

BAHS Newsletter

Number 43

www.bahs.uk

July 2017



Spring Outing: Visit to Langham Dome and Sheringham Mo Museum

On Tuesday 23rd May, sixteen members of BAHS descended on the Langham Dome on the old airfield between Langham and Cockthorpe. It was used by the RAF as a special teaching space to train anti-aircraft gunners in WW2 and during the cold war. From the outside it looks like a white 'blob' but, once inside (as if stepping through a wardrobe into an aeronautical Narnia) we found a fascinating story. There were all sorts

The BAHS group at the Langham Dome. The RAF flag is at half mast as this was the morning after the Manchester bombing.

of exhibits, photos and hands-on activities that helped us to understand the background to the site. Two volunteers, John and Roland, unravelled the history with the help of some films and explained how it impacted on the small farming village of Langham. Several participants were inspired to return on another day as there is so much more to learn.

Ten of us then made our way to the recently refurbished Blue Bell pub

in Langham for lunch. Most people had exotic sandwiches or fish & chips – our Editor managed a sticky toffee pudding as well! We were able to sit together on one table overlooking the long garden.

After lunch, seven of us drove to Sheringham to visit the Mo Museum, down by the 'promenade'. The building was renovated last year, with the help of heritage lottery money. On the ground floor, there are exhibits about the fishing industry and some lifeboats on display. The largest lifeboat is the *Manchester Unity of Oddfellows*, for which special arrangements had to
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News from the History Centre

Swan Song

After more years than I can clearly remember the time has come to step down and let fresh blood take over. Consequently this, my last contribution from the History Centre, will be slightly different from previous reports. It is more a flash back of 17 years presented as a photographic medley followed by current news then a brief look at the challenges ahead.

Shortly after coming to live in Blakeney in 1998, I joined the BAHS Management Team. Almost immediately Mary Ferroussat, then the BAHS Archivist, made me aware of the plight of the BAHS records. At that time they were dispersed amongst a few members and virtually inaccessible to the membership. They clearly needed to be brought together in a safe place and made available for research..... and so the quest began for the BAHS to find a home for all the material.

In the beginning

In the event, a custom built room was added to Blakeney Village Hall and for this the BAHS has to thank, amongst others, Bernard Crowe (North Norfolk District Counsellor), Basil Dickinson (Chair Blakeney Village Hall Com.) and Peter Wordingham (Chair Blakeney Parish Council). The late Chris Barringer (UEA Extra Mural Studies) and Paul Rutledge (NRO Senior Archivist) also provided advice while John Peake successfully secured an Awards for All Lottery Grant that enabled us to furnish and equip the Centre as well as purchase basic Parish Records, Censuses, shipping registrations and copies of other relevant documents from the Norfolk Record Office and National Archives.

Since those early days the Centre has become firmly established as a successful community resource. It remains the envy of many other parishes in the County who have sought our advice in setting up their very own Centres. We have assiduously added to our documents, maps, photographs and library and, whenever possible, volunteers have produced guides, summaries and transcripts making the collections even more accessible not only to members but the wider public as well. A significant number of these records are unique, that is, available no where else. This ensures that the Centre is a must visit repository for researchers.

The Centre has organised courses

on shipping, parish councils, Cockthorpe, and house history, to highlight a few; run day schools; given lectures; led guided walks both as an outreach activity and for visiting organisations; supported archaeological digs; held numerous exhibitions and produced several publications. Amongst these activities the mammoth four day "Tidal Lands" exhibition stands out. It was held in conjunction with the National Trust as they celebrated 100 years in the area together with the publication of our booklet "Blakeney Point" that accompanied that exhibition.

Support has been provided to local parish councils, the local community, county and national organisations. We have attempted to answer questions on all manner of matters relating to the Glaven Port Villages from both the press and the curious who seem to live in all corners of the globe. Volunteers have from time to time researched selected aspects of the Glaven Port villages, from families and places to events. Currently, research is centred on remembering both the casualties and survivors of WWI. Copies of all this original research have been added to the collections and is freely available to all in the History Centre.

Currently

It seems almost impossible to believe that it has taken four years to get the presentation model of the *Hettie* safely housed in Blakeney Church in front of her Service Boards but at last it has finally happened. A piece of Blakeney's maritime heritage has come home! Quite apart from a leaking church roof and north aisle windows needing replacement plus sundry health glitches, the donations have taken all that time to mount up. Special thanks are due to the Church for their patience, Blakeney Parish Council for not one but two Community Grants, a few very generous donors and then all the others who made it possible for John Peake to organise the purchase of a custom built security case and fund a small publication. The latter will be published shortly.

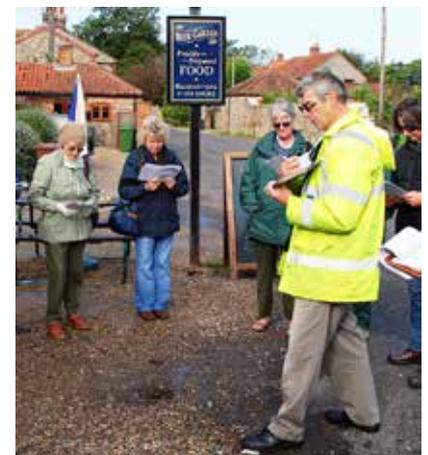
Lifeboats seem to be at the fore for the History Centre this summer as we have been involved with helping a Sheringham artist understand the colouring of early lifeboats. This is in preparation for a panel that he is painting for the Sheringham Lifeboat House.



Above: The Hettie being launched in her new home.

Opposite: A Medley of Memories. Reading from left to right and top to bottom they begin with our first, and very temporary home in the Portakabin; the new centre under construction and Awards for All logo; two views showing the Centre in operation; Indenture for Well Cottage, Newgate Green, Cley; Blakeney fishermen and tradesmen standing in the Guildhall entrance; house history detective work in Cley; Carezza Lewis inspecting a test pit dug by Blakeney school children; Michael Medlar leading tour around Langham; poster for Cley walk; detail of "The Hettie" lifeboat; exhibition poster; George King, a Blakeney casualty of WW1 and the display board in Blakeney Church; poster for Tidal Lands exhibition held jointly with the National Trust.

Closer to home we have been involved with lost Rights of Way and the historical status of Blakeney Harbour, both very emotive subjects. Less contentious are the Sim Posts marking the finishing line for Blakeney Regatta. These were erected in 1908 in memory of Dr Roderick Sim who used to spend his summers in Blakeney. Now, over 100 years later, Blakeney Sailing



**Exploring Cley
A Walk on the
History Side**

Looking at the Village and the Church on
Sunday July 27th
Meet 3.00pm at the Church & return for tea at 5.00pm

Your guides will be the Rev Neil Batcock and John & Pam Peake

Everyone welcome, but numbers will be limited. So book your place on either 01263 741357 or 740686

Cost £5 per person in aid of the Friends of Cley Church and The History Centre Blakeney



Heritage Open Days 2013
A contribution from the History Centre Blakeney

'Ships Ahoy'
500 years of Blakeney Haven

An exhibition and tours at
St Nicholas Church, Blakeney
12-15 September: 2-4pm

Maritime History through Ship Graffiti, presentation model of the Hettie lifeboat, stories from the Churchyard, paintings, photographs and even more.

Tours start: graffiti 2pm & churchyard 3pm
If you wish to join a tour book on the Norwich Heart website - www.heritagecity.org/hods or phone 01263 740388



Tidal Lands

August 18 - 21
Blakeney Village Hall

An exhibition of the natural history and history of Blakeney Point, the harbour and surrounding villages

More information: www.history-blakeney-area.org.uk

Club fear that they are deteriorating and need replacing. Consequently they are seeking more information on Dr Sim and the possibility of relatives that they may contact. Can you help?

This summer we have also led a walk for the Norfolk Coast Partnership who held their annual conference, Developing Solutions, here in Blakeney. Delegates are attending from all over Norfolk and, not surprisingly, this will be a challenging task. The remit is Blakeney Past, Present and Future and the essential ingredient is Blakeney's housing!

Then there are the people and families that we have been asked to provide information on;

Emmerson Shorting of Blakeney, the **Lincolns** and **Baines** of Blakeney, **Chapman** of Cley and finally **Beavis** of Glandford, Cley and Blakeney. Many families are surprised to find their roots lead back to the Glaven villages.

A significant collection of eighty-four photographs from the Ives family of Cley is our very latest accession. These are predominantly views of Cley, staff of Cley Hall and various individuals. Sadly however, like many photographic collections, the vast majority are without dates, names or locations. We shall be putting a selection on view at the Mardle night in December when hopefully members may be able to identify some of them.

Meanwhile knitters amongst our midst have been busy making poppies for the summer Flower Festival being held in Blakeney Church, not what you would normally think of as an activity for the Centre. However we are taking this opportunity to use knitted and crocheted poppies as a tribute to all our servicemen. Thanks are due to Pauline and Anne Hill, then Maureen Lait and Rita Savage and their teams for all their efforts. The poppies will be on view alongside our display boards in the north aisle where the 1917 Blakeney casualties of the Great War are featured. Remember to look out for them on your next visit to the church as they will remain long after the exhibition has finished.

Looking ahead

There are two clear challenges ahead for the History Centre; firstly the manpower to continue running it, then secondly its role in the community as many other local societies are jumping on the heritage band wagon. That is quite apart from all the various web sites and blogs that are appearing. It is truly wonderful that awareness of our own local history is at last blossoming but, for the History Centre to remain relevant in this scenario, it must be even more both resolute and robust, separating fact from mythology.

For myself it has been a privilege to manage the History Centre and see it emerge from the dreams held by the early membership and come to fruition as such a vibrant asset to the wider community. However none of this could or has happened without both the continuing support and encouragement of so many others, be they individuals or organisations. Whilst some have already been named and thanked here for their support there are many more, too many, that have not as yet. Amongst these are the Centre volunteers, some 20 of them in all over the years. Some, like Sara Dobson and Jean Thompson who helped establish a strong family history section then Jan Semple, but none more so than my husband John. He has been there right from the very start, sourcing funds, acting as Treasurer, providing information, an absolute rock in every way. To everyone of you thank you for making my role so much easier. It has been team work all the time, both enjoyable and immensely satisfying.

It must continue.

Pam Peake

We don't want to lose you, but...

If you've not renewed your subscription, due 1 July 2017, then a label will have been affixed to the front page. If so this is the last Newsletter you will receive.

If this is a state of affairs too appalling to contemplate, please send your remittance to our Membership Secretary, Jenn Savage at 18 Meadow Close, Holt, Norfolk NR25 6JP, as soon as possible.

Subscription rates are unchanged at £10 for individuals, £14 for couples at the same address. Cheques should be made payable to BAHS.

(continued from front page)

be made to crane it in to an exact position (without damaging a main drain below ground!). On the second floor there is a WW1 display and a series of shop-fronts showing their wares – saddlers, ironmongers, sweets etc. These provided a useful insight into the social history of the town. Finally, at the top - up a spiral staircase, there is an impressive glass tower with panoramic views across the sea. We chatted up there for a while and then, enriched by all that we had seen and experienced, made our separate ways back home.

Diana Cooke

Women in WW1

At The Forum, Norwich we are calling for stories from the community on the role of Norfolk women in the First World War. If possible could you please share the following information with members of the Blakeney Area Historical Society:

The Forum, Norwich, is appealing for people to share their stories and memories of Norfolk women in the First World War who were either on active service or remaining strong on the Norfolk home-front.

Thousands of Norfolk women had their lives completely transformed during the First World War, proving their strength and bravery was essential to the war effort and beyond. The Forum is keen to hear from local people who may have stories, photographs, letters and objects to share. This may include: farm workers, Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, Women's Royal Naval Service, Women's Royal Air Force, Munitions, British Red Cross Society, Women's Land Army, women in the factories and shops, transport, canteens, hospitals, comforts and the post office.

Information and stories of local women will help add to the research for The Forum's community project 'Norfolk in the First World War: Somme to Armistice'. The project runs until November 2018 with National Lottery funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

People with information about Norfolk women involved in the First World War are invited to get in touch with The Forum's Heritage Assistant, Lizzie Figura-Drane via email: heritage.assistant@theforumnorwich.co.uk or telephone: 01603 727971.

A press release about the project will be released this week and we are also distributing posters calling out for stories, a copy of which is attached. The Forum is currently working with a team of volunteers to research the role of Norfolk women on active service and any stories shared with The Forum will be added to this research. All of the learning from the project will culminate in a Women on Active Service exhibition starting at The Forum and the Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library on 04 November 2017. Following this, the exhibition and accompanying films will go on tour to schools and community venues around Norfolk.

Lizzie Figura-Drane

NORFOLK IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Women on Active Service

Commemorating the role of women
across Norfolk 100 years ago



Thousands of Norfolk women had their lives completely transformed during the First World War. They proved their strength and bravery was essential to the war effort and beyond.

A CALL FOR YOUR STORIES!

DO YOU HAVE STORIES, PHOTOGRAPHS, LETTERS OR OBJECTS RELATING TO NORFOLK WOMEN WHO WERE INVOLVED IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR?

This may include Farm Workers | Women's Army Auxiliary Corps | Women's Royal Naval Service | Women's Royal Air Force | Munitions | British Red Cross Society | Women's Land Army | In the factories and shops | Transport | Canteens | Hospitals | Comforts | Post Office

If so, we'd love to hear from you.

PLEASE CONTACT LIZZIE FIGURA-DRANE Heritage Assistant at The Forum, Norwich
EMAIL heritage.assistant@theforumnorwich.co.uk TEL 01603 727971 WEB theforumnorwich.co.uk/WWIstories

the
forum

NORFOLK
1916-18
SOMME > ARMISTICE

Image: Neil Storey Archive

 heritage
lottery fund
LOTTERY FUNDED



Above: A high level, sepia toned view of the High Street which is the first view I have found of the Quay Garage - located in the forecourt of what is now Quay House - the photo probably taken in the mid-to-late 1930s. The total absence of traffic bodes ill for the business!



Below: A hand tinted view from 1964 showing the bakery and Starr's shop.



The Village, Cley

F.U.S.
CLY 3

Beer & Bridges



Holt's neglected architect
William Mindham



The Kings Head, Letheringsett
Sunday 23 July 2017 at 7 pm—

Buffet supper in the garden marquee
and a talk by historian Margaret Bird
on this forgotten polymath



THE KINGS HEAD

— Letheringsett —



HOLT FESTIVAL FRINGE

NR25 7AR

TICKETS

£28.00 from

The Kings Head

tel. 01263 712691

www.holtfestival.org

www.maryhardysworld.co.uk

www.kingsheadnorfolk.co.uk

✉ info@kingsheadnorfolk.co.uk

Winter Programme 2017-8

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

- Sept 26th** **Laura Eke and the fisherman who painted in wool,
A real Norfolk story**
Christine Humphries
- 31 October** **William Allen, Grocer and Shipping Tycoon**
Jonathan Hooton
- The talk will be preceded by a short AGM*
- 28 November** **Norfolk in WW1**
Neil Storey
- 12 December** **Cromer and the Georgian Seaside Resorts**
Melanie Hilton
- 30 January 2018** **Three Short Talks**
To Be Confirmed
These talks are open to all but are normally given by three members
- 27 February** **The story of Norfolk Wools**
Roger Arguille
- 27 March** **Saints and their badges: pilgrim badges from Norfolk and elsewhere**
Dr Michael Lewis
- 24 April** **Scapegoat! The Avoidable Death of HMS Prince of Wales and HMS Repulse**
Dr Martin Stephen

Martin Stephen was formerly High Master of St Paul's School and Headmaster of the Perse and Manchester Grammar Schools. He has written many books, including the Henry Gresham series and Diary of a Stroke and is an authority on the poetry of the First World War.

History Centre Diary

Public Openings

August 1st 10.30am till 1pm
September 5th 10.30am till 1pm
October 3rd 10.30am till 1pm

The Centre is closed during the winter months and will hopefully reopen in March 2018.

Private Openings

Appointments for private openings can be made for any time of the year depending on the availability of volunteers. Please phone 01263 740388, write to the History Centre, Blakeney Village Hall, Langham Road, Blakeney, Norfolk NR25 7PG or email www.historycentre@bahs.uk to make your appointment.

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.

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