



BAHS Newsletter

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The Fairstead, Cley-next-the-Sea.

A couple of recent acquisitions by the Editor give some indication of what has, and for that matter what has not, changed in the last century or so. The upper view is of Cley High Street from Mackrell's Hill in c1961. Starr's shop is visible in the right distance while

Hopkins' butcher shop (was it their's by 1961? Can anyone enlighten me please?) is on the left with the Hovis sign prominent. The other view is of the Fairstead with what is now Holly Cottage on the left and the rear gate to Cley New Hall on the right, pre 1910.

Committee Stuff

The Annual General Meeting held on the 30th September 2008 determined the following: The Society's Annual Accounts for 2007/08 were approved and a copy is enclosed with this newsletter.

The proposed subscription increase for 2009/10 was agreed should the Management Committee find *'it is deemed necessary'* as this present year progresses. The subscription for 2009/10 will become due before the next AGM.

Minor revisions to the Constitution of the Society were agreed as distributed with the AGM documents.

Outstanding Subscriptions 2008/9: what will you miss! At the time of going to press some 40 or so subscriptions are outstanding for this year 2008/9; subscriptions were due on 1st July. These unpaid subscriptions represent some £400 plus of income, contributing directly to the activities of the Society and helping to maintain our low subscription level.

The management committee advise that members whose subscriptions remain unpaid on **31st January 2009** will cease to be a member of the Society and will not receive any further newsletters etc. We are sure that you will agree that the Society represents extremely good value and to enable this value to continue this deadline is necessary.

Please complete the enclosed subscription slip and return it with your subscription ASAP.

Peter Wordingham

News from the History Centre

Walks

The year began with A Walk on the Historical Side around Cley, a joint venture with the Friends of Cley Church. Expectations were high, the list of advance bookings was oversubscribed and yes, gate crashers even turned up on the day. There was sunshine all the way from Newgate Green to the marsh at Underhill and back again with many detours on the way. These detours were up and down alleyways, behind and between houses and old warehouses and into yards, some being seen by Cley residents for the first time! The workings and layout of the old sea town were explored as well as the characters that lived and worked in some of the buildings. A tour of the church concluded the walk and this was followed by afternoon tea.

Walks, led by the History

Centre, will continue this the summer with a tour of Old Blakeney. Details and date are yet to be finalized and places will be strictly limited. If you are interested in joining and wish to be kept informed, then let me know at the History Centre or on 01263 740388.

Open Day

In August we had our most ambitious open day to date. It was held in St Nicholas Church where every corner was occupied with an amazing array of exhibits. Tours, teas, tower open and a 'cinema' working all day added to the exhibition and made a great day out for visitors which numbered close on 500. An added bonus for the Centre was the array of surprise gifts from visitors. These included Parker family photographs and postcards as well as a List of Wells Vessels

compiled by Mrs Groom sometime in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The donations received on the day, together with those from 2007, have enabled the Centre to put together a series of maps, six inch to the mile, covering the lower Glaven Valley, the coastal strip to west and east as well as some of the inland parishes. These should be available for viewing when the Centre reopens in February.

Finally, as a result of all this interest in local history, the PCC has agreed to us having a permanent exhibition area in the north aisle. Just as soon as our custom built boards are ready, we will mount mini exhibitions on topical subjects and keep interest in the area going.

Publications

Over the years, the History Centre has prepared several useful and inexpensive leaflets for helping researchers



People everywhere! History Centre Open Day in St Nicholas Church. Every space within the nave and chancel was used for exhibits, while less crowded and quieter moments were found in the pews where there were over 50 folders covering a wide range of different topics. See full report under History Centre (above).

using the resources in the Centre. This year we have been even more ambitious and started on publishing a database of all the names and associated information recorded on the monumental inscriptions in the churchyard at Blakeney. This will be of enormous benefit to family historians as well as others interested in the wider village community.

The first part published, covers the 679 names recorded in the East Ground and also provides a location for all the gravestones/monumental inscriptions. Relationships, occupations, ships and place names are all recorded in addition to the dates. Copies may be purchased from the History Centre or at Kirby Hall.

The second part will cover all the burial ground to the west of the church. This is a much larger area and contains many more monumental inscriptions with names that have to be checked. Publication is consequently some time off.

Roots and Branches

Family History is very much an on-going activity at the Centre with locals and visitors from afar coming to look for elusive 'clues' that will shed light on their ancestors. More and more people are now back beyond the nineteenth century decennial censuses and delving into parish registers. This is a timely reminder that copies of all local parish registers and many more besides are available in the Centre, no need to travel any great distance to get answers.

So with Christmas and the New Year upon us as I write, here is what the Blakeney registers recorded in the seventeen hundreds:

Baptism of **Sarah Hearn, John Lake, Matthias Yaxley, William Rayner, Anne Loads, John Hearn and John Browne** on Christmas Day 1712, 1747, 1759, 1768, 1773, 1777 and 1778 respectively and on New Year's Day, **Elizabeth Rumbold, Thomas Fox, Christmas Susannah Beavis and Risborrow**

Nobbs, 1702, 1730, 1769 and 1775 respectively.

There was only one marriage recorded for either of these festive days and that was for **Samuel Buck and Margaret Brettingham** on January 1st 1784. Meanwhile **John Crofts snr** was buried Christmas Day 1710 whilst **Robt Pull snr** and **Joshua Lake** were buried January 1st, 1723 and 1783 respectively.

Family research by visitors over the past few months has included both descendants and house historians looking at: **Mountain/Holmes** of Cley and Wiveton, **Ottway/Loads** of Blakeney, **Shorting, Thompson, Johnson** and **Smith** of Blakeney and **Riseborough/Spooner** of Morston and Blakeney.

Why not have a go? Come to any of our Tuesday morning openings or try a visit on the afternoon of the first Monday of the month when volunteers will have more time to guide you through the records.

Pam Peake

Norfolk's Wealth: Wool and Weaving

Brian Morgan; 28 October

We all learned at school how the troubadour, Blondel de Nesle, located his friend, Richard Coeur de Lion, held prisoner in the castle of Durrenstein by singing the song they had composed together while crusading in Palestine but from Brian Morgan we learned that it was Norfolk wool and cloth that paid his not inconsiderable ransom. Richard showed his gratitude by spending a few months in England before going off to continue his feuds and get himself killed in France.

This was just one bit of English history which Mr Morgan linked into his talk on wool. Wool taxes paid for the early stages of the hundred years war and as prices rose gave rise to the first enclosures.

In the fourteenth century Norwich was known for its heavy

cloths while lighter materials were produced at Aylsham, North Walsham and of course Worsted. The wealth from this trade built and endowed many of the churches and religious houses in Norfolk but this was not just a medieval phenomenon; the heyday of Norfolk stuffs he told us was in the 1700s and only declined when power spinning developed in Yorkshire where water power was available.

Mr Morgan's talk didn't deal only with these macro events. He spoke also of selective breeding to improve fleeces with longer, finer fibres; of techniques of cleaning, combing, carding and spinning; of how some wool felts to produce heavy cloth while the threads in Worsted remain separate. He spoke of the techniques of weaving and the design of looms and of the interchange of material and expertise with the Low Countries from about 1100 onwards that led to the interchange of people.

We were told too of the various types of cloths – too many for me to note all the names – of how the 1678 Woollen Shroud Act allowed people to be buried in Worsted but not in cloth from North Walsham where linen threads were incorporated. The sale of woollen cloths was so important that a later act required people to wear wool for six months of every year.

Mr Morgan told us how other areas learned from Norfolk; how Witney copied Norwich blankets and how paisley pattern originated here.

At no time did Mr Morgan specially advertise his museum of wool and weaving at Worsted but I shall certainly take an early opportunity of going to learn more of this history centred in Norfolk.

Frank Hawes

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BAHS and Contributors

Spring/Summer Programme 2009

Events

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 **Members' Night: four short contributions by members.**

January 27

David Perryman I don't believe it – or do I?

John Peake A view of Blakeney in the early 19th century

Gerald Cubitt Saving the lives of Shipwrecked Mariners along the North Norfolk Coast

Tuesday **Norfolk Archaeology from the Air – new perspectives:**

February 24

from the leading exponent of the use of aerial photography in archaeology in Norfolk

Derek Edwards

Tuesday **Portraits in Tudor Norfolk:** explore some of the

March 31

influential families during the Tudor period through their surviving portraits

David Yaxley

Tuesday **King Henry's Band:** this will be both informative and

April 28

entertaining covering a wide variety of early instruments and music from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance.

Robert FitzGerald

Note: there will be no Summer Lecture this year.

Tuesday **Details will be announced in the next Newsletter**

Sept 29

A short AGM will precede this meeting

History Centre Diary

Reopening Tuesday, February 3rd: 10am till noon, then the first and last Tuesday morning in every month. Other times by arrangement.

Members' Sessions on Monday afternoons, February 2nd, March 2nd and April 6th: 2pm till 4pm. Remember there is a £1.00 entrance fee to cover essential heating.

A Walk through Old Blakeney: walks organised by the History Centre will continue this summer with a tour of Old Blakeney. Details and date are yet to be finalised and places will be strictly limited. If you are interested in joining and wish to be kept informed then enquire at the History Centre or by phone on 01263 740388.

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

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