many years since it was suggested that it was the remnants of a Star Fort shown on a 1588 map illustrating defences against a potential invasion by the Armada. This aerial photograph (by John Peake) taken in 2006 clearly shows the banks identified as the fort that are now being gradually buried under the shingle ridge as it is pushed further south. Prior to the construction of Beach Road at the end of the 19th century the fort was situated on the western edge of Cley Eye overlooking the entrance to the Port of Cley and the new channel that now acts as the River Glaven. For more information a good starting point is the internet site: www.gatehouse-gazetteer.info/English%20sites/1998.html

at Salthouse, Blakeney Chalice, footpaths and bridle ways in Cley, the Reverend Crowe Munnings and the 1918 lifeboat rescues of the *Caroline*. The latter is to be the subject of a song!

Looking forward, the subject chosen for next summer's Art in Cley Church is 'Connectivity' and already two different sets of artists have visited the History Centre, each with very different ideas on how to interpret 'Connectivity'. For one researcher the topic was quite straight forward, namely the history of her property, without divulging the name, and the goings on there over the centuries. For the others, it was a case of conducting a feasibility check on their idea; was it going to work and could the Centre provide background.

The Morningthorpe Sale

One of the largest private collections of Norfolk related archives was auctioned as part of the Morningthorpe Manor Country House Sale last September. John Peake visited the pre sale viewing on behalf of the History Centre and was given permission to photograph relevant items concerning the Glaven Port villages for our collections. Some of these will be shared with members at the meeting in January while further copies will be available to view in the History Centre when it reopens in the spring.

More information on p.7

The Black Death in Wiveton

John Peake



A decade ago the History Centre helped organise two archaeological digs in Wiveton under the aegis of the Higher Education Field Academy (HEFA) that had been established in Cambridge University by Carenza Lewis. She published the results of one season's work in the *Glaven Historian* No.10. There were two prongs to the HEFA study; one was to stimulate young peoples' interests in studying at a university, the other was Professor Lewis's own research on the development of settlements during the Medieval Period. Recently she has published an account of her research in the journal *Antiquity* and this has stimulated a number of newspaper reports.

The Society participated in the digs as did pupils from Blakeney Primary School. The study involved digging one metre square pits to a depth of one metre, then sorting and recording all finds in each 10 centimetre layer. These pits were scattered across Wiveton from the north around the Hall to south near the Church. However, the full survey covered nearly 50 villages across East

Blakeney Primary School at work on the dig; one pupil is interviewed Carenza Lewis.

Anglia with 1,717 pits dug up to the end of 2014, an extremely impressive total that enables some generalisations to be drawn.

The theme of the paper is 'disaster recovery' as Carenza is looking at the impact of the 'Black Death' on local populations in the mid-14th century. As she points out this is quite a contentious subject; although there is an extensive literature, the problem is to assess the impact on population changes at a local level. The study employs a novel method of addressing this issue and like all new ideas it will be fiercely debated; the important point is that she is bringing new archaeological evidence to the debate. This new evidence depends on the quantity of pottery recovered from each pit separated into two distinct periods: that produced between the early 12th and early 14th centuries and that produced between the late 14th and late 16th centuries. This

crucial distinction is dependent on the skill of Paul Blinkthorn who identified and dated the pottery. The two periods lie either side of the calamitous epidemic of 1346-1351.

The results show that the pottery-using population across a sixth of England, that is East Anglia, was around 45% lower after the Black Death. At a local scale in Wiveton, quoting from the paper, 'Mapping the data similarly revealed that in the high medieval period this coastal village extended for more than 600m around, and north of the church'; it was reduced in the late medieval period to a small core extending barely 200m beyond the church. These figures are by no means the most severe; at Gaywood and Paston (both in Norfolk), the drop is around 85%.

The paper by Carenza Lewis is called 'Disaster recovery: new archaeological evidence for the long-term impact of the 'calamitous' fourteenth century' published in *Antiquity*, 90, pp 777-797. A copy will be available in the History Centre Blakeney when it opens again in March after the winter break.

The Peter Avison Scott Clock

Diana Cooke

A clock can be seen above the ice cream shop, opposite Blakeney Carnser. It is a well-known local landmark which is invaluable to sailors, walkers and all who use the Carnser. It was presented to the village in 1937 in memory of Peter Avison Scott following his tragic death, in a plane accident, when he was just 23 years old. A dedication plaque is placed below the clock.

Peter was an only child and popular medical student who spent most of his holidays in Blakeney, along with his parents and relatives. They knew and loved Blakeney because they were descendants of the Revds Joseph Cotterill and Richard Tillard, both Rectors of Blakeney Church during the 19th century.

The present-day family had noticed that the stone plaque was being eroded and was no longer easy to read. So they commissioned a new one to be made by Teucer Wilson. The clock was restored at the same time with bold golden numbers. Revd Libby Dady was asked to bless them at a ceremony which took place on Friday 19th August. This was the anniversary of Peter's birthday. He was, in fact, just a week older than my husband's Uncle Nicholas (after whom the Cooke posts on the Carnser are named) and they were childhood friends.

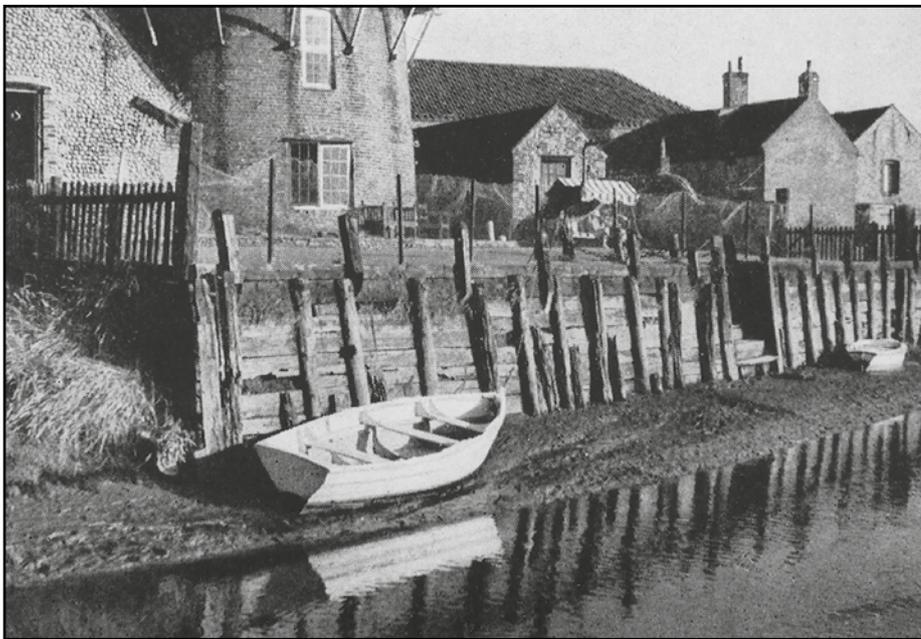
A dozen members of the Scott family attended the event and they generously invited several local people, who represented the Church, the Parish Council and the BAHs, to attend a delicious lunch at the Blakeney Hotel.



Right, upper and lower: the newly restored clock and its brand new memorial plaque carved by Teucer Wilson.

Above: members of the Scott family





A recent acquisition by the Editor from eBay is this unusual view of Cley Quay from the north-west(ish) sometime in the 1930s. The quay heading is rather the worse for wear – and considerably higher than it is now. There are steps down to the water but no slipway as that wasn't built, by Kenny Newton, until after WW2. Also very obviously absent is the concrete sea wall built in 1955.

It is interesting to note that encroachment onto the quay has begun with a post and netting fence running the width of the quay, and wood paling fence seemingly cutting it in half.

Glaven Historian 15

Paid up members will shortly receive their copies of the Glaven Historian 15, another bumper issue and the first in colour. It contains eleven papers, demonstrating the wide range of research undertaken by members of the Society and others. Sarah Bates, the archaeologist involved in the project, describes her investigations when trenches were dug for the installation of a toilet and kitchen at St Margaret's, Cley, while John Peake discusses the wider significance of these discoveries for our understanding of the development of the Church and the Churchyard. John Wright analyses the information that can be obtained from a 16th fieldbook on the development of Binham as the era of open fields gave way to more modern farming practices, while Diana Cooke unravels the coat of arms on the 1586 map of Blakeney haven, uncovering information about the Heydon family who appear in the Paston letters.

In two papers Michael Medlar throws new light on life in Field Dalling and surrounding villages in the 18th and early 19th centuries: he discusses the charitable bequest of Christopher Ringer and the impact of the Napoleonic wars on the farm rents of Manor Farm, Field Dalling. Richard Dunn follows up a paper in GH 14 with a discussion of the field

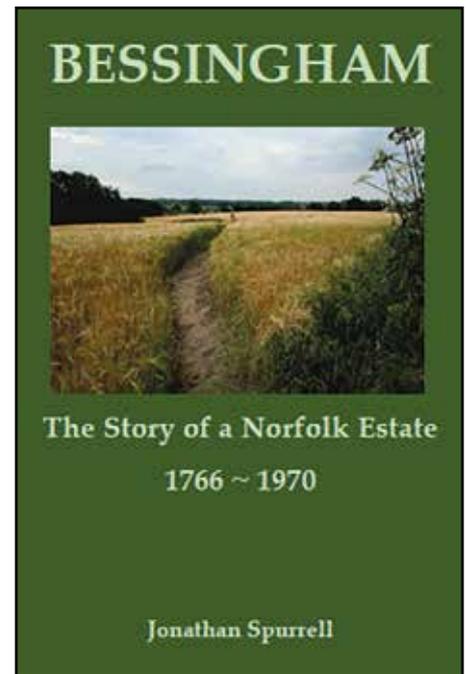
names in Cley shown on the tithe map of 1841, while Eric Hotblack discusses a 19th century fragment of a clay pipe which commemorates General Gordon. John Wright presents the dramatic account of the wrecking of the collier the SS Hjørdis in Blakeney harbour in 1916, while Bob Bruce and Dana Josephson tell the story of a distinguished scholar of the music of Handel, T. W. Bourne, who lived in Cley and Blakeney for the last twenty years of his life. Lastly, Pam Peake discusses the arrangements made in Blakeney in 1940 against the threat of invasion from Germany.

The last number of the Glaven Historian appeared just over two years ago, in 2014. Producing a journal of nearly 90 pages every year had become unsustainable and we switched to biennial in 2010. Despite lack of numbers on the committee we are still trying to keep with a biennial issue and we hope that the next issue will appear in late 2018.

If anyone is considering contributing an article to the journal, please contact the joint editor, Roger Bland (publications@bahs.uk).

*Richard Kelham
Roger Bland
Editors*

Book Review



A new book has recently been published about the village of Bessingham, near Cromer. Bessingham: The Story of a Norfolk Estate, 1766-1970 by Jonathan Spurrell tells the story of the men, women and children who lived in the village over the centuries.

It will appeal to anyone interested in the history of rural Norfolk as it discusses the challenges facing a community adapting to the enclosure of the common land, the mechanisation of agriculture and the transformation of society. From its mid-Victorian heyday to the 'ghost village' years of the 1960s, these changes are placed in their local and national context and brought to life with colourful characters including a prize-winning daffodil breeder, a woman who stood for election to the district council in the 1890s, and a bear that was kept in the grounds of the manor house.

It is the first in-depth history of the village and has been put together using family papers, farm records, maps and interviews with recent residents. It was printed by Barnwell Print of Aylsham and contains a foreword by Shelagh Hutson, former Chairman of Norfolk County Council.

A book launch was held on 30 September at Bessingham Manor House, which was restored a few years ago. About forty people attended the event, including former residents who moved away during the 'ghost village' years and had not seen each other in a long time.

The book is priced at £12.95 and can be found at bookshops in Norwich and North Norfolk, as well as online via www.bessinghamhistory.org.



First World War Pillboxes in Norfolk – an update

It's now more than a year since the North Norfolk District Council launched the 'Pillbox Trail' of First World War pillboxes. We never planned this to be a comprehensive tour of surviving sites, as many lie on private land. But in addition to the sites which I deliberately excluded, a few new ones have since come to light.

In total, I have records for 54 pillboxes built in Norfolk in the First World War, of which 24 currently survive. My records for long-demolished sites are not comprehensive, so it is safe to assume that there were many more along the coast, especially between Cromer and Yarmouth.

Archaeologist Chris Kolonko kindly shared a WW1 map he had unearthed showing many of the defences. While it omitted several pillboxes which still exist today, it crucially marked six pillboxes which were unknown to me at Antingham, Briggate, Honing – all on the inland stop line based on the course of the River Ant. These would have been demolished decades ago, in some cases to make way for their Second World War descendants. (It must be remembered that the vast majority of surviving pillboxes are from 1940-41, not the First World War.)

Glimpses of long lost pillboxes are still turning up in unlikely places. For example, a pair at Pretty Corner, Sheringham, are only known because they appear on an inter-war postcard. A 1930s photograph of an unknown pillbox turned up in a shoebox in a museum in Sheringham. Another pillbox, guarding a road junction north of Holt, was marked on a 1930s map displayed in a cottage I rented in Kelting.

I uncovered a document in the National Archives which shows that five of the pillboxes between Salthouse

and Weybourne were of a previously unknown rectangular design. One of these was a monster pillbox 24 feet long!

There is some controversy over whether the site at Stiffkey, the westernmost of the line of known defences, is in fact a pillbox at all, as it differs in several design points from any other known example, and may possibly be connected with the 1930s anti-aircraft camp instead. So that site is something of a guess, though in the opinion of the expert on pillbox designs, Dr Mike Osborne, it is indeed a WW1 pillbox.

I have entered all the known WW1 pillboxes, both extant and demolished, on the Home Front Legacy website, where anyone can view them: www.homefrontlegacy.org.uk/wp/map-of-sites/

The few surviving WW1 pillboxes we have in Norfolk are the only physical reminder of a major, and almost totally forgotten, invasion threat from a century ago. I would be delighted to hear of anyone with any additional information, particularly in terms of original maps or photographs.

Christopher Bird
oxfordbird@googlemail.com

Morningthorpe Manor Country House Auction

Held at Keys of Aylsham,
6th – 9th September 2016

This four-day country sale caused a plethora of interest. It included Pictures & prints, Collections & Interiors and The Library. The Library collection was built up over a period of more than 50 years by Mr Ron Fiske. Its sale was spread over two days and included many historic items with a Norfolk connection.

Unusual Pillbox at the Muckleburgh Collection, Weybourne.
Map ref TG 1021 4334

The first I knew of the auction was at the beginning of September with the arrival of an email. It came from NORAH (Norfolk Archives & Heritage Development Foundation) which is the newly established charitable arm of the Norfolk Records Office (NRO). They were appealing for £30,000! This amount would enable NRO to purchase several significant items that might otherwise leave the County, from an auction in Aylsham. In the event, £17,000 came through public donations and organisations, with the remainder being donated by individuals and groups. The BAHS Management Committee duly agreed to make a contribution as well.

NRO staff had ear-marked approximately 180 items in which they were interested. It required a tense, balancing act of bidding to ensure they acquired what they wanted, without spending too much too soon and thereby missing out on later items. At the end of the day/s, they came away with 90 lots and were very pleased with the result.

Subsequently, Appeal donors received an invitation to an Open Afternoon/Evening in order to view a selection of items that NRO purchased. On 1st December, I went to the Evening event on behalf of BAHS. Around 25 artefacts were on display and included:

- The most expensive – Patent book of the Dean & Chapter of Norwich Cathedral 1621-1675; this was a missing volume from the NRO collection and covers the period of the Civil War
- The oldest – Stratton Strawless deeds dated 1431 relating to the Marsham family with seals
- The largest – 8 boxes of deeds and documents from C17 to C21, Norwich Great Hospital
- Local interest – Walter Clutterbuck's photo album of August 1919 with images of Blakeney and nearby villages

In case you are in the vicinity, NRO will be exhibiting some of the Morningthorpe collection, from 20th Feb to 19th May, in their entrance corridor (alongside County Hall). Copies of the two Library Catalogues have been donated to the Blakeney History Centre, along with the list of lots purchased by NRO.

Diana Cooke

Spring Programme 2017

Events

All the following meetings are on Tuesdays in the Harbour Room at The British Legion Hall in the High Street, Blakeney, starting at 7.30pm. Entrance: £3 for members and £5 for visitors, including refreshments

January 31st	An evening of short talks – Johnson Jex <i>Richard Jefferson</i> John Darby, 16th Century Local Land Surveyor <i>Diana Cooke & Nichola Harrison</i> Another Oliver legacy <i>John Peake</i>
February 28th	A fisherman's prized possession <i>Rita Taylor</i>
March 28th	The parish churches of Norwich before 1400 <i>Prof Sandy Heslop</i>
April 25th	The work of the Norfolk Identification & Recording service <i>Andrew Rogerson</i>
Sept 26th	Laura Eke and the fisherman who painted in wool, A real Norfolk story <i>Christine Humphries</i>
Oct 31st	(title to be confirmed) <i>Jonathan Hooton</i> The meeting will be preceded by a short AGM

History Centre Diary

Public Openings

Reopening Tuesday, March 7th 2017, 10.30am till 1pm, then the first Tuesday morning of each month until October 3rd, inclusive.

Researchers and visitors wishing to use maps, large documents, film or fiche readers are strongly advised to reserve a place in advance as both equipment and table space are very limited.

Private Openings

Bookings are available throughout the year at almost any time and on any day, for a small fee.

Reservations and Bookings can be made by phone 01263 740388; by writing to the History Centre, Blakeney Village Hall, Langham Road, Blakeney, Norfolk NR25 7PG; by emailing historycentre@bahs.uk. Remember to state clearly the purpose of your visit and include a SAE for confirmation if writing.

Full details of the BAHS Committee can be found on the Society's website www.bahs.uk

Website News

If you attended the recent AGM or receive our emails you will be aware that we recently launched a dedicated members' area on the website. To access the members' area you need to login for which an email address is required. Past and present members may login and check both their subscription status and personal details held by the society. Members may also update their personal details rather

than relying on our over-worked membership secretary.

Whilst a number of Glaven Historian issues are available online to the public, members with a current subscription may now access the remaining issues of the Glaven Historian. Over time we expect to add further options to the members' area but we are always interested in your views on how the website may evolve in the future.

If you wish to receive our infor-

mation emails or are not sure how to access the members' area please contact our membership secretary Jenn Savage. Jenn's contact details may be found on the website with contact details of all the management committee.

Richard Daley