



BAHS Newsletter

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History can be fun!

The next generation of budding archaeologists from Blakeney Primary School enjoyed digging in Wiveton and finding material from early Medieval times to the recent. They were part of an extensive dig across the village by children from schools in North Norfolk. This was a continuation of research undertaken in 2006 and reported in *The Glaven Historian* No.10. This year there were a number of exciting finds from medieval fish hooks to large numbers of German Stoneware and other pottery from Roman to 19th century periods.

Committee Stuff

I have been asked to provide 'a few lines on Committee matters for the Newsletter'. Compressing the year's activity into a few lines is not easy. Ignoring the various sub-committee meetings, the minutes of the first six committee meetings of the year run to fourteen pages with six sheets of addenda.

At the first meeting Peter Wordingham was voted in to share the job of Chairman with Dick Kelham and the first of several discussions about the need for additional committee members took place. It was also decided that the Society's Constitution needed amendment but this was put off pending consideration as to whether we should become a Registered Charity. It took several meetings and much research by John Peake to decide that now was not the time. The rôle of a Trustee is more onerous than just a committee member and insurance against mishaps could be expensive.

Another running topic throughout the year was the reorganisation of the Society's funds as a hedge against any future problems and this eventually gave rise to a not unanimous decision that the subscription should be raised. As a result we have lost our Treasurer but we hope that she will remain on the Committee as Membership Secretary.

In addition to all this John Peake has organised all the meetings and courses, Chris Bond has kept the web-site up to date while Pam Peake, in spite of illness and surgery, has kept the History Centre flying high.

News from the History Centre

2008 began with the purchase and delivery of two bookcases to house the ever growing collection of resources. One set of shelves is now devoted to guides, research folders and files of newspaper cuttings while the other has become the new home to the family history folders and Norfolk Genealogy Volumes.

On a more technological front, news quickly followed from the Parish Council that we had been successful in obtaining a Community Grant for the purchase of a notebook computer. Not only does this free up more table space within the Centre, it also allows us to move the computer out and about for activities away from the Centre. With the purchase of a digital projector by the Society we are also right up to date, able to have digital presentations and offer the facility to guest speakers.

Meanwhile the roving reporter for BBC's *Who do you think you are?* caught up with us and the Society was featured in the April Issue as the Local History Society of the month. Members were photographed at the archaeological dig at Wiveton Hall while Basil Dickinson was shown in the Centre inspecting his family tree with Margaret Thatcher as a cousin of sorts. Needless to say, there was suddenly an inundation of enquiries from all over the world, mostly about family history. Seizing the opportunity, the Society's webmaster set up a message board where all members can log in and respond. Who knows, distant cousins and new connections with like-minded historians could be just around the corner for you!

Then Mike Medlar continued his series of walks around inland villages by introducing a group of intrepid walkers to the more significant vernacular delights of Field Dalling.

Activities continued with a return visit by the Field Academy of Cambridge University to the archaeological dig at Wiveton that was begun two years ago. Again the History Centre made all the

arrangements with local land owners and ensured that Class 3 from Blakeney Primary School, with some help from Class 2, were able to participate, this time digging two test pits. Such fun, such excitement and such wonderful results – the photograph shows it all. The children are presently busy preparing a display of their results that will be on show at the History Centre Open Day. Indeed all activity in the Centre is now focused on Open Day.

Open Day 2008

While the use of the Scout Hut last year undoubtedly provided more space for both visitors and exhibits, it was not an ideal situation operating two sites at the same time. So this year we are being really ambitious, perhaps too much. Saturday August 23rd sees the annual Open Day under one roof in Blakeney Church, an exciting venue with a wonderful backdrop in every way. All in all quite a challenge.

There will be the usual eclectic mix of exhibits, photographs, maps, censuses and directories as expected and a family get together for all those descended from the Ramms of Wiveton and Cley and the Thompsons of Blakeney. The network is growing all the time and now includes the Baker, Ellis, Wells and Carroway families from Wells and Forsdick, Pye, Booty, Dew, Craske, Kerrison, Adcock, Pinchen, Woodhouse, Bishop and Brett families from the Glaven villages to name but a few.

The tower will be open and in addition there will also be tours, with a difference, throughout the day. These tours, both inside the church and outside, will highlight features of past communities that are unique to Blakeney.

Refreshments will be available so why not make a note of the date and come and join us for a day out with a difference.

Accessions

Not so many accessions over the past few months as previously but some that will definitely be a bonus. The final Salthouse parish register has been conserved and photographed by the NRO and now purchased. Already this has solved the whereabouts of two individuals that have been a stumbling block for tens of years to their descendants, namely Luke Ramm and Brittife Edmund Dew. This register covers the period 1713-1818 for baptisms and burials. Added to this are the Thornage parish registers that greatly extend our coverage of local registers.

Then the Centre has been blessed with a donation of maps, an enormous selection including enlargements of specific areas. Alas they are neither indexed nor presented in a suitable way until someone volunteers to do the work. Could that someone be you? Meanwhile they are there to browse through, especially the house history researchers.

Books acquired cover Methodism in Holt and further a field, guides to WWI Ancestors and a series of useful guides produced by The Federation of Family History Societies, a conservation plan for Wiveton Hall walled garden and *The vernacular architecture of Breckland*.

PP

Family Search

Michael Fitzmaurice (e-mail: mjfitzmaurice@btinternet.com) is currently building his family tree. "I have a lot of relations on my mother's side, from Blakeney. So I am finding all that I can about the **Starling** family." *from the BAHS web-site*

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Meeting Report

The Dutch Garden in Norfolk and Europe by Charlotte Crawley
26 February 2008

Mrs Crawley, who is well known as an art historian and as an arts administrator with the Art Fund and The East Anglian Arts Foundation, gave us a beautifully illustrated talk which took us from William of Orange and Het Loo in the Netherlands to her and her husband's own garden at Hunsworth Hall in Norfolk.

William and Mary brought their close involvement with gardens with them when they agreed to rule together in 1689 and it was not long before they had redesigned Kensington Palace gardens and then, partly because the London atmosphere did not suit William's asthma, had set about Hampton Court. Their taste became the accepted Dutch garden design and was adopted by gentlemen of fashion all over the kingdom.

Rectangular spaces interspersed with straight canals and laid out with 'greens', i.e.: clipped box or yew cones, pyramids, balls and lollipops together with oranges and lemons in tubs that could be hidden away in greenhouses or enjoyed in Orangeries in the winter were at the heart of the style but were very expensive in labour and money. Queen Anne who inherited the gardens and the bills from her Brother-in-law in 1702 soon had them removed but enough records remained for the Privy Garden and the Fountain Garden at Hampton Court to be restored in the twentieth century.

Just as the fashionable Dutch style had spread around gentlemen's estates, so with the rise of the next fashion many of these formal gardens were swept away but perhaps because its pattern of spaces each enclosed by walls or clipped hedges had been designed originally for the windy, flat, Dutch landscape it proved itself particularly suitable to East Anglia where several such as Melton Constable remained for many years.

We were shown some of Kipp's

remarkable bird's-eye views of what had existed, or perhaps, might have been going to exist and these and other relics have allowed bodies such as the National Trust to attempt recreations.

Soon after Mrs Crawley and her doctor husband moved into his parents' house at Hunworth they discovered an 18th century survey that showed that it had once had a formal garden and bravely set about creating their own version. Their canals and raised pavilion were influenced by the ones at Westbury Court in Gloucestershire or perhaps nearer home by the garden at Aylsham Old Hall. Their topiary balls, cones and screens are several years and feet in advance of the recreated Privy Garden at Hampton Court and the audience was impressed and amazed at what they embarked on and what they have achieved.

FH

Historic EAFA Films now out on DVD

The East Anglian Film Archive have released a range of local interest DVDs to help more people access the region's history through film. The archive preserves television, video and film footage from all over the East of England, originally shot by both amateurs and professionals.

The DVDs use archive film from the region, capturing the lives of people, their work and their surroundings from as early as the 1900s. They have also re-released several of the popular Anglia TV 'Bygones' series.

As a special offer to members of Norfolk's local history groups, Independent Studios UK and the East Anglian Film Archive would like to offer you a 10% discount off the purchase of any DVD from the range.

To view the full range and to order, visit us online at www.archivefilmshop.co.uk. To claim your discount, type HISTSOC into the discount code box. You can also order by phone

on 01603 251744 and claim your discount by mentioning that you are a member of the Blakeney Area Historical Society. Please note this discount is not valid in conjunction with any other offer.

On the other hand you could save postage by buying them for a tenner each from Holt Books.

"The Story of Illuminated Manuscripts" – BAHS Autumn Course

The course will cover book illustration and decoration from the beginning to the invention of printing, with greater emphasis on the period 500-1200. The weekly programme will be arranged as follows:

1. What types of books were there? What kinds of illustration were there?
2. How were books made? What sort of inks, pens and paints were used?
3. Who made these books and why?
4. The Author Portrait.
5. The Historiated Initial.
6. Bible Illustration, or people could vote for which of the various types of illustration they would like to study this session.

Just getting to see some of these original works could be an ongoing project, as they are held in country churches or city libraries, provincial museums or cathedral treasuries, here and abroad. You could, for instance, visit Ranworth Church in Norfolk, the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, Durham Cathedral treasury, the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin or the monastic library at St Gallen in Switzerland.

Precious and delicate books are not available to be handled by the general public, but facsimiles are accessible (but not usually on loan) at libraries such as the Norfolk Studies Centre in Norwich Millennium Library. The internet has some excellent sites (more information will be given in class). Better still is *Turning the Pages* at www.bl.uk/turningthepages

Autumn/Winter Programme 2008-9

Events

Annual Public Lecture

Saturday
August 16
A Changing Scene: Medieval Parks in Norfolk.
Dr Rob Liddiard (UEA)
Blakeney Village Hall at 8.00pm (Doors open 7.30pm)
Entrance: £3

All the following meetings are in the Harbour Room at the British Legion Hall in the High Street, Blakeney starting at 7.30 pm
Entrance: £2 for members and £3 for visitors, including refreshments.

Tuesday
Sept 30
700 years of Psalter Illumination
Margaret Forester
A short AGM will precede this meeting.

Tuesday
October 28
Norfolk's Wealth: Wool and Weaving. The history of weaving in Norfolk by the curator of the weaving museum on the outskirts of Worstead.
Brian Morgan

Tuesday
November 25
Reaching for Heaven. A look at towers and other features of churches by an active researcher in the field.
Dominic Summers (UEA)

Tuesday
December 16
Mardle Night: there will be a number of brief contributions on the theme of Reminiscences from WWII supported by exhibits and seasonal festivities.

Tuesday
January 29
Members' Night: four short contributions by members.
details to be announced

History Centre Diary

Open the first and last Tuesday morning (10am till noon) every month. Then closed after the first week of December and reopening February 3rd. Other times by arrangement.

Members' Sessions on Monday afternoons of October 6th, November 3rd and December 1st: 2pm till 4pm. Remember there is a £1.00 entrance fee to cover costs.

Local History Day: Saturday, August 23rd, 10.00am - 4.00pm at Blakeney Church. There will be exhibits on village, church and family history covering the villages of Cley, Wiveton and Blakeney; maps, photographs and results from the archaeological digs in Wiveton in 2006 and 2008. Tours in the church and churchyard plus if you are in need of sustenance teas and light lunches. Come to church for the day!

Autumn Course

Starting Wednesday morning, October 1st in Blakeney Church

The Story of Illuminated Manuscripts

Tutor: Margaret Forester

Enquiries to Frank Hawes: tel. 01263 740981

See page 3 for details of the course.

For more information: www.history-blakeney-area.org.uk