

# BLAKENEY AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter No. 8

June 2000

Dear Members,

Yes, this Newsletter is later than it should be, and technology is not to blame – except that which allows the Editor to desert his post for pleasures elsewhere: sorry for the delay. The Newsletter follows what is now the usual pattern. The main item is a piece drawing your attention to the Exhibition in Blakeney Village Hall on 15<sup>th</sup> July and a talk that same evening by Peter Carnell on the various surveys conducted in Blakeney and Wiveton. Please do come and support your Society, and bring your friends so that they can see what we do. And then, of course, there is the little matter of renewing subscriptions ....

## Recent Events

In January 17 members braved the elements to hear **Paul Banham** talk about **heraldry**, an interest which he has pursued for over 50 years. He described the development of coats of arms, which arose in early medieval times in order to identify participants in tournaments and on the battlefield. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century coats of arms first became hereditary, passing from father to son. It was recognized early on that some control would be needed, and this was exercised by 'heralds' who still work from the College of Heraldry. The profession consists of 3 'kings' (with territorial jurisdiction – Clarenceau for south of the Trent), 6 heralds (named after cities), and 4 'pursuivants' (herald apprentices, with names like Portcullis and Rouge Croix). Paul's slides illustrated many fascinating aspects of heraldry. He used the Royal 'Achievement', as it appears on the Customs House at King's Lynn (there is a similar one at Wells), to describe the elements of a coat of arms: shield, helm, crown, crest, supporters, etc. The royal coat of arms appears in many churches, but quite often incorrectly as only the name was changed when a new monarch came to the throne. Using a kit of his own design, Paul went on to demonstrate some of the rules of shield design, introducing us to the French terms still used (though now with English pronunciation) such as 'or' for gold and 'gules' for red. He then showed examples of coats of arms which can be seen today, including those on pub signs. Finally, he told us how he had acquired his own coat of arms for use on stationery, flags, his 'carriage' etc. Anyone of sufficient standing can apply for a grant – and most graduates would qualify – but the cost today would be around £3000. For the record: the Heydon arms on the 1586 map of Blakeney Haven are correctly described as *Quarterly Argent & Gules, a Cross engrailed counterchanged* (see page 3). The 'blazon' (description) of Paul's own shield is *Per bend sinister Ermine and Azure a bend counterchanged and cotised Gold*. The crest includes *a demi seapie rising bearing in the beak a stem of Marsh Samphire all proper*. Those who attended found the talk both informative and entertaining - well worth hearing again if you see it in a future programme.

In February Brian Scott talked to 24 of us about **Wells**: its Local History Group and its townscape. The Group was started in 1996 and has about 120 members. It produces newsletters, arranges monthly lectures and outings, and is publishing a series of Town Walks, two based on the buildings and one on maritime aspects. The Group had been successful in obtaining small grants from the RCC, Wells Town Council and Wells Carnival, and most recently had received a Millennium Festival Award of nearly £2000 for the purchase of census records and a microfilm reader. Their

activities included tape recording interviews with older residents, recording local buildings (when expertise was available) and cemetery inscriptions, and a project to record for posterity on film and text the current life of Wells. The Group does not have its own premises. For the remainder of his talk Brian showed slides of various buildings in Wells and commented on the known history of each. The earliest harbour was probably by the church but there was no documentary evidence of the planned town which may seem obvious from the street plan; Brian thought that the rectangular street pattern could have arisen naturally from the topography. His slides included the Old Lifeboat House (a former reading room), the church (burnt out in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century), John Fryer's House (he was the sailing master on the *Bounty*), and many others. There appeared to be a 'Wells' vernacular building style, which included non-coursed brickwork, for example. The Wells Group plan to put plaques on selected buildings to denote their historical importance, starting with plaques on all former pubs.

### **The Wiveton Exhibition (15<sup>th</sup> July)**

### **A Project Director writes .....**

We have now completed the mammoth task of taking **resistivity** measurements on the 'quay', ie the field to the north of the church. The results are interesting: come and see for yourself and have a chat about it on the 15<sup>th</sup>. As you may know, we were rained off many times so the work spread over 7 months. It meant patching the blocks together but we have shown that this can be done reliably. The research on the Wiveton and Cley **bridges** has been very productive, showing that both the Stone Bridge and the now missing Great Bridge were much larger than we thought. I am convinced that the Great Bridge lived on after 1739 as Eson's Bridge. See the evidence on the 15<sup>th</sup>! Michael Lee has produced graphical computations on the **Mass Dials** (scratched sundials) on the south buttresses of the church; fascinating stuff. Have you seen the **ship drawings** carved into the stone work of the church? I had not realised there were so many – and so detailed. Do they show ships built in Wiveton, and have we located the shipyard which once existed? The **Domesday** entries are revealing for the Glaven villages, and it would be a project in its own right to tease out the evidence. The **hedge dating** and investigations into the **early roads** show a very different Wiveton from today. The '**sea**' wall work is tantalising but John Peake won't let me see the results yet! Sheila Medlar has been able to conjour up the 'theatre' of the **medieval church**: brilliant colours, a mass of flickering candles, musical instruments and swirling incense. And there's more!!

If you would like to help on Exhibition Day it would be much appreciated; a few hours would help no end. It should be a most interesting day! Please contact me on 01263 740789 so I know how many are coming. Thanks, Peter Carnell.

### **The UEA Course**

Another course has been arranged for this autumn. The tutor is Gerald Randall, already known and appreciated by members of the Cley WEA class. The Blakeney course will be on the **History and Architecture of the English Parish Church**. Gerald has said that as far as possible he will use examples from East Anglia. The course is advertised in the current UEA brochure but no extra information is to hand at the moment. The course will be held on Monday afternoons, 2.00 to 4.00 pm, in the Chapel, starting on 25<sup>th</sup> September.

### **The Glaven Historian**

Members will know that another issue of the *Glaven Historian* is due out before the end of the subscription year (30<sup>th</sup> June) with distribution planned to start at the summer lecture, being held this year on 15<sup>th</sup> July. At the moment the production is a little behind schedule, but if it is not quite

ready for the 15<sup>th</sup> you will receive it soon after. Copies of issues No. 1 and No. 2 are available at £5 each, although when original print runs sell out good quality photocopies will be supplied instead.

### **Exhibition at Blakeney Chapel**

As reported in earlier Newsletters the Society will be staging an exhibition in the Blakeney Methodist Chapel this summer to coincide with the Flower Festival on 28<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> July. There will be three themes: landscape, buildings and things marine, and you will be able to see again some of the material from the 15<sup>th</sup> July Village Hall exhibition. The last exhibition at the Chapel was well attended and much appreciated, so don't miss this new opportunity to see something of Blakeney's history set out in convenient form.

### **Subscriptions**

The Society's membership year ends on 30<sup>th</sup> June and new subscriptions are payable on 1<sup>st</sup> July – without any separate reminder, so if you've read this far (and obviously you have) then you'll have the message. The 'bad' news, though, is that at the last AGM the membership agreed to the Management Committee's proposal to increase the annual rate from £5 to £8 for the year 2000/2001. To make it easy for you this Newsletter has a tear-off portion which you can use, if you wish, to accompany your subscription. Anyone who has not paid up for the year 1999/2000 will not be getting the Journal.

### **FUTURE PROGRAMME**

The next events are the two exhibitions, followed by the AGM at which David White will talk about Holt Country Park. The dates of the winter clubnights have been settled so please put them in your diary. The speakers are being arranged and will be known by the time the next Newsletter arrives with the AGM papers.

15<sup>th</sup> July

**Blakeney Haven**

**Blakeney V. Hall**

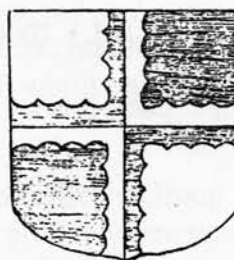
10.00 am – 6.00 pm.

An all-day event to show the work of the Society.

An **Exhibition** filling the main hall will cover the Society's surveys at Bayfield, Blakeney Eye and Wiveton. A **lecture by Peter Carnell** (7.30 pm) will cover aims, methods and results. See the separate sheet for more details.



Paul Reyner Banham



Heydon

28<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> July

**Exhibition**

A 3 day exhibition of Blakeney History to be held in the Methodist **Chapel**, in conjunction with the Flower Festival being held in all the Glaven churches. By popular request: the return of the village scrap books which so absorbed people last time.

19<sup>th</sup> September

**AGM**

Papers will be sent out to all members in advance. The speaker after the formal business will be **David White** who will talk about the history of the area that is now Holt Country Park.

In view of the comments opposite the Co-Chairmen would like to take this opportunity to ask for **volunteers** to take on the secretarial role(s). We desperately need more people to help with the 'admin' necessary to run the Society. Guidance will be available if needed.

By September John Wright will have been Secretary of the Society and its predecessor (the Blakeney History Group) for 10 years and it really is time for him to do other things and for you to have a change. While there is no provision in the constitution for breaking up the job into smaller parts it might well be possible for one person to act as programme secretary, for example, so reducing the remaining work for a 'general' secretary.

**Clubnights**

All clubnights have been well attended but there is always room in the Chapel for a few more. Do come along: meetings are free to members **and** their guests.

31<sup>st</sup> October 2000  
28<sup>th</sup> November 2000

All clubnights are on Tuesdays and start at 7.30 pm.

27<sup>th</sup> February 2001  
27<sup>th</sup> March 2001

Topics to be arranged: if you have suggestions for subjects or speakers, please let the Secretary know.

**AND FINALLY**

As usual, any comments, requests, suggestions, corrections etc should be made known to any member of the Management Committee or to the Secretary and Editor: John Wright (01263 740589).

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**SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2000 to 30<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2001**

I / we enclose a cheque / cash for £ ..... for membership 2000/01

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