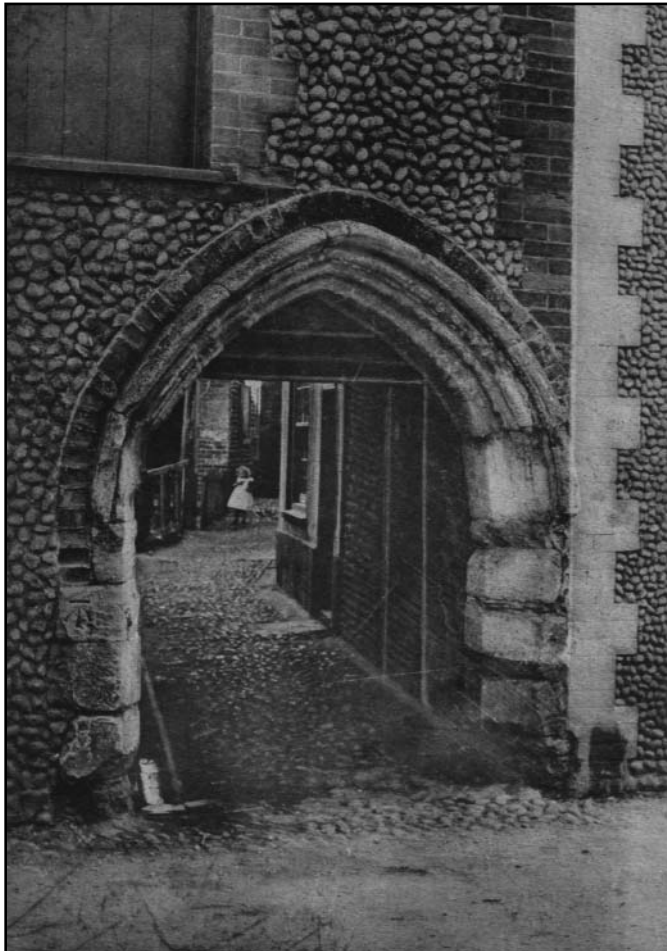




# BAHS Newsletter

Number 20

December 2005



*The Old Arch, Cley, back in the days when it still lead somewhere. It is the first view I have found that shows the buildings on the other side, albeit obliquely. There have been a number of interesting Cley and Blakeney cards on the eBay auction web-site, the best going for well over £20. You need deep pockets for this game!*

## Projector Problems

Recent lectures have demonstrated that the Society's projector, while very well suited to use in the History Centre, it balks at the varied selection of slides brought by our speakers, especially when required to point upwards. We are therefore to buy a Carousel projector which it is expected will cure the problems.



*Gosh! Yet another view of Cley Mill, this one taken in the 1930s by which time it had long since ceased to be a mill. A direct descendant of the last miller, Stephen Burroughes, recently made contact.*

## Subscription Renewals

If you haven't paid your subs yet, this is the last Newsletter you will receive [sob]. Nor will you receive your copy of the next Glaven Historian [wail]. If you are in default this will be indicated by a slip attached to the newsletter.

For next year the Committee are hoping to introduce arrangements for payment by Standing Order – we're too small to warrant Direct Debit – which should make the process much less painful.

# News from the History Centre

In just a few months time the History Centre will have been in operation for 3 years during which time it has become firmly established as an essential resource centre for Blakeney and all the surrounding villages.

As the Centre moves on to the next phase, the Management Team is delighted to welcome on board two new co-opted members, Jan Semple and John Wright. Watch this space. It also seems an opportune moment to begin a regular section of news in the Newsletter.

## Accessions

A steady stream of gifts and purchases continues to swell the collection of resources and just a few of the more recent items are highlighted below:

- collection of books on east coast shipping
- Gant family papers and photographs
- Transcript of Visitations for Blakeney and Wiveton churches covering the period 1597-1640
- East Anglia from the Air (video) and East Anglia from Above (book)
- Copies of old Cley postcards
- Exploring the Norfolk Village
- An Historical Atlas of Norfolk

The last two books warrant special attention as both have been eagerly anticipated for some time and both are released just in time for Xmas.

*Exploring the Norfolk Village* by Christopher Barringer is part of the Norfolk Origins series published by Poppyland Publishing. It contains the usual eclectic mix of information from a wide variety of sources which CB's students have come to value and expect after attending his courses on local and village history. Some fourteen villages scattered across the county are highlighted and for our members there is a section on Binham. All in all a book to keep in the car as you move about on a day out.

The last book, *An Historical Atlas of Norfolk*, is the third edition of this title, this time edited by Trevor Ashwin and Alan Davison and published by Phillimore & Co Ltd. It is a weighty hardback and, although greatly expanded by the inclusion of updates and new map topics, it still aspires to replicate the original layout with text on the left and newly drawn maps on the right, and an unchanged total of 93 map topics.

Christopher Barringer attempts to define "What is Norfolk?" in the Introduction while another of our members has contributed the map topics on Population Change from 1801-2001 with an additional section on rural primary schools closures in the latter half of the twentieth century. A quick look down the list of contributors will reveal

the names of many who have travelled to Blakeney as guest speakers for our evening lecture series. Get a copy quickly before it goes out of print again.

## Branching Out

Family History is a fast growing part of the activities at the Centre where there is access to copies of some 14 or so local parish registers and every census from 1841 to 1901. In addition there is an unique collection of resources that are simply not available anywhere else as they are neither published nor transcribed online.

Consequently visitors and long distance members have come to regard the Centre somewhat as a mecca when seeking their ancestors. One member from New Zealand met up with cousins here in the summer, all looking for their de Ridder ancestors who were here in the early 1800s. An outcome of that visit was the identification of the minister's wife featured on page 10 of *The Blakeney Methodist Church* where she was described as a 'native of Blakeney'. We can now give her a name, Maria de Ridder.

Other family names currently being researched are Baines, Brighty, Dew, Doughty, Gant, King, Long, Lumsden, Smith and Waller.

## Photographs Please

Still on family matters we have grandsons desperately seeking photographs of their grandfathers and it is just possible that someone out there may be able to oblige. Firstly Martin King would love to have a photograph of **William Edward King**, former Morston coastguard who became licensee of the King's Arms in Blakeney when he retired from the service. This would have been in the early part of the 1900s.

Then Tony, David and Michael Smith would very much like to have a photograph of **James William Smith** who died at the end of WWI, and a photograph of their great grandfather (**James Curry Smith**, the Blakeney blacksmith, who lived until 1940. If you are able to help in any way then please contact the History Centre Manager on 01263 740388 in the first instance.

## GH Backnumbers Wanted

The History Centre needs copies of the early editions of the Glaven Historian, long since out of print, for resale to new members. If anyone has early issues they no longer want, Pamela Peake would just love to hear from you! Phone her on 01263 740388.

We will be able to supply the latest issues in electronic (.pdf) format, but this is not at present an option for the early issues.



*Members exploring the north elevation of Cockthorpe Hall. Time and again it was demonstrated that the rear elevation of a dwelling provides powerful clues to the past. The face of a house, as presented to the road, was more usually the statement of later owners, keeping up with the times and current building styles – misleading when trying to date it.*

## The Cockthorpe Project

Armed with a series of maps spanning some 200 years, the houses, outbuildings and barns of Cockthorpe have been subjected to close scrutiny by a small but dedicated group of members and friends. Vernacular architecture has been put under the microscope; brick colour, age size and placement deliberated, blocked up or even opened up doors and windows considered, roof lines, tiles and thatch debated and more recent style cross referenced with census returns for clues.

During this investigation the church terriers emerged as a potential tool for understanding the glebe lands and some of the buildings of the parish. Thus a workshop on the terriers, which had been planned for 2006, was brought forward by popular request. These terriers spanned well over 300 years to the present time, and indeed there were some eye opening moments – especially when Little Langham church and its glebe lands were discovered – on paper at least.

Then for two of the members, their home suddenly took centre stage as the history of their house was revealed from these rather less than usual sources. This story will be unfolded in January when they take up the story at our Members Night.

The project continues in the New Year with a return to the church. Firstly there will be a workshop looking at some early wills where money has been earmarked for specific repairs and maintenance, new building, burials and the construction

of monuments. It should be interesting to see whether their intent matches what we can see today! Then Rik Hoggett, our November lecturer on church archaeology, will lead a practical workshop walking round the outside mostly and reading the above ground archaeology of All Saints. Come armed with binoculars for the latter and join either one or both of these sessions as you wish, remembering to sign up in advance please.

## Dates for your Diary

The Centre will be closed over Xmas and through January for annual stocktaking, refurbishment and essential maintenance. Reopening the week commencing 6 Feb 2006

### Members' Nights

Mondays 6 February, 6 March, and 3 April, 7 - 9pm

### Cockthorpe Project

Monday 3 April: **Clues from Wills**  
History Centre 1.30 - 3.30pm. Cost £3

Monday 10 April: **Reading the Church**, a building story with Rik Hoggett.

Meet 2pm at Cockthorpe church. Cost £3

### History with a side helping of Crab

Arrangements are being made for a summer outing to Blakeney Point and you will need to ask at the History Centre for more details and to make your booking.

# Reports of Meetings

## Blakeney Chapel

by *Richard Lee*

25 October 2005

The British Legion's Harbour Room was almost full for Richard Lee's talk on last winter's excavation of the medieval ruins on Blakeney Eye. Would we now hear the answer to the age-old question: was the building ever a chapel?

Richard first reminded us of some of the finds from the initial evaluation dig on the Eye: post-holes with Neolithic and Bronze Age pottery, a gold bracteate (medallion) lost in Saxon times, a horse burial perhaps relatively modern. Turning to the building itself, Richard might have been able to sketch its chronological history more clearly had there been abundant – and dateable – evidence. There was evidence, but not on the scale he had expected – there was no wood at all, for instance, and 'only' 2,000 pieces of pottery, though some of it was high status and of Continental origin. Some detailed studies had not been completed – and no dates were yet available from the Carbon 14 process of dating organic material.

There were some finds under the building: Iron Age and Roman material, and later ditches unusually clean and containing no evidence of their purpose. Also under the building and probably pre-dating it were 2 'long cross' pennies from the later 1200s. The major feature was a kiln containing slag, probably iron, and some potentially dateable charcoal. The kiln lay under the NW corner of a long medieval building, aligned roughly east-west. The flint walls were thick and strong; there was a doorway to the west (of just the right size to accommodate the Cley arch), and another to the north, but no internal dividing walls. The building was out of use by the time gravel came in from seaward followed later by wind-blown sand. Over this was a layer of broken pantiles, relatively late if locally made, but earlier if imported from Flanders. Of any previous roof, thatch perhaps, no trace remained.

In the 1600s, or thereabouts, a second structure was added on to the south side of the ruined first one, re-using some of the material. At the same time, after inserting a blocking wall, the western end of the first building was used again, with a brick hearth and mortar floor. The second building, smaller and less substantial than the first, had 2 rooms with back-to-back fireplaces. At the SE corner were fragments of roofing slates, though not enough to cover the roof – perhaps slates had been stacked there for removal. No roof timbers remained on the site, although there were many nails of various sorts and (as yet) unknown function. Many animal bones were found in the later building.

In telling us this, and much more, Richard

speculated on what the 2 buildings might have been used for. The later one could have been a warrener's cottage, but the earlier building remains an enigma for the finds do not suggest any particular function. Any number of uses remain possible because the evidence cannot preclude them, and if it was built as a chapel it probably had other uses as well. Whilst it would have been good to have had an answer to the 'age-old question', perhaps continued uncertainty is more interesting!

In conveying the thanks of the audience John Sizer of the National Trust, who had helped to sponsor the lecture, said that Richard and his team (from Lindsey Archaeological Services) had been a pleasure to work with. A view which will be shared by all those who were shown round the site during the excavation.

*John Wright*

---

## Maps and Map Makers

by *Matthew Champion*

26 September 2005

Matthew Champion concentrated his talk on East Anglian maps and map makers but explained that map making could be dated back to Ptolemy before it was rediscovered in the 15th and 16th centuries in various parts of Europe.

In this country the impetus was fear of war - resulting in a coast line survey under Henry VIII, and, under Elizabeth I, Captain Yorke's military survey which produced coastal maps from Ipswich northwards, including a map of the Weybourne coast. Other maps met different political needs. Saxton's survey of England (completed in the 1570s) was used by Lord Burleigh to provide the names and locations of the dwellings of all prominent recusants. Saxton's map of Norfolk was the first of the series and was slightly different from the others. Other local maps included an estate map of Chelmsford, from the latter years of the 16th century, which is unusual in being one of the few to have survived complete with an appended written description of the estates.

Much later, two successive surveys of North Norfolk (1786 and 1826) provide an insight into coastal changes at Holkham. A 1596 map of Godwich – now a deserted village – was also mentioned, as was the so-called Hutch map of the Yarmouth estuary. The latter although well known locally was unknown to the British Library until it was recently drawn to their attention. This map seems to show the coast as it was several centuries before the Elizabethan period when it was drawn; was it a copy of an earlier map? If so, it suggests that map making had not entirely died out in the Middle Ages.

A lot of attention was given to the map of Norwich produced by William Cunyngham (a native of the city) in 1559. This was the first printed plan

of any town in England and was based on a measured survey – a book published by Cunyngham included instructions for carrying out triangulation surveys. A puzzle over the map is the blank space where the Great Hospital and nearby buildings should have been shown. Matthew Champion outlined his recent research which led him to believe that Cunyngham made use of an earlier map (now lost) produced after a disastrous fire destroyed the Hospital area. Such a map would probably have been used when Kett's Rebellion was put down by the Earl of Warwick at Norwich in 1549. Warwick's son, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, was with his father at the time and subsequently became acquainted with Cunyngham. This is known from an entry in Robert Dudley's account books and by the dedication to Dudley of one of Cunyngham's published books. Dudley could have passed on such an earlier map to Cunyngham – why else would an accurate map maker, brought up in Norwich, omit such a distinct area of the city? A theory but an entirely plausible one and providing a fascinating insight into recent research.

*Derek Schofield*

---

## **Archaeology of Churches**

*by Rik Hoggett*

29 November 2005

Rik Hoggett recently gained a PhD from the UEA on this very subject. His depth of knowledge was clearly huge and his enthusiasm catching. The unfortunately rather small audience at the chapel had a most entertaining and enlightening evening.

From the first he was eager to point out that church archaeology was not just a matter of digging holes, but of using the whole range of techniques of building and landscape history.

Having said that there were a few holes in the ground. At Staunch Meadow in Brandon an excavation has uncovered the remains of an early Anglo-Saxon wooden church of c700. Though little more than a few rows of post-holes – how the archaeologists *love* their post-holes – it's clearly laid out in the typical shape: nave plus chancel, and with a nearby cemetery.

While most English villages have their origins in this period, early remains tend to be buried under later buildings unless the village moves to a new site. East Anglian wooden churches tended to be replaced by stone structures in about the mid eleventh century, and much altered subsequently. Many settlements were deserted in the late Middle Ages – quite a few in East Anglia, overlooked by Beresford – though the churches remained, in varying states of decay. Godwich deserted village, mentioned by Derek in his report of Matthew Champion's lecture, retains the ruins of part of its church tower.

Churches – stone churches – seemed so solid

and so much a part of the landscape, even when, as often seems to have been the case in the late 18th/early 19th centuries, they were obviously falling into decay and desuetude. Then came the Blitz! Suddenly people began to appreciate these ancient structures – the study of Church Archaeology began.

One of the first to be investigated was St Brides, Fleet Street, The Newspapermen's church. The destruction of this church in an air raid gave archaeologists the perfect opportunity to delve into the earlier phases of the structure – smaller churches buried under larger, later ones – and they seized it readily. It has since been rebuilt.

By the 1970s the churches were suffering dwindling congregations and were more and more hard-pressed for the money to keep the structures in repair. 'Pastoral Measures' allowed churches to be declared redundant. They could then be either sold or demolished. A few of the choicer specimens have been taken up by The Redundant Churches Trust and similar groups, others have become homes or warehouses, or piles of rubble. An example of the latter [though not one that Rik gave] was All Saints, Lyham Road, London, demolished in the 1970s and replaced by a small brick hut, a "church-cum-community centre". It had been a large Gothic pile build by the Victorians as a "Mission" church. As it was barely 100 years old – and the first building on the site – it was of no interest to the archaeologists, but I love the idea of them sending missionaries to convert the heathen hordes of Clapham. I wonder if any of them were eaten?

St Peter's, Barton-on-Humber, was a church that attracted the archaeologists. The church is still standing, but they were able to dig up the floor of the present nave and uncovered the foundations of earlier churches going right back to the 10th century. The original nave survives as the base of the present tower – as fine a piece of Anglo-Saxon stonemasonry as any in the country. At least five separate phases of building development have so far been identified at this fascinating church.

The exteriors of standing churches provide many clues to their previous appearance: blocked windows/tracery, old rooflines (if originally thatched), and many other alterations over time. Some now look quite "messy" so it perhaps as well to remember that medieval churches were often rendered on their exterior walls, thereby obscuring such blemishes.

Rik finished by giving details of the work at Sedgeford, work which was the core of his PhD, which included the use of every technique available short of digging it up (the church is still in use). He was able to tell us that most of the basic structure is 13th century with additions (and deletions) post 16th century. Let's hope he can throw some light on Cockthorpe church in the Spring (see Dates for your Diary).

*Richard Kelham*

# Spring/Summer Programme 2006

## Events

All meetings (unless otherwise stated) are held on the last **Tuesday** of the month and start at **7.30pm**. Contact John Peake 01263 740388 for further details. **See Stop Press below.**

Tuesday  
January 31

### **Members' Night**

A medley of short talks with something for everyone  
Village Reminiscences: *Graham Lubbock*  
Cockthorpe Project – the Parsonage: *Maurice Matthews*  
Village Studies: *Frank Hawes*  
Homer – a ship and a house: *Pamela Peake*  
In the Methodist Chapel, High Street, Blakeney  
**Members £1, Visitors £2**

Tuesday  
February 28

### **Agriculture in North Norfolk**

A view of a changing scene through picture postcards  
*Philip West*  
In the Harbour Room, British Legion Hall, High Street, Blakeney  
**Members £2, Visitors £3 (this is the new entrance fee for all monthly meetings)**

Tuesday  
March 28

### **A local family – the Astleys of Melton Constable**

A family of enormous power whose influence extended north to the coast  
*David Yaxley*  
In the Harbour Room, British Legion Hall, High Street, Blakeney

Tuesday  
April 25

### **Deserted Villages**

The fascinating story of discovering medieval villages that have disappeared  
*Alan Davison*  
In the Harbour Room, British Legion Hall, High Street, Blakeney

May  
Date to be  
announced

### **Norwich: Dragon's Hall and King Street**

A guided excursion through one of the historic areas of Norwich; Dragon's Hall will just have been reopened after a major refurbishment

Saturday  
July 29

### **Annual Public Lecture Barrows, Bombs and Brachteates**

The archaeology of the National Trust's East Anglian coastline  
*Angus Wainwright, Senior Archaeologist for the National Trust*  
Blakeney Village Hall, 8pm  
**Entrance £3 for all**

Tuesday  
September 26

### **Cley Church**

While sitting in the church be guided through its architectural wonders  
*Gerald Randall*  
A short AGM will precede this **meeting in Cley Church**

---

## Stop Press!

In the light of the increasing problem of parking near the Methodist Chapel, the Management Committee has decided to move all future meetings of the Society to the new Harbour Room at the Royal British Legion where there is adequate parking space.

It is with great reluctance that this move is being made, as the Methodist Chapel has been a very welcome home for meetings and courses for many Years. We owe them a very big thank you.

The Harbour Room is a splendid, modern,

comfortable, but above all *expensive* venue. This will inevitably have to be reflected in a modest increase in the entrance charges for monthly meetings.

This will **take effect from the February** meeting. We look forward to seeing you there in 2006. Please spread the word.

---

Editor: Richard Kelham  
phone/fax: 01263 740186  
e-mail: richard.kelham@dsl.pipex.com

All text © BAHS and Contributors 2005-6