

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

As President of the Society I wish as always and first of all to congratulate and thank all involved with the Museum as they ensure that Lowestoft's heritage is well maintained in Broad House. The commitment given by all, working with the Trustees and the Management Committee, continues year in year out and is very much appreciated indeed. Many of you know that what I say in my Annual Report follows a very similar pattern each year and I make no apology for repeating that. What I do say is expressed with every sincerity.

We have seen during 2015 how the members of the Museum Management Committee have worked so well together. It is on these we rely for the very professional operation of the Museum. I have been extremely pleased and impressed as to how each member of the Committee has taken on very willingly the various responsibilities to ensure that we would be ready for the 2015 Season and once again we will be likewise ready for the 2016 Easter Opening. This team approach has again showed the excellence of the museum service we provide for our many visitors and most importantly for our own community. Also our thanks go to our faithful volunteers who work during the Winter preparing for the Season and the volunteers acting as Stewards who have as always manned the Museum on each opening day.

I hope that all, including the members of the Society, will agree with me that our highlight for the 2015 Season was the Anniversary activities held on the 1st August, being 30 years since the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh visited Lowestoft, and particularly Her Majesty's opening of Broad House. In planning for the event the Trustees were mindful of how successful the Bloodmoor Exhibition had been as a tourist attraction for visitors and residents, particularly for children from our schools in Lowestoft but also from the surrounding areas. In view of this popular interest by children and young people the Trustees successfully reflected that in the Anniversary event, ensuring that the Broad House Museum was a truly family friendly museum. The media covering of this day was excellent and our appreciation has been very much expressed to our local paper the Lowestoft Journal staff, who originated the press article material, and the Eastern Daily Press.

It is appropriate to mention in relation to the 30th Anniversary that following our invitation to Lord Somerleyton to be our Patron he was very pleased to accept. Of course his father the former Lord Somerleyton had been Patron from the establishment of the Museum in 1972 until a few years before he died. Also, we have been delighted to have 4 new Trustees, namely Andree Back, Ron Ashman, Ivan Bunn, John Stannard and Terry Tarbox.

The other significant matter that I want to mention in this year's Report to the Society is that you will recall that we received Accreditation for the Museum in 2012 and since October we have been carrying out a full Review of the Forward Plan ready for submission in February. As already mentioned the Museum is wholly dependent on unpaid volunteers, all being dedicated to providing a Museum to the highest of standards. Many of the volunteers serve on the Museum Management Committee which has overseen and coordinated the review of the Forward Plan. Equally my fellow Trustees and I, all of whom are well connected to the wider community, have been able to use those contacts and knowledge to inform the Forward Plan through discussion and debate at all appropriate stages of the Review process. This is another major task which has shown how well the team approach has worked with the Trustees Management Committee and Volunteers.

It is essential that all of us, as far as we are able continue to play a positive role in ensuring the continuation of our Museum and this is particularly important as we share the various responsibilities for the 2016 Season. It is acknowledged that the work I have mentioned above from the various volunteers plays a most significant part in ensuring the viability of the Museum. Running alongside this, so to speak, we are very fortunate too to have a very vibrant and active Society under the Chairmanship of Marilyn Duerden and so to Marilyn and all of you members of the Society I express my sincere thanks for the excellence of the Society.

In conclusion, may I as always express my thanks to all involved, directly or indirectly, with the Society and the Museum. The pleasure the Museum brings to all our visitors and our own community makes the work and support of all involved worthwhile.

Malcolm Berridge,
President Lowestoft Archaeological and Local History Society.



Constructed of flint with red pantile roofs, these were typical of the houses of the Beach village, but the area was frequently subjected to floods. In 1925, abnormal high tides caused widespread flooding and wrecked sea defences. There was a record high tide of 24 feet and the entire beach village was under nearly three feet of water, with thousands of herring barrels floating in the streets and over 250 homes flooded. After more floods in 1953 the beach village was finally demolished.

CONTENTS

Presidents message	1
Chairman's report	4
Membership of the Society	5
Statement of Accounts for the Society	6
Museum Report	8
Statement of Accounts for the Museum	9
Reports of meetings for 2015	11
Lowestoft Scene (compiled by Jenny Hatton)	30
80 High Street and the Wildes (David Butcher)	39
Anglo-Saxon settlements (Keith Davies)	54
Bronze-Age pottery from Covehithe (Paul Durbidge)	65
Housing Development in Compass Street (Paul Durbidge)	67
Some abraded tiles on Pakefield beach (Paul Durbidge)	67

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The first talk of 2015 was an interesting look at Lowestoft's lost churches and chapels, presented by Terry Weatherly, who is continuing his series on the religious buildings of our area.

On January 22nd, three members of the Society attended a field walking exploration at Covehithe, organized by Cambridge Archaeology as part of "Touching the Tide", a three year project to investigate aspects of interest along the Suffolk coast. Since then, there have been two days, one training at Dunwich and one field walking at Aldeburgh which it is hoped will enable our Society to undertake similar explorations locally.

The annual winter meal was again held at Lowestoft College on February 10th and was enjoyed by all the members who attended.

At the Suffolk Local History Council's "Societies Day" on March 7th, held as usual at Elmswell near Bury St. Edmunds, L.A.& L.H.S. mounted displays featuring the results from Covehithe of pottery from Roman to Victorian times and a slide show of the excavations at Bloodmoor Hill which took place between 1998 and 2001. Artefacts from this dig have been loaned by Suffolk Archaeology for the new display at the Broad House Museum in Nicholas Everitt Park.

There were no changes to the Society officers at the AGM in May, with the exception of the retirement of John Knowles from the committee. John has served for several years and I thank him for his valuable contribution during that time.

Our annual church visit this year took place on June 23rd to St. Nicholas, now a Minster, in Great Yarmouth. Members were guided through the churchyard and minster by Paul Davies who was keen to point out the iconography of the outstanding stained glass windows. Afterwards, a meal was enjoyed at the Foxborrow Inn at Gunton. Thanks are due to Jenny Hatton for arranging both the visit and the meal.

Following the resumption of our talks in September, an extra outing was organized to Southwold Museum, on October 6th. The curator, Jan Holloway, kindly conducted a private morning visit which was much appreciated by the 13 members who went.

On Sunday November 22nd, a large group of members and friends spent a delightful afternoon at Desmond's Coffee Shop in London Road South. This event, which included a buffet tea, was hosted by Richard Mundy, who gave an illustrated talk on the Bridges of London. He is to be congratulated on this new and successful venture and members look forward to his next project.

During the year, we lost one of our lifetime members, Jon Reed, who died in April. An obituary, written by Ron Ashman, provided a memorable account of his work for the Society and the Museum.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all the committee members for their valuable support during my first year of office.

Marilyn Duerden

Membership 2015 - 2016

Honorary Life member: Mr P Durbidge

Members:

Mrs I Ashman	Mr R Debenham	Miss P James	Ms F Sachs
Mr R Ashman	Mrs M Duerden	Mrs J Kirby	Mrs P Smith
Mrs J Berry	Mr R Duerden	Mr J Knowles	Mr J Stone
Mr M Berridge	Mrs J Durbidge	Mrs M Knowles	Mrs I Thompson
Mrs J Brown	Mr D Friston	Mr S Lovewell	Mr P Thompson
Mr D Chivers	Mrs E Gale	Mr R Mundy	Mrs H Townsend
Mr R Collins	Mr I Hart	Mrs J Nice	Mr R Young
Mr B Cook	Mrs J Hatton	Mrs I O'Toole	Mr M White
Mr K Davies	Mr K Humphrey	Mrs P Peters	Miss K Wilton
Ms S Day	Mr G Hunt	Ms J Royce	

Obituary: Jon Reed

Jonathan (Jon) Reed was born in London on 30 June 1931 and died in James Paget Hospital on 10 April 2015. He qualified as a Chartered Mechanical Engineer and worked for Pye Electric, later TASC Drives, on the design of electric motors and their control systems.

As a member of the Society's Committee from 1980 he served in various roles including Editor of the Newsletter. He also arranged fieldwalking and many summer outings, including some by coach to places such as Colchester, Woodbridge, Sutton Hoo and Norwich. In 1995 he became Honorary Curator at the Lowestoft Museum, a position he held until he retired in 2002.

A nice man, Jon was well thought of and respected by Society members and the Museum team. He did much for the Lowestoft Archaeological and Local History Society and for the Lowestoft Museum in his various roles. In recognition of this work he was made a life member.

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS OF THE SOCIETY 2014 -2015

INCOME

<u>2013/2014</u>		<u>2014/2015</u>
637.50	Membership Fees	713.00
86.00	Visitors	125.50
30.00	Annual Reports	32.00
10.00	Gifts and Donations	110.00
67.22	Fund Raising	7.00
4.00	Sundry	28.00
na	Great Hospital visit	80.00
0.98	Deposit Account Interest	0.96
405.00	Xmas Social College Meal Feb.14	na
na	Xmas Social College Meal Feb.15	379.50
1240.70		1475.96
	Cash and Bank Balances at 1/4/14	
	Cash in hand 106.71	
	Current Account 486.04	
	Deposit Account 1726.90	
	2319.65	2319.65
		3795.61

EXPENDITURE

<u>2013/2014</u>		<u>2014/2015</u>
370.00	Lecturers Fees	155.00
45.00	Charitable Donations	242.00
336.00	Room Hire	336.00
69.45	Postage, Printing and Stationery	15.81
17.10	Annual Report costs	33.35
25.00	Suffolk Local History Council	25.00
4.00	Miscellaneous	5.00
na	Great Hospital visit	75.00
405.00	Xmas Social. . . . College Meal Feb.14	na
na	Xmas Social. . . . College Meal Feb.15	379.50
1271.55		1266.66
	Cash and Bank Balances at 31/3/15	
	Cash in hand 75.05	
	Current Account 726.04	
	Deposit Account 1727.86	
	2528.95	2528.95
		3795.61

The assets of the Society, as written down for the current year, are as follows :

Laptop £307, Digital Projector £20.

R.A.COLLINS, HON. TREASURER.

AUDITOR'S REPORT

I have reviewed the financial statements of the Lowestoft Archaeological and Local History Society for the year ended 31 March 2015 and agreed the entries to the supporting documentation.

The financial statements have been reviewed solely for the confidential use of the Lowestoft Archaeological and Local History Society and may not be relied upon for any other purposes whatsoever.

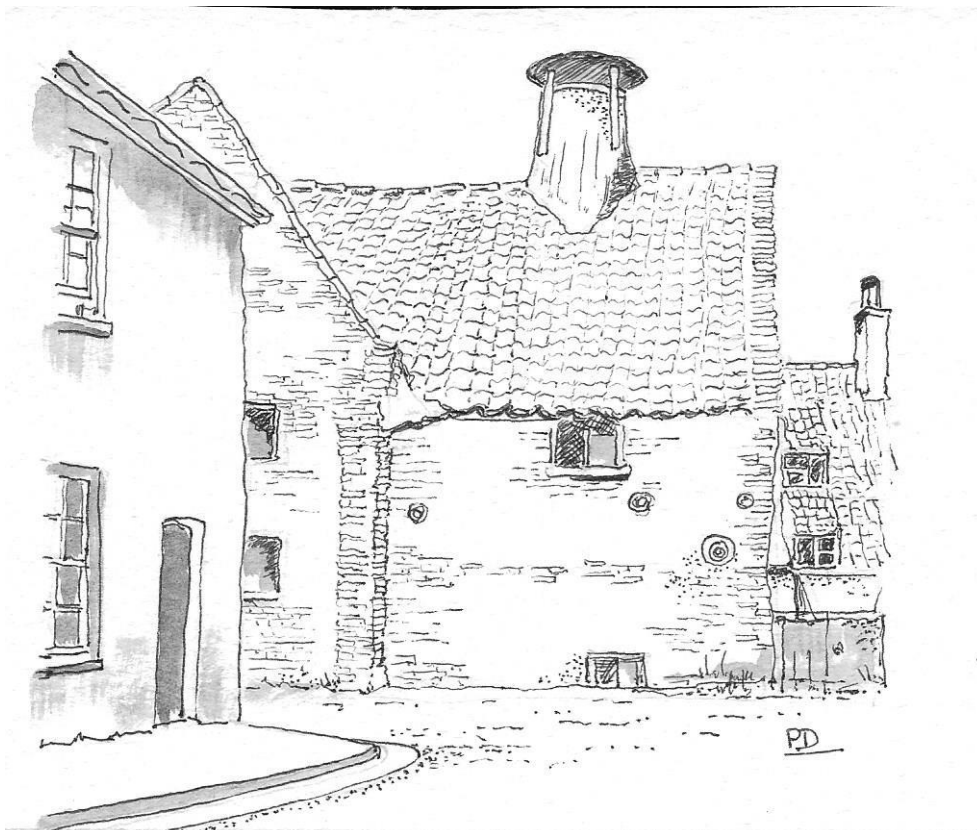
I neither owe nor accept any duty to any other party and shall not be liable for any loss, damage or expense of whatsoever nature which is caused by their reliance on these figures.

Marie Ayers

F.C.C.A

Date

Signed by the Chairman at the Annual General Meeting, 28th May 2015.



MUSEUM REPORT

The 2015 season promised to be interesting and exciting with the arrival on July 1st of the Anglo-Saxon “Warrior” figure from British Museum, re-united with other artefacts from the Bloodmoor Hill excavations, and an Open Day on August 1st exactly 30 years after the Museum in Broad House was opened by the Queen.

During the closed season, volunteers continued to learn new skills such as how to make attractive labels (with continuing help from the HLF grant and SHARE), to complete the accessions data base, and to develop more family and school friendly activities. At Carlton Colville, a round house was built with advice and assistance from two involved in the education side. One volunteer installed a new CCTV system and another a digital display of photographs recording Lowestoft’s past.

The weather was perfect for the Open Day and it not only drew many visitors to Nicholas Everitt Park but allowed the activities provided outside the Museum, two Anglo-Saxon re-enactors from Colchester (demonstrating weaving and simple archaeology), a fire appliance, St. John paramedics marking their 100 years in Lowestoft, to be appreciated fully. As part of their centenary celebrations, St. John Ambulance displayed their history in a case upstairs which had previously been the “Old Office”.

Inside, a life-size photograph of the Queen greeted visitors and later the Waveney MP ceremonially cut a 30th birthday cake, decorated with a picture of Broad House. The event was well covered in the Lowestoft Journal and the EDP.

During October, just before closing for the winter, a major project to paint all the outside woodwork got under way, and was not finished when the Museum closed on November 1st, the last day of the half term holiday. Suffolk Archaeology came to refurbish the Bloodmoor cases and decided to leave many of the items for a third year. The “Warrior” figure went back to BM but in its place is an exact copy in aluminium made by another skilled volunteer.

More recently, the Museum has had broadband installed which will enable direct connections to e-mails and all the other digital services which are so important now, especially to the MMC team who are working hard on the renewal of accreditation, due in 2016, and the forward plans to make the Museum even more successful. Water in the cellar, which has plagued the Museum for years is about to be tackled. Watch this space.

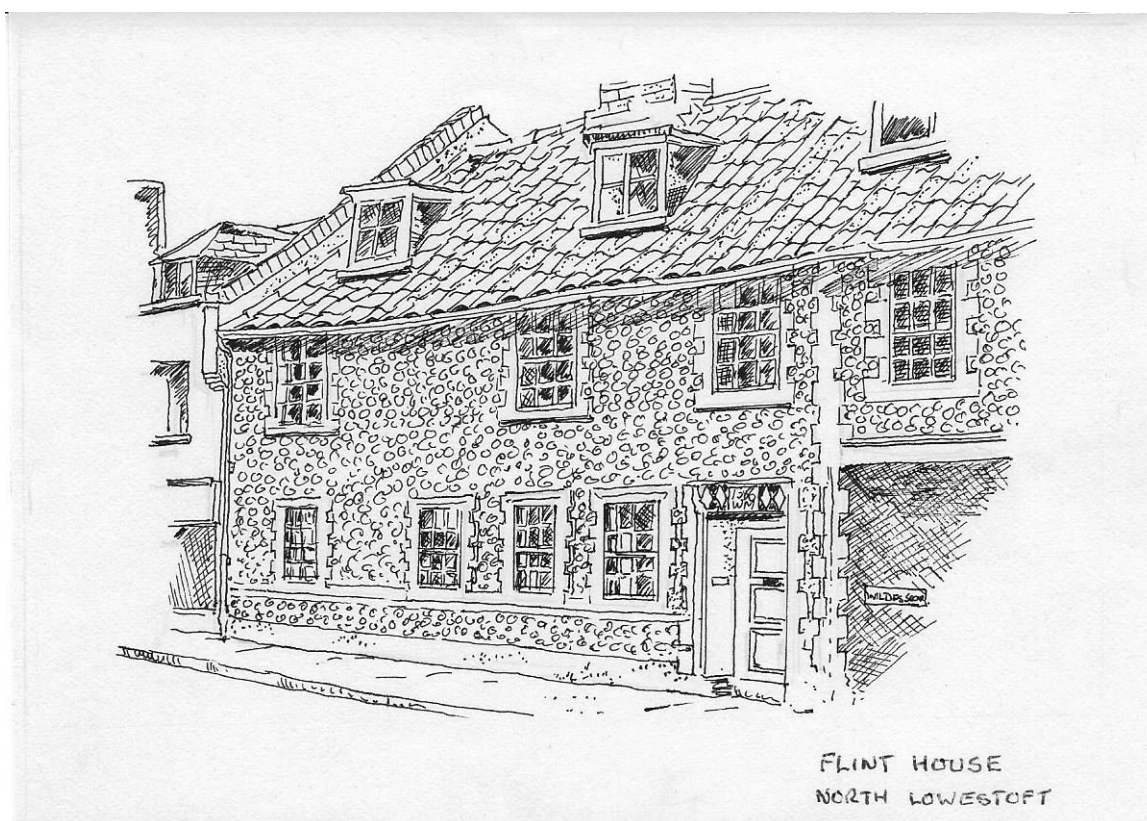
In spite of all this valuable activity, visitor numbers have not increased as hoped but were just 8 fewer than in 2014 at 8,438. Of these 1,942 were children (roughly 23%), counted accurately for the first time for benchmarking purposes. It is noticeable how much the weather can affect visitors to the park especially on weekends and holidays. Even so, donations rose by 11% and shop sales by 10% which will help to keep the Museum running and improving in the future and is a tremendous tribute to the work of the volunteers who spend so many hours to ensure its success.

MUSEUM ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR 2014-2015

	2015	2014
Income		
Donations and fundraising	2,627.25	2,588.45
Interest from National Savings	129.64	251.84
Shop and book sales	<u>2,146.90</u>	<u>2,037.16</u>
	4,903.79	4,877.45
Expenses		
WDC - share of donations	1,240.46	1,249.23
Display and maintenance	188.16	779.65
Subscriptions	155.80	148.30
CCTV	489.99	-
Insurance	959.00	959.46
Sundries	285.92	60.50
Printing, stationery and postage	36.72	99.75
Shop purchases	<u>923.73</u>	<u>813.83</u>
	<u>4,279.78</u>	<u>4,110.72</u>
Surplus of income over expenditure	<u>624.01</u>	<u>766.73</u>
BALANCE SHEET		
Current Assets		
Cash in hand	119.95	51.24
Bank current account	6,842.75	13,188.94
Business reserve account	9.51	9.51
National Savings account	<u>19,871.45</u>	<u>15,941.81</u>
	26,843.66	29,191.50
Current Liabilities		
Grant money not spent	3,112.92	6,754.00
Creditors	<u>764.96</u>	<u>95.73</u>
Net Current Liabilities	<u>22,965.78</u>	<u>22,341.77</u>

Funded by

	Balance at 1 April 2014	22,341.77	21,575.04
	Surplus of income over expenditure	624.01	766.73
Total funds		<u>22,965.78</u>	<u>22,341.77</u>



REPORTS OF MEETINGS

22 January 2015 – “Lowestoft’s Lost Churches and Chapels” by Terry Weatherley

Terry began his talk by saying that in the Lowestoft Journal a couple of weeks ago there had been an announcement that the Methodist Hall in Barnby was to close its doors, a sad end to over a century of Methodist worship in the village. Originally the hall had a Chapel next door but the latter was demolished some years ago and houses built on the site. At one time such halls were not uncommon.

As a starting point in his research for this talk, Terry had found a survey of Non-Conformist Chapels in the 1977 LA&LHS Annual Report carried out by Mrs Jean Julings useful. Another source of information was the census carried out on Sunday 30 March 1851 to find out the provision of religious worship.

On researching Lowestoft, Terry started with St Peters Church, which was consecrated in 1832 and located on the corner of St Peters Street and Alexandra Road. The church was built as a Chapel of Ease to St Margaret’s and replaced an earlier chapel that became part of a former town hall. It was an impressive building without a tower and, although apparently in excellent condition, was declared redundant in 1974 as the housing all around was being demolished to make way for the inner ring road complex. St Peter’s Church was not in the way of the new road but at that time was not considered important enough to be saved. People are sometimes confused by a nearby church-like structure in Alexandra Road – this is St Margaret’s Institute, a parish mission dating from the late 19th century.

Next Terry talked about St John’s church, which stood on the corner of London Road South and Belvedere Road, built in 1853 with the spire being added in the 1860’s. One of the former parishioners had been the composer Benjamin Britten, whose mother had been the organist there. The church was used for civic services, and in 1914 Suffragettes interrupted the proceedings. This made the News worldwide, for *The Bendigo Advertiser* (in South Australia) on Tuesday 14 April 1914 wrote:

Church Service interrupted by Suffragettes. There were continuous suffragette interruptions in St John’s Church, Lowestoft, yesterday. Twenty suffragettes were ejected.

The demolition of the church was well recorded and the weathercock can now be seen on display in the Lowestoft Museum. Levington House, containing sheltered flats, stands on the site today.

Probably the most unusual church was St Matthew’s that stood in Clifton Road until 2007. This was a Mission church to St Peter’s, Kirkley, built in 1899. Later it was known as Colville Hall. (Clifton Road was previously known as Colville Road). In 2012 the Society took charge of a red leather-bound book that had been presented to the Rev Hedges on his departure from St Matthews Church, Kirkley, in 1906. The book was in recognition for his seven years of faithful service to the local community. In wonderful calligraphy, it lists the names of all those who contributed to his leaving collection of £100 (or Purse of Gold as it is referred to in the book), a considerable sum in 1906.

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodists, visited Lowestoft 14 times. The first meeting place being a room near the The Old Blue Anchor pub; then in 1776 Wesley came and opened the new Meeting House. This building, in the High Street, was itself demolished and Wesley House constructed in its place. There were several different branches of Methodism, which included Wesleyan, Wesleyan reformed, Free, and Primitive. The Primitives were also known as Ranters. Some built their chapels in brick, but others used corrugated iron, and the latter were popularly known as ‘tin tabernacles’. In Lowestoft brick seemed the most popular. A Methodist Chapel in St Peters Street, built in 1876, had been used by the Elim Pentecostal since 1961, but is now closed. Oulton Methodist chapel has been converted into a home. Kendal Road Methodist chapel was sold to the Congregational Church as a Sunday-School room, but for many years now has been used by the Scouts.

The Flensburg Street Methodist Chapel was used by Chadd’s as a carpet store and is now replaced by houses. An imposing chapel once stood on the corner of Lorne Park Road and Lawson Road. That closed in 1963 with the congregation moving to the then new South Lowestoft Methodist Church in which we hold our Society meetings.

Shops now occupy the site of the Free Methodist Church that stood in London Road North. Opposite the library is a Reformed Wesleyan Methodist Chapel building (on the corner of Raglan Street and Stanley Street).

The Congregationalists first met in Lowestoft in 1655 in a barn in Blue Anchor lane; in 1695 they used a chapel in the High Street next to Devereux stores. In 1852 they moved to a new church and the Methodists used the old chapel until it was demolished.

The Baptists had an old Meeting House in the High Street on what is now the site of a filling station. The inside of which was recorded as having a pulpit at one end of the building, and at the other end a gallery for the choir. They did not have an organ but a scale box. From here they moved to London Road North, where in 1852 they built the Arcade Chapel on the site now occupied by Beales Department store. Having outgrown the Arcade Chapel in 1899 they moved to a splendid church further down London Road North towards the bridge. In the 1970's the site was sold to Boots Chemists and a new church built on the corner of London Road South and Kirkley Park Road. In Richmond Road today stands a house that was once a Particular Baptist chapel. Having been built in 1878 it later became a store, and was eventually converted to a house.

It was in a net loft off Clapham Road that the early Catholics first met. The present Our Lady Star of the Sea Church was built in 1902. A building in Blackheath Road was used more recently as a Catholic church.

In 1903 the South Cliff Congregationalist Church was built in Kirkley, on the corner of Pakefield Road and Morton Road. In 1961 the Congregationalists became part of the United Reformed Church. When they closed the building in Kirkley it was unused for a period until being re-opened as the St Nicholas Catholic Church.

Arnold Street once had a church that was the home of the New Jerusalem Church of the Swedenborgians. It had been the writings of the Swedish scientist and theologian Emanuel Baron Swedenborg that had influenced five ex-Wesleyan ministers to found this church.

The Seventh Day Adventists once had a chapel in Regent Road, now Tesco's car park. Also, their chapel in St John's Road was sold and became Jeckells the Sailmakers shop.

Many Missions have been lost which include the Railway Mission in Denmark Road, the Mission Hall in Crown Street and the Missions to Seamen in Commercial Road.

The Fishermens Bethel is now the Lowestoft Players' theatre.

The Brethren bought a number of smaller chapel buildings and at one time used Colville Hall (previously St Matthews).

Terry finished by saying all is not doom and gloom, as in recent years Trinity Methodist and London Road Baptist churches have been built and the Brethren have been building in Long Road, Fairfield Road, and in a field at Gisleham.

Fence Wire Telephones – by Ron Ashman

Today, we take telephones for granted. In this modern world we have a number of choices, for not only do we have landlines, GSM mobile phones and for the News media, military, and ardent travellers, we have satellite telephones.

However, things were very different in the past.

The first telephone patent was taken out by Alexander Graham Bell in 1876, although the credit for its invention is frequently disputed as a number of people were experimenting at the time with devices by which people could talk directly across long distances.

When the American telephone network was being installed it was mainly in urban areas, the rural areas were left until later. Infrastructure is the main cost of any utility, and early phone company investors saw no profits in stringing hundreds of miles of expensive wire and poles to connect sparsely populated areas of the American West.

In the early 1900's someone living in the American rural west came up with an enterprising scheme. What the rural west had was miles of wire fencing, some of which was barbed wire. It was discovered that by connecting telephones to the fencing wire that the top strand was suitable for use in a line of communication, and was reportedly as clear as the standard telephone service. This meant that bespoke telephone lines did not have to be installed and, best of all, the user did not receive any telephone bills.

There was one disadvantage however, in that the wire needed to be isolated (insulated) from the post, especially when it rained. When it was wet, the wire nailed to the top of the post grounded (earthed) the whole line, which was then unusable until the post dried out. One type of insulator was obtained from the local Saloons that provided empty beer, whisky or wine bottles. The bottlenecks were broken off and wooden pegs fitted inside. A hole was drilled right through the peg and it was then fixed to the post with a long nail. The wire would then be wrapped around the bottleneck, glass being one of the best materials for an electrical insulator. Where bottles were not available they resorted to the use of leather, rubber from tyres, and corncobs.

As the early system did not have a switchboard, every telephone along the line would ring at the same time. Therefore, each house would have its own distinctive ring, i.e one ring, two rings, one short and one long ring (a bit like customised ringtones of today). However, everyone connected to the line could listen in on any conversation, although it was considered to be impolite to do this. But for those in isolated areas when they felt lonely it was easy to listen in on other peoples' conversations. It should be remembered that at that time many did not have a daily newspaper, there was no radio or television, and to listen in on others talking was probably the highlight of the day. Having said that, sometimes many people could be on the line at the same time for an arranged group discussion.

One wily old farmer had a solution to ensure a private call. At the start he would announce, for example, that he was about to explain in detail how to castrate a horse and anyone not wishing to listen should put down the receiver. This would be followed by a series of hang up clicks that made his conversation virtually private. To illustrate how fast the gossip spread, another farmer once said his neighbours knew his wife was pregnant before she did. Later, as the network expanded, switchboards were to be introduced into the telephone system.

As this network was completely independent and could not connect to the standard telephone system, if someone needed to call anyone in town they would have to find a farm or ranch that was connected to both systems and get them to relay the message. Calls over a long distance sometimes required the user to call a farm, or ranch, part of the way down the line to relay the message to the end user.

In the 1920's the fence lines started to be replaced by formal telephone systems, although some barbed wire lines were still being operated in the 1970's. The USA was not the only country to use the barbed wire system it was also employed in the Australian outback. The longest line there stretched some 700 kilometres (about 440 miles). This network served many farms up to the 1960's when the lines were eventually replaced with a microwave radio relay system.

12 February 2015 – “Verdun 1916 – the death of an army” – by Richard Mann

To many members of the Society, Verdun will be familiar, but only as a famous name. After Richard Mann's detailed talk we are as well informed about it as any of the battles of WWI in which British forces were involved.

He started by stating that the German plan was “to kill as many French as they can”, one which had been in the mind of von Schlieffen as early as 1890 and formalised in 1905. This would involve a rapid 6-week demolition of France's forces while keeping her ally Russia, who was not expected to be well organised, in check on the Eastern Front, rapidly transporting troops by Germany's extensive railway network. The plan also depended on a rapid 5-pronged advance through Belgium hoping that Britain would not join the war. In 1914, the plan almost succeeded but was brought to a halt at the Battle of the Marne. Thereafter a “defensive” war commenced for which the Germans were well prepared as they had already developed a trench system with barbed wire fences, machine guns, pill boxes, gas shells, flame throwers and bomb-proof shelters. The French also had a plan for dealing with Germany, Plan XVII. This included a direct frontal attack in the difficult, hill country of Alsace-Lorraine, relying on the Russian alliance and Belgium's neutrality in the west. They relished “L'offensive a outrance” (attack to excess) and “*élan vital*” (energy and enthusiasm) rather than safety in defence, looking back to successes of the Grand Army of 1792, at a very different time and against a differently armed enemy.

Richard illustrated his talk with a series of detailed maps, the first of which showed the von Schlieffen Plan, with proposed attacks and the actual ones, and the subsequent Battle of the Marne. In addition, he was able to show in portraits the main soldiers on each side, who in a bewildering array of promotions, demotions, successes and failures, orchestrated the bloody slaughter; Joffre, Petain and Nivelle versus von Moltke, von Falkenhayn, Ludendorff and Hindenburg.

The town of Verdun lay at the point where an important east-west route between France and Germany (Paris to Metz), crossed the River Meuse, whose defence was crucial to the safety of NE France. The map of Verdun which Richard showed us, revealed that the defences consisted of a number of forts and casements on hill tops on both sides of the Meuse, incorporating similar ideas to those which created the Maginot Line before WWII and with similar results.

When the war started in August 1914, German guns such as "Big Berthas" and 16" howitzers managed to destroy the Belgian forts in 2 days. The French saw this as a reason not to reinforce the defences at Verdun but when the attack there, scheduled for the night of February 11/12th 1916 was held up by bad weather for 10 days, the French managed to send 2 divisions and improve the forts. However, the German barrage (from 1220 pieces of artillery, including 542 heavy guns), commencing at 4.00 am on February 21st was the heaviest in history and by the 25th the crucial fort at Douaumont had suffered the same fate as those in Belgium. Richard showed not only maps of the fort but also aerial photographs before and after the bombardment and photographs of the damage. The Germans built railway lines on which to transport heavy weapons including naval guns and having captured Douaumont, proceeded to shell other forts around Verdun. 80,000 shells landed on the Bois de Coures. A photograph of 1919 showed the shell holes and some recovery of the trees. Owing to the shape of the Verdun salient, the Germans could not advance on Verdun without first taking other forts on the crescent shaped front line.

In the west, Bois de Bourrus, Cote 304 and Le Mort Homme were also subjected to terrible bombardments but reinforced French artillery on the Meuse's left bank prevented the German troops from taking advantage of their destruction. By the end of March 89,000 French and 81,000 German troops were lost and another stalemate was reached.

Richard then showed more personal photographs of life in the forts before, during and after the battle and a rather comic set of incidents relating to exactly which German soldier had entered Douaumont first. Eventually it was an officer, Captain von Brandis who was given the credit rather than a Lieutenant Kruze or a lowly Sergeant Radhe. When a new attack began at the beginning of May the momentum was lost when an explosion inside Douaumont killed 697 and wounded 1800 Germans. So great was this destruction both to men and the fort that the Germans sealed their bodies in an arched tunnel which became a war grave, visited annually by friend and foe alike. This setback enabled the French to hold on to their existing territory and by keeping open the east-west route through Verdun, known as "Le Voie Sacree", they were able to re-supply the forts successfully. One photograph showed a steady stream of traffic along the road, supplies of food and ammunition travelling towards Verdun and ambulances with the wounded, away from it. In addition, by maintaining a rotation of troops on a regular basis (259 out of 330 regiments fought there), the French were able to hold out against the Germans.

"Ils ne passeront pas", (Petain to Joffre) became the watchword.

Mort Homme was taken on May 29th and Fort Vaux, by then an absolute ruin, on June 7th but they in turn were re-captured by the French, the latter on November 2nd. It was to help relieve the summer German offensive that the British were asked to bring forward their plans for an attack in the west from August to July 1st in what became known as the Battle of the Somme with the same massive slaughter for little gain as experienced at Verdun. At the end of the longest battle of the war, there were 162,000 French dead or missing and 216,000 wounded; the Germans lost almost as many 142,000 killed or missing and 187,000 wounded. 22 million shells were fired, including some that contained phosgene. The town of Verdun itself had to be rebuilt but it was not captured and for the French this was a Pyrrhic victory and for the Germans a setback to their original plans.

Richard then followed the career of some of the main protagonists. Petain became leader of Vichy France in 1940 and was tried as a war criminal in 1945 and von Hindenberg was president of Germany from 1925 under whom Hitler was allowed to rise to absolute leader as Chancellor and Fuhrer.

26 February 2015 – “A Local Thatcher” – by Nick Walker

Nick started his talk by saying the role of the thatcher was traditionally passed down the male line of the family. However, in his case none of his family had ever been employed in this trade. He preferred to call it a trade rather than a craft. He chose this career as he liked working outside and considered it to be constructive hands-on work. As there are no training courses on the subject and it is not something that can be learned from a book, he approached the practising thatchers within a 60-mile radius. Eventually one took him on and after 7 years of learning the trade, he branched out on his own. His first job was on the buildings fronting the Boulevard alongside Oulton Broad. Thatch is considered to be probably the first form of roofing. It is found all over the world and involves the use of many different materials, such as straw, reed, heather, and in foreign countries, banana leaves.

These are all natural materials and would be readily available locally. In this area there is a lot of water reed but the use of this is rare outside East Anglia, with straw being used in many other counties. Heather is used in hilly and more remote places, like the Highlands. Homes were not the only structures to be thatched as corn and haystacks were also protected from the weather in this way. The use of thatched roofs declined in the mid to late 1800's as first canals then the railways made materials such as slate and tiles more readily available. Tiled roofs last longer than thatched ones. There is always the risk, and fear, of fire with thatched buildings, many of which have been linked to faulty electrical services, wood burners and poorly maintained chimneys.

Most of the reed used today comes from areas owned by Wildlife Trusts. This reed can be up to 8 feet in length, depending on the source. The key to keeping the roof watertight is that the pitch of the roof should be about 55 degrees. This ensures that the water cannot penetrate the reed and the water runs off the roof preventing it from becoming waterlogged. With a reed roof the ridge has to be completed with wheat straw, as reed breaks when bent. Some thatchers decorate their roofs with straw animals, a practice that Nick does not follow. A roof thatched with reed should last about 80 years although the ridge will usually have to be replaced before that time. A straw thatched roof should last about 50 years.

The material for straw thatching is not as readily available as it used to be, modern grain crops having a shorter stalk. The seed heads (ears) of these varieties are much larger and heavier and a long stalk would bend with the weight. As a result this necessitates the growing of 'old' varieties of wheat such as Squarehead Master which can grow up to 4 feet tall and makes it a good crop for a roof covering. As these crops are not commercially grown the thatcher either has to grow his own or find a farmer to grow the crop for him. To thatch a small cottage with 4-foot wheat straw would require 2 to 3 acres to be planted. Straw also requires more handling than reed. With reed it is cut, bundled, the ends trimmed and it is ready for use. With straw it has to be cut with a 'binder' (a combine harvester would damage the long stalks). Then it has to be stood to dry in 'shocks or stooks', the tent-like features that were a common sight in fields up to the late 1960's. Having stood thus for about 2 weeks, it has to be collected, stacked and later threshed in a 'drum' (threshing machine). When used for thatching the straw is laid out in a pile and 'wetted down' before being drawn out by the thatcher, or his assistant, into useable bundles.

Before re-thatching a roof, the old material is stripped down to the base coat; the latter could be up to 600 years old. If the bottom of this base coat is black, it could mean that the building dates back to before it had a chimney. Wire netting is normally fitted over the roof to prevent squirrels, rats and birds from getting into the thatch. Nick brought with him some of his tools, some broaches, also a bundle of reed and a bundle of wheat straw. The broaches were split hazel rods about 30 inches long and sharpened to a point at each end. In other counties these have different names, in Cambridgeshire they are known as a 'Spit'. Nick deftly twisted each rod in the middle to form a 'hairpin' shape that would be pushed into the thatch to hold it in place.

The tools included:

Leggett:	used to hammer on the butts of the reed, dressing it into position.
Dutchman:	smaller version of a Leggett.
Liggers:	horizontal rods of split hazel (4' to 5' long) used on the outside surface of ridges, held down by broaches, and in the case of long straw, on eaves and gables.
Sheepshears:	used for trimming thatch, (garden shears could be used as an alternative).
Mallet:	for fitting broaches (the mallet has a beech head and an ash handle).
Rake:	for removing unwanted material from the face of long straw, also used to compact the roof.
Pitch Fork:	used for moving the straw.
Knife:	general-purpose thatch cutting tool used mainly for cutting the eaves and gable on straw roofs, also used for cutting the string on bundles. Nick had found his one in the thatch of a building erected in the 1930's and thought the tool could have been left by a thatcher on his last job before retiring.
Billhooks:	used for cutting coppiced hazel.
Long Knife:	this knife has a long blade and a long handle and is used for trimming the thatch on the roof. Nick gave a demonstration, with his whetstone, on how to put a serrated edge on the blade, which is then used like a saw to cut the thatch.

Nick had acquired his tools from a variety of sources. He favoured old tools as he considered the steel in those to be of a higher quality than modern steel.

12 Mar 2015 "Barber's Point Excavations 2013" – by Jez Meredith

Jez gave a very comprehensive talk on the recent excavations at Barber's Point in the Alde estuary as well as referring to previous work there and a lot of background information about the archaeological setting. The most recent dig was undertaken as part of the three year "Touching the Tide" project (under whose auspices three members took part in field walking at Covehithe in January) that aims to involve members of the public in exploring their home area. Guided by 5 experts from Suffolk Archaeology, 20 volunteers from Aldeburgh and District LHS and up to 140 children from 7 local Primary Schools, plus some students on "work experience" were able to achieve a large amount in just 3 weeks. The inclusion of children at the dig was an encouraging effort to develop an interest in archaeology at an early age.

The talk was illustrated not only with maps, diagrams and photographs of work in progress but also oblique aerial photographs that brought out the relationships of the site to the surrounding coast and estuary. One of the most revealing was taken in December 2013 just 3 months after the dig when the tidal surge which flooded parts of Lowestoft, turned Barber's Point back into the island it had probably been when first settled. It is difficult to give a full impression of these valuable visual aids in this written account.

Two irregular shaped areas were excavated in the sandy soil, one of 240 sq. metres and the other 55 sq. metres. The main discoveries were of 18 graves (dating from c.550 to 900 AD) with the remains of about a dozen skeletons that were unusual for the frequency of young, mainly female, adults and children. It was thought that there might be another cemetery nearby with more male burials.

Also unusual was the large amount of Roman pottery found but only a little of Anglo-Saxon origin. Jez explained that it was likely that the Romans had used the site as a saltern, using ceramic briquetages, and he showed a reconstruction of one from Lincolnshire. He posited the idea that the broken Roman pottery had been collected and placed on the site to raise it higher above the waters of the Alde. Some of the Roman remains and especially the waste oyster shells had increased the pH value of the soil and helped to lessen the destruction of the grave contents. Another theory, which derives from the finds associated with the graves, is that it was a religious site linked to St. Botolph's Abbey across the water at Iken, and similar to Lindisfarne in its isolation. The character of the objects found in the graves also suggested a change from pagan to early Christian beliefs. The objects might have been interred when they were no longer appropriate in a Christian setting.

One grave that made headlines contained what was called a teenager's "keepsake" box. At first, one object looked like a damaged duck eggshell but after complete removal it turned out to be a cowrie shell probably from the Red Sea or Indian Ocean. The other objects in this assembly included a piece of Roman glass, a lump of amber and an Iron Age ring and a much-corroded key.

26 March 2015 "Pakefield Coastwatch, a Short History of Pakefield Lighthouse" **by Di & Phil Humphrey**

The Pakefield lighthouse has often been described as the forgotten lighthouse. The coast here has been subjected to erosion over the decades and much land has been lost near the lighthouse. In the mid 1600's a navigational aid was established at the end of Arbor Lane. This was a brazier, complete with a keeper's hut, which was not very effective, so it was moved to Kessingland. This must have been quite a task as the structure weighed 70 tons and had to be pulled along the turnpike by horses.

Sandbanks had always been a hazard to shipping and in the 1820's local vessel owners partitioned Parliament for the provision of a lighthouse at Pakefield to guide vessels through the narrow seaway.

The present lighthouse was constructed in 1831/2, having been funded by Trinity House, complete with keepers' cottages, in the grounds of Pakefield Hall. The cliff on which it stood being 34 feet above sea level and the circular tower 30 feet high. On top was a lantern containing two Argand lamps that exhibited a fixed light having an effective range of 9 nautical miles. The construction cost was £821.9s.4d and was opened in May 1832. A Mr Morse had owned the land originally, but when a sum of £200 was offered to him, as it had an access road to the lighthouse, he declined. Solicitors handled the dispute for a period of 15 years, first with Mr Morse, then with his heirs, before the problem was resolved and the £200 accepted. Sandbanks are continually shifting and the light became ineffective. So 32 years after it opened the lighthouse was closed. and for the next 50 years the buildings remained unoccupied.

The property was sold back to Pakefield Hall in 1929. The owner, Howard Barrett, opened a holiday camp on his land with accommodation in tents with a marquee serving as a dining room. In the 1930's, as the camp became more popular, the tents were replaced by wooden chalets. Many of the campers came from the industrial areas of the country, the Midlands and the North of England. Part of the lighthouse and the keepers' cottages were used as a bar for the campers. The cost of a week's holiday in 1935 was £2.2s.0d per week, including meals. One picture showed campers leaning on the tower handrail watching the activities below.

In April 1938, with the impending threat of war, the lighthouse was taken over by the Royal Observer Corps, who removed the roof and lantern to allow them better visibility of approaching aircraft. During World War 2 the camp was taken over by the military and gun emplacements and other defences were constructed along the cliff and beach. The keeper's cottages became the billet for the ATS girls stationed there. A gate in the beach defences provided the local fishermen with access to sea, but they had to return before it got dark as no lights were allowed. On 12 May 1943 the lighthouse was hit by machine gun fire during a German air raid on Lowestoft.

The area around the lighthouse has a ghost called Crazy Mary. Mary was married to a fisherman who put to sea from the beach at Pakefield. When he did not return from a fishing trip she continually went to the cliffs, looking out to sea for her husband, wringing her hands and bemoaning his fate. She is said to have refused to move out of the gully below the lighthouse, a place now called 'Crazy Mary's Hole'. Eventually she became deranged and walked into the sea.

During the war a solitary sentry on one occasion sensed some form of presence, but saw nothing, after which they patrolled in pairs. A paranormal group recently surveyed the lighthouse and found three 'hot spots' (a spot where there could be some ghostly presence).

After the war the property returned to being a holiday camp and a new roof was installed on the lighthouse. People came to the camp before the barbed wire and mines had been removed from the beach. In 1958, Pontins bought the camp. In the 1960's the ground floor area of the lighthouse was used as the camp photographer's darkroom and the keepers' cottages demolished, as they were in a bad state of repair.

In 1999 local volunteers having gained permission from Pontins, started to renovate the lighthouse and in 2000, having passed rigorous tests, it became part of National Coastwatch. The closure in 2013 of the Coastguard Station in Gt Yarmouth now means that Maritime Rescue & Co-ordination is controlled from Humber (East Yorkshire) in the north and Walton on the Naze (Essex) to the south. Local knowledge is important when dealing with incidents at sea and the Coastwatch provide this information. The National Coastwatch was founded in Cornwall in 1994. This followed the deaths of two local fishermen who drowned right below a recently closed Coastguard station. Following a campaign to re-establish a visual watch along the coast, the first Coastwatch station was established on the Lizard at Bass Point in November 1994.

The Pakefield team watch the beach and coastal waters from Lowestoft harbour to Benacre and monitor radio channels for distress calls and liaise as necessary with the Coastguards. The station is manned 365 days of the year. The Staff are all volunteers and income comes from fund raising events, there is no funding from the Government. Recently new windows were fitted, which were financed by Adnams Brewery and a local authority grant.

23 April 2015 – “Lost Villages of Norfolk” – by Richard Mundy

Before Richard started, he displayed an outline map of Norfolk with lost villages marked in red and existing places in black, and it was amazing to see how many lost ones there were. He commenced by asking “Why Norfolk?” The reply was that in the 11th century, it was the most densely populated county in England and that over 150 villages known then have subsequently disappeared or been noticeably changed. Before going on to explain the reasons that had been responsible for this, he asked “What is a lost village?” In Norfolk, it applies not only to settlements destroyed by coastal erosion but also to deserted, shrunken or shifted villages, for which Richard outlined the factors which were most influential. Richard's talk continued under nine headings as follows:

Climate change resulting in crop failure. The 13th century enjoyed stable and warm dry weather but colder and wetter conditions in the 14th century caused failed harvests in 1315 and 1316. Years of poor harvests and widespread food shortages, undermined the stability of many rural communities.

Disease and pestilence. During poor climatic conditions between 1319 and 1321 came cattle disease, then The Black Death in 1349, followed by further plague outbreaks in 1361-2, 1369, 1379-83 and 1389-93. Norfolk's already declining rural population was badly hit. Little Ringstead was one of the lost villages identified as having been directly affected (with 17 tax payers in 1332 but needing massive tax relief after 1349) and never recovered.

Farming practices. Partly as a result of falls in population and partly in response to the demand for wool, there was a change from the traditional three-field system, which required a lot of labour, to grazing sheep. Richard gave several examples of “flockmasters”. These were men who bought up land that had once been open arable fields and converted it into enclosed sheep pasture. Thomas Thursby (1450-1510) was one of the most well documented as he was mayor of King's Lynn several times, also Lord of the Manor of Gayton and an ancestor of Prince William through the Spencer family. Others were Henry Fermur in Thorpland, William Day in Alethorpe, Edmund Jermyn in Sturston, and William Fermur (son of Sir Henry) in Pudding Norton. The behaviour of these, and others like them, towards the landless peasants was often very poor and one of the main causes leading to Robert Kett's rebellion in 1549.

Embarking. The practice by the lord of the manor of building stately homes and enlarging landscape gardens on land that was once part of a village's field system, either after natural wastage or by ruthless acquisition (similar to Engrossment, below). Houghton is a good example of a village lost when Sir Robert Walpole built his Hall, and Wolterton suffered similarly when Horatio Walpole commissioned a Hall there.

Soil quality in Brecklands. With over 30 identified locations, the Brecklands was renowned for having the highest concentration of deserted villages in Norfolk. In prehistoric times, the light, workable soils encouraged a very high residency level. The early farmers practised a 'slash and burn' technique and the 'broken' plots of land became known as Brecks, which after a dry spell could be seriously affected by wind erosion. After a visit in 1677, John Evelyn recorded a local joke: "Which county is your farm in, Norfolk or Suffolk? Well, that depends on which way the wind's blowing". Sheep and rabbits contributed to the removal of vegetation leading to further erosion of the fragile soils.

Coastal erosion. The removal of the soft glacial deposits which make up the East Anglian coastline has been an on-going process due to isostatic recovery following the most recent glaciation, and when it affected settlements, was the one most likely to be highlighted in the news. Just offshore from Cromer was the village of Shipden, submerged in the 14th century. In 1888, a coastal passing tug struck the ruined tower of St. Peter's church. Further south along the coast was once the famous village of Eccles-on-Sea. Much of it was washed away in a violent storm of 1604, but the church tower remained on the beach to be gradually removed by subsequent storms and high tides, finally disappearing in 1895. Clare near Mundesley, Keswick near Bacton, Wimpwell near Happisburgh and Waxham Parva near Horsey are further examples on this stretch of coastline.

Engrossment. This was the gradual enlarging of the lord of the manor's lands from the 16th century onwards. Unlike embarking, the lord often purchased the land of his tenants, usually after they had died. Ultimately, this process would create an estate consisting of a sole manor house, a home farm and a church.

Military requisition. Some Norfolk villages were "lost" more recently. During WW2 the Stanford Military Training Area (known as STANTA) was established after a public meeting, in June 1942, when villagers from Lynford, Langford, West Tofts, Tottington, and Stanford were given one month to move out. Nearly 1,000 men, women and children were forcibly evacuated from the 17,500-acre site. The promised return after the war never took place. Some of the churches (only visitable by permission of the MoD), remain as reminders of the lost settlements. In September 2009, William Hancock, one of the evacuees, was interred next to members of his family, by special dispensation, in the churchyard of St. Andrew's, Tottington, he was the first for 50 years to be buried at the church in which he had been christened.

Proximity to Norwich. As Norwich, the second city of England in the Middle Ages, continued to prosper, it may have sucked in the population from surrounding marginal villages. See Neil Batcock *The Ruined Churches of Norfolk*, where he suggests the abandonment of Markshall, to the south of Norwich, may have been due to its closeness to the city. Bowthorpe, Earlham and Bixley may have suffered a similar fate in later years.

For each of his nine listed categories, Richard produced examples with diagrams and photographs, mostly of ruined church towers, often all that remains visible of what were once thriving settlements. One location well worth a visit is Godwick, between Dereham and Fakenham, in the care of English Heritage and possessing some of the finest surviving earthworks for a medieval lost village. It suffered from several of the problems listed above, also weather, disease and heavy clay soils. It declined in the 15th century and was virtually abandoned by 1595.

Richard ended with a selection of photographs of the delightful round tower church of St. Margaret's at Hales, now at some distance from the resident population. With the many other examples described, these should encourage those who heard the talk to visit this, and as many of the other "lost villages" as possible.

23 April 2015 – "The Mappa Mundi" – by Ron Ashman

What is a Mappa Mundi? Mappa means 'cloth or chart' – Mundi means 'of the world'. In other words it is a map of the then known world. Mappa Mundi is actually a generic term and there are more than one Mappa Mundi. However, the one on display in Hereford Cathedral is unique as it is the only complete wall map of the world known to have survived since the Middle Ages. The map is drawn on vellum, a type of leather that is fine and strong. A

single skin has been used meaning there are no seams or joins. The map measures 64 inches top to bottom and 54 inches across. It is dated to the end of the 13th century, probably about 1280, and was thought to have been a teaching aid. The original text was in Latin and Norman French, but all the pictures shown in Ron's talk were taken from a copy of the map that was available to view afterwards, and used an English translation.

There had been a larger and older map, called the Ebstorf Map, but that was destroyed in an allied bombing raid in 1943. It measured 11 feet by 11 feet and was possibly dated to 1235.

The Hereford Mappa Mundi has a number of style differences to maps of today and can look primitive and inaccurate. It was never meant to be used for navigational purposes – the land mass and seas were 'sketches'. The British Isles are rather elongated and kidney shaped with Scotland being shown separated from England by the river Tweed. There are also some geographical inaccuracies as Durham is shown to be to the west of York. Cities are marked by a castle-shaped building symbol. The Paris castle is much larger than that depicting London, which tends to indicate that Paris was the more prominent city. Containing more than a modern map the Mappa Mundi is packed with information including history, legend and stories from the bible. For example, there are: 420 cities and towns; 15 biblical events; 33 plants, animals, birds and strange creatures; 32 images of people; 8 pictures of classical mythology.

Having been drawn according to the Tripartite plan, it shows a world of three continents enclosed within a circle, with east at the top. Asia is shown at the top with Africa in the bottom right hand segment and Europe in the left hand segment. Some thought there should be a fourth continent, the Antipodes, but to suggest this was considered at the time to be heresy. Unfortunately this method of drawing placed limits on the designer, forcing them into distortions of scale and distance. At the centre of the map is Jerusalem, the City of God in the centre of the known world.

The Hereford map is thought to have originated in Lincoln and to be the work of Richard de Bello, who in 1283 was a senior churchman at Lincoln Cathedral. However, in 1305 there was a Canon Richard de Bello at Hereford Cathedral, therefore it is possible that this is the same man and explains how the map came to be in Hereford. The first recorded mention of the map in Hereford is in 1682 when it was listed as 'a map of ye world' which was found among other 'curiosities'. It was described as being kept in a frame with two doors, suggesting that it could have been used as an altar screen. In 1862 it was put on display at an international exhibition in London where it was viewed by thousands. After that it was returned and exhibited in the South Choir aisle in Hereford cathedral.

In 1990 disaster nearly struck the map. Hereford cathedral is constructed of soft sandstone that had deteriorated due to the weather and air-borne pollution. Expensive repairs were required and help was not forthcoming from the government, so it was decided by the Dean & Chapter to raise funds by selling the Mappa Mundi. This controversial decision was strongly opposed by many people. However, in 1991 a generous donation was received that not only paid for the building repairs but also the construction of a new building that would house the Map and the Chained Library (the historic library of medieval books) in a controlled environment.

At the very top of the map is the Doom, and in the centre is the son of God, Christ in Majesty, seated in the clouds, a figure with both hands raised, showing the nail marks in his hands and feet. Below him, inside the gates of Heaven is his mother Mary with attendant angels – she is pleading with him to have pity on the souls of the dead and allow them into Heaven. On Christ's left-hand side one batch of condemned sinners, having been roped together, is being dragged by a horned and winged devil towards the head of a monster with gaping jaws – this is the gateway to hell. Ron showed detail pictures from the map of biblical events including Noah's Ark, Adam & Eve, the destruction of Sodom & Gormorrah and the passage of Moses through the Red Sea: various animals and plants and some strange creatures. One of the drawings shows two men indulging in a 'cannibal' feast, one eating a human leg and the other an arm. Around the map are strange creatures. There are people with no heads and their eyes in their chests, horse-footed men and bat-eared men. These are the monstrous races, weird fantastical, beyond belief as they appear to us, but must have meant something to those who lived in earlier times.

Ron finished by showing pictures of the Chained Library, the preserved and restored library of medieval books that can also be seen in Hereford Cathedral.

14 May 2015 – “A Kirkley Slide show” – by Chris Brooks

Chris started his slide show by inviting questions and comments during the presentation. The slides covered the period from about 1850 up to the present day and were not in any chronological or geographical order.

The first slides showed Morton Peto's South Lowestoft development, looking inland from the old south pier towards the Royal Hotel and the big houses that stood facing the sea along the Marine Esplanade. Only a few houses at the south end of this row now remain. The Royal Hotel was shown both before and after an upper storey was added. The south pier was at that time an all-wooden structure with a parapet on the seaward side, but had no railings to the harbour side. The pier was popular with the upper classes that liked to promenade along it. Later a screen was installed along its seaward side that allowed visitors some protection from the wind.

The main part of the village of Kirkley in the mid-nineteenth century was concentrated at the southern boundary of the parish, along Pakefield Street. In Colville Road (now Clifton Road) stood the mission church of St Matthews, with its ornate interior and large organ. St Peter's church, further south, having fallen into disrepair had been re-built in 1749. Chris's picture from about 1859, showed this church standing in open fields. Near it there also once stood an ornate brick-built water tower. The rectory, which now stands near the church, was built in 1892. Known today as the church of St Peter and St John, the parishes combined after the demolition in 1977 of St John's church that had stood at the junction of London Road South and Belvedere Road.

Slides of the inside of the St Aubyn's College schoolroom and dining room, situated on the corner of College Road and Carlton Road, showed that the interior was not as well funded as the exterior of the building. In 1905 the college closed. The college playing field had once been on open land and its former boundary is marked by three roads; John Street, Bruce Street and Payne Street – all named after the headmaster John Bruce Payne.

The Claremont Pier was constructed in 1902/3 to allow passengers to disembark from the Belle paddle steamers operated by the Coastal Development Company. These vessels travelled north from the Thames up the East Coast to Great Yarmouth, stopping at various resorts along the way. Before the Claremont was completed the passengers were ferried to the beach by small boats. The Pier today is much shorter than the original as the 'T' section at the seaward end was demolished many years ago. During the Second World War a section was removed to prevent the pier being used by the enemy in the possibility of an invasion. Both Lowestoft piers were favourite spots with local rod and line fishermen, and in 1928 Sam Hook caught a 26lb cod from the Claremont.

Coastal erosion is nothing new. Today the esplanade is being repaired again, but in 1905 heavy seas caused the sea wall, built in 1850, near the Hatfield Hotel to collapse. Slides of the beach area known as Children's Corner revealed how it has changed over the years. Some showed the sea right up to the sea wall as it is today, whilst others showed a large area of beach. Many in the audience had fond memories of the Punch and Judy show that was performed before children sitting on the sand.

In the late 19th century bathing machines were very popular in the area between the piers. These machines were first used in Margate in Kent. The purpose of the wooden carts was to uphold the rules of bathing etiquette of the 18th and 19th centuries. They would be rolled into the sea, complete with bather; when the bather had finished swimming, the cart would be hauled back onto the sand by a windlass sited at the top of the beach. In some parts of the country the cart would be moved in and out of the sea by horse or human power. Another popular seaside activity in the Edwardian period was to promenade along the Esplanade. For the children there were donkey rides. During the Second World War, scaffolding, barbed wire and beach mines all formed part of the beach defences and the public was excluded for safety.

Chris showed a large number of slides of private and commercial buildings in Kirkley, including the Empire Hotel, the largest hotel in Lowestoft, which is said to have had a room for every day of the year.

During the time of the First World War the 1916 offshore bombardment by the German Navy and the Zeppelin raid that preceded it damaged many premises in Kirkley.

23 June 2015 – “Society visit to St Nicholas Parish Church, Great Yarmouth”

On Tuesday 23 June, 16 members and friends visited the Church of St Nicholas in Great Yarmouth. Our guide for the evening tour of the church and graveyard was Paul Davies, the chairman of Great Yarmouth Local History and Archaeological Society.

In the graveyard two headstones mentioned were the one to a victim of the 1845 bridge collapse and another of David Bartleman, a mariner who fought off a pirate cutter. The latter headstone reads:

To The Memory of
DAVID BARTLEMAN
Master of the Brig Alexander & Margaret
of *North Shields*
Who on 31st Jan^{ry} 1781, on the Norfolk Coast
With only three 3 pounders and ten Men and Boys
Nobly defended himself
Against a Cutter carrying eighteen 4 pounders
And upwards of a Hundred Men
Commanded by the notorious English Pirate
FALL
And fairly beat him off
Two hours after the Enemy came down upon him again
When totally disabled his Mate Daniel MacAuley
Expiring with the loss of blood
And himself dangerously wounded
He was obliged to strike and ransom
He brought his battered Vessel into *Yarmouth*
With more
Than the Honours of a Conqueror
And died here in consequence of his wounds
On the 14th of February following
In the 25th Year of his Age

The church of St. Nicholas was founded in 1101 by Herbert de Losinga, the Bishop of Norwich, and consecrated in 1119, as a penance for an act of simony, the buying or selling of ecclesiastical privileges. It is said to be the largest parish church in the country.

The Bishop associated the church of St. Nicholas with a small priory of Benedictine monks, which he made a cell of the cathedral priory at Norwich. The only building remaining from this priory is the refectory, which after the reformation was used as a gunpowder store, then a stable and later became the Priory School. The building is now called the Priory Centre and contains a café, support centre and information point.

In the medieval period Great Yarmouth was the fourth richest town in England. The church had stained glass, painted walls, relics of saints and tapestries. Over the years there have been many changes to the 236ft (72m) long

building. An unusual feature is that the nave, at 26ft (7.9m) wide, is narrower than both of the north and south aisles.

In 1649, during the Commonwealth period, the church was divided into three parts. The Puritans used the chancel, the Presbyterians used the north aisle and the Anglican Church used the south aisle. The arches were bricked up with a two feet thick wall and other walls were built to complete the segregation. All three denominations held their services at the same time. These brick walls remained in place until 1847.

In 1942, disaster struck when the church was badly damaged during a German air raid, leaving only the Norman tower and the walls standing. The church interior and roof were re-built with the aid of a War Damage grant and funding from local people and businesses. Twelve new bells were installed in the tower. In 1961 it was re-consecrated by the Bishop of Norwich then in 2012 it was designated as a Minster.

The church has many fine stained glass windows, the largest being that in the east window which depicts the life of Christ from the Annunciation to the Ascension.

On 13 October 2014 a memorial stone was unveiled to commemorate the 1981 crash of the Westland Wessex helicopter belonging to Bristow Helicopters, which resulted in the deaths of thirteen people.

Following this visit to St Nicholas church, members enjoyed a meal at the Foxburrow in Gunton.

10 September 2015 – “A Suffolk Village in Wartime” – by Sheila Wright

Sheila, a retired teacher from Drinkstone, made the lengthy trip from West Suffolk to deliver a very interesting talk that covered both First and Second World Wars. Taking advantage of having worked in the school at Drinkstone until her retirement, she had made a superb collection of historic stories and photographs. These slotted together to make a fine slide show to accompany her talk and covered much of the school's history from 1860 to 1986 when it closed. She began with the story of Henry Gobbit, a salesman for veterinary supplies, who married the school headmistress. He volunteered for the Suffolk Yeomanry as a reservist in the early 1900s where his c/o was SM Giles. Henry went to Gallipoli for the 1915 campaign, but was wounded and transferred to hospital in France. His recovery complete, he eventually returned and with his wife raised 6 children at Drinkstone. Next came Alf Harvey and his wife Sarah. Alf was a veteran of the Boer War but also served in WW1, in the Yorkshire Regiment. Sadly both he and a brother were killed in France. Sheila said 40 men from Drinkstone served in WW1, of which 15 died.

The main residence at Drinkstone was the Hall, owned by Lady Douglas. A number of locals were employed at Drinkstone Park including a coachman, Captain Hargreaves, who was 50 at the outbreak of WW1. The Morse car from the Park was volunteered for the war effort and used in France in February 1915 to drive nurses to the action. Captain Hargreaves was promoted to RSM in the 4th Suffolk Regiment and later led a party of troops into action, for which he gained the DSM. Due to the effects of gas, and later tuberculosis, he was unable to continue work and a new man took over the horses at the Park, the Hargreaves family moving into a cottage in reduced circumstances. Another local, Arthur Lee (born 1901), lost his mother early and suffered as a boy at the hands of an unkind stepmother. Later he signed up for the army and went to India. The school headmistress, Mrs Gobbit allowed her daughter to go to India in 1925, then considered a dangerous place, and by coincidence she was chaperoned there by Sgt Lee. Three years later he had been made up to SM and they married!

Sheila moved on to WW2 at this point. Drinkstone School by then had a new headmistress. In 1939 evacuees arrived, mostly from London, some of whom stayed for the duration of the war. Four airfields were built in the area, Rattlesden probably being closest. The war affected school life and children had to practise hiding under desks if a raid was to occur, and they all carried, and practised using gasmasks – Sheila showed hers to the members, still in its box in fine condition. She recalled school groups collecting rose hips from the hedgerows, needed to produce rose-hip syrup and, due to the shortage of manpower on farms, the Education Authority allowing schoolchildren to do

some farm jobs. One family named Bloomfield had 8 children who lived with their parents in a small cottage with two living rooms and two bedrooms. Like many country dwellers in those days they had no running water, no flush toilet and no electricity supply. Locals used battery wireless sets and got their accumulator charged once a week. It was a time of shortages all round. The whole family worked on the farm during harvest time, and to eke out their rations collected waterhen's eggs, pigeons and rabbits – fruit and vegetables were not so rare as 'home-grown' was the watchword for country people, many of whom also kept chickens. The grocer, baker, milkman and butcher made regular rounds to those living in more remote places bringing the family ration allowances. Few people had cars, and those who did were not allowed petrol unless their work required it. Some people came from London to help in school with tending the fires for heating and arranging the dinners and the cleaning duties.

At that time Ernest Livens had taken over the horses at the Hall. Rattlesden Airfield was very busy with American servicemen also billeted at Drinkstone Park. Lancaster bombers and Flying Fortresses were a common sight most days – children were sometimes taken to parties at the American base and enjoyed some luxury food items and sweets – they got on well with the American visitors. Dances were popular with the locals and servicemen, and swing music was played everywhere (once, half of the Glen Miller Band provided the entertainment). Sheila remembered the huge formations of UK and American aircraft assembling overhead before special raids were made. Scouts, Guides and even Brownies did useful jobs during the war, often learning from adults employed on important war work. The WVS organised collecting salvage. Patriotism was encouraged and this helped those who had reached call-up age. The war ground on through major crises like D-day and the raids; later there were the aerial attacks from V1s and V2s to contend with. Finally the joy of VE day and the end of hostilities arrived. It was alleged that country boys were usually practical and adjusted easily to service life. However in combat many experienced dreadful scenes, and others found difficulty returning to Civvy Street where there was often a lack of leadership. The war brought new skills, and for some returning troops, the chance to purchase a piece of land when large country estates were sold off, the owning families having been split, or reduced by the years of hardship.

24 September 2015 – “The Amazing Tale of Ali Pasha” – by Don Friston

Member Don Friston gave this talk concerning his father Henry's background and his trip to Gallipoli during WW1, from which he returned with a live Turkish tortoise that he named Ali Pasha. The tortoise lived in Suffolk from 1916 to 1987, outlasting his captor by ten years and gaining a fair amount of coverage in the Press and other media. The gifted, Pakefield-born, artist and author Michael Foreman who had attended Lowestoft Art School with Don in the 1950s also knew Henry (who regularly used his mother's tea room and shop). Michael had always wanted to tell the tortoise's story and produced '*The Amazing Tale of Ali Pasha*' in 2013. The book contains his superb colour illustrations and some of Henry's old family photos. The text of this story is based on Henry's war diary, kept while serving as gunner on a battleship.

Henry's father George was born at Corton, Suffolk, in 1856, shortly before Jeremiah Colman, the youngest partner in the famous mustard company, bought a summer residence there, the *Clyffe*, on the cliff top. George became head gardener at the Colman's house in 1895, and was moved with his family (Henry was six months old) from Mill Lane into the gardener's cottage, Hawthorn Lodge, opposite the *Clyffe*. Don showed slides of the Colmans and of his own family with period images of their homes and the new village school (built in 1895). At school Henry loved maps, learning about foreign countries, and had an Australian pen friend.

In 1908 after leaving school, aged 13, he worked at gardening with his father. During the next winter there was less to do at the *Clyffe* and he was offered a trip on a North Sea fishing boat owned by his friend's father. This awakened a love of the sea and at age 18 Henry volunteered for the Royal Navy. After shore-based initial training at HMS *Pembroke*, Henry became a seaman on the battleship HMS *Implacable*, assisting the gun crew, and prepared for active service in WW1. In late 1914, *Implacable* was ordered to sea to fire on enemy coastal bases in occupied Belgium, then on 13 March 1915 fresh orders came to sail for Gallipoli via Gibraltar and the Mediterranean. Henry looked at his world map to find that Gallipoli was part of Turkey (an ally of Germany) and was involved in the war. Together with HMS *Queen*, under sealed orders, they slipped away into the Atlantic and four days later were near to

Gibraltar. Due to bad weather they did not stop there but Henry saw Africa just across the Mediterranean as they sailed on for a further two days. When they reached Malta the grim news came – three British battleships had just been blown up at Gallipoli with many of their crews killed — on 24 March *Implacable* was prepared for battle.

Allied troops had been secretly arriving in the area for some time at the Greek Island of Lemnos and the British battleships took them onward to Gallipoli. Their plan was to land, with the help of small boats, and capture the Gallipoli peninsula while the battleships gave covering fire and took out the Turkish gun posts on shore. Once that was completed, it would allow the fleet to sail into the nearby Dardanelles channel and on up to the Sea of Marmara, opening up a route for further attacks against the enemy. But, as the attack began, it was obvious that the Turks were well prepared, heavily armed, and firmly entrenched on the cliffs above the beach. As the small boats left the shelter of the battleships they came under withering fire and hundreds of men died before even reaching the different beaches. Troops from *Implacable* were sent ashore on X beach at the southern end of the peninsula. The fighting continued for many hours and eventually the Turks were driven some way back into reserve trenches. When a stalemate had been reached, the ship's Captain told Henry and his mates to stop firing and prepare to go ashore with search-and-rescue parties as there were vast quantities of dead and wounded among both allied and enemy forces.

Henry and his mates from *Implacable* were horrified when they saw the scale of things. They were to spend many days burying the dead and bandaging and caring for the British and also the Turkish wounded, ignoring what side they were on while giving them first aid. *Implacable's* crew formed pairs of stretcher-bearers to carry the British casualties from the battlefield down to the beach, ready to be rowed out in small boats to the hospital ships lying offshore. It was just before they were ordered to stop and return to ship that Henry stumbled across a live tortoise among the trenches; he loved animals and carefully stowing the reptile in his haversack he carried him on board ship. When his mates asked him for its name he said, cheekily, "I'll call him Ali Pasha, after the enemy leader at Gallipoli". Rules were very strict at that time in the Navy and it is amazing that Henry and his mates managed to secrete Ali in the gun pit to avoid him being discovered and thrown overboard. They were so successful that Ali survived for months while the ship was sent to Taranto, in Italy (for exercises with the Italian Navy) then to Malta, and to Port Said in the Suez Canal. HMS *Implacable* was to patrol the canal, keeping it open for allied forces from Australia, New Zealand and India to travel into the Mediterranean to join the war. A whole year later the ship was sent back to England and Henry arrived home in Corton with Ali, who was given to his mother as a pet. At that point Henry was transferred to the brand new battleship HMS *Repulse* on which he stayed for the rest of WW1.

Henry got married after WW1 and drove Lowestoft trams and buses. From 1927 he lived with his family in a converted railway carriage on the outskirts of Corton; Ali was returned to him just before his mother died in 1952, and Don can remember him arriving at the railway carriage. When the 50th Anniversary of the end of WW1 was celebrated in 1968, Ali was pictured in the *News of the World* as an unusual war souvenir. A copy of the paper went to Australia, and a Melbourne Society for Pet Dogs liked the story so much they sent Ali a medal and made him the only reptile honorary life member. An ex-pat British soldier in New Zealand also saw the article and wrote to thank Henry for the good time his regiment received, when they faced a very uncertain future while being taken to Gallipoli on HMS *Implacable*. After 1968, Ali appeared quite often in the local newspapers, usually mentioned by the *Lowestoft Journal* reporter Trevor Westgate who took a great interest in Henry and Ali Pasha's story. In 1977 Henry died and Ali moved to Don Friston's home at Carlton Colville. Then, in 1986, a reporter from *The Times* heard that Ali might have reached the age of 100. He came to see Don for details first, and later produced a full-page illustrated article outlining the amazing story.

A new series of events was triggered when that article appeared. Editor Biddy Baxter invited Ali to appear on her famous BBC children's TV programme 'Blue Peter' (Ali was taken to the London studio by Don and returned with the coveted badge). HTV West asked him to take part in their Bristol Studio's weekly show 'Pets in Particular', this time accompanied by Don and a friend with his tortoises bred in Lowestoft (Ali and friends stayed at the Holiday Inn, Bristol). Don also did many radio interviews, both live and recorded, including one from NBC Canada. Finally, the Press Officer on the Royal Navy's new frigate HMS *Brave* wrote asking if Ali would like to go to sea again? *Brave* was linked to Lowestoft and was to be moored off the town on an official visit. Ali and Don were taken out with a party of

Sea Cadets from Beccles to look round the ship and have lunch aboard. Sadly, that proved to be Ali's swansong as the following year he caught a severe cold virus and died. His tale, however, goes on. Michael Foreman's book was published in time to celebrate the Centenary of the Gallipoli Campaign and Ali's sea journey. Henry's memorabilia from WW1 and Ali's shell are currently out on loan at Newcastle in an exhibition including examples of Michael Foreman's work. In 2016 the exhibition will tour the country and it is hoped that Norwich will be included in the selected venues.

8 October 2015 – "100 years of St John Ambulance in Lowestoft" – by Tony Curd

Tony is the District Manager for Central Anglia of the St John Ambulance and has been with them for many years, joining as a junior member. He began his well-ordered, and illustrated comprehensive history to a below average audience, by reminding us that St John had celebrated its centenary in Lowestoft in 2014. He said that the motto of St John Ambulance is "Making the Difference". They feel that no one should lose their life through first aid being delayed – everyone should receive first aid from those around them.

The Blessed Gerard founded the Order of St John in 1099 as a priory hospital. In those days the hospital brothers did all the nursing and the sisters prayed – there were soon 200 beds in use and the demand was growing. The Order continued to expand over the centuries and by 1504 was established at St John's Gate in Clerkenwell, London. The Priory there today has become their headquarters and Tony recommended a visit for those interested in its history. In the 1500s Henry VIII dissolved the Order in England and it moved to Malta. It survived the siege of 1565 and was finally driven out in 1798 by Napoleon. Fortunately it was later re-established in England and in 1877 the St John Association was founded. This was directed towards the support of those injured while working in mines, factories and similar occupations where individuals were prepared to train in first aid and offer care. The St John Brigade was set up ten years later. The St John Cross used as their badge contains a number of divisions, each of which signifies and states the aims of The Order.

The Lowestoft Division of St John Ambulance Brigade was started in 1914 and Dr J C Mead was involved. Almost at once they were to become involved and do much valuable work in World War 1 (including a small number of volunteers sent to the Aegean [with members from elsewhere] on the ship *Royal Edward* in 1915; also tending to those hurt in the Bombardment of Lowestoft by German battleships in 1916). Their first ambulance (converted ex-army vehicle) arrived in 1919 and was based at Hanley's garage in Arnold Street (it did well, as it was not replaced until 1929). In 1922 the S J A Junior Cadets were formed to develop the interest of young volunteers. They have been maintained since, playing a part in World War 2 and supporting local events across the country. The largest involvement for the Brigade came on 13 January 1942, in what was known locally as the 'Waller's Raid'. A lone German aircraft dropped four HE bombs in daylight on Lowestoft's town centre, in a hit-and-run raid, completely destroying Waller's restaurant with 71 people killed and 117 injured. The Odeon Cinema opposite was used as a temporary mortuary. St John First Aid Party leader Charlie Jacob was awarded the BEM for his involvement there. On the Brigade's 30th Anniversary, in 1944, Lady Mountbatten came and reviewed them at Oulton Broad School. The Lowestoft Division continued to grow and in 1947 moved into ex-school premises at St Margaret's Plain. After the move they obtained new equipment and had three ambulances. In the 1950s they took calls during the day and had six paid drivers – volunteers attended any evening calls. They also assisted the RNLI in emergencies – in 1956 Dr Gee and a SJAB volunteer went to sea aboard the Lifeboat *Michael Stevens* on a call-out.

In 1962 the Nursing Cadets won a National Competition. Shortly after the Brigade moved to their current premises in Oxford Road, the ever-willing volunteers doing the conversion from the previous use by Matthes Bakery. Radio was made available in 1965, speeding up the contact and service. True to form, in 1970, the volunteers converted a caravan into a mobile specialist first aid unit for attending local events. At this time the SJAB were contracted to help East Suffolk ambulance services. However, as time passed various problems arose with unions and uniforms and some time after 1974 the arrangement was discontinued.

The Brigade then reverted to their former pattern of assisting many local events, including the Carnival and Fetes, and also made familiarisation visits to the premises of local larger companies. In 1987 the St John Ambulance Badgers were introduced, allowing those from 5–10 years old to learn some first aid skills. The aim is to extend the aims of the Order beyond first aid. Surprisingly it was not until 1990 that male and female Divisions were amalgamated. Fund raising became a vital part of activities and the Brigade always welcomes the public support they receive. Their attendance at major tragedies like the 2005 bombings brings them into view, as do their parades. The Centenary in 2014 was celebrated with a parade at St Margarets Church, Lowestoft and HRH Duke of Gloucester attended to sign the Book. They continue into the 21st Century in great spirits, still aiming to “Make the Difference” and like to think of themselves as “Professional Volunteers”. A video of activities closed the evening.

22 October 2015 – "Far Eastern Pavilions –part 2" – by Michael Mills

Michael has a long history and family connections with local repertory and theatre; he has an extensive archive on this subject and an excellent set of slides for his talk. He briefly explained that part 2 would cover the theatres in Lowestoft from the outbreak of World War 2, when the Sparrow's Nest at the top of the town was requisitioned by the Royal Navy as an active centre for new entrants and became known as HMS *Europa*. The Hippodrome on Whapload Road was similarly engaged. Many famous personalities came to the 'Nest', using the stage and ancillaries to entertain the sailors and public. These included popular stars Gert & Daisy, pianist Russ Conway, radio personalities Eric Barker, and Jon Pertwee of the *Navy Lark*. Swing bands also appeared including The Blue Mariners with star soloist Freddie Gardner on reeds.

The Palace, south of the bridge, featured six or seven small orchestras at various times during the 1940s. The Rhythm Aces and the Pioneers Swing Band, also The Blue Mariners and Arthur Barham, pianist, appeared there. In 1940s Lowestoft there were several local entertainers too such as humorous pianist Johnny Belton, Ruby Collen and Tommy Crawford whose comedy act uniquely included a live coypu. Trafalgar Day was publicly celebrated in Lowestoft in 1941, with military parades and marching bands. On the seafront was The Royal Hotel and ballroom and it also was a very popular rendezvous for locals and visitors. Other stars visiting the town in wartime were Al Bowlly, The Crazy Show, The Spitfires, Harry Tate, The Follies, and The Ridgway Parade of 1941. On the Esplanade the Phoenix Players somehow performed in a marquee.

After the war, the Kendall family reopened the Playhouse with their production of *Pygmalion*. After this good start things went well, but unfortunately the theatre burned down in 1946 and was out of commission for some time. Happily, the Navy had released the Sparrow's Nest that year and a wide range of shows began there. Richard Tauber came in 1947, followed by Vic Oliver, expert musician and humorist. Lowestoft Repertory Company was in action in 1948 and put on *The Winslow Boy* with Fulton McKay and Vivien Westwood. Jack Jay had reopened the Hippodrome in 1947 and quite soon featured Roy Castle, Bonor Colleano and a string of other top performers.

The famous son of Lowestoft, Benjamin Britten was mentioned in the talk. He and his music featured in several local productions between 1933 and 1959. Two notable ones were '*Let's make an Opera*', with young performers chosen from Lowestoft schools (at the Sparrow's Nest in 1951) and a *Britten Concert* at the Odeon in 1952.

The Arcadia (formerly The Playhouse) gave a start to many budding stars, later to appear on TV and stage as headliners. June Brown (*East Enders* regular) came in 1950; Michael Caine in 1955 and Des O'Connor in 1956. From 1955–57 Charles Simon put on plays in which were Avril Angers and Shirley Ann Field. Bill Maynard came in 1959 and Susan Hampshire in 1960. In 1959 the name changed again, from Arcadia to the Theatre Royal. The 1960s saw other headline entertainers visit Lowestoft including comedian Jack Hulbert, trumpet wizard Eddie Calvert, comedians Bob Monkhouse and Frankie Howerd, singer Donald Peers and guitarist Bert Weedon.

The Palais de Dance (a skating rink/ballroom at Pakefield, later rebuilt as part of MAFF) attracted a number of big bands, like Eric Delaney, Ken Macintosh and Nat Gonella. They brought popular vocalists such as Ann Shelton, Lyta Rosa and Dickie Valentine. Ronnie Scott's band also appeared and the great ballad singer Michael Holliday.

In 1947, Alf Beckett, Lowestoft entertainments manager, began a string of seasonal shows at the Sparrow's Nest. He was able to book a host of stars, that included Billy Dainty, the dancers 'Dazzle', Bob & Alf Pearson, Dick Emery, Bernie Clifton, Joe Brown, Roy Hudd, Leslie Crowther, Jack Tripp OBE (stage dame), and, of course, Robbie at the Organ. Prior to closure of the theatre in 1990, Bobby Davro, Kenny Ball and Norman Wisdom appeared.

In the 'Swinging Sixties' the Royal Hotel put on the latest acts from stage and TV including The Animals, Sandie Shaw, Millie, Long John Baldry; also Freddy & the Dreamers, Rod Stewart, Gene Pitney, Marianne Faithful, Jimmy Young, Terry Dene, Russ Henderson, The Hollies, Sabrina, Charles McDevitt, Gene Vincent, and The Bachelors.

Finally, Michael showed a slide featuring the vast range of stars that had visited the Marina between 1876 and 2006. In its early days it was a skating rink and it has been remodelled several times over the years to suit a mixture of theatre and cinema use. The performers covered almost every type of act and the Marina remains a top line venue in the town, regularly hosting classical concerts by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

12 November 2015 – "Decoding the Morses" – A history of the Crown Brewery by Eric Doré

Eric is the author of a new book recounting the history of the 'Crown Brewery' once operated by Morse & Woods (later E & G Morse) in Crown Street, Lowestoft (Crown Street was originally known as Bell Lane). The buildings and associated site will be familiar to all our members as they had in part accommodated the original Lowestoft Porcelain Factory, and are presently occupied by the Crown Artist Brush Factory. Eric likes the real ales manufactured by today's East Anglian micro breweries and some three years ago became curious to know the history of Lowestoft brewers E & G Morse, who had closed down in 1937, and how their beers had tasted.

To untangle the riddle, he trawled the Internet for references to the family and discovered Sir Jeremy Morse listed, also Cathy Lang, granddaughter of Edgar Morse. Sir Jeremy was willing to allow access to his family tree. This gave a useful start, followed by the discovery that head Brewer Fergus Fitzgerald at Adnam's of Southwold had the Morse brewing books and recipes in his archive, and was prepared to reveal the contents. Eric's next move was to visit the Crown Street factory where he was amazed to discover it retained much of the Crown Brewery exterior styling and, during a guided tour, found a number of original interior fittings from the time of E & G Morse.

Now having the bit between his teeth Eric looked at the history of the Morse brewing family. During the late 1700s the Morse family looked for new business opportunities and one opening was in brewing. At first the Crown Street building was used as a malt house, but in the 1840s Thomas Morse (grandfather of Edgar) began to buy additional property in Bell Lane. The 1842 Lowestoft Rate Book showed a brewery there run by Mr Morse. Mr Doré found evidence that from at least 1850 it operated at Lowestoft as Morse & Woods and also in Norwich and Swaffham. It is from that period Adnams selected two of the recipes to reproduce in a special test brewing to celebrate the November 2015 launch of Eric's book *Decoding the Morses*. Ticket holders were able to attend a special tasting of both beers, meet the author, and obtain signed copies of the book. Brewing historian Eric was thrilled to see the recreated beer come to fruition. Guests at the launch included Cathy Lange, great grand-daughter of Edgar Morse. Thomas Morse retained ownership of the land until 1860 when Fred Morse took a share (Henry Glasspole Woods retained a financial role). Over the late Victorian period the company also imported wines, port, sherry and brandy. The Morse family also had several connections in the Blundeston, Flixton and Somerleyton areas, with considerable landholdings, much of which were later subsumed into the Somerleyton Estate. Fred's son, Edgar began to stand in for him in the 1890s and by 1900 was operating the brewery with his brother Gilbert. In 1902 the porcelain factory building was restored as part of the brewery. Edgar Morse was interested in Lowestoft porcelain and during the construction work recognised a quantity of original moulds, broken china and kiln wasters that he made sure were preserved – some are displayed today at the Lowestoft Museum. At that time Edgar married, and in 1904 moved to Haddiscoe, as a gentleman, retiring from the business in 1911, seemingly with no further interest in brewing.

Gilbert remained a popular employer and businessman, and although business was affected by the 1920s slump, the company continued to supply many local pubs and beer houses with its products. During the 1920s and 1930s, its

beers were sold in bottles identified by a numbering system – 2 Dark Lunch, 4 Light Bitter, 6 Pale Ale and 8 Full Brown. Mr Doré had discovered a 1936 *Lowestoft Journal* report indicating that business had suffered and that the Crown Street brewery was to be closed down at the New Year 1937. The company was taken over by brewers, Morgans of Norwich who from then on supplied existing local outlets. The Morse brothers both reached the age of 90 and died in the 1950s. In 1950 the buildings were sold to Windsor & Newton, Artist brush manufacturers.

26 November 2015 - The formation of Local Fire Brigades - Maurice Joel

It would be difficult to write a comprehensive account of the talk given to LA & LHS by Maurice Joel without extending to four or more pages, so detailed was his lively description of his chosen topic, using contemporary documents, drawings and photographs. He began with a picture and description of the earliest pump used in Gt. Yarmouth in 1697, a machine patented in 1625 and examples of which have been located in Harleston Museum as well as one in The Bridewell, Norwich (now at Bressingham) and at Bungay. These were operated by 10 men pumping and could be drawn by men or horse to the scene of a fire. Maurice related that horses were preferred because they were attracted more readily to the presence of smoke.

Maurice then talked about the earliest Fire Offices, 1680 and the well-known Sun Office 1710 whose fire mark can still be seen on older houses eventually developing to 26 different variants. Other companies were soon set up and a myth was spread that fire fighters arriving at a conflagration of a building without their own fire mark would not attempt to fight that fire. That was not the case; leaving a fire to continue would endanger neighbouring properties that were insured.

Maurice continued by mentioning several notable local luminaries who had developed fire-fighting equipment, Captain George Manby (1765–1854), who made many improvements and inventions to help save lives and fight fires, including the first hand held fire extinguisher. He is regarded as the true founder of the RNLI and has a blue plaque on a dwelling in Gorleston High Road.

The remainder of the talk consisted of a list of fires in buildings in and around Gt. Yarmouth or Gorleston (Oulton's request for a fire station was turned down and Lowestoft was not mentioned). The wooden grandstand at Gt. Yarmouth racecourse suffered twice and the Britannia Pier three times in 1859 (ship collision), 1914 and 1954. Other public buildings such as hotels and music halls also suffered, some more than once having only just been rebuilt. In WWI, fire fighters were called up and new volunteers had to be recruited. Shells from the German navy hit a fire station and Zeppelin raids created more work for the new crews.

The photographs of the most recent damage to The Britannia Pier allowed Maurice to introduce pictures of himself in a "hot music" combo and several of the cars he was able to afford before marriage reduced his lavish expenditure. He could have continued all night but will probably return for "Part Two" at some point in the future.

LOWESTOFT SCENE 2015

January

Seawall repairs

Urgent repair work to the erosion-hit seawall and shore on the South Beach has successfully reached the end of the first phase. The £900,000 Environmental Agency funded scheme began in November 2014, when 6,000 tonnes of rock was transported from Norway and delivered to the beach at Lowestoft. Since its delivery, work has taken place at each low tide to position the rock, with the last of the pieces put into place.

Town library is keeping busy

Lowestoft is the busiest library in Suffolk in terms of the number of visits, replacing Bury St Edmunds. The news came after a national report called for a reinvigoration of the library service across the country – and holds Suffolk up as an example to be followed in other parts of Britain. The increase has been seized on by library managers in Suffolk to show that the service, now run independently from the county council, is succeeding in attracting new borrowers.

PCSO now patrolling town centre

Lowestoft town centre now has its own Police Community Support Officer (PCSO), thanks to joint funding by Suffolk Police and Lowestoft Vision.

Big revamp for leisure centre

A major investment in leisure services has been celebrated at an official opening ceremony. Thanks to the “ever-increasing popularity” of Lowestoft’s main sports centre, more than £1M has been invested in the Water Lane Leisure Centre – with the centre benefitting from its second major revamp in less than three years. The sports centre, which is operated by Sentinel Leisure Trust in partnership with Waveney District Council, underwent an extensive £8M redevelopment in January 2012. During Autumn 2014, further renovations were made to the centre in Water Lane after the centre had reached maximum capacity. With this extension, further health and exercise opportunities have been offered to everyone.

February

Town in moving tribute to victims of Holocaust

Commemorating 70 years since the liberation of Auschwitz, dignitaries and residents joined together for remembrance services on Holocaust Memorial Day. In a ceremony at Lowestoft railway station, Waveney District Council chairman, Peter Collecott and mayor Stephen Ardley hung a wreath under the plaque commemorating Lowestoft’s role in the Kindertransport program which brought Jewish children to the town to escape persecution in Europe.

Closure of Day Hospital

The town’s Day Hospital closed its doors after 33 years of providing “tender loving care”. It is believed that some 65,000 people have benefitted from the service. Help given over the years include a bath and hair wash, a change of medical dressings, chiropody, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and, until the kitchens were closed, a hot meal. So there we are, the second largest town in the county without our own hospital.

Cinema’s recovery from flood disaster

The East Coast Cinema has made a remarkable recovery from a devastating flood which threatened its future. As the recovery goes from strength to strength, the owner warned that as the town continues to wait for permanent, long-term sea defences to be built, another flood like the December 2013 flood could cause permanent closure.

Vandals must be defeated

“We all need to work together to protect Lowestoft and its history from mindless vandals” warned a council contractor. It has been revealed that there is not enough money to fix thousands of pounds worth of damage to the sea wall on the picturesque seafront, because it has been repeatedly hit by vandals month after month.

Prime Minister’s visit

The Prime Minister pledged that Lowestoft’s voice would be heard in Downing Street on a visit to the town’s new enterprise zone – but avoided the region’s road and rail services by flying in by helicopter, meaning he did not experience the town’s problem with the bascule bridge.

Major employer’s future is secured

Fears for the future have been allayed with the “fantastic news” that CEFAS is to remain in the town, safeguarding more than 400 jobs. The Prime Minister announced that funding will be available to CEFAS for the redevelopment of their site. The organisation had been undergoing a review into its future with fears that it could close due to the state of the building.

Major wind farm given the go-ahead

A major wind farm is to be built 27 miles off the Suffolk coast, between Lowestoft and Felixstowe. The go-ahead has been given for East Anglia One, a 714MW project which is one of two offshore wind projects given the green light. It is set to be the best value offshore wind farm ever to be built in the UK, according to ScottishPower Renewables, which is behind the development that hopes to provide power to about 500,000 homes each year.

Council to take on lease of historic hall

It has the prestige of being Lowestoft’s first purpose built theatre, but more than 200 years from opening its doors, the historic building is facing an uncertain future. Once the current lease expires on 31 March, Waveney District Council will take on the lease until a decision is taken on its future.

March

Third crossing debated in the Commons

It will be up to Norfolk and Suffolk’s enterprise partnership to take forward plans for a third crossing in Lowestoft, a transport minister has said. Robert Goodwill told a House of Commons debate that any funding to ease congestion in the town would have to come from pots of cash prised from Whitehall departments as part of future local growth fund award – bid for by New Anglia.

Plane crash victims are honoured – 70 years later

It should have been a routine mission. But for an American from the 8th Air Force’s 487th Bomb Group, it was one which was to end in disaster. Almost 70 years to the minute since their plane crashed, the two airmen who died were remembered in a moving ceremony at their memorial in Ribblesdale, Carlton Colville by the Lowestoft Aviation Society.

Budget cash for crossing analysis

Further analysis is to be done on where to locate Lowestoft’s long awaited third crossing using a £2M windfall from the Chancellor of the Exchequer – after the public gave a resounding ‘no’ to the council’s preferred eastern option.

Spine Road opens

Lowestoft’s new £6.5M northern spine road was officially opened by the Transport Secretary, with the promise that it would ease traffic congestion for the town’s residents. Phase V of the project allows motorists to drive down the single-carriageway road built between the Millenium Way-Bentley Drive roundabout and Blundeston Road-A12 Corton Long Lane junction.

Parish votes against pub's demolition

Kessingland Parish Council voted against the demolition of the much-loved historic Kings Head pub and turn it into housing. The Chairman declared that the pub had been part of the heritage of the village for 400 years and should remain so.

April

New furniture store set to open its doors

Work is underway to transform an 'eyesore' building that has been vacant for eight years and was labelled as Suffolk's ugliest building in 2006. Furniture store Dunelm will officially open on May 20 close to the ASDA store on Belvedere Retail Park. There has already been a considerable amount of work carried out in the area with the footpath connecting the ASDA car park to Horn Hill closed and a new car park installed.

Bridge to be closed for works

The Bascule Bridge in Lowestoft will be closed overnight for four weeks in April while improvement works are carried out. The bridge will be closed for 18 nights between 8pm and 6am, Sunday to Thursday, while repairs on the bridge's lifting mechanism are completed.

A place of support for veterans

The Royal British Legion Lowestoft and District branch has opened a drop-in centre in Station Square in the town, and is hoping to a positive impact on the services community in Waveney. It is open to serving members of the armed forces, reservists, veterans and their families to meet for an informal chat over coffee. The centre will work with other charities including the British Limbless Ex-Serviceman's Association (BLESMA) and Soldiers Sailors and Airmen's Families Association (SSAFA).

Lifeboat called out to yacht rescue drama

A yacht was pulled from the edge of a sandbank off Lowestoft in a RNLI lifeboat rescue operation. The 27-foot yacht that had The RNLI's Shannon Class relief lifeboat 'Reg' was called out to go to aid of the 27-foot yacht that had sent out a mayday call when it got into trouble on the edge of Newcombe Sands, off the Suffolk coast. 'Reg' is the latest addition to the RNLI charity's relief fleet. The state-of-the-art rescue craft has only recently become operational and is at Lowestoft whilst the port's regular lifeboat was away at Poole having minor adjustments made.

Reserve damaged by a huge blaze

Volunteers and staff at a popular nature reserve near Lowestoft have expressed disappointment after a wildlife habitat described as "an oasis" for migrating birds was devastated by fire. Police investigations are continuing after at least six different fires were tackled across more than three acres of land at Carlton Marshes Nature Reserve.

Town marks centenary of first Zeppelin raid

Residents gathered to mark the 100th anniversary of the first recorded air attack on Suffolk in the First World War. On the night of 15-16 April 1915, a German Zeppelin carried out an air raid on Lowestoft. The Lowestoft Aviation Society and the Jack Rose Old Lowestoft Society organised a gathering where people remembered the event, re-enacted the pictures from the time and gathered close to where the original bomb crater was formed.

Foodbank gets underway

A foodbank designed to give rural residents emergency support in a time of crisis has been set up in Kessingland. East Suffolk Foodbank had already set up a collection point at Kessingland library this year, where members of the public could donate non-perishable items for food parcels. People in need can collect the ready-made food parcels from the distribution centre in Marram Green.

Closed prom is reopened to the public

A coastal promenade which was closed to the public over the winter for safety reasons has reopened to the public. Due to concerns of cliff slippages and other risks during the winter, the promenade at Corton was closed for public safety. During this closure, the condition of the promenade was monitored and any necessary work has been undertaken.

Orchestra is given special Coat of Arms

The managing director of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra has hailed a prestigious association with Lowestoft – describing the east coast town as “a second home” for the world class musicians. The RPO was honoured with a special Coat of Arms in recognition of its decade of performing at the town’s Marina Theatre and continuing commitment to providing music of the highest calibre.

May

Will you keep your crossing promise, David?

On a visit to Lowestoft just ahead of the general election, Mr Cameron said the long awaited new bridge over Lake Lothing “has got to be done in the next Parliament. It has gone on long enough”.

Fish market must be kept for the future

A solution must be found to prevent the “heartbreaking” loss of Lowestoft’s fish market said community secretary Eric Pickles on a pre-election visit to the town. Mr Pickles heard from fish producers BFP about the need to work with offshore wind companies also based at Lowestoft port during his visit to the area.

Faults on town’s bridge are repaired

Hydraulic motors on Lowestoft’s bascule bridge had to be replaced to keep it in safe condition because they had developed faults, engineers have said. The bridge had been shut for several nights each week to allow Highways England to carry out “extremely technical works” on four sets of hydraulic motors.

Leaders to hold PM to account on his promise

David Cameron must be held to his promise of building its long-awaited third crossing, Waveney’s political leaders said after the Conservative’s shock election victory. For the avoidance of doubt, the pledge to build the £80M bridge was re-stated by chancellor George Osborne and transport secretary Patrick McLoughlin in separate visits. However, Mr Aldous warned after his victory that although he would hold Mr Cameron to his pledge, no government could build a bridge unless there was an agreed design in the first place.

Store set to open with new jobs for town

A new, Dunelm furniture store opened in Belvedere Rd with 65 new jobs. Built in 2005, the units were labelled Suffolk’s ugliest building in 2006 in a poll conducted by the Suffolk Preservation Society.

Bargains galore at Lions’ market

It all started in 1969. And after making a successful return to the town’s calendar for the first time last year, the re-launched Petticoat Lane market in Lowestoft attracted hundreds of people to the north end of the town it raised more than £1300.

Town marks VE Day 70th anniversary

Seventy years since the war in Europe ended, members of the uniformed services, veterans and the public came together for a ceremony. A short service was held at Sparrow’s Nest on May 8th, organised by the Royal British Legion, the Royal Engineers Association, the Royal Naval Patrol Service Association and Waveney District Council. Attendees enjoyed music from the Loddon Band before hearing about wartime achievements of veterans at the

ceremony. Prayers were read in tribute to those who fought, died, were wounded, worked in reserved occupations and rebuilt their lives after years of conflict.

Emotional trip ahead for lifeboat

A former lifeboat received a warm welcome from people in Lowestoft and Southwold ahead of an emotional return journey. The veteran wooden lifeboat, Lucy Lavers, set off on her epic voyage of celebration and commemoration as she re-enacts her role in the dramatic “little ships” wartime rescue operation. After being extensively restored, the Lucy Lavers sailed from her home port in Wells-next-the-Sea and joined 60 other vessels that took part in Operation Dynamo to cross the Channel to Dunkirk once again and celebrate the 75th anniversary.

Second phase of beach works gets underway

The second phase of the beach works improvements scheme on the south beach has got underway. The protection work will enhance the Children’s Corner area with the creation of new rock structures on the beach to protect the seawall, a concrete access ramp to replace the original which collapsed in 2013 and replacement of damaged coping stones.

Beach awarded Blue Flag status

Lowestoft’s South Beach has been awarded Blue Flag status which is the international standard for beach quality and is only awarded to coastal destinations with the highest standards of water, facilities, safety, environmental education and management.

Town gets new ‘brand’ identity

Lowestoft vision has launched a new ‘Discover Lowestoft’ brand campaign which includes a new logo and a website to give people all the information they need on days out, shopping, restaurants, events and businesses in the area.

New council building finished

Lowestoft-based staff from Suffolk County Council and Waveney District Council have moved into brand new accommodation, with the construction of the new Riverside office complex now complete.

Residents take a step back at big 1940s weekend

Almost 800 people took a step back in time to enjoy the first ever 1940s weekend that was held at the East Anglia Transport Museum. The site was decorated with bunting and props from the 1940s era with windows taped across as they used to be in case of air raids. Occasionally, music of the era would be interrupted by the sound of the air raid siren.

June

New bridge is top priority

A third crossing for Lowestoft has been named as the ‘number one project in Suffolk’ by the county council’s new leader as prime minister David Cameron reiterated his promise to build a new bridge by 2020.

Final plaque now unveiled

The final plaque of six memorials commemorating fishermen in Lowestoft who lost their lives during the first World War was unveiled aboard Lowestoft fishing smack Excelsior. Since July last year, plaques depicting artwork designed by various youngsters across the town have been installed in prominent positions around Lowestoft. The first two plaques were unveiled at the railway station concourse last July, with further plaques installed in Sparrow’s Nest Gardens, on the statue of a fisherman in ASDA car park and in Kensington Gardens. The final plaque was unveiled aboard Excelsior during a special ceremony.

Anniversary of evacuation marked

On Monday June 2 1940, children of all ages were uprooted from their homes as the threat of war moved towards the east coast. About 3,500 children and teachers were evacuated to Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire – with some leaving the town, never to return, as many others came back to continue their lives at Britain's most easterly point. To promote this year's anniversary – 75 years on from that day when local children picked up their few belongings and waved goodbye to their parents as they boarded a train for the safety of the Midlands – some of Lowestoft's evacuees lined up at the town's station once more.

July

South pier reopens

After a two-year fight, Lowestoft's South pier has finally reopened to the joy of residents and tourists alike. The 1,320 ft pier dates back to 1846 and holds many fond memories for people from the town.

RPO on board boat

The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra boarded the Mincarlo, one of Lowestoft's most iconic and historic ships for a "Celebration of the Sea" concert.

Pakefield – demolition of Middle School

Demolition of the old Middle School and Sports Hall started at Pakefield High School as the final phase of improvements to the first new high school to be built in Suffolk for over 30 years continues.

Rocks to help save the beach

Thousands of tonnes of rock arrived in Lowestoft as part of the continuing repairs to the town's south beach.

Riverside Council building

The new multi-million pound Lowestoft Riverside building was officially opened by Peter Aldous, MP for Waveney.

People power won the day

People power won the day – that was the reaction of campaigners after supermarket giant TESCO finally backed down in its attempt to take over the Tramway, an historic Lowestoft hotel.

Charge for waste collections

A £42 charge is to be introduced from next year for garden waste collections in Waveney, it has been revealed.

Visit of tall ship

An iconic tall ship built in Lowestoft as a gift to the Australian Navy made an emotional return in time to celebrate the opening of a new £4.5M quay, which has been hailed as a great investment in the town's future. The return of STS Young Endeavour was a highly symbolic moment for the town, as it coincided with Associated British Port's unveiling its replacement for a large section of the Harbour Wall which collapsed into Lake Lothing in June 2012.

Return of figurine

A tiny figurine, just a few centimetres long, has been part of a national collection at the British Museum since it was discovered more than a decade ago. But now it has finally come home to the place where it was found, thanks to months of work by the Lowestoft Museum committee. The rare and valuable silver gilt piece, no thicker than a pencil, dates from Anglo Saxon times and would have been worn around the neck as an amulet.

Flooding in Pakefield

Too little, too late that was the verdict from angry residents when told there would be a council enquiry into why their homes at Aldwyck Way, Pakefield flooded after years of protesting about the issue. Flooding has been a long running issue as a nearby stream and dyke overflow and water comes up through the drains during heavy rainfall.

August

Museum marks 30th anniversary

A popular museum described as a “hidden jewel” in Lowestoft has celebrated its 30th anniversary in style. Hundreds of people attended an open day at Lowestoft Museum, Oulton Broad, on 1st August. A ceremonial cake was cut, families turned out in force to learn more about the town’s heritage and young and old posed for pictures at the guest book, which was signed by the Queen and Prince Philip when the museum opened in August 1985.

Lifeboat call-outs

A recent spate of incidents at sea off the Suffolk coast has prompted safety warnings. In the past week, Lowestoft’s RNLi lifeboat, Patsy Knight, has had its busiest spell of the year so far, with five call outs in three days. It had also been an extremely busy period for HM coastguard officers from Lowestoft and Southwold coastguard rescue teams. There have been 33 call outs this year (86 last year). Coastguards warned that people going fishing or pleasure cruising to be properly equipped with hand-held VHF radios as mobile phones are not reliable at sea.

Debate over fish market

In a sign of the changing face of the town, there are now plans to move the historic fish market from its prime location to one of six newly-proposed sites on the port. The move could allow the town to benefit from £50billion investment into the East of England energy sector, potentially creating new jobs.

Service held to remember Zeppelin raid

100 years ago, a German Navy Zeppelin crossed the coast at Dunwich to carry out a night raid against Britain. As it passed over Pakefield, it dropped a bomb on a field at Leggett’s Farm, damaging nothing but fences and windows. It then dropped a bomb between The Avenue and London Road, demolishing a wall and greenhouses. It then went out to sea and re-crossed the coast near the Grand Hotel. Six more bombs were dropped, causing £4,971-worth of damage and claiming one life. Kate Crawford, a live-in maid was crushed by falling masonry when a house collapsed as a result of the raid. She is buried at Kessingland church. An informal service was held by the Lowestoft Aviation Society and the Jack Rose Old Lowestoft Society.

Town’s iconic store is now in administration

A major family-run Lowestoft department store which found national fame after being featured on a television programme with retail guru Mary Portas has gone into administration. Business leaders in Lowestoft reacted with sadness to the news that Godfreys, which had been trading in the town for 37 years, had appointed administrators on instructions from the firm’s directors.

September

Repairs at Children’s Corner

Essential repair works to prevent the Children’s Corner area of Lowestoft’s South Beach have progressed rapidly thanks to the completion of two major rock deliveries. Following the delivery of 14,000 tonnes of rock in July, both the ‘knuckle’ and the ‘reef’ rock structures have now been completed – giving protection to this area of the beach.

Crossing must prove its worth

Lowestoft businesses have been urged to help provide economic value of a third crossing – after it was revealed the town must show the scheme will bring in twice what it costs. Prime Minister David Cameron has already promised that the long-awaited project will be built by 2020.

October

Memories of a great town fishing vessel

The Deodar was built in Brixham in 1911 and, in 1919, was sold to Slater and Barnard of Lowestoft. She sailed out of Lowestoft until she was sold in 1937 to a Swede. She had several owners until, in 1958, she was bought by Thomas Helstrom who lovingly restored her. She visited Lowestoft and was met by the granddaughter of John Barnard.

History found on the beach

Martin Baxter was walking his dog on the north beach near Links Road, when he found a piece of plane wreckage. It was from a little-known wartime bomber, a Handley Page Hampden. The piece of wreckage came from the flap mechanism on the wing. The Hampden was known as the “Flying Suitcase” owing to its slab-sided fuselage and cramped crew positions.

Former lifeboat returns to its old seaside home

A former Lowestoft has been brought back to the town by a charity to be used as a community resource. The Thames Class Lifeboat charity has worked for the past couple of years to raise the funds to bring back the 50ft Rotary Service lifeboat, which was built at Brooke Marine in 1973. The plan, which will take about 18 months and all depends on money and volunteers, is to put her somewhere near the town as a floating museum and offer her services as a training vessel.

Mug is a top seller

A sale, which was held by fine art and antiques auctioneers Chorley’s of Gloucestershire, saw an 18thC Lowestoft Porcelain blue and white mug, painted in underglaze blue with white flowers, expected to sell for £2000 to £3000 – eventually sell for £8,500. The mug was inscribed as belonging to “John Elden, Carpenter at Colthorp”. He is buried in Calthorpe in north Norfolk.

November

Lifeboat completes six-hour tow to assist wind farm vessel

A wind farm support vessel, the Challenger, which was making its way to Northumberland from Rotterdam, had to be towed into Lowestoft harbour after suffering mechanical failure 31 miles due east of Lowestoft. After connecting a tow, the lifeboat completed a “fairly arduous” six-hour return journey.

Anniversary train

A train was named in honour of a historic rail users’ group to mark its 50th anniversary. To celebrate the landmark, Abellio Greater Anglia named a Class 156 train “ESTA 1965-2015” after the East Suffolk Travellers Association, in a ceremony held at Lowestoft railway station.

Old cannons restored

Historic cannons have been restored to their former glory thanks to some painstaking renovation work. Waveney Norse and the International Boatbuilding Training College brought the three historic cannons back to how they looked 200 years ago. The cannons are now in Belle Vue Park.

Bringing the past back to life on playing field

A new Celtic roundhouse has been built at Carlton Colville Primary School. It will be used to teach history, science and art. It is hoped that the roundhouse can inspire drawings and allow the pupils to discuss the materials used to build the structure. David Curl and Paul Durbidge officially opened the roundhouse, which will also be used for storytelling.

New windfarm boost set to have long-term benefits

Lowestoft is to benefit from thousands of new jobs and millions of pounds of economic investment after it was confirmed that the town would be the long-term operational base for the East Anglia ONE offshore windfarm.

December

Bright future for town pub

The new owners of the Tramway Hotel have had a busy few weeks. They have converted the pub to a bar and seafood restaurant and plan to have rooms to let above.

Fishing quota increase is agreed

A new increase in fishing quotas for the smallest vessels in the fleet has been welcomed. Waveney MP, Peter Aldous, has vowed to continue to press the government on further reforms to the fishing policy. The responsible Minister has announced that 25% of the increased fishing quota will be allocated to the under 10 metre fleet.

Revamped sign points to town's historic past

After undergoing extensive restoration, the town's sign is now back on display. The sign depicts parts of the maritime history of Lowestoft. Images include a fisherman, an outline of the port, the Brooke Marine shipbuilding yard and the Royal Naval Patrol Service war memorial. It is surrounded by an engraving of the town's lighthouse and Christchurch. The sign used to have "Borough of Lowestoft" on it, but the new sign says "Welcome to Lowestoft" as the town is no longer a borough.

80 High Street, Lowestoft, and Wilde Family Connections

“The South Flint House”, as it is sometimes called, is a high-quality merchant’s residence of the late Sixteenth Century. Its westward elevation, abutting the street, is an imposing one – built to impress, with plinth and coping, dressed flint cladding and stone quoining around the windows and door. The initials WM above the door (which are replicated on the spandrels of the stone fire-place in the hall chamber, on the first floor) represent the Christian names of William and Mary Wilde, for whom the house was built, and the year 1586 gives the time of construction. The couple were married in August 1569 and the property came to them in May 1575 via the will of Mary’s father, Richard Dericke (also known as Derick Harman), a master-shoemaker, who died without male heirs. Therefore, an earlier dwelling was demolished to make way for the building we see today.

The Wilde family was an important one in the history of Lowestoft, both as a ruling force and a philanthropic influence. The Lay Subsidy of 1524 shows them to have been lesser merchants, with William Wilde’s father (also named William) paying the sum of one shilling tax on trading-stock worth £2. Within the next fifty to sixty years, the family’s fortunes had increased sufficiently for William Wilde Jnr. to build his imposing new residence. The money derived largely from fishing and maritime trade, and the upward trend in prosperity was reflected in the town as a whole. Even today, it is possible to detect a good deal of high-quality residential building along the High Street (especially on the eastern side) dating from the period 1550-1600.

The Seventeenth Century was a time of mixed fortunes for Lowestoft. During the first half, two serious plague outbreaks (of 1603 and 1635) ravaged the population and the herring industry declined noticeably in the face of competition from the Dutch. The Wildes remained unscathed during the epidemics and their fortunes were sustained by interests outside fishing (including agriculture and property ownership). As the town underwent recovery during the 1670s and 80s, they prospered further, and the will and probate inventory of James Wilde (grandson of the man who built the house and himself a merchant) show personal wealth of considerable scale.

James Wilde died in February 1684 and the list of his possessions is an important source document with regard to 80 High Street, because it shows how the house was organised and furnished. The internal arrangement of rooms was as it had been a century earlier, with a ground-floor layout of hall, parlour and kitchen, with chambers (or bedrooms) above, and with an attic used for storage and servants’ accommodation. There were also two outhouses in the yard (probably on the second terrace), one of which was used for brewing, and a summer-house on the same level. Good quality furniture was located in the six principle rooms (two of which had soft furnishings also); there were pictures on the walls of the hall, the parlour and the hall chamber; a cased clock was located in the hall, as well as a collection of books; and the kitchen contained a wide range of utensils. The overall impression conveyed is one of the comfort and affluence enjoyed by the upper levels of provincial society of the time – a standard of living which can still be appreciated by any of us living today.

The purpose behind writing this article is not only to show a piece of sequential family history, but to demonstrate what can be achieved by using different sources and cross-referencing them. Primary and secondary material can combine to create a three-dimensional picture of earlier life-styles, which can then be further embellished by topographical work using the built environment as we see it today. The survival of particular buildings from a bygone era is always a bonus for the historian, when they relate to his or her researches, but identifying the sites of those which have long since disappeared is often possible and is perhaps even more rewarding than beholding what still stands.

A Summary of the Will of Wylliam Wylde (12 February 1611)

Preamble: “Being of good & perfect Remembrance Thanks be given to god for it – first I give & bequeath my soul in to the hands of All mighty god hoping And steadfastly believing to be saved & delivered from y^e guilt & punishment of all my sins And to be made partaker of the heavenly kingdom Through y^e merits death and passion of my lord and only Saviour & Redeemer Jesus Christ – And my body I commit unto y^e Earth to be decently buried where it shall please God.”

Daniel Wylde (5th son, aged 21) • Half the testator's herring & mackerel nets.

- Dwelling-house [80 High Street] after widow's death.
- Use of the yard for storage-space during her lifetime.
- All possessions & money not otherwise bequeathed.
- Made responsible for settling testator's debts.

Margaret Wylde (2nd wife) • All goods & chattels which were hers before she married.

- Dwelling-house [80 High Street] for the rest of her life.
- Half the testator's herring & mackerel nets.
- All victuals (except the malt and barley), wood & coal.

Derick Wylde (6th son, aged 20) • The house occupied by Thomas Clarke.

- All herring speets, riving vats & reed.
- A posted bedstead & all the bedding.
- A trendle bedstead & all the bedding.
- 4 cushions.
- A joined chair & one other chair.
- 2 silver spoons.

John Wylde (1st son, aged 39) • All houses & lands in Corton & Newton.

- The house occupied by Robert Arnold.
- A grazing dole on Drake's Heath.
- Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*.
- 20 shillings, to be paid to Thomas Roose (within 2 months of testator's death).

Alice Arnold (1st daughter, aged 35) • 2 silver spoons,

Sara ? (2nd daughter, aged 32) • 2 silver spoons.

Rebecca Bentlye (3rd daughter, aged 30) • 2 silver spoons.

Mary Arnold (4th daughter, aged 26) • 2 silver spoons.

Thomas Roose • 20 shillings (to be paid to him by John Wilde).

Executor: Daniel Wylde (5th son)

Witnesses: Thomas Ward (yeoman)
Rychard Berye (yeoman)
Thomas Roose

• Thomas Ward was the man who wrote the will. He and Rychard Berye signed their names, Thomas Roose used his initials: TR. Wyllyam Wylde also signed his name on the document.

• John Wylde bought out both his brothers' interests. Daniel was a cooper by trade and established himself in Great Yarmouth. The house he had been bequeathed stood on the site of what is now No. 176, High Street. The one left to Derick Wilde stood on the opposite side of the road, a little further to the north, occupying a plot on what is now an open, grassed area (between Nos. 4 and 27, High Street – this the result of bomb damage during World War II, when a row of houses was destroyed and not replaced).

Glossary: grazing dole – a strip of rough pasture (this one was situated near the B and Q store of today, on the North Quay Retail Park).

herring speets – wooden rods onto which the fish were threaded through mouth and gill before being smoked into red herrings.

joined chair – a chair whose parts were joined together by mortices and tenons,
rather than just being nailed.

reed – used to seal gaps between the staves of a barrel, thereby stopping leaks.

living vats – large wooden tubs in which herrings were salted before being put
into the smokehouse.

trendle bedstead – a small bed on castors, which could be moved around.

- The parish of Newton lay to the north-east of Corton. It had long suffered from sea erosion and has now almost completely disappeared. Part of one field only is left – located in the present-day parish of Hopton-on-Sea, to the east of Potter's Leisure Resort.

- John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* was (after the Bible) the most popular book of the late sixteenth and early/mid seventeenth centuries. It told the story of the various people burnt at the stake for their Protestant faith during the reign of Mary Tudor (1553-58) and therefore was closely identified with Church of England practice, as well as reinforcing many people's fear and suspicion of Rome.

- The summary of this will (and the ones which follow) is given in modern spelling, with the exception of people's names. Original grammatical forms and use of capital letters are retained in the preamble(s).

- Wyllyam Wilde's first wife Mary (née Harman) had died in June 1608. He remarried, a year later, to a widow named Margaret Atkins.

- Wyllyam Wylde himself died on 23 March 1611 and was buried two days later, aged 87 years, inside St. Margaret's Church. His grave-slab is no longer to be found there, but it apparently recorded that "he lived harmless as a child".

- His will is held in the Norfolk Record Office: ref. NCC 19 Stywarde. A copy is also lodged in the Lowestoft branch of the Suffolk Record office.

A Summary of the Will of John Wilde (4 April 1641)

Preamble: "Being in reasonable bodily health But p[er]fect in Remembrance Thanks be given to God for it – First I give and bequeath my Soul into the hands of the everliving God and my most merciful father in Jesus Christ Being fully assured of free p[ar]don and remission of all my sins, only in, by and through the Death and bloodshedding of the same his dear son Jesus Christ my only saviour and Redeemer. And consequently everlasting life in him. And my body I Commit to the earth from whence it came."

The poor people of Lowestoft • 40 shillings (20 to be paid on the day of the funeral, the
other 20 within 6 months of decease).

Mary Wilde (wife, aged 70) • All houses & lands in Corton & Newton, for rest of life.

- Almshouse Meadow and Webbes Meadow, for life.
- Mortgages held on property in Gt.Yarmouth, Southtown, Gorleston, Bradwell & Lowestoft.
- Dwelling-house & appurtenances, for life [80 High Street].
- Land known as Stingates, with the stable thereon, for life.
- Lease of land on which the Town Barn stood, for life.
- Half of the malthouses, yards, straw-houses and stables purchased from brother Derick, for life.
- Barns, yards & buildings bought from daughter Rebecca Prest, for life.
- All other goods & chattels, money owing & livestock.

James Wilde (8th son, aged 28) • Half-share in mackerel boat *Elizabeth & Alice*, with her mackerel & herring nets & other equipment.
• £300 (£100 to be paid within one year of decease, the other £200 a year later).
• Almshouse Meadow, after mother's decease.
• Dwelling-house & buildings [80 High Street] after mother's decease.
• Land known as Stingates, after mother's decease.
• Lease of Town Barn land, after mother's decease.

John Wilde (son of James, aged 4) • Almshouse Meadow, after parents' decease.
• £20, payable at age of 21.

Deborah Wilde (daughter of James, aged 2) • £20, to be paid at age of 18.

Josiah Wilde (7th son, aged 30) • Equal share with his wife in their dwelling-house.
• The grazing dole on Drake's Heath.
• Dwelling-house which had belonged to Christopher Murrell, after mother's decease.
• Half-share in mackerel boat *Elizabeth & Alice*, with her mackerel & herring nets & other equipment.
• £300 (£100 to be paid within one year of decease, the other £200 a year later).
• Webbes Meadow, after mother's decease.
• Half of the malthouses, yards, straw-houses & stables purchased from Derick Wilde, after mother's decease.
• Barns, yards & buildings purchased from Rebecca Prest after mother's decease.
Thomas Wilde (son of Josiah, aged 16 months) • Webbes Meadow, after parents' death.
• £20, payable at age of 21.

Mary & Elizabeth Wilde (daughters of Josiah, aged 6½ & 4) • £20 each, payable at age of 18.

Samuel Wilde (5th son, aged 35) • £200 (£100 payable within 6 months of decease, the other £100 within a further 6 months).

Thomas Wilde (6th son, aged 32) • Half-share in bark or crayer *Judith* & her equipment.
• £250 (£150 payable within a year of decease, other £100 one year later).

Unborn child of Thomas Wilde • £20, payable at age 21 or 18, according to gender.

William Wilde (son of William dec'd) • £100, to be paid within 2 years of decease & invested in the Chamber of London until he was 21 years of age.

Mighell, Mary, Alice, Margaret & Sarah Wilde (children of William dec'd) • £20 each, payable at age of 21.

Margaret Wilde (widow of William) • All houses & lands in Corton & Newton, after mother-in-law's decease.

Mary Andrewes, wife of Samuel (2nd daughter, aged 42) • £100 (£50 payable within a year of decease, the other £50 a year later).

John & Deborah Andrewes (children of Samuel & Mary) • £20 each, payable at age of 21.

Third child of Samuel & Mary Andrewes (not named, but stated as having been born in Barbados) • £20, payable at age of 21.

Daniel Wilde (brother, aged 51) • 20 shillings, to buy a ring.

Children of Derick Wilde (nephews & nieces) • 10 shillings each.

Alice Arnold, wife of Nathaniel (sister, aged 65) • 20 shillings, to buy a ring.

Rebecca Prest, widow of William (sister, aged 59) • 20 shillings, to buy a ring.

Sarah ? (sister, aged 62) • 20 shillings, to buy a ring.

Mary Thornton, alias. Arnold, (sister, aged 56) • 20 shillings, to buy a ring.

Children of Rebecca and Nathaniel Bentley (nephews & nieces) • 10 shillings each.

Children of Sarah ? (nephews & nieces) • 10 shillings each.

Children of Robert & Mary Thornton, alias. Arnold (nieces) • 10 shillings each.

Executor: Mary Wilde (wife)

Witnesses: Nicholas Pacy (mariner)

Robert Underwood (scrivener)

• Note that there were five surviving children of Rebecca and Nathaniel Bentley: William, 38; Rebecca, 34; Isaac, 32; Mary, 31; and John, 26. Their mother had married William Prest after the death of her first husband.

• There were three surviving children of Mary & Robert Thornton, alias Arnold: Mary, 38; Alice, 31; and Margaret, 31.

Codicil (13 November 1642)

Made with reference to land & buildings purchased from James Rant of Norwich (gentleman) and Henry Jenkenson of Oulton (gentleman). This property lay below the cliff and adjoined the ground belonging to the testator's house (now 80 High Street) on its northern boundary. The buildings referred to were two fish-houses and a salt-house.

Mary Wilde (wife) • The land & buildings referred to above, for rest of life.

James Wilde (8th son) • Property referred to immediately above, after mother's decease.
• £100 (to be paid within one year of decease).

Josiah Wilde (7th son) • £100 (to be paid within one year of decease).

Thomas Wilde (6th son) • £100 (to be paid within one year of decease).

Samuel Wilde (5th son) • £100 (to be paid within one year of decease).

- The £400 bequeathed to the testator's four surviving sons, in the codicil, was to derive from the profits of Icelandic cod voyages and from North Sea fishing activity. Smaller, proportionate sums were to be paid out to the beneficiaries if the sum of £400 had not been realised by the time of John Wilde's death.
- John Wilde wrote his own will and signed his name at the bottom. The two witnesses each signed their own names on the document. Nicholas Pacy was Wilde's next door neighbour, living in the house which is now 81-83 High Street. Robert Underwood was a lesser lawyer of some kind, who would have been experienced in drawing up legal documents. He may have advised Wilde on the writing of the will.
- The Town Barn and the land known as Stingates were located next to the market place, which lay opposite the family home. The lease-money on the former was used by trustees for charitable purposes; the latter was named after a former owner, Jeffrey Stingate.
- The crayer *Judith* was a small coastal trading vessel of some kind. Thomas Wilde, to whom the half-share in it was bequeathed, settled in Great Yarmouth. He held the rank of major in the army and was killed in February 1666, on the Corton/Gunton denes by a musket shot to the throat. He and a shore party were shadowing the movements of a hostile Dutch vessel which had come in close to shore, and shots were exchanged. He was buried in the middle aisle of St. Margaret's Church, next to his parents.
- The sums of 20 shillings left to the testator's surviving brother and his four sisters were for the purchase of mourning rings in memory of him.
- William Wilde (deceased), whose six children were left cash bequests, was the oldest of John Wilde's children. He had been captured by Muslim pirates in the Mediterranean during the year 1633 (he was 40 years old at the time) and forced to become a galley-slave. A letter written from Constantinople to his father, in November that year, telling of his plight, somehow reached Lowestoft. Edmund Gillingwater's *An Historical Account of the Ancient Town of Lowestoft* (1790) has a copy of part of it, on page 382.
- The reference to Samuel and Mary Andrewes being in the West Indies may possibly mean that they had emigrated there and were possibly involved in running a plantation. [Addendum: Samuel Andrews is named in a list of the inhabitants of Barbados, who held more than 10 acres of land, in the year 1638. Ref. P.F. Campbell, *Some Early Barbadian History* (Wilkey, Barbados, 1993); the book is a reprint of an earlier, eighteenth-century publication.]
- The total amount of cash bequests made in the will (over £1500) and in the accompanying codicil shows how wealthy John Wilde was. A modern-day equivalent of the sum cannot be given, but a skilled craftsman at the time (depending on his trade) would have earned about £8-£10 a year.
- John Wilde died on 10 August 1644 and was buried three days later, aged 72 years, under the middle aisle of St. Margaret's Church, not far from the chancel steps. His grave-slab may still be seen. His wife, who died in October 1651, lies beside him. She was 80 years old and had married her husband in September 1589. Her maiden name was Eache and her father had been a shoemaker and leather-worker.
- John Wilde's will is held in the Suffolk Record Office (Ipswich): ref. IC/AA1/82/116a & b. A copy is also lodged in the Lowestoft branch.

A Summary of the Will of James Wilde (7 July 1682)

Preamble: "Being in my perfect health and memory – First I give & bequeath my soul into the hands of Almighty god my most merciful father in Jesus Christ trusting through his merits to have free pardon and remission of all my sins and joyfully to rise again to life eternal – and my body I commit to the earth from whence it came to be decently buried at the discretion of my executrix."

Alice Wild (wife, aged 64) • All houses & lands in Lowestoft, for rest of life.
• All goods, chattels, mortgages & debts.
• Charged with maintaining testator's servant, William Cory.

John Wilde (1st son, aged 46) • Everything left to mother, after her decease.
• Half of a small pightle purchased from Henry Church of Great Yarmouth.
• £300, to be paid within 2 years of decease.
• Clock & table in the hall, after mother's decease.
• Jack in the kitchen, after mother's decease.
• Large silver tankard, given to testator by the townsmen of Lowestoft.

Alice Durrant (3rd daughter, aged 37) • £500, to be paid within 2 years of decease.

John Durrant (son-in-law) • Half of a small pightle purchased from Henry Church of Great Yarmouth.

Deborah Wells, wife of William (1st daughter, aged 43) • £300.

Children of Deborah & Andrew Leake (grandchildren) • £200, to be paid out in equal shares at their coming of age.

The Poor People of Lowestoft • £50, to be spent as thought best by executrix, testator's children & leading townsmen.

St. Margaret's Church • A piece of silver plate, to be used for the consecrated bread during communion services.

Joseph Hudson (vicar of Lowestoft) • £3, as a token of testator's love & esteem.

William Cory (testator's servant) • Food, drink & clothing for rest of life, at executrix's expense.

Executor: Alice Wilde (wife)

Witnesses: Samuel Pacy Jnr. (gentleman)

William Pacy (merchant)

Thomas Glover (customs officer)

• James Wilde had married at Somerleyton some time during 1635 to a woman named Alice Carman. Their first child was a son, John – the boy referred to in his grandfather's will of April 1641 and the man named above in that of his father.

• Note that there were four children of Andrew & Deborah Leake: Andrew & William, whose ages are not known, Margaret, aged 8, and Deborah, aged 6. Andrew Leake Snr., a merchant, was Deborah Wells's second husband, who had died in August 1675 and whom she had married in October 1664. Her first partner had been a man named John Scaps (or Scops) of Great Yarmouth, a gentleman, whom she had married at Somerleyton in June 1660.

• James Wilde wrote his own will and signed his name at the bottom. The three witnesses all signed their own names on the document. The first two were the sons of Wilde's next-door neighbours, Samuel & Elizabeth Pacy (living in what is now 81-83 High Street), who were members of a merchant family and were also related to the Wildes. Samuel Pacy Jnr. styled himself a gentleman on the strength of his parents' money; his younger brother,

William, was a merchant, who eventually moved from Lowestoft and became mayor of Great Yarmouth. Both men were the grandsons of Nicholas Pacy, who had acted as one of the witnesses for the will of John Wilde. James Wilde would have known Thomas Glover through being involved in North Sea and overseas trade. Glover was the first customs official appointed in Lowestoft, on its being granted port status in May 1679.

- Andrew Leake Jnr., referred to in the note above, became one of England's most notable naval commanders during the reign of Queen Anne, winning a knighthood for his services at sea and dying heroically at the Battle of Malaga (13 August 1705) in a major action against the French.

- William Wells, Deborah Wilde's third husband, had married the widow in November 1676. He was a victualler by trade and bought *The Crown* inn early in 1682 for £280. The money was raised by him mortgaging the property to his father-in-law, James Wilde. The couple's son James was a lieutenant in the navy, who was drowned in a boating accident at Lowestoft, with his friend William Scholdam, in September 1704. Their daughter Ann married the Rev. Gregory Clarke, who was rector of Blundeston.

- The pightle (a small field, often of awkward or irregular shape) referred to as being shared between John Wilde and John Durrant later became known as Rotterdam Meadow. It lay where the allotments next to the houses at Newson's Meadow are situated. It gave its name to Rotterdam Road. The Church family, who once owned it, were mariners and merchants from Kirkley, who moved into Lowestoft during the second half of the seventeenth century, with a further branch of the family establishing itself in Great Yarmouth.

- The clock and table in the hall, to be inherited by John Wilde after the death of his mother, are referred to in the inventory of household goods drawn up to accompany the will. It is not possible to ascertain whether the clock was a long-case model or a smaller one.

- The jack referred to in both the will and the inventory was a clockwork device which turned spits and helped meat to roast evenly over an open fire.

- The silver tankard left to John Wilde was one of the three listed in the inventory among the contents of the parlour. It was presented to James Wilde by the leading citizens of Lowestoft in 1674, in recognition of his successful efforts on behalf of the town (during the 1660s) in resisting Great Yarmouth's attempts to control the local herring industry.

- The £50 bequest left to the poor people of Lowestoft was eventually used to buy a cottage and piece of land along Whapload Road, the rents of which were used to give 12 free penny-loaves to the needy every Sunday, after morning service, at the parish church. The cottage became known as "James Wilde's bread-house". The building was later replaced by the one which now houses the Lowestoft Maritime Museum and the land which accompanied it is the Sparrow's Nest bowling green and surrounds.

- John Durrant was a brewer, who owned a dwelling-house and brewery two plots to the south of James Wilde's house (what is now 84 High Street and part of 85-86).

- The bequest of debts to beneficiaries at this time was common, because those debts represented money owed to testators through the conduct of their business activities and also from the loans advanced to people who needed cash. In the absence of banks, wealthy local people (women as well as men) were the main providers of funds. The ability of James Wilde to act as a community banker is reflected in the fact that he left £1350 in cash bequests to family members.

- James Wilde died on 11 February 1684 and was buried two days later, aged 72, under the floor at the west end of St. Margaret's Church, just to the south of the font. His grave-slab may still be seen. His wife died in September 1702, aged 84, and lies near him, her memorial being located just to the north of the font.

- James Wilde's will is held in the Public Record Office, London: ref. 50 Bowyer. A copy is also lodged in the Lowestoft branch of the Suffolk Record Office.

James Wilde's Inventory (14 March 1684)

An Inventory Indented of all and singular the goods and Chattels of James Wilde late of Lowestoft in the County of Suff[olk], merchant, valued and appraised the Fourteenth day of March in the year of our Lord One Thousand six hundred eighty three by Joshua Smithson, Nicholas Utting, Robert [?] and John Aldred of Lowestoft aforesaid, Merchants, as Followeth

In the hall

six Russia leather chairs.....
one table & carpet, two forms & eight cushions.....
two small chairs & one cushion.....
a Clock and Case.....
a looking glass & three pictures.....
a library of books.....05 00 0
a fire cradle as it stands.....
a parcel of arms.....03 00 0

In the parlour

four Russia Chairs, two turkey work & two Cane Chairs.....
a table, three stools, one Couch, seven Cushions & a carpet.....
one Chest of drawers.....01 00 0
one looking glass & three pictures.....03 00 0
one fire cradle, andirons, tongs & fore-iron.....
four Curtains with Curtain rods & a lute.....00 15 0
three silver tankards, one salt, two cups, one porringer
& nineteen spoons.....35 00 0

In the kitchen

one fire cradle, tongs & fore-iron.....01 00 0
one Jack, with weights, & six spits.....01 10 0
a pair of steelyards & other small irons.....00 15 0
one Keep & a parcel of earthen ware.....01 00 0
one table & screen, ten Chairs & four Cushions.....01 00 0
a looking Glass.....00 02 0
four & twenty pieces of brass.....
a parcel of pewter.....10 00 0
six leather Buckets & a cupboard.....
several small things in the pantry.....

In the parlour chamber

One bed & bedstead as it stands.....10 00 0
Six chairs, one table, one stool.....01 00 0
A Chest of drawers, a looking glass & two pair of andirons.....01 10 0
A parcel of fine linen.....20 00 0

In the hall chamber

one bed & bedstead as it stands.....20 00 0
two tables, eleven chairs & three stools.....03 10 0
one Looking glass & three pictures.....05 00 0
a parcel of linen.....05 10 0
two pair of andirons & two cabinets.....00 10 0

In the kitchen chamber

one bed & bedstead as it stands.....05 00 0
one Trendle bed as it stands.....03 00 0
one trunk, one box, two chairs, one press & two stools.....01 10 0
two pair of andirons & a cushion.....00 04 0
two small baskets & a voider.....00 03 0
a bed & bedstead in the closet.....02 10 0
a parcel of linen.....09 14 0

In the Garret

one bed as it stands.....03 00 0
one case of bottles, one trunk, three chairs & three stools.....01 05 0
twelve pair of sheets.....03 00 0
two beds & bedsteads as they stand.....03 00 0
one table, three chests, one close stool & two chairs.....01 00 0
four coverings.....01 10 0
a parcel of twine.....00 10 0
Fourteen pair of sheets.....06 00 0
one bed & bedstead more.....03 00 0
one table, three chairs & four stools.....00 10 0
one Chest, one trunk & one standard.....00 10 0
a parcel of Canvas.....20 00 0
a parcel of strings.....01 00 0
eight pair of sheets.....03 00 0
six dozen Napkins.....01 04 0
eight board cloths.....01 16 0
three dozen towels.....00 09 0

In the outhouses

four Iron pots, two roast irons, two frying pans.....01 10 0
two hundred paving stones.....01 10 0
two coppers & one pot.....10 00 0
a parcel of brewing vessels.....01 10 0

In the summerhouse

Six Chairs, one table & a bell.....01 10 0
twenty dozen bottles.....01 10 0
his wearing apparel, linen & woollen.....15 00 0

an eighth part of the ship called the *Lion*.....70 00 0
an eighth part of the *Riga* merchant.....75 00 0
an eighth part of the *Tricon*.....75 00 0
a fourth part of the *Ermin*.....80 00 0
three sixteenth parts of the *Oak*.....60 00 0
the *Envoy*.....200 00 0

the <i>Mermaid</i>	140 00 0
the <i>James</i>	100 00 0
the <i>Swallow</i>	100 00 0
the <i>Amity</i>	..50 00 0
four Ferry boats & props.....	18 00 0
twenty dozen swills.....	06 00 0
two hundred Coombs of barley & malt.....	100 00 0
herring & mackerel lint.....	15 00 0
two horses, two carts & one Calash with furniture.....	15 00 0
half a hundred deals.....	01 10 0
a draught net.....	01 00 0
eight hundredweight of rope.....	08 00 0
one barrel of white herrings & a firkin.....	00 14 0
three spare anchors.....	03 10 0
Lumber in the upper & lower houses.....	05 00 0
five wey of salt.....	15 00 0
four thousand billet.....	06 00 0

Glossary: andirons – fire-dogs (a pair of metal stands used to support logs in a hearth).

arms – weapons and armour.

billet – a small split section of ash or oak, used for curing red herrings.

board cloths – tablecloths.

calash – a light, two-wheeled carriage used for personal transport.

carpet – usually imported from Turkey and used to cover a table.

close stool – a commode.

coomb – a measure of grain amounting to four bushels.

deals – softwood planks (usually pine, spruce or fir.)

draught net – a draw net (A small, hand-operated seine).

ferry boats – rowing craft used to convey goods to and from vessels at anchor.

firkin – a cask of nine gallons volume. A herring barrel was thirty-two gallons.

fore-iron – a small spit used for roasting in front of an open fire.

furniture – equipment, gear.

jack – an oscillating, clockwork device for turning spits above an open fire.

keep – a small, closed cupboard; a safe.

lint – drift-net mesh.

lumber – odds and ends; items of no great worth.

napkins – serviettes.

parcel – a quantity or amount.

porringer – a small, two-handled bowl or cup.

props – oars.

Riga merchant – a vessel engaged in Baltic trade.

Russia leather – highly rated for its quality and durability.

screen – a portable wooden barrier to act as prevention against draughts.

standard – a tall wooden candle-holder, or a large packing-case of some kind.

steelyard – a weighing balance, with horizontal arm and counter-weight.

swills – baskets used for washing herrings after they had been salted.

turkey work – tapestry or raised embroidery.

voider – a basket or container for plates, cutlery etc.

white herrings – fish which had been gutted and pickled in brine.

wey – forty bushels; one ton by weight.

- Note that the transcription has omitted the word “item” at the beginning of every entry and has used modern spelling, while retaining original grammatical forms and use of capital letters. Monetary values of the household goods have only been given in cases where the entries could be clearly read and there was no doubt as to the amount recorded.
- The three identifiable assessors were classified as merchants in the preamble. Only Nicholas Uttting had that occupation; Joshua Smithson was a woollen draper and John Aldred a grocer. The fourth assessor’s surname cannot be read because of imperfections in the document.
- The summerhouse referred to stood on the second terrace-level down from the street. After the contents (three separate entries) had been recorded, all of James Wilde’s business activities and materials were then listed. The *Lion*, *Riga*, *Tricon*, *Ermin* and *Oak* were trading craft; the *Envoy*, *Mermaid*, *James*, *Swallow* and *Amity* were fishing vessels. The *Riga* speaks of a well-established Baltic trade and is, of course, the capital of the modern state of Latvia.
- The remains of the summerhouse were located during archaeological work carried out during 2001 and 2002, prior to landscaping of the garden area adjacent to the Lowestoft Heritage Workshop Centre. They consisted of a square, brick-built chamber, below ground level, with plastered interior walls – a cellar of sorts, which presumably had the summerhouse itself set immediately above. Considerable numbers of late seventeenth-century wine bottle fragments were also found – some of which, at least, may possibly relate to the “twenty dozen” bottles referred to in the inventory.
- The table and chairs listed were obviously for recreational use and the bell (presumably, a hand-bell) employed for summoning servants, as and when needed. But what were all of James Wilde’s clothes doing there? His wife had obviously had a quick clear-out following his decease and used the summerhouse to store them. Two possibilities for this are either his dying from something infectious, with consequent removal of particular personal effects, or the widow’s desire to distance herself (in her loss) from items intimately connected with her husband.
- The six main rooms of the house, listed in the document above, now have the following uses in a restaurant established there: the hall and parlour form the bar area; the kitchen is occupied by the toilets; the hall chamber and parlour chamber constitute the dining-space; and the kitchen chamber is the kitchen itself.
- The determining factor in the internal layout was – and still is – the large, off-centre chimney-stack, which provided a heating and cooking facility in four of the rooms (it would also have warmed the attic for the people living there). Another, smaller stack on the end wall of the house, next to the entry-way to the score, would have done the same for the other two.
- The inventory above is held in the Public Record Office: ref. PROB/4/12299. A copy is also lodged in the Lowestoft branch of the Suffolk Record Office. The dating of 14 March 1683 is that of the old Julian calendar; the year is 1684 by modern reckoning.

A Summary of the Will of James Wilde (4 November 1723)

Preamble: “In the name of God Amen – not being well in health, but of sound & perfect memory (praised be God for the same) but knowing the uncertainty of this life & being desirous to settle things in order for a better – First & Principally I commend my Soul to Almighty god my Creator & merciful Father in Jesus Christ. Trusting through his merits to have free pardon & remission of all my sins & Joyfully to Rise again to life Eternal – and my body to the Earth from whence it came I commit decently to be buried at the Discretion of my Executors.”

John Wilde (1st son, aged 35) • Half-share of all property & possessions not otherwise bequeathed.
• Half-share of money remaining after bequests had been made.

James Wilde (2nd son, aged 27) • Half-share of all property & possessions not otherwise bequeathed
• Half-share of money remaining after bequests had been made.

Alice Hayward (2nd daughter, aged 32) • £100, to be paid within 2 years of decease.

John Wilde (brother, aged 53) • £20, to be paid within a year of decease.

Margaret Ward, widow of Henry (sister, aged 47) • £5 per annum, for 10 years.

The four female residents of St. Martin's Hospital • 5 shillings each.

The Lowestoft churchwardens • Charged with replacing the St Martin's residents with
suitable widows & elderly spinsters, as opportunity
arose – no rent to be charged.

The poor people of Carlton Colville • 20 shillings.

Elizabeth Hots (testator's maidservant) • All testator's clothes and bed linen – to be inherited if she was still in his
employment at the time of his death.

Executors: John and James Wilde (sons)

Witnesses: Nath[aniel] Welham

Edward Ellys

Samuel Guild

• James Wilde was the grandson of the man of the same name, whose will and inventory are reproduced above. His father, John, is mentioned in that will – a major beneficiary as the testator's oldest son. John Wilde himself died in May 1700, at the age of 63, and his burial entry in the parish refers to him as a gentleman. This may mean that the family had "gone upmarket" socially and were living on rents deriving from property rather than being directly involved in fishing, maritime trade and other enterprises. On the other hand, it may simply reflect Wilde's desire to be regarded as of higher degree in people's minds than merchant status was able to achieve.

• John Wilde had married out of parish during the mid 1660s to a woman named Margaret Reeve. Their first child, James (the man here), was born in either 1666 or 1667, but his baptism is not recorded in the parish registers. It was once the custom, however, to have first-born children christened in the mother's parish of origin. Both John & Margaret Wilde (the latter of whom had pre-deceased her husband in December 1698) lie buried to the south of the font in St. Margaret's Church, near other family members.

• James Wilde, the testator here, wrote and signed his own will. The three witnesses, who also put their names to the document, do not appear to have been Lowestoft men. They were probably of similar status to Wilde and lived in neighbouring communities.

• Wilde had married Helen Stone of Bedingham (member of a south Norfolk gentry family) early in 1687. She died in May 1704, at the age of thirty-seven, leaving her husband with the three children named in the will. He did not remarry. His own burial entry in the parish register (12 December 1725) calls him a merchant, rather than gentleman, which means that he probably still had some kind of interest in commerce. Taking his year of birth of either 1666 or 1667, James Wilde was about 58 years old when he died. This was a respectable age for the time, in view of an average life-expectancy of 30-35 years for the country as a whole.

• The two sons named as executors, John and James, were charged with selling certain property of their father's in Lowestoft and Carlton Colville for the best possible price, with settling his debts, with meeting the funeral expenses and probate charges, and with paying the various bequests. Exactly what the property consisted of is not specified.

- St. Martin's Hospital, referred to above, was a small almshouse block of four units which provided free accommodation for elderly widows or spinsters (each unit consisted of a downstairs room with a chamber above). It had been built in 1716 with money left by Martin Brown, a relative of the Wilde family, who had been a merchant in Rotterdam for many years. James Wilde was charged with supervising the work and acting as sole trustee. In his will he passed on this responsibility to the St. Margaret's churchwardens. The building stood at the junction of what is now Crown Street West with Thurston Road and the space is currently occupied by a small children's play-area.
- The bequest of clothes and bed linen to a maidservant is not as strange as may at first appear. Both would have had good second-hand value, in addition to actual utility.
- James Wilde's will is held in the Suffolk Record Office (Ipswich): ref. IC/AA1/154/34. A copy is also lodged in the Lowestoft branch.
- John Wilde retained possession of the family home (80 High Street) after the death of his father. When he made his own will in July 1735, he left all of his property in Lowestoft and Worlingham towards the founding of a free grammar school for forty boys. First, however, the estate was to be enjoyed for life by a woman named Elizabeth Smithson (afterwards Perryson), and she did not die until 1781 – a much longer life-span than Wilde probably envisaged. In 1788, the Lowestoft churchwardens duly constructed the school – a building which still stands today to the rear of 80 High Street, alongside the score which bears the family name. It now houses the Heritage Workshop Centre, run by the Lowestoft Civic Society.
- 80 High Street itself served as the schoolmaster's residence for a number of years. The first occupant was Lewis Webb, who performed his function for about eighteen months only, dying in March 1790 at the age of 38 years. His epitaph described him as being "like the cover of an old Book, its contents worn out, stript [sic] of its lettering and gilding".
- The school continued in existence up to the early part of World War II, though it had changed considerably in nature and extent from the one set up originally. One thing that was still being done, even towards the end of its life, was the Vicar of Lowestoft preaching an annual sermon in St. Margaret's Church to the assembled pupils on the text, "Train up a child in the way that he should go: And when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22. 6.). This had been stipulated as a condition of establishment in the founder's will.
- John Wilde and his younger brother James never married, and with them the main male line of the Lowestoft Wildes came to an end. John died in 1738 and was buried at Worlingham, aged 53; James passed away in November 1748, aged 52, and was buried in Lowestoft. Thus ended a connection with the town that had spanned at least seven generations, six of them with family members resident in 80 High Street.
- As a last word, it is clear that the preambles of all four wills reveal deeply held and sincere Christian beliefs, especially when one considers that three of the documents were written by the testators themselves. The Wilde family were noted in Lowestoft for their charitable deeds and concern for the well-being of their fellow townspeople. It is fitting that they are commemorated by association with the house in which they lived for so long and in the title of the adjacent score which still carries their name.

Primary sources

Lowestoft parish registers, 1561-1649 & 1650-1786: NRO, PD 589/1 & PD 589/2.
The Lowestoft manor roll of 1610: SRO(L), 194/A10/72.
The Lowestoft manor roll of 1618: SRO(L), 194/A10/73.
Lowestoft manor court minute books, 1616-1734: SRO(L), 194/A10/5 to 17.
The Rev. J. Tanner's court baron extracts: SRO(L), 454/2.
The will of Wyllyam Wylde: NRO, NCC 19 Stywarde.
The will of John Wilde: SRO(I), IC/AA1/82/116 a & b.
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David Butcher

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80 High Street

The Anglo-Saxon Settlement - Bloodmoor Hill

Introduction

Excavations at Bloodmoor Hill by the Cambridge Archaeological Unit in 1998 revealed a well preserved and almost complete early Anglo-Saxon settlement. Prior to the excavations, several large heaps of soil were created as heavy plant stripped off the upper surface, and Adrian Charlton was given permission to search these heaps for archaeological material with a metal detector. Some coins were found with potsherds and part of a quern which were given to the site director. Then a small black figurine of man, partially gilded was found and submitted to Norwich Castle museum for identification. It is described as a silver three dimensional, bearded figure wearing a cap, and belted hose length trousers, hands and face are all gilded, a suspension loop is attached. It probably had an amuletic function. The precision of its execution and date range of items found with it suggests it should be dated to the first half of the 7th century.

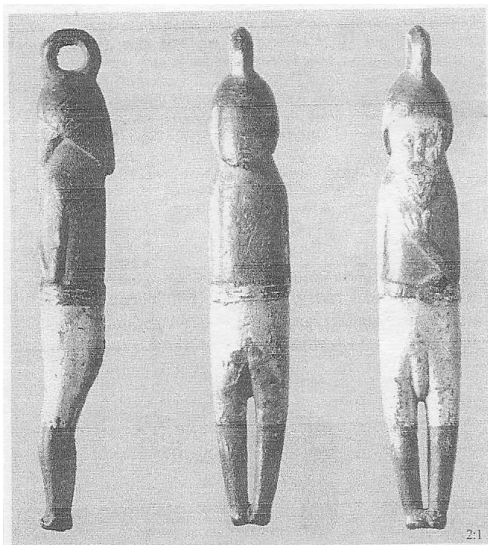


Plate IX The silver anthropomorphic pendant,
found by Adrian Charlton

Subsequently smaller excavations took place in 1999 and 2001. Bovis Homes, Wimpey Homes, and English Heritage funded the excavations. Post excavation analysis was funded by Wimpey Homes and English Heritage. The site director was Richard Mortimer, who also helped with the post excavation analysis of the 30,000 sq metre excavation areas. In his acknowledgements he thanked the following local enthusiasts for their help: Adrian Charlton who assisted with metal detection on site: Paul Durbidge for volunteering help on site and facilitating the recording of local finds; and Keith Davies of Carlton Colville Parish Council who gave valuable advice; finally The Green Jack Brewery, the Triangle Tavern, and The Bell at Carlton Colville, without whom it is said the project would not have been possible.

Pre Saxon Activity

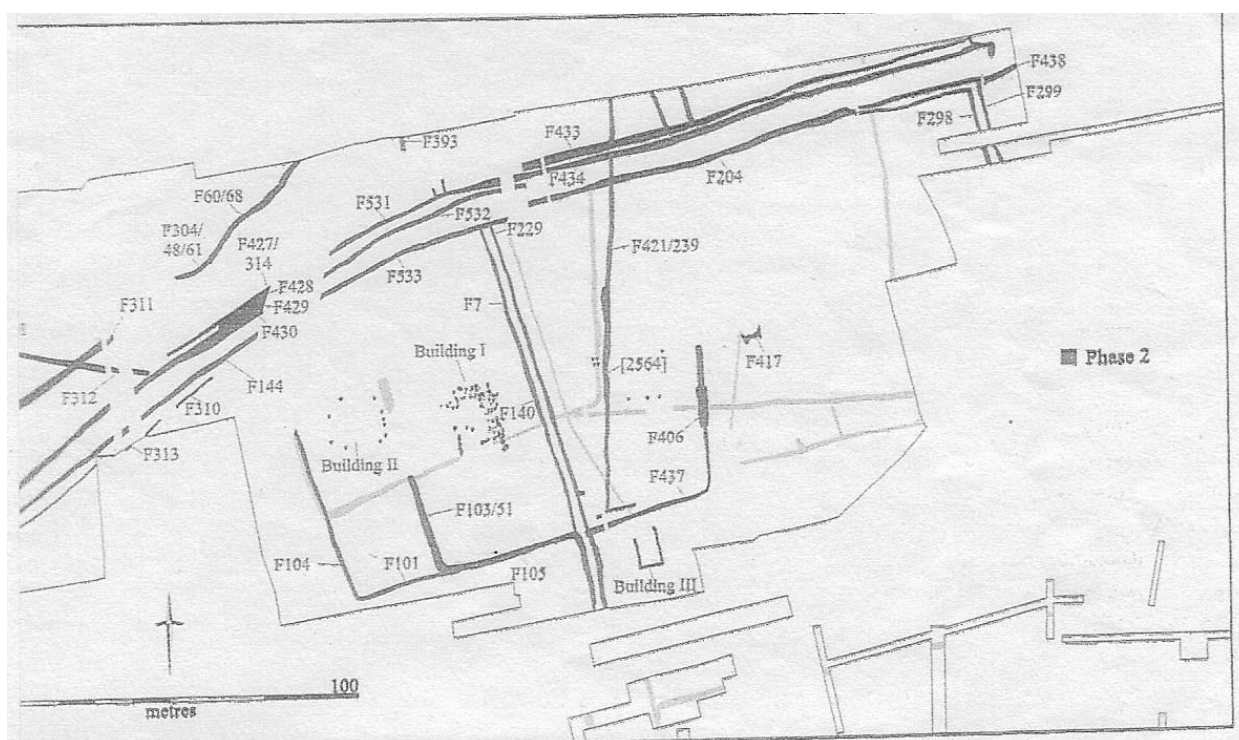
Finds of weapons and tools indicate continuous occupation of the area from the late Neolithic to the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age i.e. the 2nd millennium B.C. A recent excavation 300 metres to the south west of the site has produced evidence for at least two late Bronze Age or Iron Age roundhouses about 8 meters in diameter associated with a number of 4 post structures.

Roman Settlement

A Roman subsistence level rural farmstead was probably established in the earlier part of the 2nd century A.D. With an enclosure system and a small number of buildings. The principal feature of the enclosure system was a double ditched track, which ran from the south west to the north east of the area. The area south of the track was divided into enclosures by a number of ditches forming a rectilinear system. This was altered by a double ditched north south hedge bank, elaborated with ditches to east and west. To the north further ditches appear to demarcate more fields.

Three buildings were identified. Building one was a large post built structure to the west of the central hedge line with at least 35 large post holes and at least 74 smaller post or stake holes, occupying an area of 220 square metres, probably the main farmstead. Building two, a circular structure probably a hayrick, 150 square metres, Building three, a post in trench building, used as a barn.

The settlement probably went out of use in the late 3rd century.



Plan of
Roman
features



Cockerel brooch – silver – probably Roman

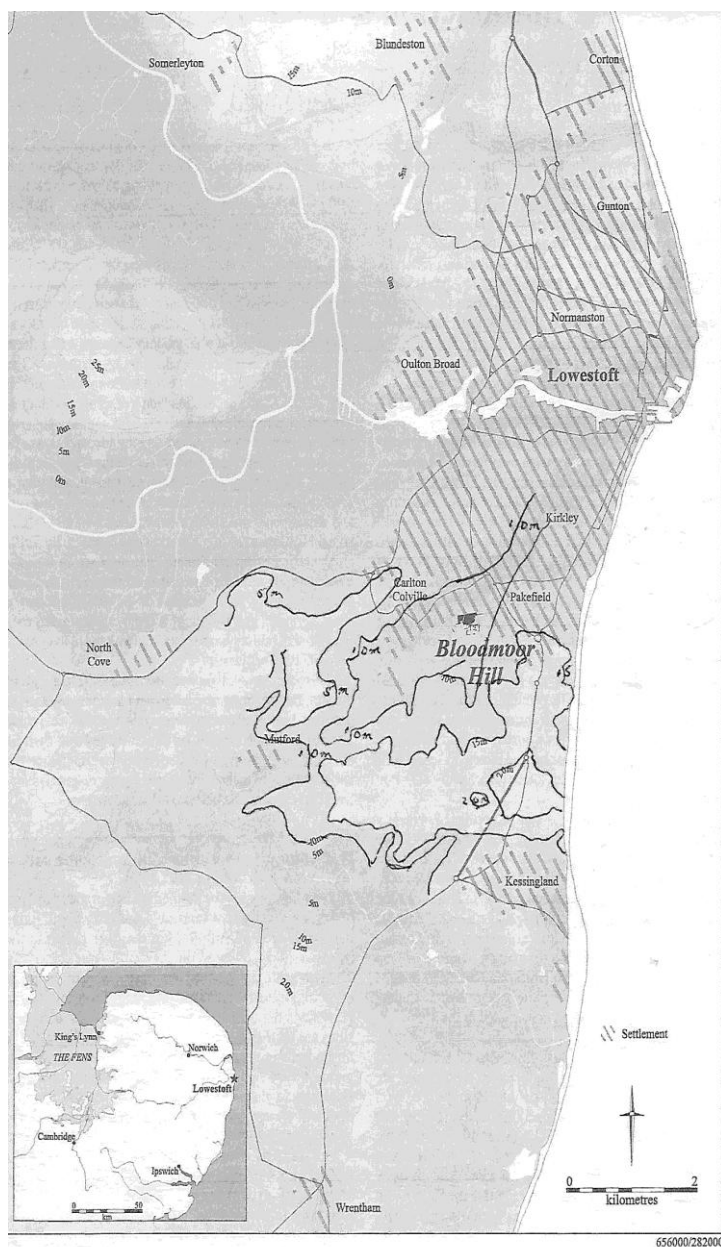
The Bloodmoor Hill Anglo Saxon settlement

The settlement was established sometime after 500AD, and was gradually emptied shortly after 700AD. Planned as a single entity, phase 1 of the settlement was characterised by a central core of nine post built structures, aligned both east-west and north-south, to the south of the roman track way. These could be focal points for family units, with the largest housing the leader of the settlement. It is also possible that wall post buildings had a second floor in the form of planks pegged across the tie beams, accessed by a step ladder, giving additional strength to the structure

and increasing the floor space. Later, probably in the 7th century, one post in trench building was added. The ground floor area varied from 33 to 66 square metres. All the wall post buildings were constructed with vertical posts spaced from .50 to 1.00 metre apart. There is no direct evidence of the type of wall cladding used. Any daub would be unlikely to survive, due to weathering, but horizontal or vertical planks or stakes might have been used. (See site plan and table).

<i>Structure</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Area (sq m)</i>	<i>Post-holes</i>	<i>Entrances</i>	<i>Internal partition</i>	<i>Alignment</i>	<i>Type</i>
39	9.30	5.30	49	42	South side?		ENE-WSW	Earthfast post-hole
40	4.70	3.30	15.5	12			ENE-WSW	Earthfast post-hole
41	8.90	5.30	47	39		East end	ENE-WSW	Earthfast post-hole
42	11.50	5.75	66	25	Opposed entrances, south and north side	West end	ENE-WSW	Post-in-trench
43	10.70	4.60	49	21	South side?	South-east side?	ENE-WSW	Earthfast post-hole
44	9.00	5.30	48	26	East side?		NNW-SSE	Earthfast post-hole
45a	8.70	4.30	37	32	Opposed entrances, south and north side?		ENE-WSW	Earthfast post-hole
45b	9.20	3.75	34.5	16			ENE-WSW	Earthfast post-hole
46	7.35	4.50	33	20			NNW-SSE	Earthfast post-hole
47	8.65	4.50	39	32	South side?		ENE-WSW	Earthfast post-hole

Activities included metalwork and butchery, which generated large amounts of waste, together with more domestic activities of weaving, woodworking, and pottery. These were confined to sunken featured buildings, many of which lay to the north in the area of the roman trackway, and which can be divided into two clearly defined categories: 0-2 post holes (26), 3-16 post holes (12), the surface areas varying from 8 to 33.4 square metres, indicating functional differences. Perhaps some of the larger ones were used as dwellings. Two post-hole derivative structures (21) had opposing gable or ridgepoles located in the centre of the short sides. Six post-hole derivative structures (3) had 2 ridge post-holes and 4 corner post-holes. Each had variations with additional post-holes, secondary or replacement posts. There is little archaeological evidence to indicate the form of the superstructure. The surface area of the SFB was often considerably larger than the base area, which was probably used as a storage area. The depth varied between .10 to .65 metres. The sides of the sunken area had no signs of collapse or erosion, which indicates some form of lining in the form of panels, planks, or turf walls. (See site plan)



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Figure 1.1 General site location, showing built-up areas and topography

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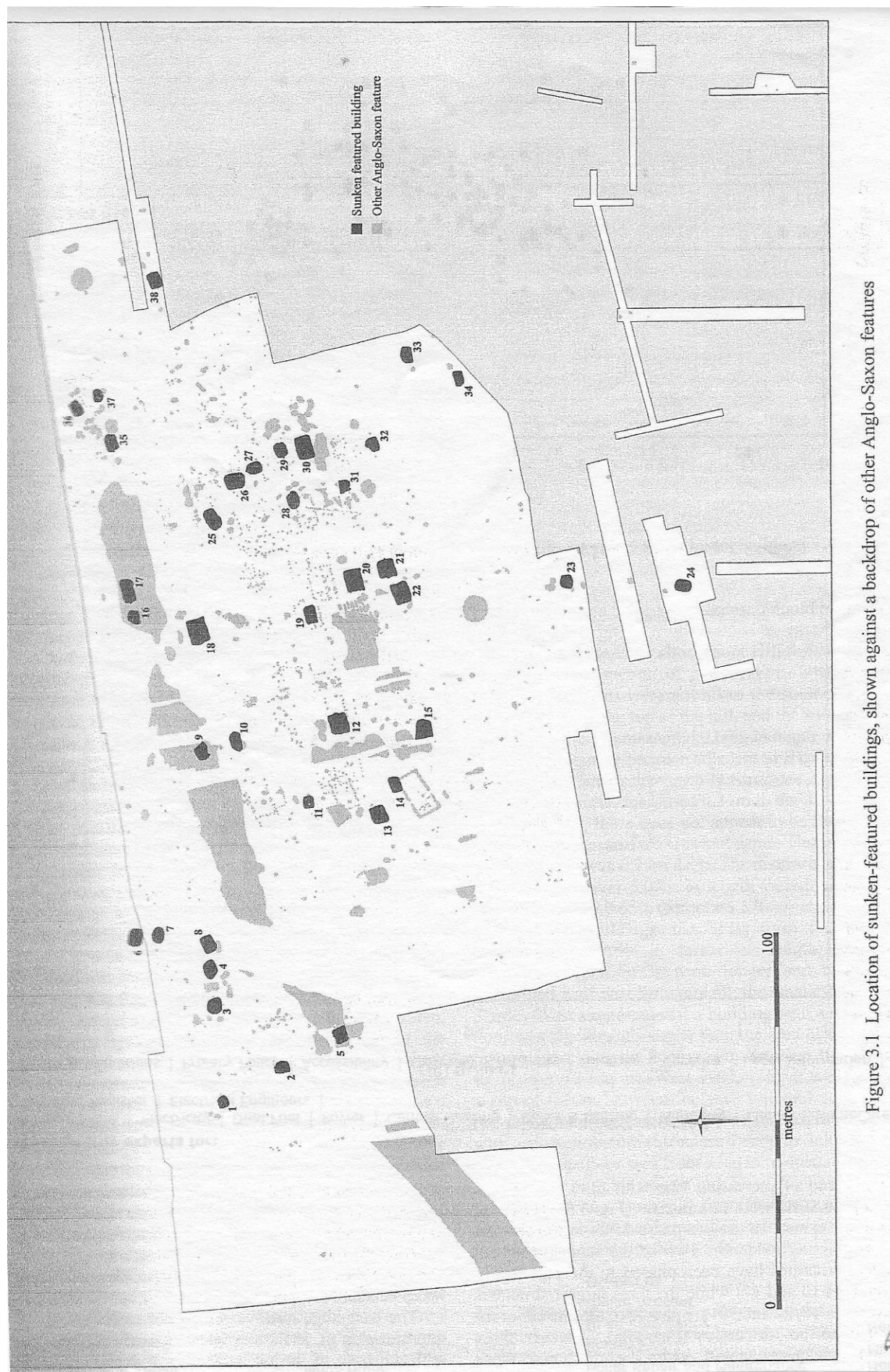
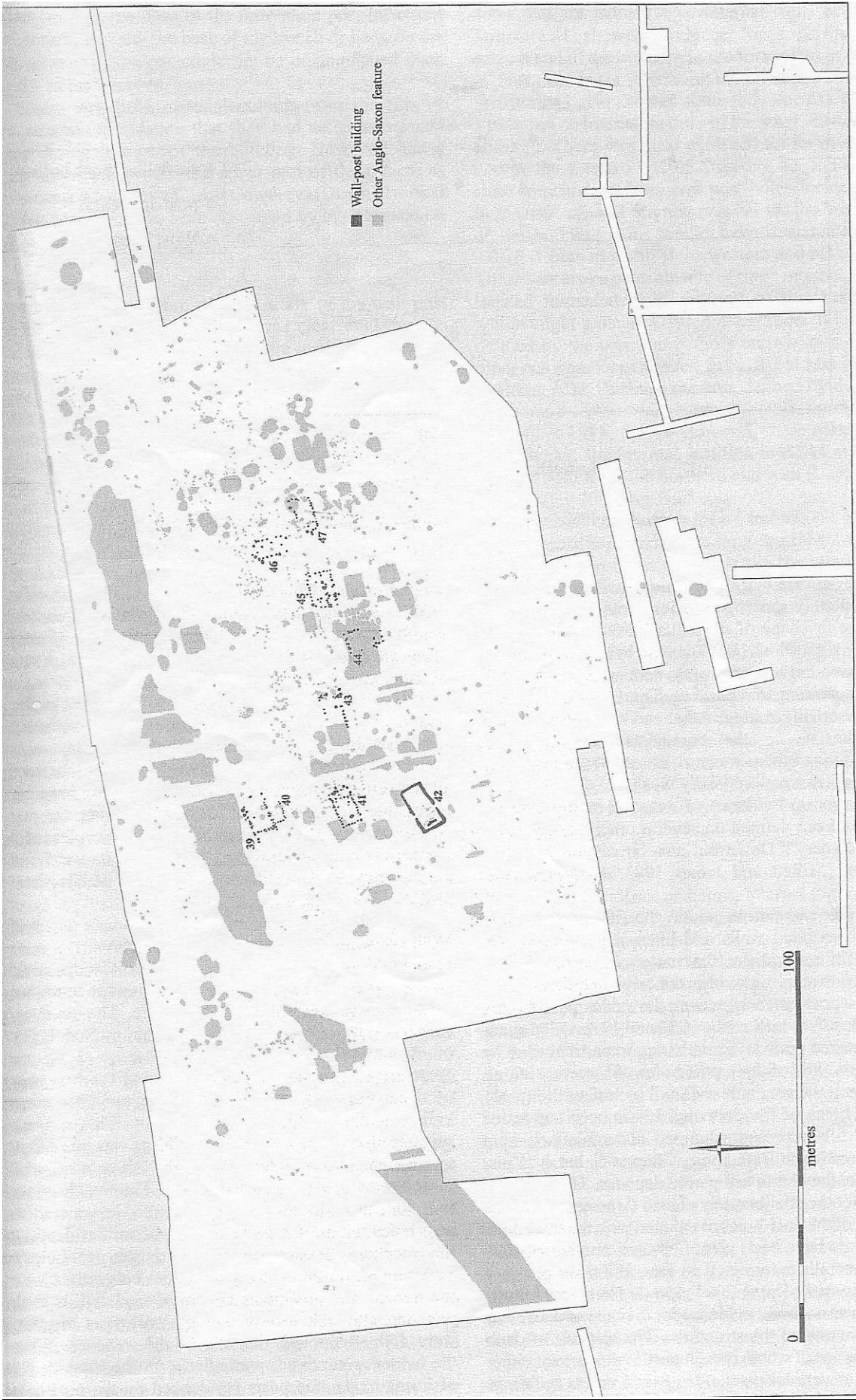


Figure 3.1 Location of sunken-featured buildings, shown against a backdrop of other Anglo-Saxon features



Agriculture

Agricultural activities were zoned, with the pasture to the north, and arable to the east. Animal bone evidence indicates that the settlement specialised in cattle production, probably trading out younger beasts, and trading in older beasts for dairying and traction, which were killed for beef. The settlement was self sufficient in pig production. Excess sheep were culled for meat when young, with the remainder used for wool production. The crops of barley, wheat, and rye, were all important to the settlement, with some indications of oats. Flax was also used for its oil and fibre, and Celtic beans were present. Collected wild food was important, hazelnuts, crab apples, and sloes. Reeds were used for thatching and strewn on floors.

Settlement on the hill was ideally located to access a number of land use resources. Significant areas of the woodland to the south east, fertile clay loam to the east for arable production, with winter and summer pasture available to the north for cattle. In addition, direct access to the natural harbour of Lake Lothing made utilisation of maritime and fishing resources easy.

Metal Working

There is extensive evidence in the form of crucibles and slag. A number of metal working tools were also identified: 4 chisels, a set of metalworking clips, a nail making plate, a file, 2 punches, a tongs, and 5 other potential tools (chisels or punches). Clips would be used to hold small items in the manner of small tweezers. 25 hones were found, used in the final stages of metal working, for the initial sharpening of tools coarser examples, finer stones for fining the cutting edge. The finer sandstones were of a later 7th century date and were probably imported from Wales, Scotland and the Midlands.

The fuel used was charcoal. Nearby coppiced woodland was probably the source. Suitable rich ores were available close to the site, but non-ferrous ores had to be imported (copper, zinc, lead, and tin).

Wood Working

Tools recovered from the settlement site are: adze hammer, paring chisels, former chisels, mortise chisels, gouges, and a round shave. The adze hammer and mortise chisel were used for heavier work, the former with a long handle, and the chisel being hammered. The remainder would be hand pressured to shape the wood for specific purposes by a carpenter or woodworker.

Leather Working

Leather would be used for belts, clothes, shoes, bags, riding equipment, and scabbards. Probable leather working tools were identified: awls, punches, and stamps. Awls were sharp and used for piercing leather. Punches were used for decoration and used on bone, wood, and metal.

Textile Production

Spindle whorls were evidence for spinning, and clay loom weights and double-ended bone pin beaters, imply the use of warp-weighted looms. Metal shears were used for cutting cloth, and needles for joining fabric.

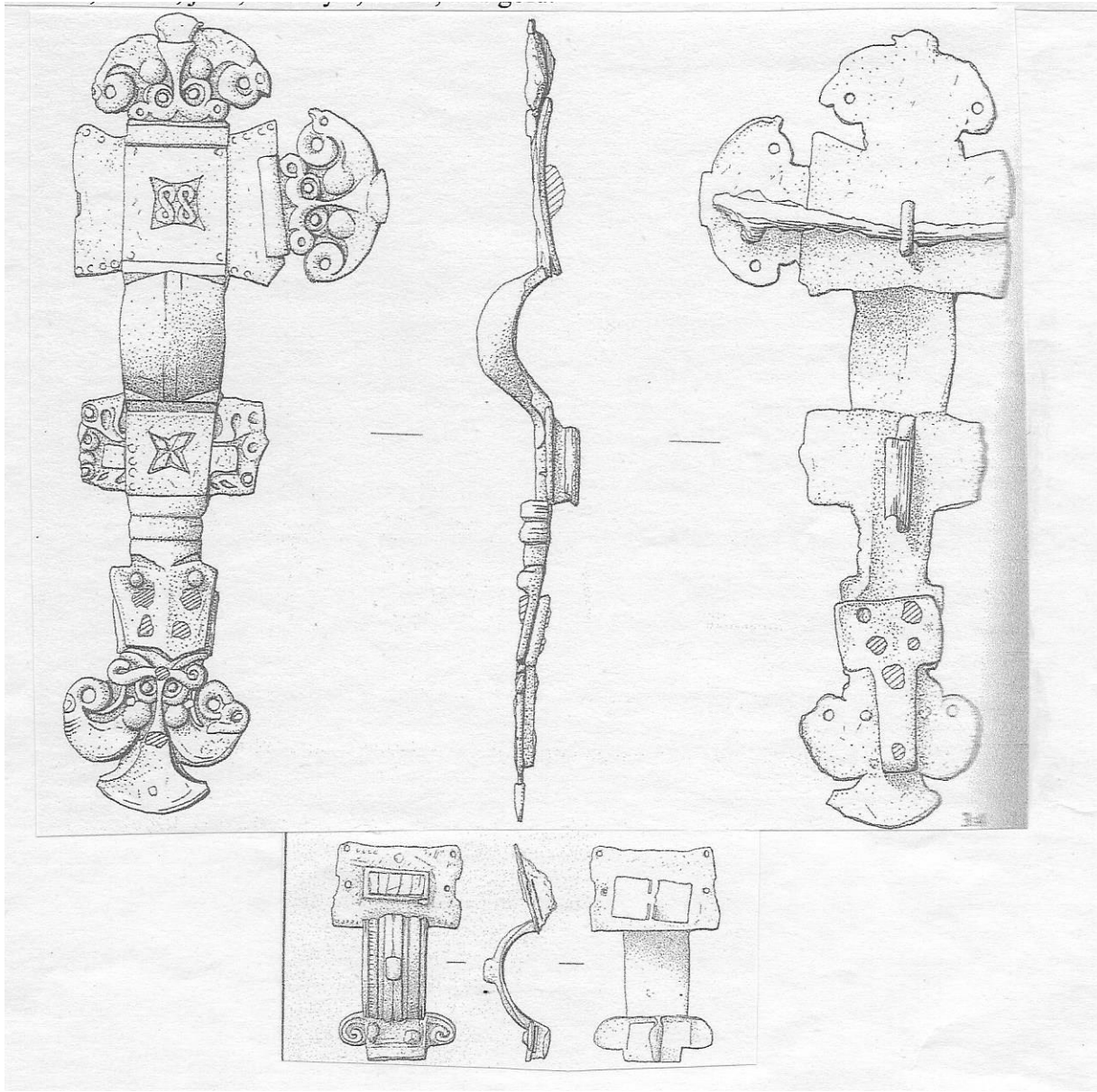
Horse Equipment and Weaponry

Bridle fragments, and snaffle bits. Arrowheads, shield boss and mounts, scabbard, and spearheads.

Artefacts

Decorative items found included finger rings, bracelets, bangles, brooches, beads, and pendants. Dress fasteners, comprised of pins, wrist clasps, and belt fittings; and chatelaine complexes. The latter were assemblages of items enclosed in material and suspended from a waist girdle between the thighs or alongside the hip, and could contain links and chain with shears and girdle hanger (a symbolic latch lifter or lift key) indicating somebody in charge of a household. Many were found in the cemetery on site. One largely complete cruciform brooch was found in the south of the area probably from a disturbed grave, and was dated to probably the 6th or early 7th century. A bow brooch old when lost in the second half of the 6th century was made of leaded copper with an uncorroded gilt surface. It was found in an Anglo Saxon pit on site. (See black and white illustrations)

Materials used were iron, copper, tin, zinc, lead, and alloys, semi precious stones, amber, jade, amethyst, silver, and gold.

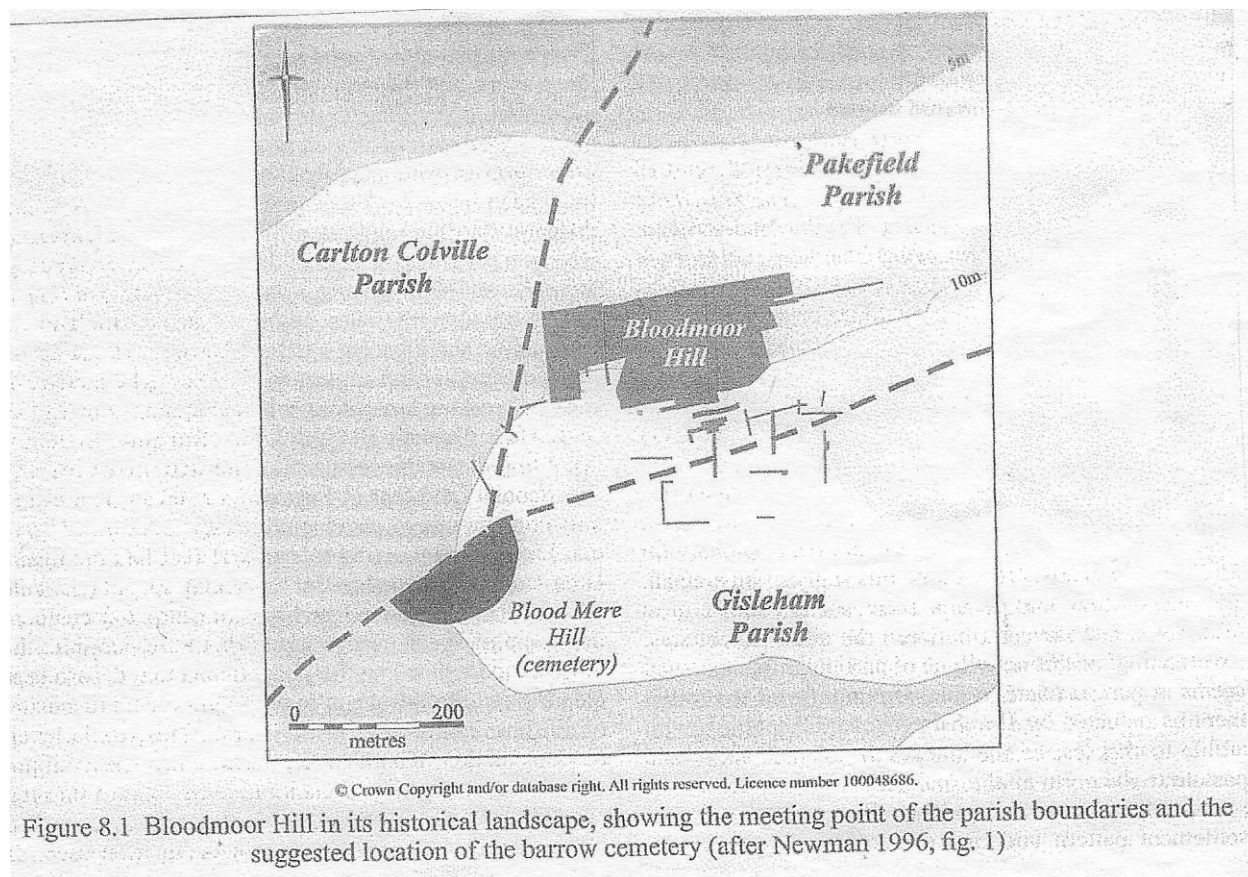


Trade

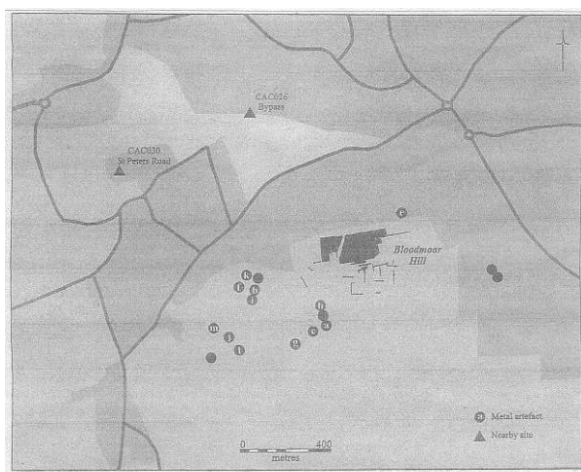
There is considerable evidence that the population of Bloodmoor Hill was integrally involved with contemporary trading networks. There is evidence of bone and antler working on the site, and different styles of brooches, and other decorative work suggests that itinerant craft workers moved around the region or their products traded across large distances.

Burials

Shortly before the end of the 6th century the settlement pattern was compressed into a smaller area to the south of the trackway. Towards the end of this phase human burial is seen within the settlement. There may have been a relocation from a more remote burial area around the barrow to the south west, representing different religious affiliations with conversions to Christianity, suggested by cross shaped pendant found in one of the graves in the settlement.



The barrow burial mound on Bloodmoor Hill was excavated in 1758. The hill itself was the site of the junction of 3 parishes: Carlton Colville, Pakefield, and Gisleham. The 1799 enclosure map of Gisleham/Pakefield labels the area Mootway Common, which indicates that the area in general, and the barrow in particular may have served as an early (pre 800) meeting place for the Mutford Hundred, to which the 3 parishes belonged, and is supported by the finds of a silver sceatta (Anglo-Saxon coin) and brooches and pendants of the 6th and 7th centuries. (Such meetings have been noted in other areas in East Anglia), Antiquarian evidence from the barrow suggests the presence in the vicinity of the barrow of an earlier flat grave cemetery dating to the 5th and 6th centuries. Items found: coins, one gold, one of copper, each with the name of Avitus, an Onyx set in gold, a necklace of rough garnets, a crystal with an engraved cross, and assorted glass beads of various sizes and colours. But the barrow burial was mid to late 7th century. That the 2 sites were being used at the same time may reflect different religions, and or, the status of the deceased, the burial mound being the grave of a person of high status. Mapping of previous antiquarian, and recent metal detection finds, help to define the location of the barrow and the flat grave cemetery, an area to the west of the main excavation. (See maps and illustrations).



Metal detection finds are 1.6a, fragment of a complete disc brooch.

B, brooch fragment.

C, 6th century gold pendant.

D, brooch.

E, quatrefoil brooch (Frankish) found in Deepdale.

F-I, pieces of cruciform brooches.

M, 8-9th century caterpillar ansate brooch.

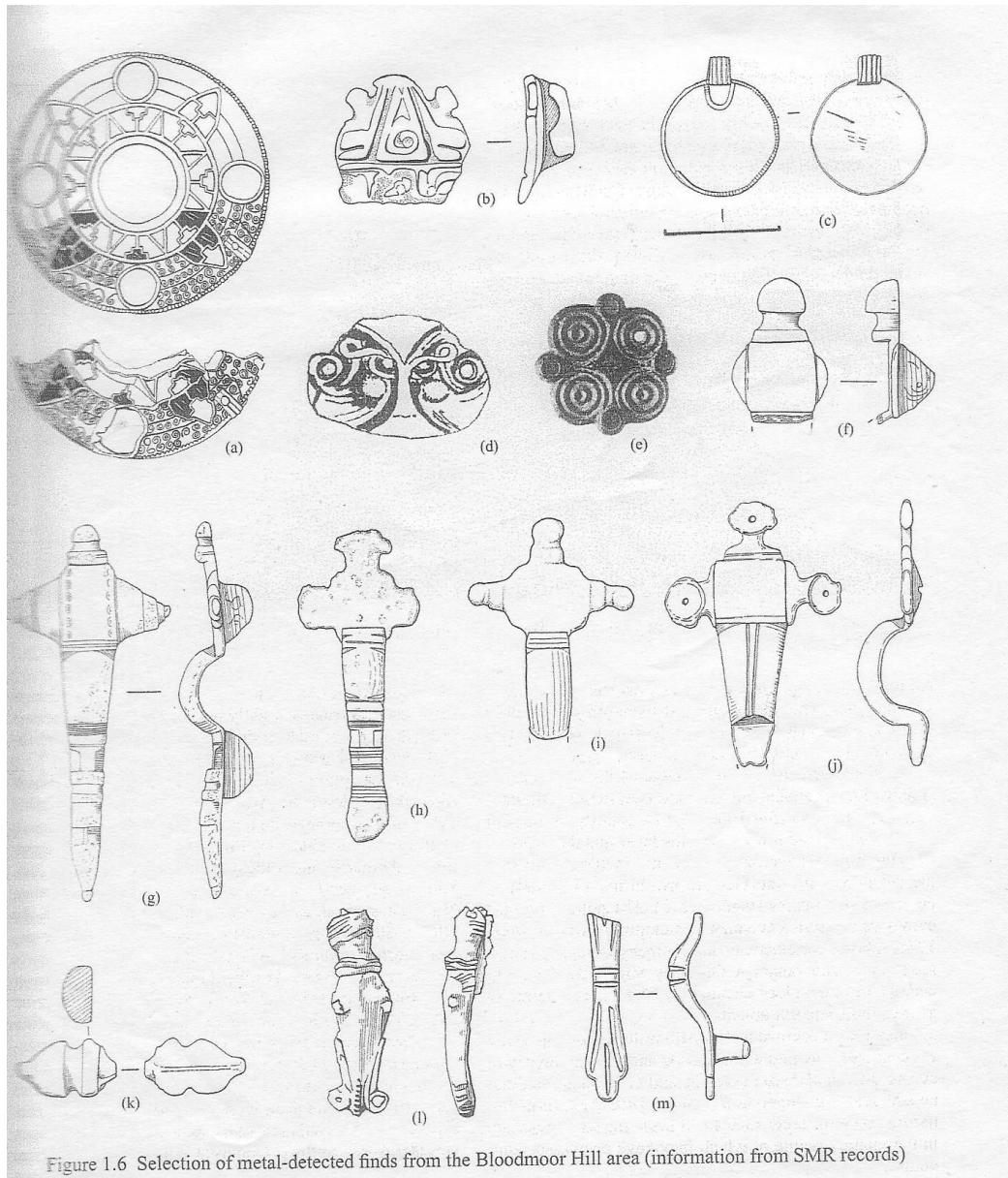


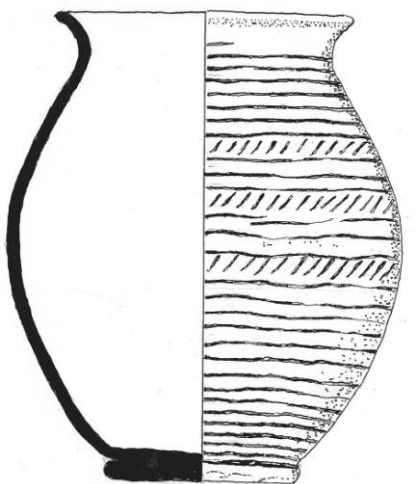
Figure 1.6 Selection of metal-detected finds from the Bloodmoor Hill area (information from SMR records)

The end of the settlement appears to have been a gradual abandonment. The end of burials on site around 670-680 would suggest this. Perhaps the death of the head of an important household was a key cause, or because it was decided to relocate the settlement around the newly founded manor and parish church of Carlton Colville.

BRONZE AGE POTTERY FROM COVEHITHE, SUFFOLK – Paul Durbidge

It was during the 1960's when I first visited Covehithe and it was a time when, along with another young family, we would take the children there at weekends either to enjoy the freedom of the beach and then heathland, or to spend time beside the lagoons at nearby Benacre Broad. It really was an idyllic spot with bitterns calling in the reed beds and terns and plovers nesting amongst the stones and debris on the beach, whilst in the nearby copse, we would see and hear green woodpeckers. But as time progressed it was very noticeable that considerable changes were taking place as a result of severe erosion and this, in turn, resulted in the uncovering of many archaeological features. Such was the severity of destruction, that high seas were stripping off much of the upper part of the low cliff, uncovering both army and archaeological features as well as sharply lowering beach levels. By the next tide the picture had completely changed, with oncoming sea throwing a carpet of shingle over the features, often to a depth of 40cm and I found myself visiting the location virtually every day. The soft high cliffs also suffered badly with vast amounts being brought down exposing pits and a number of timber lined well shafts in section with the lower part of one standing clear of the cliff line. It was to be several years before the destruction began to lessen before again increasing, this time further north. Objects were still being recovered including some extremely important Palaeolithic finds from a totally unexpected area. Later, Bronze Age pottery was recovered some distance away.

Covehithe is one of those locations which sometimes goes very quiet for some time and one could be forgiven for thinking that nothing more will come to light then, for no reason at all, it all kicks off again. An example of this was during early February 2015, when I was contacted by my brother-in-law, who had been shown some pottery by David Ruffles, who was trying to find out which period it dated from. Apparently David, together with his young son Dylan, had recovered the greater part of a small earthenware pot whilst walking along the beach at Covehithe during November 2014. I have known David for several years and in conversation he mentioned that they had been walking along the foot of the cliffs in the vicinity of Cove Broad, when the remains were seen protruding out of wind-blown sand, just over a metre down from present ground level. With the young lad more agile than his father, he carefully made his way up the loose scree and recovered three pieces of a decorated earthenware pot before making his way back down to the comparative safety of the beach below. Recognising that this was something different they then carefully carried the remains to their car some 1½ miles distant, before making the journey home. When I finally



BEAKER VESSEL OF BRONZE AGE DATE
FROM COVEHITHE SUFFOLK
HEIGHT 134 MM WIDTH 112 MM

saw the remains, I identified them as being from the late Neolithic – Early Bronze age period and that they were from a small decorated beaker. It measured just over 134mm in height, 112mm at the waist and it had a rim diameter of 85mm. Examination of the sides showed a fairly constant thickness of 5mm while the small round base measured 51mm across a slightly hollowed profile. The fractured edges showed a heavily gritted fabric and the fresh breaks indicated additional remains were either still in the cliff face, or in the mass of wind-blown soil and sand heaped against the base of the cliff. The pottery was decorated with horizontal grooved lines scoured into the clay along with three bands of angled grooves. These were positioned 35mm, 55mm and finally 75mm down from the rim. The pottery was a sandy yellow in colour both internally and externally although the broken edges showed a somewhat greyish colour. There were no signs of internal staining and, in conversation with the finder, there were no signs of any dark soil or even traces of bone where the vessel was found. I visited the location shortly after seeing the remains in the slim hope of finding additional shards but, with three months since the discovery, there was not much hope of that

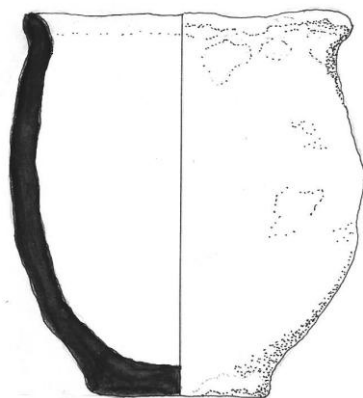
given the continual movement of wind-blown sand.

After a further two weeks, I returned to the location and as a result of winds removing some of the built up sand, it was more productive and allowed a clearer look at the upper part of the cliff. There were clear indications of two intrusions containing small rounded stones approximately 30cm below the visible plough- line and close searching produced a light grey bi-facially worked leaf arrowhead, 42mm long by 19mm across. Later, a small dark grey

secondary flake was picked up at the base of the cliff along with a small light grey burnt flint. These additional finds reminded me of the time some 40 years earlier when the field was under plough and well-weathered and I carried out a search on the lower slopes on the opposite side. I remember the day very clearly. It was early summer and amongst the occasional small round pebbles at this point a burnt hammerstone was picked up along with a couple of extremely fine, well-worked scrapers and I wondered if there were more to come. Several years later there was, but it was from the other side of the Broad. Two narrow butted bronze axe heads were found along with a flat copper axehead.

Shortly after this, part of a cremation urn was seen in the upper face of the cliff by a man and his wife on a Sunday afternoon walk. Half of the vessel had already fallen to the beach below where it lay in fragments but we were able to recover the remainder. Prior to its difficult removal, near-black soil containing very small pieces of white bone could be seen in section, still being retained by the walls of the vessel. It was not an easy task to slowly remove the soil enclosing the remains before gently easing it into a large cardboard box as it involved my hanging onto the face of the cliff holding the box. Benacre Estates were informed of the discovery the next day and the box and its contents were later taken to the Archaeological Unit at Bury St Edmunds. Here the contents were examined in detail and a small part of a finger bone indicated that the remains were from a child of 13 to 14 years of age although the gender was not known.

Sometime after this discovery and further north, Adrian Charlton found a thick decorated body shard, again from a Bronze Age vessel, in the upper part of the high cliff. The body shard had been decorated with a series of thin half-round marks in the clay and these could equally have been the result of using a shell or even thumb nails.



SMALL COILED BRONZE AGE POT
FROM COVEHITHE SUFFOLK
HEIGHT 85MM 82MM AT WAIST

It was to be a month before I again visited the site of the recent finds, this time with unexpected results. The day was bright and dry and a strong wind was blowing along the beach. Over the previous weeks it had rasped away at the soft cliff leaving most of the small pebbles exposed in the cliff face with the upper mixed soils also noticeably scoured out. There had been some small cliff falls but it was possible, with the aid of a stick, to get reasonably close to the top to see what was happening. As on previous visits, visual searching showed the intrusions had been highlighted by the continual action of the wind and now stood out clearly as infills or pits. A surprise awaited near one of the features where, on a small shallow ledge, lay a small light brown coloured clay pot. It was partially covered by wind-blown acid soil and lay on its side and apart from a couple of shards, it was complete. Like the earlier vessel, it appeared to have been released from the soft cliff face by continual wind action and, given a few more days, it would have rolled down the cliff where it would have been lost or broken up. With my fingers, I gently worked around the small pot, loosening it from the soil and sand, before sliding it into a plastic bag complete with its

content of sand. Upon returning home, the pot and its contents were allowed to dry out before any attempt was made to remove the sand. Once dry, the contents, of now loose sand, were easily removed using a cocktail stick thus finally exposing the interior for the first time. The vessel was the shape of a small beaker and had been made by coiling leaving quite irregular surfaces. It measured 85mm in height and 77mm across the crude upturned rim and there were several finger- or thumb-marks around the base of the neck where the rim had been brought up. It was 82mm across the waist and where the shards were missing, the walls appeared quite thick for such a small pot measuring between 6mm and 9mm and when standing up, it appeared quite misshapen and also quite crude.

It is hoped that both of these discoveries will be displayed in Lowestoft Museum in Nicholas Everett Park for the 2016 season.

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN COMPASS STREET, LOWESTOFT, SUFFOLK – by Paul Durbidge

Prior to a housing development by Dove-Jefferson Homes Ltd in Compass street, an evaluation of the site was carried out by an archaeological team between 1 August and 3 August 2012 and as a direct result of the outcome, an archaeological investigation later followed and this was carried out in the period 19 September and 3 October 2012. A “watching brief” followed, from 4 October 2012 to 30 May 2013.

The plot was initially evaluated by the excavation of three evaluation trenches in order to give a 5% sample of the area. All three trenches contained archaeological features. Trench 1 was situated in the north-east corner of the site and here late medieval/early post-medieval pits and a cobbled surface were exposed. The cobbled surface was probably the market place surface in post-medieval period. Deposits in Trench 2 had undergone a large amount of disruption due to large cuts for services however, a layer containing dumped material survived at the base of the sequence. Trench 3 contained several post-holes and pits of probable late medieval/post-medieval date.

The area subject to an excavation was located at the southern side of the site (in the position of Trench 3) and a series of largely small pits and post-holes and patches of clay (which were probably clay footings) were recorded. Several of the post-holes seemed to form patterns which along with the clay footings appeared to preserve traces of a timber-framed building, which was dismantled in the later medieval or post-medieval period. A small annexe to this building appeared to be situated in the south-east corner. Due to the presence of metal working debris in small pits located wholly within this annexe, it perhaps represented a forge or specialised metal craft area.

A watching brief was undertaken on drainage trenches situated in the area of New Block 1 in the north-east corner of the development site and a large soakaway at the centre of the site. A part of an 18th/19th century cellar was observed in the north-eastern area of the site.

My thanks to Richard Hogget from the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service at Bury St Edmunds for providing the above requested information. Paul.

SOME ABRADED TILES ON PAKEFIELD BEACH, SUFFOLK – by Paul Durbidge

Over the last six months or so, the remains of Romano-British roofing tiles and part of a brick have been picked up on Pakefield beach. The remains are the usual soft red colour and have been considerably abraded by sea action. The brick is 38mm thick with square sides and, like the tile, it has been cast on rough ground. With the exception of one, the upstands have been deliberately removed for some reason and on one, the remains of the circular sweep is still usable on the flat area. It is highly likely that these recent remains originally came from near Pontins where, in 1995, Romano-British tiles and associated pottery were recovered – again as a result of erosion.

These discoveries were made by Adrian Charlton, who was also involved in the recovery of the previous material. A subsequent report was later included in the Annual report of the Lowestoft Archaeological and Local History Society, Volume 29, 1996/97.

The Grave of the German soldier – by Ron Ashman

In the churchyard near the north door of Pakefield church is the grave of a German soldier. This is the last resting place of Lieutenant Leopold Schultze who served in the 1st Hussars, King's German Legion. His last campaign was at the Battle of Waterloo when he fought at the farmhouse of La Haye Sainte.

Leopold Sigismund Schultze served as an NCO before receiving his commission on 17 September 1810, becoming Lieutenant on 19 November 1811. He had served in the expedition to the Baltic in 1807; in the Peninsula from 1809 to 1813; the campaign in the South of France 1813 to 1814; in the Netherlands in 1814 and at the Battle of Waterloo. He was decorated for his service in the Peninsula and at Waterloo. In 1816 he was placed on half pay.

I would like to thank Jerry Lacey for sending the above information to me. RA

So why is a German officer buried in Pakefield? Searching on 'Find My Past' revealed that Leopold had been born in Hanover in 1782. He married a lady called Mary Anne Rous on 7 May 1817 in Ufford, Suffolk, where the groom's parish is listed as the German Legion. Mary Anne was born in South Walsham, Norfolk, in 1794. She had a sister called Happy, who was baptised in Beccles in 1805, with the surname Rouse.

The only census that lists Leopold, and Mary Anne, is the one for 1851, when they are recorded as living in the High Street in Southwold. Unfortunately it does not record the house number, but his occupation is given as Lieutenant, Hussars Queen's German Legion. Leopold is living with his wife, his sister-in-law (now Happy Button), and a German lodger who is a Professor of Foreign Languages and Music. From passenger lists of ships arriving in England, a Leopold Schultze, Lieutenant late of the German Legion, and a lady, arrived at the Port of London on 9 March 1846. Which is probably why they were not recorded in the earlier Census.

I have not been able to find out when he moved to Pakefield, nor where he lived, but Leopold died in 1857 at the age of 75 and was buried on 5 August of that year in All Saints & St Margaret church-yard. After Leopold's death Mary Anne appears to have moved to Woodbridge to live with Jacob Button, a brickmaker, and his wife, where she is listed as an aunt. Mary Anne died in 1884 and is buried in Woodbridge cemetery.

At the Battle of Waterloo the Allied Army under the Duke of Wellington was a coalition of British, Dutch, Belgian and German soldiers. The French army, under Napoleon Bonaparte, had around 69,000 soldiers and consisted of 48,000 infantry, 14,000 cavalry, and 7,000 artillery having 250 guns.

Wellington's troops consisted of 67,000 men: 50,000 infantry, 11,000 cavalry, and 6,000 artillery having 150 guns. Of these, 25,000 were British, with another 6,000 from the King's German Legion. All of the British Army troops were regular soldiers with 7,000 of them being Peninsular War veterans, which included Leopold.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Waterloo_-_cite_note-22

At one end of the Allied Army battle line was the château, garden and orchard of [Hougoumont](#), which was a large and well-built country house. At the other end was the hamlet of Papelotte. Both Hougoumont and Papelotte were fortified and garrisoned, and thus anchored Wellington's flanks securely. About in the middle and in front of the rest of Wellington's line, was the farmhouse and orchard of [La Haye Sainte](#), which was garrisoned with 400 light infantry of the [King's German Legion](#).

During the battle the French repeatedly attacked La Haye Sainte and eventually they were successful, partly because the King's German Legion's ammunition ran out. But these brave soldiers had held the centre of the battlefield for almost the entire day, which had stalled the French advance.