

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

53, Gainsborough Drive,
Gunton,
Lowestoft,
Suffolk,
NR 32 4 NJ.

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.

In the last couple of years I have given emphasis to our activities in 2015. We celebrated the 30th Anniversary of the opening of Broad House by Her Majesty the Queen on the 1st August 1985, and the very important work in 2015/16, primarily by the members of the Management Committee, in carrying out the Review of our Forward Plan in relation to the Accreditation of the Museum. Although my Report is inevitably shorter this year, it is important to stress how well the members of the Management Committee have continued to work so very well together under the leadership of David Curl. I also wish to give recognition to the sterling work throughout the year in many areas from Irene O'Toole, the Secretary, to both the Management Committee and the Trustees.

I have always said that Broad House Museum has provided an excellent museum service comparable to that found in any large city or small city such as our neighbouring Norwich. Our many visitors during the season are able to learn of the wonderful heritage and history of Lowestoft, and most importantly, so can the people of our own community. For this standard, 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.

At the time of writing this Report the proposals of Waveney District Council for establishing a Town Council for Lowestoft and a Parish Council for Oulton Broad have been announced. Briefly, the Broad House Museum building is to be transferred to the new Oulton Broad Parish Council, which will then own the building and the lease it to the Museum Trust to operate. The "Lowestoft Collection", which is on loan to the Museum Trust from Waveney District Council, is to be transferred to the new Town Council. This relates to some very special exhibits currently belonging to Waveney, but on display in the Museum, including the very special and historical Lowestoft porcelain together with a number of special paintings.

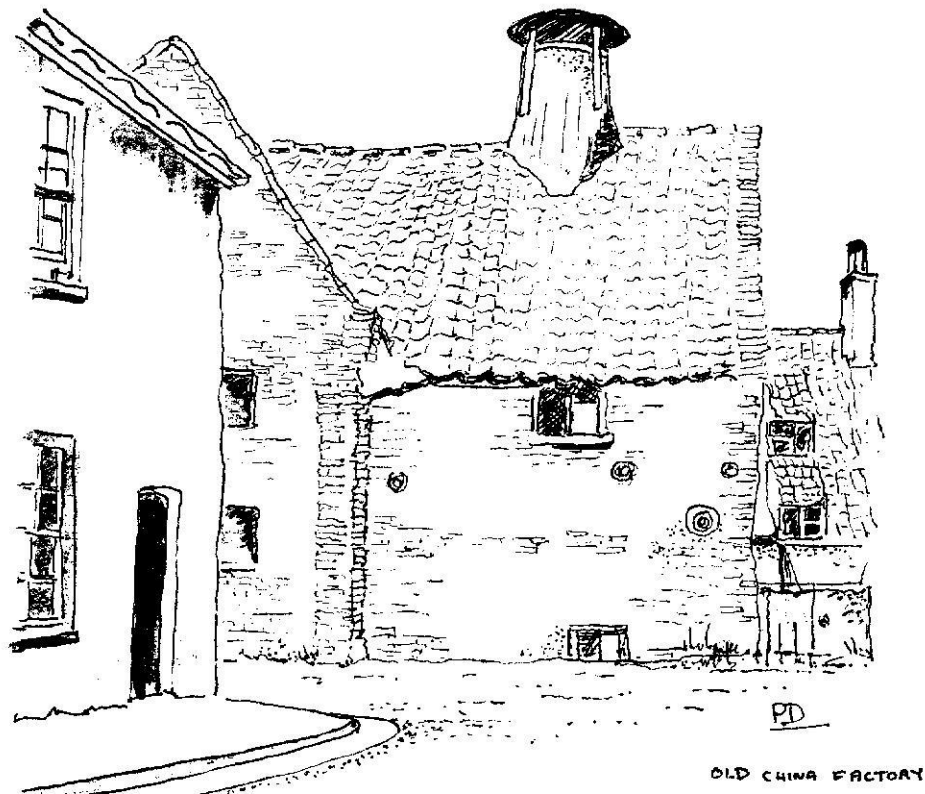
As a Trust we have always worked well with the Councillors and officers of Waveney District Council and following discussions with my fellow Trustees, I can say that we hope, during the next 12 months, we can meet with appropriate representatives of the District Council, the new Town Council and Oulton Parish Council, to ensure that under the new regime the quality and cost of providing this excellent museum service can continue and be recognised as one amongst the best of museums, not only across the County of Suffolk, but also across the wider East Anglia.

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 face the future challenges referred to above. 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 Rodney Duerden and so to Rodney 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.

January 2017.



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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Society has continued to thrive thanks to the 13 varied and interesting talks arranged by the programme secretary, commencing, as has become a regular fixture, with Terry Weatherly's latest research into local churches. Another notable feature of the meetings has been the increased number of visitors, especially when the speaker is well known, which suggests that the display of posters advertising the talks is reaching a wider audience than just members. Accounts of all the presentations in 2016 will be found in this annual report.

The annual winter meal was again held at Lowestoft College on February 4th, but with a later start time and increased cost (as well as illness), fewer members were able to attend. A review will take place to arrange a more acceptable format.

On April 8th, following a talk about the Morse family and its brewery, Society members were able to visit the remains of that factory, now occupied by the Crown Artist Brush Company and enjoy a special commemorative drink with fish and chips.

At the AGM in May, Marilyn Duerden asked to stand down, owing to ill health, and so Rodney Duerden was promoted to chairman.

The summer outing to a local church and meal organised again by Jenny Hatton, was to Ilketshall St. Andrew's, one of numerous ancient churches serving the scattered villages of 'off the beaten track' Suffolk. This visit together with the talk on 'The Angel Roofs of East Anglia, emphasises the amazing heritage which is available in our local area. The meal which followed the visit was enjoyed at the Three Horseshoes in North Cove.

Don Friston's valuable contributions to the Society and its Newsletter over the years have been rightly commemorated. Latterly Ron Ashman, who has taken over these tasks in addition to those of Secretary, also deserves our grateful thanks.

The autumn programme continued successfully as advertised with the addition of a visit to the War Memorial Museum in Sparrows Nest Park on the evening of September 29th. This was fascinating in several ways especially for those who had families in Lowestoft during the war. The town was the most bombed place in Britain relative to the size of population, and later, a special fund raising event on December 6th, was held, again at Desmond's in Kirkley, where a meal was accompanied by two talks from Society members; Richard Mundy on Robert Fitzroy (captain of the Beagle and founder weather forecaster) and Janis Kirby on local artist G. V. Burwood, painter of many sea and landscapes in and near Lowestoft. The latter talk was severely curtailed by lack of time so we are fortunate that it will feature later in the season.

It is a testament to the work and devotion of all the committee members that the Society has maintained its high standards again this year. They all deserve our thanks.

MEMBERSHIP 2016 - 2017

Honorary Life member: Mr P Durbidge

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

OBITUARIES

It is with much sadness that we heard Don Friston had died on 13 October. Don had been a Society member for many years and was elected to the committee in 2005, where he contributed much to the meetings. That same year he took over as Newsletter editor and held that position until this year. With his background in the printing industry this gave him the knowledge to prepare the artwork for the posters and the membership renewal form. Don had originally been diagnosed with cancer 12 years ago, but was always positive and cheerful even though the cancer returned. Don was well liked, well respected and will be missed.

Society member Pamela James passed away Friday 5 August, aged 84 years. Pamela had been a secretary, then a PA before becoming a teacher, and taught at the Harris Girls School, St Mary's Convent and the Worlingham Middle School. Pamela will be missed.

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS OF THE SOCIETY 2015 – 2016

INCOME

<u>2014/2015</u>		<u>2015/2016</u>
713.00	Membership Fees	726.00
125.50	Visitors	132.00
32.00	Annual Reports	57.50
110.00	Gifts and Donations	0.00
7.00	Fund Raising	80.00
28.00	Sundry	50.00
80.00	Great Hospital visit	na
0.96	Deposit Account Interest	0.96
379.50	Xmas Social College Meal Feb.15	na
na	Xmas Social College Meal Feb.16	286.00
1475.96		1332.46
	Cash and Bank Balances at 1/4/15	
	Cash in hand 75.05	
	Current Account 726.04	
	Deposit Account 1727.86	
	2528.95	2528.95
		3861.41

EXPENDITURE

<u>2014/2015</u>		<u>2015/2016</u>
155.00	Lecturers Fees	320.00
242.00	Charitable Donations	25.00
336.00	Room Hire	336.00
15.81	Postage, Printing and Stationery	11.87
33.35	Annual Report costs	83.40
25.00	Suffolk Local History Council	25.00
5.00	Miscellaneous	0.00
75.00	Great Hospital visit	na
379.50	Xmas Social. . . . College Meal Feb.15	na
na	Xmas Social. . . . College Meal Feb.16	286.00
1266.66		1087.27
	Cash and Bank Balances at 31/3/16	
	Cash in hand 27.68	
	Current Account 1017.64	
	Deposit Account 1728.82	
	2774.14	2774.14
		3861.41

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

Laptop £250, Digital Projector £15.

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 2016 and agreed the entries to the supporting documentation.

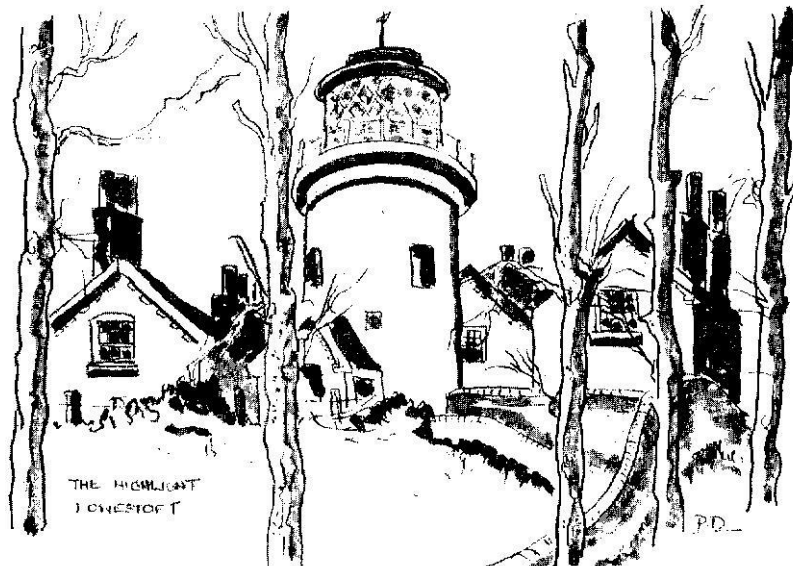
The financial statements have been reviewed solely for the confidential use of the Lowestoft Archaeological and Local History Society and may not be relied upon for any other purposes whatsoever.

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, 26th May 2016.



MUSEUM REPORT

During the closed winter season of 2015/2016, physical work continued to refurbish displays and although Suffolk Archaeology are reclaiming some of their items, others will be made available as well as some from the Museum's collection. In addition, numerous hours were spent by committee members on the paperwork needed for re-accreditation. One of the main elements required was "forward planning" for which professional help and funding from SHARE was made available. In the course of this process, plans for future displays were discussed including another possible loan from British Museum, of which Bronze Age artefacts from the Somerleyton Hoard may be possible.

The new CCTV cameras and screen has enhanced the security of the Museum as well as informing stewards at the desk how much time visitors spend in different rooms.

Work started and proceeded in stages to clear water from the cellar. There is a sump at the lowest point and in it a pump has been installed which activates if the water level rises. However, water is still evident in the cellar and means that the space cannot be used for any kind of storage.

On the last Saturday of the school holidays, a family day took place with Travels in Time providing their usual array of historic re-enactments outside and there were additional activities inside. As a result of keeping accurate records of visitors, it was decided that a similar day in 2017 would be held on a Sunday when greater numbers of people are in the park.

Before Lyn Gash retired in October (replaced by Jayne Austin), she obtained funding from the Arts Council for a freelance Project Officer to engage with the local population, in conjunction with Lowestoft Rising, and attract new volunteers to work at the three museums in the town. This will be an 18 month project on which a fuller report will be possible at the end of 2017.

During this recent closed period, a regular team of skilled volunteers have been cleaning and re-arranging displays. The most striking improvement has been the replacing of older lighting with first class ceiling lights which will make a big difference to visitor appreciation of the whole collection.

The Museum opened on March 21st and visitor numbers were encouraging but as usual a lot depends on the weather especially during the holidays. By the end of October there had been 9,194 visits including 2,162 children, well up on 2014 and 2015 but just below the record figure for 2013. Donations increased as did sales in the shop, all of which bears tribute to the fine team of volunteers who have worked tirelessly throughout the year.

LOWESTOFT MUSEUM							
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT							
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016							
				2016		2015	
Income							
	Donations and fundraising			2,732.08		2,627.25	
	WDC			100.00		-	
	AsFM grant received in 2014			750.00		-	
	Expenses claim - Making Museums Family Friendly			136.25		-	
	EDP Community Chest Vouchers			500.00		-	
	Forward Planning Grant			1,000.00		-	
	Interest from National Savings			149.04		129.64	
	Shop and book sales			2,373.84		2,146.90	
				<u>7,741.21</u>		<u>4,903.79</u>	
Expenses							
	WDC - share of donations		1,366.04			1,240.46	
	Display and maintenance		2,136.12			188.16	
	Subscriptions		180.20			155.80	
	CCTV		89.90			489.99	
	Insurance		1,109.23			959.00	
	Activity days		-			-	
	Lowestoft Museums 5% share of HLF grant expenses		695.66			-	
	2014 Activity days not covered by grant		150.00			-	
	Sundries		77.57			285.92	
	Printing, stationery and postage		84.75			36.72	
	Laptop		155.00			-	
	Expenses - Making Museums Family Friendly		136.25			-	
	Expenses - Forward plan		1,000.00			-	
	Shop purchases		453.33			923.73	
				<u>7,634.05</u>		<u>4,279.78</u>	
	Profit for the year			<u>107.16</u>		<u>624.01</u>	
BALANCE SHEET							
Current Assets							
	Forward Planning Grant			1,000.00		-	
	Cash in hand			0.66		119.95	
	Bank current account			4,187.27		6,842.75	
	Business reserve account			9.51		9.51	
	National Savings account			20,020.49		19,871.45	
				<u>25,217.93</u>		<u>26,843.66</u>	
Current Liabilities							
	Grant money not yet spent			-		3,112.92	
	Grant money to be repaid to HLF			2,112.00		-	
	Creditors			32.99		764.96	
	Net Current Liabilities			<u>23,072.94</u>		<u>22,965.78</u>	
Funded by							
	Balance at 1 April 2013			22,965.78		22,341.77	
	Profit for the year			107.16		624.01	
	Total funds			<u>23,072.94</u>		<u>22,965.78</u>	

REPORTS OF MEETINGS

28 January 2016 – “Suffolk Churches Great and Small” – by Terry Weatherley

Terry started his talk by describing the Holy Trinity church at Blythburgh, the very large building sometimes called the cathedral of the marshes. In AD654 a battle was fought at Blythburgh in which King Anna, the nephew of King Raedwald of the East Angles, was killed by King Penda of Mercia. King Raedwald is thought to be buried at Sutton Hoo. Later a shrine was founded to King Anna that could have been located within a church, possibly on the site of the present one.

Holy Trinity was built in the 15th century when Blythburgh was a busy port, and the church reflects its wealth and grandeur. The decline of the church coincided with that of the port.

During a great storm in 1577 the steeple on the tower fell into the nave during a service, killing a man and a boy. The claw marks on the north door are believed to have been caused by a lightning bolt during the storm, although the congregation were convinced that the devil had visited them that day and made the marks on the door as he left.

Repairs were needed in 1597 when the chancel was in ruin and the roof ready to fall down. The church suffered much damage during the Commonwealth period as stained glass was smashed and some religious images were taken down. When they could not reach the cherubim these were fired on with musket shot. A horse-tethering ring remains as a sign of occupation by Cromwell's troops.

Some interesting features included the holy water stoup in the front porch; the Jack which was originally part of a clock; the tomb of Sir John Hopton; the bench ends which depict the deadly sins and the seasons, and the choir stalls that were used as desks for the village school (in 1665 a Dirk Lowersen from Sweden carved his name there). By 1851 the church was considered too big for the congregation, the average attendance for the communion service held four times a year was just 10.

The next church was Wenham St Peter. As well as describing many features of this church, which include what is thought by some to be the best-preserved example of a Doom in the country, Terry also explained how the Doom was discovered through a lucky accident. A Doom is a traditional painting of the last judgement, and in this one St Michael is shown weighing the souls of the departed. Those considered worthy are allowed to pass into heaven, but those not worthy are hauled off into the jaws of hell. Other features include some fine barrel vaulting in the chancel and the Royal Arms of George III.

The church at Blyford, although not as grand as Blythburgh or as famous as Wenham, has a 15th century porch with a fine Norman doorway and the north door has decorated columns. There is one unusual feature in a World War 1 Flanders cross for Walter Day. This was sent back to his family when the Empire War Graves Commission replaced it with a permanent memorial. However, Walter had no connection with Blyford and does not appear on the parish war memorial or the Roll of Honour. His parents lived in Bromley, Kent.

In Bramfield the Congregational Church was built in 1841 by a dissenting landowner for his workers. Also in the village is the church of St Andrew that has the only detached round tower in Suffolk. One of the treasures inside the church is the screen, on which the original colours can clearly be seen. It dates from the early 16th century, and depicts the saints Mark, Matthew, John and Luke. There is also Mary Magdalene with her alabaster jar of ointment. An 1870 restoration added a reredos, a screen or decoration behind the altar, with saints in the niches.

The Thorington St Peter round tower is thought to be one of the finest in Suffolk. The carved oak reredos behind the altar is probably Austrian in origin.

Huntingfield St Mary has many treasures within it. The eagle on top of the font cover points to a richly-painted roof. The lectern here is unusual in that instead of an eagle carrying the word there is a pelican. An old belief was that the pelican fed her young on her own flesh and blood plucked from her breast, a symbol of God's compassion.

Cratfield St Mary has a fine west door and in the left spandrel is a woodwose, or wild man of the woods. The clear west window in the tower is unusual, but it gives a lot of light to the interior. The

seven segment font shows scenes from the life of Christ. There are the remains of some ancient woodwork in the tower, together with those of an 18th century clock.

Terry showed some of the entries in the Churchwardens accounts for 1640.

The font in Heveningham church was rescued from Ubbeston in 1983. In this church can be found a rather fine ornate family pew that comes complete with its own fireplace.

Redisham church is claimed to be the smallest church in Suffolk. This has elaborate Norman doors, and stained glass that shows the risen Christ and the fishermen. The church once had a tower but it collapsed in the 19th century and was not rebuilt. A 15th century end pew depicts a dragon licking a cooking pot on its back. This probably derives from the story of the sailors who set up their cooking pot on a desert island only to find themselves on the back of a whale. The carver probably had no idea what a whale looked like, but had seen the image of a dragon.

11 February 2016 – “Lowestoft Hospital” – by John Stannard

John Stannard presented a detailed history of Lowestoft Hospital with illustrations of the origins, early names and the developments from its foundation, in 1822, until the recent final closure. The first institution was located at Bell Lane, now Crown Street, from 1822 to c.1839 and was called ‘Mutford & Lothingland General Dispensary & Infirmary’. From c.1839 to 1882 it was in St. Mary’s Plain, then Ten Acre Field, and later on the High Street. In 1926 it moved to its final location in Tennyson Road. The name changed and shortened over the years. The number of wards expanded to accommodate not only male and female patients, but also children. One of the notable features that John pointed out in the various photographs, was the ratio of staff to patients. In one containing 5 children, there were 6 nurses and a doctor present. Similar numbers featured in photographs of military casualties.

As well as recounting the many stages of construction, demolition, rebuilding and enlargement which were almost continuous since the original small building was erected, John also emphasised that at each stage of this journey, up to the creation of the NHS in 1948, all the monies needed to fund the hospital, had been raised by public collections, subscriptions and local benefactors. A large Honours board in the now defunct building lists the names of donors to one of the more recent developments. In view of this heroic philanthropy over nearly 200 years, it is a significant example of the way in which assets that were once publicly funded and owned can be lost to the local community who worked so hard to provide them in the first place. Our thanks to John for documenting this item of important local heritage and presenting it to LA&LHS so clearly.

25 February 2016 – “USAAF in East Anglia, GI Brides” – by Ian McLachlan

Ian had addressed the Society previously on a related subject “Over here” and this talk developed the theme of what happened when American Airmen based in East Anglia formed relationships with local women. Not only did he give the broad picture of the overall numbers, he made the subject much more vital by describing the experiences of individuals, some of whom have families living locally today.

To emphasise this point, Ian firstly introduced us to “Frank”, a most impressive mannequin, dressed in pilot’s uniform and wearing amongst other insignia, the wings that showed that he had volunteered to fly with the RAF rather than the USAAF.

US Airmen began to arrive from February 1942 and by Christmas there were 30,000 in the UK. A final total of between 450,000 and 500,000 came over, of whom some 50,000 were killed. 60-70,000 GI brides were married and about 20,000 children were born. One important fact in Ian’s talk was that at the beginning of the operation, a large number of air bases from Exeter to Lincoln had to be built. In the main, black Americans did the construction work and were treated very well by the locals (see Suffolk Magazine, Spring 2016).

There was a certain amount of resentment (34%) to these brash newcomers and German propaganda attempted to make British forces even more uneasy at the influx of young, virile Americans. In Loddon churchyard, a tombstone commemorates a young woman, Daphne Crisp 17, killed by her boyfriend out of jealousy.

Ian, through a series of contemporary photographs and documents, informed us of the rigorous process that a prospective bride would have to undergo before she could marry an American and travel to the New World. Among the warnings were those not to expect “Hollywood” treatment. In fact one bride who lived near the sea here ended up in Kansas and could not bear the flat dusty, plains and so came back. Some of the Americans also preferred to stay in the UK.

Not only was there resentment here among the local men, who felt the unfair competition from the better pay and conditions enjoyed by the American Forces, but also in America there was some anti-British feeling, so the GI brides had to be really determined to stick it out. Some about to embark were booed by returning British soldiers.

Good Housekeeping produced a useful pamphlet containing all sorts of advice and information about what to expect on arriving in America, how to get on and a glossary of words which differ, such as petrol and gasoline, banknote and bill, verandah and porch.

With over 60 slides, documents, cartoons and maps, this was a most enjoyable and informative talk and one which could well be enlarged into a very worthwhile book.

10 March 2016 – “Gone and probably forgotten” – by Ron Ashman

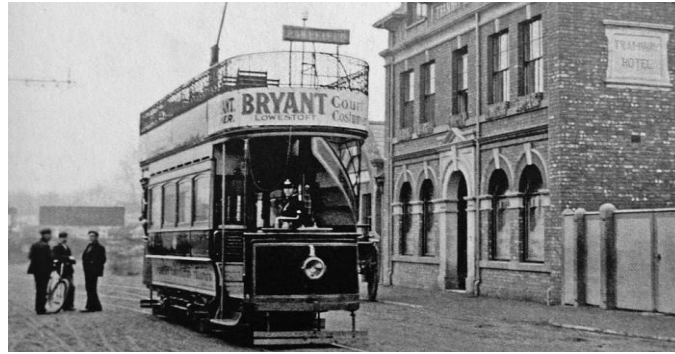
Ron began by saying that through living in Pakefield for 48 years he had seen many changes both there and in Lowestoft. However, Pakefield saw most changes during the first half of the 20th century when erosion was a huge problem. ‘Old’ Pakefield has virtually gone, and what we see today is mostly post 1950.

Ron’s slides showed there were once numerous boats at Pakefield, but over the last 30 years fishing from the beach has almost died out. During the 1980s, on a Saturday or Sunday morning, you could buy seafood almost all the year round. In summer there were shrimps (freshly boiled at the beach huts), later on, sprats, herring, whiting and cod were sold. If there was little activity on the beach, fish could be obtained from the now-dismantled hut on the cliffs. The fishermen’s huts then stretched from below Nightingale Road to the slope at the end of Cliftonville Road, as well as those on the cliff-top green.

A 1935 slide of the sea defences below the Jolly Sailors showed that when the sea wall was constructed, the sea came right up to it at high tide. The groynes from that time could still be seen into the 1980s but the sand has covered them now and the sea is many yards away. Something similar has happened south of the Claremont Pier. In the 1980s you had to walk down steps to reach the beach. Today the sand is some five feet higher, and the groynes along this stretch have almost disappeared. Ron said the Claremont Pier opened in 1903. Its outer ‘T’ section was added in 1912 to allow the Belle paddle steamers to discharge and collect passengers. The pier was 670 feet long and was much used by sea anglers and the local swimming club. The crumbling ‘T’ section was removed in 1962.



Pakefield Sea Wall under construction here in 1935



Lowestoft Tram No. 1 has just arrived at the Pakefield terminus

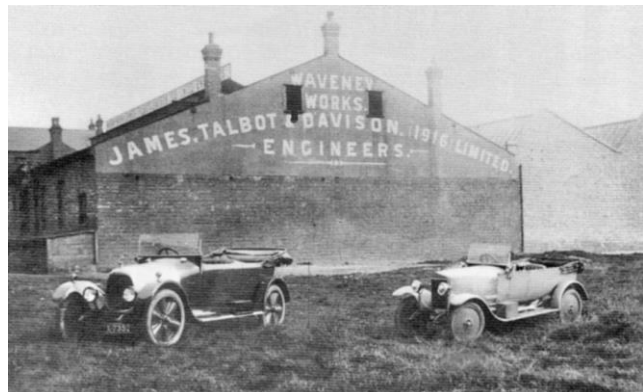
Other facilities that have gone include the aptly named Cliff Edge Tea Rooms and the Pakefield cinema. Also, between the wars Mr E.W. Fuller had a jam-making factory in Florence Road, called the 'Eastern Fruit Preserving Co Ltd'. One unfortunate effect was the aroma of boiled fruit attracted huge quantities of wasps. Another sweet manufacturer was S. Foreman & Sons of Wilson Road, who made lettered rock and confectionery. They were related to Mrs Gladys Foreman who ran the General Grocery and tearoom opposite the 'Tramway Hotel' on London Road. Lowestoft tram crews all patronised the tearoom during their break at the end of the return journey between there and Belle Vue Park. The tram terminus became so well known that even today some locals still refer to the road junction by that name – this was the southern limit for the service which ran from 1903 until 1931.

London Road was also known by some of the local population as Kessingland Road. In the 1911 census (in Elizabeth terrace off the A12, today near Morrisons) the residents of numbers 5 & 7 recorded that they lived in London Road, but number 6 was in Kessingland Road. Something similar happened at Pakefield Street for the 1861 & 1871 censuses record this as High Street, but all other censuses list it as Pakefield Street. The busy 'Terminus' junction where these roads all come together once had two petrol filling stations, both now gone. Mitchell's Garage (now the site of Beehive Refrigeration) sold Esso, and Hughes, on the junction of Pakefield Street and London Road South, sold Shell (although Ron's vintage slide also featured a sign there for National Benzole petrol).

Lowestoft once had shipyards, engineering and canning industries, all supporting local fishing and farming. Sadly with changes in climate and world trade most have now gone. However, in the early 1900s, an interesting business that does not receive much publicity was car manufacture. A few names appear in trade directories but J.W. Brooke is probably the one most people would associate with this subject, as they went into production with a limited range of well-built models using their own chassis and engines. The best known was the 'Swan Car' that featured a hand carved body in the form of a swan. A one-off order for an Indian Maharajah, it survives today, but J.W. Brooke foresaw the huge competition ahead for cars and decided to concentrate on their popular marine products instead.



'Swan Car' built on a chassis from J.W. Brooke



Lowestoft built Zephyr car shown on the right at Freemantle Road

One other Lowestoft company did make a few cars – James, Talbot & Davidson designed and built a car called the Zephyr in 1913, mainly for the purpose of testing the Zephyr patent pistons, although records show the prototype proved itself reliable and smooth running over a number of years. Starting up in Horn Hill, they later moved to Freemantle Road using the building that once housed the Grand Roller Skating Rink. Technical problems with engine castings and supplies of components resulted in only a few cars being made and so there was no production run, although Ron showed slides of their car and adverts. Their pistons were used in World War 1 in the engines of the Vickers Vimy twin-engined bomber. In 1919 they were used in the engines of the modified Vickers Vimy that achieved the first non-stop crossing of the Atlantic under the control of Captains Alcock and Brown. Zephyr Pistons later became Zephyr Cams and moved to the South Lowestoft Industrial Estate before closing down in 2002.

In parallel to cars in the early 1900s, some Lowestoft companies turned to coach building, converting cheaply available war surplus lorry chassis into charabancs and buses. The Eastern Coach Works became the best-known supplier of bus bodies in the UK, and also abroad, but even they were eventually outpaced by competitors.

Ron then turned to a series of 'then and now' slides showing Belvedere Road, Station Square (with the Suffolk Hotel), and later, with the controversial 'fisherman' statue now relegated to the Asda car park. He mentioned the Fisher Boys with their highly coloured suits made by Lawrence Green, High Street Tailors. In covering the fate of the station concourse clock – British Rail was supposed to have replaced it after the removal of the station roof. The truth is it was sold in July 1987 and is currently preserved by a collector in Sydney, Australia.

Moving across to Waveney Road, the slides were of the Fishing Companies offices. From about 1896, these were home to many insurance agents/brokers, fish salesmen and auctioneers, some of whom also acted as vice-consuls to a number of European countries. The vice-consuls were mostly housed in Baltic Chambers, Waveney Chambers and New Fish Market. On the corner facing the fish docks remain the Boston Deep Sea offices with their striking overhead tiled fascia of sailing vessels clearly visible from the South Pier and Yacht Club. Another large mural of a local fishing scene on the corner of Suffolk Road has not survived the weather. Nearby, tall and proud stands the Gourrock Ropeworks building. Founded in 1790 it closed in the late 1800s. Next door was the Hippodrome, opened in 1904 as a circus and was later used for theatre and film shows (a wartime evacuee centre) and finally for bingo. The old structure was destroyed by fire in 1999 and subsequently rebuilt as a modern bingo club. Further north is the former Fisherman's Bethel Church, now turned into a very nice small theatre for the Lowestoft Players.

Ron showed an interesting pre-WW2 map of the roads between Battery Green and London Road North. At that time it was possible to drive from London Road Nth past the Marina, continuing round the block to exit in Gordon Road. Due to war damage and new development only one original remains (believed named Oxford House at one time) of the splendid houses along the road linking the Marina and Gordon Road. The side road to Battery Green still remains. Battery Green was once a huge open area, now mostly taken by the multi-storey park and roundabout at the end of Gordon Road. More slides revealed a café close to what is now M&S car park, and another building that acted as a waiting room for Grey-Green Coach services – also wide open views north across to Old Nelson Street.

Part way along Gordon Road is St Margaret's House, one of only two Lowestoft buildings mentioned by Pevsner. A retired sea captain who lived there is said to have added the tower. Certainly there is a Latin inscription over the door: *after the wind and waves a quiet haven...* The house name appears to date from 1867 – 70 when the Rector of St Margaret's church lived there. More recently the building functioned as a Registry office.

From Whapload Road, the changes to some scores were shown. Access to Maltsters Score is now blocked from the lower end and visitors have to approach via Spurgeon Score and a side path to reach it – before and after views of Rant Score were compared. Ness Point has seen many changes but in the past its unique location seems to have been undervalued (graffiti from the 1970s was

shown). Since the Millennium the outlook has improved but maybe still more could be done. It is now listed in the East of England Park Scheme.

Views from the top of Old Nelson Street to the Triangle Market site included some vanished buildings. In the 1880s, the Borough Council cleared the area around the end of St Peter's Street to give space for a New Town Hall. They could not afford it, so in 1898 the Triangle Market was established on the site. A number of pubs and commercial premises survived into the 1900s and, despite some name changes, a good number may still be found today.

Lack of capital usually accounted for the amount of dilapidated properties that struggled through to the 1960s, many of which were in the area between St Peter's Street and the High Street. Ron had some good slides of the Old Drill Hall in Arnold Street, once the hub for Companies 5 and 6 – 1st Norfolk Volunteer Artillery. Ron gave details of some of their activities. From 1901 to 1914, when they moved to new premises in St Peter's Street, the Drill Hall was home to the 3rd East Anglian Howitzer Brigade (Royal Field Artillery, Territorial Force). The Old Drill Hall was later split into two sections by the new road, Artillery Way, bypassing the pedestrianised Triangle Market area.

The location of the final 'mystery' slide was revealed as Henham Hall at Wangford – sadly demolished in the 1950s, with most of its gardens, by the Earl of Stradbroke in an effort to keep the Estate solvent. Many fine English Country Homes and their contents were laid waste in similar fashion after the war.

7 April 2016 – "Look back at Oulton Broad" – by Ivan Bunn

Starting his talk with an aerial view of Oulton Broad, Ivan said it enabled him to point out the local districts he was to feature. In a general introduction he explained that there was no place defined as Oulton Broad in medieval times. The area of water we know as the Broad today was created by medieval peat digging, and first became flooded in the 13th–14th centuries. Later tax records show 30,000 turves were cut in 1550 alone. Mutford Bridge was probably created in the late 1500s. A reference from 1681 describes it as more of an earth dam, making a crossing point on the north/south turnpike, and there was very little local housing in those early days. It was washed away in 1717 when a heavy tidal surge at Lowestoft penetrated Lake Lothing. A brick arch was built by 1760 but was also destroyed in 1791. About that time the Hunt family had a malt-house and mill just north on Bridge Road. Much of the common land to the north of the Broad was available for public use prior to the 1801 Enclosure Acts, as were parts of Lowestoft, Kirkley and Carlton Colville. It was 1803 before the land to be enclosed was defined.

Ivan then moved on to 1827 when a further Act was finally passed allowing navigation between Lowestoft and Norwich, work beginning in the autumn. The plan was to breach the shingle bank at Lowestoft and put in a sea lock with a bridge, in 1830, to allow the London to Yarmouth turnpike to cross. Inland, just prior to the Peto era, the New Cut was developed (two and a half miles in length) between the Waveney at Somerleyton and the Yare at Reedham saving some five miles on the old route of the Waveney. In order to control water levels between the two rivers, in 1827 the Act allowed a new lock (Mutford) to be opened with a new Mutford Bridge above. The original Wherry Inn was built nearby in 1828, primarily for the coaching trade. George Mason, its host, established a bowling club and green and also kept hire-boats for rowing and pleasure angling. This early provision of tourist facilities developed rapidly when the railways arrived.

By 1831, cargo landed from London ships at Lowestoft inner harbour could go on (via wherry) to offload at quays as far upriver as Norwich. Samuel Morton Peto had now arrived in the Norwich area and wanted to promote a railway network across East Anglia. A line from Norwich to Gt Yarmouth was opened in 1844. Lowestoft was keen to follow but it took Peto (who bought Lowestoft Harbour in 1845) until 1847 to open a branch line from Lowestoft, via Somerleyton through to Reedham. The Beccles branch opened in 1856. By the late 1880s disputes often occurred over common land ownership around the Mutford lock area. Eventually the Great Eastern Railway was legally challenged by a Mr George Edwards, and then settled out-of-court. As a result, the Free Quay was

built (with jetty) near Mutford Lock as part of the common land long-term public access area. The railways provided easy access for visitors and further long-term benefits for the area came later, when Howard Hollingsworth bought Broad House Estate and gave it to the Town for use by the public. The Council took on the job of converting it for recreational use. It houses the Lowestoft Museum at present and remains a popular centre for tourists and locals.

The opening up of the area meant that small businesses and residents were attracted and building began, although at first in ribbon fashion around the local main roads and junctions. This in turn brought the need for schools and places of worship so, in 1884, St Mark's Church was built as a Chapel-of-ease to St Peter's of Carlton Colville. The railway station adjacent was originally called Carlton Colville Station. Mr George Edwards then built a House of Worship for teetotallers north of the Wherry and named it The Coffee Pot. We recognise it as the Library today. Sadly, aged 89, he took his own life, but is lodged securely at Oulton churchyard beneath a huge erratic boulder.

As the population surrounding the Broad increased it became necessary to devise a management system, and in 1888 East Suffolk County Council was established. Further changes ensued and by 1894 Mutford & Lothingland Rural District Council appeared along with associated Parish Councils. Finally, in 1904, Oulton Broad Urban District Council was formed as a parish. Several times during and after these switches various sections of the adjoining parishes were exchanged, with agreed boundary changes. The OBUDC lasted a mere fifteen years, as it then became a ward of Lowestoft, although an Oulton Broad Joint-committee still managed its local affairs and decisions. The final alteration was in 1975 when Waveney District Council was formed. This change achieved the required larger community base by combining local areas with Lowestoft and the OB Joint-committee was then dead in the water. Management of the Oulton Broad waterway has since been taken over by the Broads Authority.

21 April 2016 – The Bombardment of Lowestoft – 25 April 1916 – its 100th Anniversary– by Rob Jarvis, Curator of Lowestoft War Memorial Museum

Rob reminded members that this talk was just four days short of the 100th Anniversary of the Bombardment – a very appropriate time. He listed several national and international happenings between 1914 and 1916. These included three early, largely ineffectual, Zeppelin and seaplane raids in the Lowestoft and Gt Yarmouth areas. There was one fatality in August 1915 when a girl was killed, at Kessingland, in a raid by Zeppelin L11. Rob showed a range of interesting slides depicting enemy aircraft. Some of these were armed with machine-guns and carried rather primitive bombs (mostly launched by hand) and also hand grenades. The Home defences were similarly equipped with a range of small aircraft and bombers, there being a Royal Naval Air Station at Gt Yarmouth on the seafront at the site of the current Pleasure Beach. Local services also had some access to mobile anti-aircraft guns.

Being relatively close to the continental areas overrun by German forces, Lowestoft was prepared for early action, and residents were warned that attacks might ensue from air and sea. The British fleet, including submarines, protected the East Coast, in addition to airfields and minefields. By 1916 a number of local engineering works had already switched to producing components essential for assembling armaments like small-arms ammunition, and shells needed for the war in Europe and at home – these included Richard's Ironworks and Brooke's (at their Adrian Works). Local shipbuilding works had already contributed fishing vessels for conversion to naval use such as transport and minesweeping. They were now commissioned to make standard design trawlers suitable for war duties. A large quantity of older vessels had already been used with varying success including a pre-war steel fishing boat named Feasible. Some of these were fitted with a deck gun and when not fishing could be used for anti-submarine patrols or minesweeping – losses to mines were considerable. Some notable events featuring brave seamen coming into conflict with enemy vessels led to awards, including two VCs for Lowestoft skippers.

The War meant that many local residents also played their part by supporting the armed services when on shore. There was a war depot behind the Cliff Hotel. Individuals also contributed gifts and clothing to those on active service. After the invasion of their country a number of refugees were moved to a Belgian Children's Home in Lowestoft – the location is unknown at present. In the terror of the early war years, some residents of Lowestoft had moved from the coast or travelled into the country each night to sleep in schools, churches, or in the open air.

The Bombardment of Lowestoft on 25 April 1916 (the fourth and final raid of WW1) was forewarned the previous day when British Intelligence revealed that the Imperial German Navy was at sea. The group of four battle cruisers, Derfflinger, Lutzow, Moltke and Von Der Tan, under the command of Vice-Admiral Scheer approached the town of Lowestoft. The first two turned north some 7,000 yards offshore and opened fire at 4.10am, using the just visible Empire Hotel and St John's Church as markers, shifting their aim to the prime targets of the swing bridge, ships in the harbour, railway station and the gasworks. The residents of Lowestoft were woken by the gunfire, and as the attack was restricted to seven minutes they emerged, shocked by the scenes of horror. After 63 shells from Lutzow and 48 from Derfflinger the German ships continued north towards Gt Yarmouth. About 200 houses in Lowestoft were damaged and 40 destroyed in this brief raid. Three civilians and one serviceman died and 19 were injured. An 11-inch shell travelled through 13 houses in Kent Road, stopping unexploded in a cupboard, but luckily nobody was injured. Blenheim House, one of the Peto villas on the seafront got a direct hit and was almost cut in two, and the nearby South Pier Pavilion was damaged. Three fatalities, including a baby, were in the bedroom of a house in Sandringham Road. Most damage occurred to premises in the area between the Claremont Pier and Surrey Street.



Vice-Admiral Scheer

The outclassed British naval ship Conquest was defending the town, accompanied by submarines ranged north to south each side of the offshore minefield and sandbanks. Due to conditions they were unable to provide effective cover and the German ships continued north to Gt Yarmouth, firing on the town at 4.24am. Offshore fog came to the latter's rescue when, after the first salvo, only one battleship continued to fire causing little damage. The enemy withdrew from the action at 4.45am, believing (erroneously) that the main British Fleet was closing in pursuit.

After the 1916 raid the East Coast defences were further strengthened, and numerous pillboxes erected along the coastline. Batteries of field guns were positioned at Caister, Corton and Pakefield. Happily there were no more raids of that type but locals were left with a taste of what serving family members experienced across the Channel. Many souvenir photographs and mementoes of the 1916 raid remain in Lowestoft collections. Two shells may be seen outside the Lowestoft Maritime Museum at Sparrow's Nest.

12 May 2016 – “Wish You Were Here!” – by Richard Mundy

Richard began by giving an outline of the general history of the postcard. A mail service had existed from the 14th century in Europe using rather exclusive hand drawn sets of cards. The system became widely used in England from the 17th century, with images produced by some well-known artists. Later examples ranged from modified playing cards to formally printed and personalised examples, depending on the social level of the sender. However postal charges had to be paid by the receiver in virtually all cases up to the 19th century, and the system was open to corruption. In the 1800s Sir Rowland Hill, a reformer and teacher, was able to radically change the system.

In Rowland Hill's youth he remembered his mother dreading the arrival of mail in case she could not meet the unknown charges. As he matured he turned to finding a better, faster and fairer system. He suggested a prepaid uniform rate be applied, for which the sender could purchase a stamp or label coated with soluble adhesive. The increasing demand for cheaper postage meant that Parliament agreed to a two-year trial of the Penny Postage Act in 1839, though not everyone was in favour. Postal rates were reduced in January 1840 and the famous Penny Black stamp appeared on 6 May, shortly followed by the Twopenny Blue. The revolution had begun, but Sir Rowland's career with the Post Office was not to last, he being dismissed in 1842 and subsequently finding a new life in developing railways.

The first illustrated postcard in the UK in 1840 was probably a cartoon of postal workers sent by keen letter writer and practical joker, Theodore Hook. Theodore (believed related to 'Bob' Hook, Lowestoft Lifeboat man) relished the idea of the workers seeing the card in transit through their system. The early official pre-printed postcards had to have the message on one side and the address only on the reverse. Even so they were popular and some half million were sold in the first year. Initially a picture was allowed on the front only if the cards were sold on site and sent as mementoes from exhibitions. This was the start of the craze for collecting cards and displaying them in albums. Rules were then relaxed and if there was a picture on the front the message still had to be in the margin. Only from 1902 did a Mr Hartmann get approval to divide the reverse, enabling the address and message to be written side by side and leaving the front free for the picture. In 1902 the 'golden age' of the post card began, with over 800,000,000 being sent annually by 1914. The postage stamp for cards was then a halfpenny and there might be several collections daily, local deliveries often being on the same day. The variety of uses and designs was enormous and cards from birthdays to funerals were keenly collected into an elaborate range of albums that were, and remain today, specialist keepsakes for families and individuals. The best examples, containing a marvellous record of social history, sell today for large sums at auction.

In 1912 the General Post Office made the decision to install telephones in private premises. Although limited in initial take-up, due to instalment costs, the telephone was used more and more for quick messages and seriously affected the demand for postcards. Happily all was not doom and gloom and the use of the latter for birthday and holiday messages has continued up until the present day. Special rules applied during wartime, and services writing home from overseas were especially restricted by censorship and the need to limit sensitive information that might be of use to enemy forces. One way of doing this was by pre-printing a range of standard statements giving simple information on health and good wishes etc. that could apply to any person serving. They added their name and ticked the appropriate boxes without giving away location. Not rewarding to their families except to know their relative was a survivor. This system was updated during WW2 to the airgraph, a photographic system that dramatically cut the time taken by previous surface mail.

James Bamforth (a studio photographer in 1870) diversified to produce slides and plates for magic lanterns in 1883. This venture was successful and ten years later he experimented with short films (mainly comedy). He had three sons and one daughter and found places for all in his company, in different roles from production to acting. In 1896, in a deal with a relative, he opened a branch company to produce postcards. In doing so he could draw on the 20,000 images already in stock as lantern slides – again with a humorous slant. The company became limited in 1910 with two sons,

Edwin and Harry, as directors, the third, Frank, opening a similar venture in America. After James (given the sobriquet The Cheeky Postcard Chappie) died in 1911, they employed four artists as postcard illustrators. Edwin's son, Derek, inherited the company in 1936 and, after a short break in the war Bamforth and Co Ltd continued trading. During the 1950s censorship became a problem and several producers of postcards were challenged about their comic (seaside) output, some councils believing they had pushed the boundaries of good taste too far. Local Censorship Boards were formed and tried prosecuting the manufacturers. Bamforths argued their case in court, were acquitted, and traded through until their artists began dying off, finally selling out to Dennis & Son in 1987. The latter eventually auctioned the original artworks via Sotheby's. Bamforth images still appear on-line for sale today.

Donald McGill (the Picasso of the Pier). Donald was born in 1875 in Regent's Park, by London Zoo, into a family of artists. He suffered an accident when aged 16, damaging an ankle. Subsequently, due to the bone becoming diseased, surgeons had to amputate his foot. He recovered and, with a false foot, continued to study art but became disenchanted with the college, commenting, I want to do caricatures rather than flowers – indeed he took every opportunity to draw for the newsletters of local sports clubs! He joined naval architects Maudsleys from 1893–96, but was then articled at Thames Ironworks as an engineering draughtsman, finishing his apprenticeship in 1907.

In 1900 he had married Florence, daughter of Alfred Hurley, manager of a London music hall and adjoining public house, the Rose & Crown. Donald took many of his humorous characters from life in those establishments, using them in later years. In 1904 he began illustrating postcards, one of the first being the 'excuse me while I kick Fido' subject of a small girl at bedside prayer. McGill's sister had married the owner of a postcard printer and Donald had a 'set fee per drawing' contract that was not beneficial to him (although he seems to have persevered with it as it lasted until 1962 – except during WW2). He sketched at slightly over finished size and coloured in the outline drawing using a child's paintbox. He required peace and quiet while thinking up the captions, but enjoyed the family atmosphere when colouring them in. Critics prefer his artistic style from the 1920s but he was always aware of public trends – social history and humour were accurately reflected throughout his working life. His Scottish name was also included in the humorous themes. Over the years, and going with trends, he would swap characters and sexes in existing cards. He too suffered at the hands of the censor in the 1950s but seemed less able to defend himself against criticism than Bamforth and was fined £75. There was a shop raid in Ryde I.O.W. where over 1000 of his illustrated postcards were seized (termed indecent). It seems from reports of the time that the condemning Board members did find a certain amount of amusement in them – how odd! In later years Donald McGill worked for D Constance & Co. By the mid 1960s there were more serious challenges to the laws on indecent publications (Lady Chatterley etc,) and the postcard issues were to fade away. Probably our best-liked and most-popular postcard artist, often imitated but not often equalled, Donald McGill died in 1962 in Balham, London, aged 87.

16 June 2016 – Church visit to Ilketshall St Andrew

On 16 June a party of Society members visited the church of St Andrew, Ilketshall St Andrew, a trip that was organised by Jenny Hatton.

This member of the group of villages known as "The Saints" is no more than a sparse scattering of houses and farms across a pleasant countryside, with commons dotted here and there.

There is nothing specific to suggest that the round tower is Saxon rather than Norman but, like others in the area, it may date from before the Conquest. It has been smoothly repointed and has a small decorated west window. The 14th century octagonal top is unusually deep, with a blank lower stage and flushwork window shapes between the bell openings. Walking round, you will find a blocked plain Norman north doorway and a small lancet of the same period a little further along. Most of the other windows are Perpendicular, some of them renewed – probably as part of an 1880s restoration. The patch of brickwork on the north side of the nave may mark the site of the stair

which led to the old rood loft. The chancel dates from the early 14th century, and it is interesting that the builders found some fragments of carving from the Norman building and used them as quoins at the base of the chancel south buttress.

The early Tudor porch in brick and flint is solidly handsome, and the niche above the entrance houses a modern statue of the church's patron saint. There are 19th century stained glass shields in the side windows: on the west St Andrew's cross and the arms of the Tilney family; on the east, the three mitres of the Norwich Diocese (Suffolk was once part of it) and the arms of the Ilketshall family. There is a scooped-out stoup recess in the corner, and the Norman doorway has a bold chevron moulding in the arch above single jamb shafts. A pilgrim cross is cut on the right hand jamb, and the medieval door still has its closing ring, with a drawbar socket just inside.

The shape of the tower arch suggests late 13th century, and above it hangs an attractively chunky set of Charles II Royal arms, carved in wood. On either side are two very interesting painted shields, each set within the circle of the Garter motto. The arms are those of Thomas Howard who died in 1646, with Howard alone on the left, and the quarterings of the Howard, Brotherton, Warren, Mowbray, Fitzlan, Clun, Maltravers and Widvile families on the right. He owned property in the neighbourhood, and the shields probably graced the family pew in the 17th century. The early 15th century font stands on a deep base, with eight shafts around the stem, and the bowl panels are carved with shields set in quatrefoil roundals. The early 17th century Holy Table, with its finely turned legs and decorated top rail, now stands on the north of the nave, and next to it is an interesting 16th century bench that used to be in the chancel. The back is vigorously carved with cherubs, scrolls and other Renaissance motifs, and a centre panel carries the entwined initials 'JE'. Also, the name John Bonsey was found, but that must be on the end next to the wall which cannot now be seen. The Norman lancet contains a nice little painting of St Andrew of about 1870, and there is an image niche below. There are two more in the south wall opposite, one of which has had its hood mould cut away. Halfway down the nave under the matting is the church's only brass. It commemorates John Verdon: 'which was forsaken of the soule 28 Day of May 1624, but expects it agayne at ye Day of the resurrection'.

Further east is a beautifully lettered ledger-stone bearing the arms of Thomas Else who died full of years in 1705, having lost his young wife Thomasine nearly half a century before. The nave roof is arch-braced, with lateral braces between the wall posts and a tie-beam at the junction with the chancel. Remnants of the screen that used to stand below still survive in the chamber above the porch. The chancel roof is good 19th century work which matches the nave, and the fine demi-angels perch at the base of the wall posts. The lancet in the north wall contains a Blessed Virgin and Child of 1910 and opposite there are the remains of a large 14th century tomb – an ogee arch with finial, and flanking pinnacles closely crocketed at the top. The 16th century poppyheads of the stalls match the carved bench in the nave, and there is a simple piscine in the sanctuary. In front of it, the ledger-stone for a vicar's wife who died in 1772 is headed by the phrase much quoted as a comfort by the Victorians, and used by Caroline Norton as the title for her popular poem: 'Not lost but gone before'.

[Reference: 'The Popular Guide to Suffolk Churches, No 3 East Suffolk' by D P Mortlock 1992]

8 September 2016 "Watch the Birdie" by Paul Godfrey

Paul started his talk with a brief history of the development of the photographic process. One of the early pioneers was Henry Fox Talbot who produced his first successful negative in the summer of 1835, but did not patent the process until 1841. This process employed the three primary elements of photography, developing, fixing and printing and became known as the calotype process with paper negatives and paper prints.

At the same time in France, Louis Daguerre was also working on a different process and he became the first person to announce publicly a successful method of capturing images. This invention was free to use by all except in Britain, where he had secured a patent.

Frederick Scott Archer combined the best of the Fox Talbot and Daguerre processes and devised the 'wet collodion process' which was cheaper and easier to use.

Richard Leach Maddox invented the dry plate process which he did not patent but allowed it to be freely used by the photographic community.

As the visitors started to flock to Great Yarmouth so did many traders, which included photographers. The first in Great Yarmouth appeared in the mid-19th century. Many of the buildings used at that time had a north facing studio, (known as a north-light daylight studio), in which the light could be controlled by the use of blinds.

One photographer, Wallace Miller, had a studio in King Street which bore the name Royal Studio, and the Millar mounts often featured the feathers of the Prince of Wales and the words 'Patronised by the Prince of Wales'. When Wallace died his wife Elizabeth took over his role and even after she had married John Lockwood they still maintained the original business name.

Whilst many photographers set up their studios in the town, others operated on the beach. However, these had to have a dark room close at hand to process the photograph.

Although neither of these pictures below in Figs 1 & 2 is of a Yarmouth beach photographer, they show some of the equipment used.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

Figure 1 shows the camera and tri-pod and portable dark room.

Some photographers fixed display boards to the side of their portable dark room to show examples of their work.

In the family picture, Figure 2, the bucket, spade and fishing nets were probably supplied by the photographer.

Charles Hollowell, a Yarmouth beach photographer, ran his business with his wife Emma and his son Samuel. Father and son had a signalling system whereby having found a customer, Charles would indicate how many plates needed to be coated in the portable dark room. They were then placed in the camera and once exposed these would be processed and a print made, usually in about 6 minutes.

Samuel is thought to have been the last beach photographer, finishing in 1955.

Paul showed pictures of camera development over the years, including one of 1901 that processed the photograph inside the camera.

Many of the photographs used 'props' which included live animals, model airships, model aircraft, real cars, real motorcycle and sidecar, horse and carriage, see Figs 3 & 4 below. Some used painted boards, where the customers put their heads in holes to appear in scenes such as water skiing, playmates etc. Others depicted scenes from advertisements, such as the Pears Soap advert, 'You Dirty Boy'.

Later photographers traded on Yarmouth seafront.



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

22 September 2016 “The Angel Roofs of East Anglia” by Michael Rimmer

The report on this excellent talk will be a short one since for those who were present and those who missed it, the only way to appreciate the subject (apart from doing what Michael Rimmer himself did by visiting and photographing in all the churches mentioned) is to buy or borrow the book with the same title and gaze in wonder of the craftsmanship which went into this remarkable period of Medieval decorative artwork, lasting from c.1390 to 1505.

There were three main strands to the talk; the origins and chronology of using carved angels to decorate the high trusses and beams of timber roofs, the historical characters involved in commissioning and creating the roofs and the possibility of identifying individual carvers from similarities of angels’ faces, wings or hair. So rapidly did one photograph follow another that it was difficult to make an accurate list of all the names of the churches which exist so wonderfully in this part of Britain in which these roofs have managed to survive despite the ravages of the Tudor Reformation and Dowsing during the 17thC. Commonwealth.

13 October 2016 “Home is where the hearth is” – Anglo-Saxon settlements of East Anglia by Dr Richard Hoggett

This very detailed and interesting talk was given by Dr Hoggett who has been closely involved in the Anglo-Saxon archaeology of East Anglia for many years and a valued adviser to Lowestoft Museum in displaying the finds from Bloodmoor Hill.

He started with a map of East Anglia highlighting the low lying peaty fens, mostly to the North and West, and all land over 60 metres, mostly in the South, onto which were placed known settlements from the period. One of the earliest and most extensively excavated, is at West Stow where reconstructions based on archaeological evidence have enabled a detailed life in the early post-Roman period to be built up.

Two main types of construction were illustrated, halls for living in, formed on a number of vertical posts and “sunken-feature buildings”, the exact nature of which are still being debated. Several of

these are viewable at West Stow. When one burnt down in 2005, archaeologists were able to use the evidence to enhance information from previous excavations, a useful if unintended piece of experimental archaeology.

The talk included the early work of Basil Brown at Sutton Hoo and elsewhere, Vera Evison and a protégé Stanley West who continued their work, together with Eric Houlder who photographed the process.

Although these early settlements are often called villages, they were not like what we know as villages today but a collection of timber and thatch buildings each with a particular function, living, cooking, weaving, blacksmithing, potting and, as timber rotted, new posts and holes were inserted either near the old ones or at a distance depending on the site and circumstances.

The question of Viking intrusions was raised and also the gradual conversion to Christianity which probably had the most pronounced effect in establishing the first church building and the dwellings when then clustered around to become a prototype village of the type we know today.

The talk concluded by referring again to the Bloodmoor Hill settlement, which flourished for around 200 years, changing and developing in character during that formative period. Then almost as suddenly as the site had grown, it was abandoned, leaving the graves and fine workmanship of our distant ancestors.

East Anglia is rich in archaeology from this initial stage of the formation of England, a great deal of which is concealed under the modern urban centres into which they grew but in the countryside, there is still a wealth of undiscovered evidence which once identified, will add to and possibly alter our present knowledge of how this region became the distinctive Anglia of today.

27 October 2016 A History of Gorleston by Les Cole

To start and finish this presentation, Les Cole showed slides of a large stone, a “megalith”, embedded in the sandy cliffs overlooking the beach which suggested the town’s name was derived from this prominent feature. Up to the 18th century there were mentions of a “druids stone circle” but no evidence survives.

Much later, after numerous views of pictures and scenes, some altered and some still standing and many of which were associated with notable residents of the town (such as GW Manby of mortar lifeline and unsinkable lifeboat fame, and James Paget, commemorated in the hospital of the same name), a slide revealed the stone to have been a fake, decorated with concentric circles and about to be transported away by lorry.

Norfolk’s favourite son, Lord Horatio Nelson was next to feature, having landed on Gorleston beach in November 1800 after returning from the Battle of the Nile. The prominent monument dedicated to him, out in the open when it was erected after his famous victory, is now among the industry of South Yarmouth and depicts that and three other naval successes and the ships that Nelson commanded.

So wide ranging and comprehensive was the talk, that it is impossible to give only a brief impression here, especially as the photographs were key to the success of the presentation. Many of the buildings reveal a much more prosperous past and a very varied history. For those who wish to know more, GOSH Publications have three booklets on the subject.

Les Cole is a devoted recorder of the history of Gorleston and reminded us strongly that we have a wonderful heritage all around us which we should observe our historic settlements more carefully and help preserve them for future generations.

10 November 2016 - The 'Real' Dad's Army by Richard Mann

Before Richard Mann began his presentation, I, and perhaps several others in the audience, wondered if all we had learned from watching the TV serial would be completely rejected. However, after showing familiar faces from that successful program, he went on to reveal that Jimmy Perry and David Croft's program was very much true to life if not the whole story.

In 1940 even before the fall of France, the occupation of other European countries and the evacuation of Dunkirk but before the Battle of Britain, there was a real danger of invasion by German forces who seemed unbeatable. Although cartoons suggested that "complete panic" was enemy propaganda, the government eventually responded to requests from civilians to form some sort of force additional to the regular and reserve armies. In a broadcast on the 9 p.m. news of May 14th Sir Anthony Eden asked for men aged between 17 and 65 to register at their local police station, much to the confusion of desk sergeants who had not been warned in time. 100,000 was envisaged but in the first 24 hours 250,000 tried to enlist. Richard showed photographs of men of all ages, in long queues, some wearing medals from previous conflicts. In order to avoid being shot as spies, volunteers were guaranteed a uniform but initial shortages showed that this was often simply an armband on which were the letters "LDV", Local Defence Volunteer, soon to be satirised as "look, duck and vanish", "long dentured veterans" or 'last desperate venture". In one photograph of an early parade in Chiswick, 10 men carried antiquated rifles and 11 had only broom handles. Richard was keen to stress that these volunteers were not playing at being soldiers and were unlikely to have lasted long in the face of a German attack but by basing each unit in its home area, they were determined to defend family and community as stoutly as possible and to slow down the enemy advance.

After the threat of invasion lessened, organisation and equipment gradually improved with a great deal of ingenuity being employed. In July 1940, Churchill considering that Local Defence Volunteer was too long a name and not catchy enough, renamed the force "Home Guard" thereby strengthening the emphasis on its main function. With King George VI as Colonel-in-Chief, the force was given added status.

The rest of the Richard's presentation was divided into sub-sections dealing with Units, Training, Tactics, Uniforms and Weapons showing how much progress was made in competence as the war went on. In 1943 after several requests, women were finally allowed to enlist but only for certain jobs.

Although invasion was less likely, there were still many facilities to guard and nightly bomber raids to deal with but once 'D' Day had been successful and the war had been taken to mainland Europe, the Home Guard as originally designated was considered obsolete. When the order to stand down was given on December 3rd 1944, there were 1.5 million in the Home Guard in 3,672 units and for many the question "what do we do now?" was frequently asked. Parades were organised and the King broadcast a grateful thanks, followed by a certificate to recognise the valuable contribution they had made to the war effort.

The Home Guard was finally disbanded on December 31st 1945 though there were attempts during the Cold War to revive something similar.

This was a very detailed and informative talk with a fine array of pictures which if reported here in full, would require a much longer newsletter.

24 November 2016 'On a Wing and a Prayer' – Bob Collis

From previous experience of presentations by Bob, it was with considerable anticipation that we awaited his latest talk. The arrival of a greater number of visitors than usual, equalling that of members, indicated that news of the talk had been widely circulated.

Bob pointed out at the start that only one item related to Lowestoft and that very little archaeology would be involved but that did not detract from a detailed and fascinating exposition of the many

examples of planes which in spite of damage, still managed to land safely, though not always on an airfield.

In order to be a comprehensive study of the subject, Bob started with the earliest examples of airplanes damaged by combat, in 1914, when weapons were first attached to flying machines and continued stage by stage through WWII to Apollo 13, Desert Storm, and up to 1983 when Israeli jets were training over the Negev Desert.

The knowledgeable audience was able to recognise the different planes, even the more obscure and unfashionable ones, even though by the quality of the old photographs and the extensive damage made this difficult at times. To those less interested in planes themselves, the stories of individuals who managed to survive the destruction of their aircrafts and escape alive, was truly inspiring. Two examples from such a cornucopia of tales from the talk will have to suffice otherwise this report would be considerably longer. Firstly, in July 1941, Jimmy Ward, a 22 year old New Zealander, climbed out onto the wing of his plane which was on fire and managed to extinguish enough of the flames for it to land and for which he was awarded a VC. Secondly, when one wing of an F15 "Eagle" was sliced off during an exercise 'dog fight', the young Israeli pilot was able to fly it home. He was subsequently demoted for disobeying his instructor's order to bail out but then re-instated and promoted for bringing the plane back. The manufacturers, when shown the severe damage, stated categorically that their aircraft would not fly in that state but it did owing to an unexpected change in the aerodynamics when the speed increased as the pilot dashed for safety. As Bob Collis finished with this example, he was able to conclude that this plane was truly on "a wing" and perhaps there were prayers in the cockpit answered that day.

LOWESTOFT SCENE – Compiled by Jenny Hatton

January

Demand is rising at area's foodbank

Thousands of families and individuals in crisis have been supported as part of a foodbank's "busiest year yet". East Suffolk Foodbank, which is part of the Trussell Trust network based at Gunton Baptist Church and run in partnership with neighbouring churches, said it had seen a major increase in demand, with a 60 percent rise in the number of family boxes going out on the previous year.

Work to prevent future flooding gets underway

A major £2.3M investment to help reduce the risk of flooding in two areas of Lowestoft has got underway. Anglian Water began preparatory works on a £2M, six-month project to reduce the risk of sewer flooding to homes, gardens and roads in All Saints Road, Pakefield. A second £250,000 scheme got underway around Lake Lothing to prevent seawater getting into the sewer system during high tides, improving pumping power and drainage.

Blueprint recommends a 'central' bridge crossing

A blueprint submitted to the government for Lowestoft's long-awaited third crossing has rejected the idea of building a tunnel in favour of a high-level bridge over Lake Lothing. The town has eagerly awaited formal plans to be submitted to the Department for Transport after prime minister David Cameron promised the project would be built by 2020 during last year's general election.

Old prison site is sold for £3M to homes builder

The Blundeston prison site, closed by the government as part of a cost-cutting exercise, has been sold to a homes builder for £3M. Lowestoft-based Badger Building has been told it must try to stick to government and council guidelines to create a mixed-use development, meaning it would be used for business, leisure and community purposes as well as housing.

Colleges put forward big merger proposal

Three of the region's biggest colleges have unveiled proposals to merge to create a single institution. The proposals would see Great Yarmouth College, Lowestoft College and Lowestoft Sixth Form College join together under the combined name of East Coast Colleges Group.

New schools earmarked for town

Suffolk County Council's cabinet approved plans to build a new primary school in Lowestoft and create a new Special School in Carlton Colville. With the former Carlton Colville Primary School earmarked to be converted into a Special School for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. It is likely to provide 50 places. The new primary school in Lowestoft – catering for 210 pupils – is likely to be built at Woods Meadow in Oulton, on a four-acre (1.62ha) site provided by developers at Woods Meadow for a development of up to 800 new homes.

February

Council pulls out of Sanyo development

Waveney District Council has said it will not proceed with buying Lowestoft's former Sanyo factory site as part of a major regeneration project, saying the company did not clear the area of existing structures and contaminated materials as agreed.

Villagers win fight to save historic pub site

Residents have finally won their long-running battle to save one of their village's most historic buildings after an attempt to knock it down was rejected for the second time. The decision by the Planning Inspectorate to reject Badger Building's bid to tear down the old King's Head in Kessingland and replace it with homes, means the site will have to retain its historical character and appearance.

Court to close despite a strong defence case

Lowestoft Magistrates' Court is to close – despite a compelling case made to keep it open. The Ministry of Justice announced that the building in Old Nelson Street, Lowestoft, would be shut to save money following a nationwide review of the court estate.

Works to improve notorious level crossing begin

Long-awaited improvements to cut the time drivers spend waiting at Oulton Broad North level crossing have finally got underway – to the joy of motorists, residents and businesses in the area. The crossing has long been a bugbear for people in Lowestoft, with long queues caused when the barriers go down to let trains through on their way to Norwich.

Wall to cost £30,000 to fix after vandalism

Repair costs on a seawall that has been repeatedly targeted by vandals are expected to reach £30,000 after it was attacked again whilst damage from previous incidents were being fixed. Extensive rebuilding work to the wall on the upper promenade in Lowestoft has been taking place, with 570 damaged or missing balustrades requiring repair or complete replacement. The historic wall, which runs from the CEFAS laboratory down to the Claremont pier, has been vandalised a number of times over the past year, with further damage taking place as the repair works were being completed.

Sign points to area's identity

A new sign, dubbed Kirkley's equivalent of the London Underground map, has been unveiled to encourage more people to visit the area. The new directory of shops and amenities has been put up near the entrance to the Kirkley Mill Health Centre. The sign works by using a grid reference layout so that different amenities can be easily located. Its aim is to help visitors find and use the amenities in the area and give Kirkley village its own identity.

Children upset at arson attack

A £10,000 appeal has been launched to rebuild a Celtic roundhouse after it was burned down by arsonists, leaving children devastated. Carlton Colville Primary School pupils were left heartbroken when their £6,000 wood and reed thatched roundhouse was razed to the ground. The 10ft high building, which took about two months to design and build and was only opened in November 2016, has been reduced to a handful of charred posts.

March

Delight as new beach is unveiled

A popular beach area, closed for more than two years after it was damaged in the 2013 tidal surge, has reopened. The beach had already been damaged by erosion but the Children's Corner area was further hit during the storms of December 2013. A £3.5M. two-phase project got underway in 2014 to repair the seafront, with new rock structures to repair the seawall and a concrete access ramp and replacement coping stones installed.

Promenade open after repair work

Corton promenade has reopened after essential repair and maintenance works were completed in time for the Easter holidays. The walkway was closed in November 2015 because of concerns over the safety of the cliffs. However, a Waveney District Council spokesman warned that it may have to close again to carry out assessments if the cliff face deteriorates.

April

Roadworks cause massive sales fall

Traders have reported a massive fall in profits this year as a result of over-running roadworks in Lowestoft. Business owners in London Road North say work taking place outside their shops as part of a larger scheme to create a cycle network has been driving customers away. The situation has been made worse by the large number of roadworks elsewhere in the town, which have caused traffic jams and made Lowestoft an unattractive place to visit.

People express anger over cuts

The scale of public opposition to closing a fire station and removing one fire engine along the Suffolk coast has been revealed. Suffolk County Council has proposed removing one fire engine from Lowestoft South and closing Wrentham fire station, which, together with other changes across the county, in an attempt to save £1.3M from the fire services budget of £22M by 2017.

Turbine still not turning

The towering 126m Gulliver turbine at Ness Point Lowestoft has been motionless for a couple of months after suffering an electrical fault. A spokesman said that the fault, which occurred just before Christmas, was more difficult to rectify than originally anticipated.

Town's forgotten brewing history

It was once one of the region's many thriving breweries. But since its gates closed in 1936, the name of Lowestoft's Crown Brewery and the beers it produced have been somewhat lost to history. However, a three-year research project has helped tell the story of the building and the company that was based there, E&G Morse. The study has been carried out by retired clergyman and brewery historian, Eric Doré, who recently released a book on the company. Mr Doré's book, *Decoding the Morses*, covers the history of the Morse family and its breweries in Norwich, Swaffham and Lowestoft from 1797 to 1938.

Communities mark Her Majesty's 90th birthday

Communities gathered across Lowestoft, Southwold and Waveney to mark the Queen's 90th birthday. A chain of towering beacons were lit across the area as part of the national celebrations to honour the UK's longest reigning monarch, including the beacon at the Royal Green in Lowestoft. A message from the Prince of Wales was read out.

One small step for 'jacket' is a big leap for firm

It may have only moved a short distance, but putting the bright yellow offshore wind farm structure (the 'jacket') onto a barge ready to be transported to sea, took a huge operation – and represented a massive step forward for one Lowestoft firm. Sebmarmine SLP, based at Hamilton Dock, was awarded the multi-million pound project by Siemens Transmission and Distribution Ltd (STDL) in September 2014 to design and build a new offshore substation for the Dudgeon Offshore Wind Farm, 32km off the Cromer coast.

[After note: The 'jacket' left on 11 May]

New customer centre is opened New and improved facilities have been unveiled at the Marina Customer Services Centre in Lowestoft. The re-designed and reconfigured centre, next to the Marina Theatre, houses teams from both Waveney District Council and Suffolk County Council.

Ship's award

The smack *Excelsior* – a 1920s vessel which in recent decades has been used for sailing training, particularly for young people – won a regional Flagship award from National Historic Ships UK. The award was given in recognition of the commitment that *Excelsior* gives to promoting historic ships in her home cruising grounds and her 2016 Shipshape East Anglia programme.

Bombing terror revealed in letter

A letter, written by teacher Robert Daplyn on 7 May 1916 to his brother, was discovered by chance in the archives at Lowestoft Record Office. It gives a firsthand account of the sheer terror felt by people following the bombardment of Lowestoft by the German High Seas fleet, and featured in a special exhibition at Lowestoft Record Office.

Candles mark bombardment

A commemorative event was held at the Lord Kitchener Holiday Memorial Centre in Lowestoft, 100 years to the day that the German *Lutzow* and *Defflinger* ships shelled the town from the sea. Candles were lit in memory of the four people who died in the bombardment of Lowestoft on the centenary of the First World War raid.

Strike doctors in town centre

Junior doctors from the James Paget University Hospitals took to the streets of Lowestoft to explain to members of the public why they decided to strike over changes to their contracts.

Housebuilder moving away to a new home

Persimmon Homes Anglia is relocating its head office from Oulton Broad to set up a new home on the outskirts of Norwich.

May

Iconic beach huts shut due to safety concerns

About 50 beach huts dating back to the 1930s have been closed ahead of the busy summer season in Lowestoft due to safety concerns. The beach huts, below Kensington Gardens, provide a welcoming backdrop to a stroll along the lower promenade for locals and visitors. This week they were cordoned off with fencing after engineers raised concerns about their structural safety.

New Retail Park on Zephyr Cam site

Waveney District Council's planning committee has granted permission to developers with a multi-million pound project to transform the derelict Zephyr Cams site – which had lain derelict for more than 10 years. Work looks set to start later this year on the new 70,000 sq ft new Gateway Retail Park site.

Views on creating a new town council

Residents have given strong support for a new town council in Lowestoft. Despite being a town of thousands of people, Lowestoft is unusual in that many areas such as Kirkley, Pakefield and Gunton do not have separate parish councils to represent residents. A draft proposal is now being formulated.

Reassurance over town hall's future as critics hit out

The owner of Lowestoft's town hall has said it is committed to ensuring it is retained for community use after heritage campaigners criticised how the majority of the building had been vacant for nearly a year. The 159-year old building served as headquarters for Waveney District Council until the majority of staff moved out last year to the authority's new Riverside Building in Canning Road, Lowestoft. In a statement last year, it said a decision would be made on the town hall's future by summer 2015. But nearly a year on, the Grade II listed building remains vacant with local historians claiming it has been 'abandoned' and allowed to deteriorate.

Residents in vow to fight caravan site development

Residents have vowed to fight future building on iconic open space overlooking the sea after a mobile home company fenced off land intended for development. Tingdene already has a static caravan park at North Denes next to the beach at Ness Point.

Beaches are awarded prestigious Blue Flag

Lowestoft's Claremont Pier retained its Blue Flag, awarded by Keep Britain Tidy.

June

Sea battle is remembered

On May 31 1916, the only meeting of the British Grand and the German High Seas fleets took place off Jutland in Denmark, which resulted in tragedy for many Waveney families. The British fleet outnumbered the German fleet by three to two. The German ships had smaller calibre, higher muzzle velocity guns and superior shell design to the British. The British ships relied on speed but had poor magazine protection. The results were disastrous for the British. The battle of Jutland, although a tactical victory for the Germans was inconclusive, and had no direct bearing on the outcome of the First World War, although the German High Seas fleet never again ventured to sea in numbers. 8,642 sailors lost their lives and 14 Allied and 11 German vessels were lost.

Ex-wartime school evacuees reunited

On June 2 1940, hundreds of children were evacuated from Lowestoft to towns and villages in Derbyshire. 40 attended the reunion held at the Stella Maris hall this month, despite many of them being in their 80's.

Leaders pledge fightback as second major store faces closure

Town centre leaders have pledged to "rise to the challenge" of attracting big name retailers to Lowestoft after the setback that BHS and Argos are to cease trading in the town.

Historic fishing smack becomes region's flagship

The Excelsior has been awarded the Flagship of the Year for East Anglia by National Historic Ships. The 23.5 metre boat now provides crucial life experiences for young people and is uniquely linked to Lowestoft.

Poignant service marks the renaming of garden in honour of Lord Kitchener

The former Sensory Garden in Kirkley Cliff Road has been renamed the Lord Kitchener garden. The moving service took place 100 years to the day since Lord Kitchener died, when the ship he was on sank west of the Orkney Islands.

Towns pull out all the stops for Women's Tour

The first leg of the Aviva Women's Tour cycle race started in Southwold and passed through Lowestoft before going on to Beccles, Attleborough and Norwich, a distance of 138km.

It's party time as people celebrate Queen's 90th

Communities across Waveney were united in celebrations to mark the Queen's 90th birthday. Belly dancers, magicians, balloon sculptures and games attracted many to a picnic and party afternoon on Royal Green.

High price expected for rare book

A rare copy of "Alice's adventures in Wonderland" was auctioned in America and expected to fetch about £1.5M. The book might not have been written if Lorina Reeve from Lowestoft had not met and married Henry Liddell. On 4 May 1852, Lorina gave birth to Alice Pleasance Liddell who, when aged three, was introduced to Lewis Carroll. They got on "famously" and the rest, as they say, is history.

July

Community urged to join forces after closure of a third big store

Town centre managers have urged business and community leaders to help make Lowestoft an attractive proposition for new retailers after QD in London Road North closed on 23 June. It has also closed its Ipswich store, quoting "a decline in trading". The closure comes just weeks after BHS and Argos announcing they would be closing their stores in the town.

Memorial to scouts earns a special status

More than a century after a tragedy in which a number of sea scouts were drowned in a boating accident on the Broads, the Carlton Colville Scouts Memorial has been given protected status by Historic England. It was selected because a sole survivor of the accident died two years later, fighting on the Somme. Lance Corporal Stanley Wood's body was never found, but his name was later added to the memorial.

Brighter future planned for town's main gateway

Over recent years, the town's railway station has fallen into disrepair and is no longer used to its full capacity. A recently established working party, led by East Suffolk Lines Community Rail Partnership, is proposing to regenerate the area, refurbish the station and "bring it back into full use".

"Leave" campaigners achieve their long-held ambition

After years of calling for "Brexit", Waveney voted by 63% to 37% to leave the European Union. The result of the vote was widely predicted. UKIP activists predict that UKIP candidates could win local and parliamentary seats as a result.

Leaders insist crossing is safe after PM resigns

Community leaders are confident that the long-awaited third crossing will be built despite the resignation of David Cameron. The government followed through on its promise to provide the £70M government funding so that detailed design work could start.

Devolution deal has support of District

At an Extraordinary full Council meeting, it was agreed to back a bid for powers to be devolved to an East Anglian authority. The Council leader believed it would give Waveney a chance to influence regional-wide decisions.

Time to decide over a new town council

Residents across Lowestoft are being given the chance to have their own town council to improve democratic representation in their area but could face higher council tax bills to pay for it. Kirkley, Pakefield and Gunton are currently unparished and therefore unrepresented. Two options were

given to residents; the first, a single town council covering the whole town; the second, a main town council but separate parish councils for Oulton Broad and Pakefield – areas with strong individual identities.

Military honour from France for wartime bravery

93-year-old Peter Hemp has been awarded the prestigious Legion d'Honneur medal – France's highest military honour – for his wartime bravery and service. In the summer of 1944, he was part of an allied convoy heading across the Channel to Normandy when one of the ships was sunk in the Straits of Dover. Having landed, Mr Hemp and his colleagues set up a mobile workshop in an orchard outside Bayeux. He was responsible for recovering and repairing vehicles from the battlefield during WWII.

August

Post Office set to move from iconic building

The Post Office has confirmed that it is moving its main Lowestoft branch from its current location, in an historic building in the main shopping area, to nearby WH Smith. The decision has been met with dismay by local political leaders.

Service to honour town's war hero

A service has been held to mark the 100th anniversary of the death of Sgt Claude Castleton VC. Local leaders and relatives of Sgt Castleton were at the service at St Nicholas's church. Wreaths were laid by Peter Aldous and Captain Smallwood of the Australian Army.

Shock after mayor quits Labour Party

A Labour mayor stunned his party by resigning the whip in protest at the way the party operates both nationally and in Waveney. Fellow councillors and officers at Waveney's Constituency Labour Party said they were shocked when mayor Nick Webb – and his wife Sarah, also a Labour councillor – resigned to become Independent councillors.

Fears at future for former factory site

Waveney District Council have plans to redevelop the site of the iconic Grade II listed Town Hall which will be retained for civic or community use but has submitted an application to demolish five former council offices on the site to make way for offices, a car park, a restaurant and take away. This application includes the Coopers building in Compass Street which the Suffolk Preservation Society says "forms an important part of the industrial, mercantile and maritime history of Lowestoft". The Coopers building was occupied by the Cooper Brothers bread and steam biscuit factory as early as 1892. Records in the 1902 Kelly's Directory show the building was occupied by William B Cooper, who was described as ship's chandler and baker. In that time it became famous for its ship biscuits known as the "24 holer" and directories show it continued to be used as a bakery until 1961.

New rail route to capital

East Suffolk is to get its direct rail route to London and back as part of the new Abellio rail franchise. The last through trains from Lowestoft to London ended in 2010. Now, as part of the new agreement, there will be four trains per day from East Suffolk to London.

Total devastation of family business

Fire fighters spent more than two hours tackling a blaze in which the main repair section of the Auto Repair garage in Long Road was completely destroyed.

Farewell to wind farm structure

Dozens of people gathered on Lowestoft's South Pier to watch as the 1800tonne "top side" of the off shore wind farm sub-station for the Dudgeon wind farm was put onto a barge and pulled by tugs out of the harbour. It was pulled along the Suffolk and Norfolk coasts to its new home 32Km off Cromer.

"Raise the Roof" appeal

Having fought to "Save the Seagull" ten years ago when Suffolk County Council withdrew its funding as a centre for performing arts, volunteers now need £40,000 to repair collapsing parts of the ceiling and boarded-up windows.

September

Lowestoft woman awarded Legion d'Honneur

Mrs Mabel Howes has been recognised for her contribution to the war effort by being awarded the highest French military decoration. She was presented with the Legion d'Honneur medal at a family gathering at her Lowestoft home by the town's mayor, Nick Webb. Mrs Howes served in the WRNS as a Supervisor of Telephonists at the Combined Operations HQ near Portsmouth, during WWII. Two months after DDay, in August 1944, she was one of an advance party of three WRNS who were chosen to go to France in support of Operation OVERLORD. In June 1945, she moved to the British base in Minden, Germany, and discovered she was to receive a BEM (Military) from King George VI.

Town's waterfront developer goes into administration

A major waterfront development in Lowestoft by the construction firm, Kent based Cardy Construction Ltd, is still valid despite the firm going into administration, Waveney District Council have said. In October 2014, Waveney District Council's Control Committee had approved an outline planning application by Cardy Construction to develop the Brooke peninsular and former Jeld Wen playing fields with up to 850 homes, a primary school, retail units and a marina. It is entirely possible for another developer to take this forward.

Kite surfer crosses North Sea

Merijn Tinga, a Dutchman, set off from the beach at Scheveningen at about 11am on Friday 2nd September on a board made from recycled single-use plastic bottles, in a bid to highlight the dangers of marine litter. He succeeded in his daring world record attempt to be the first person to kite-surf across the North Sea, when he landed at Pakefield at about 6pm.

Demolition decision takes the biscuit

Heritage campaigners have criticised a decision to demolish the former biscuit factory which fed generations of hungry seafarers. Waveney District Council's planning committee decided to demolish the old Cooper's building in Compass Street, Lowestoft on the historic Town Hall site. The Cooper's building made sea biscuits during the 1800s. It was not listed but considered to be an undesignated heritage asset. A Burger King drive-through restaurant is to be built on the site.

School unveils final section of building

Pakefield High School, the first High School to be built in Suffolk for more than 20 years, has unveiled the third and final phase of it's development. Pakefield opened to Years 7 & 8 students whilst work was still underway.

Burial park exceeds year's expectations

Support for the 30-acre woodland burial park at Gunton has surpassed the expectations of its Trustees. As the 6,500 trees planted by volunteers grow, so is the community around the park, with more than 80 people signing up as Friends of Gunton Woodland Burial Park.

October

Veteran honoured

Lowestoft war veteran Ken Jay has been awarded the Ushakov medal of honour from the Russian Federation, thanking him for the invaluable contribution he made to the defeat of Nazi Germany. Mr Jay took part in Arctic convoys to deliver vital weapons and much needed food to Russia during WWII. Mr Jay said that whilst he appreciated his award, it and other medals he received, remained a constant reminder of the many who did not return from the war.

Case shut for court

The magistrates court in Old Nelson Street has been closed as part of a round of cutbacks in the county. The Ministry of Justice (MOJ) claimed that a declining workload and a growing reliance on digital technology for hearings meant that it (the court) was no longer needed as part of the court estate. There are now just two courthouses in Suffolk.

Transformer moved

A huge 170 tonne supergrid electricity transformer was moved, by road, from Lowestoft to Leiston in an operation that took six hours to complete the 26 mile journey. The transformer will allow electricity generated by the new Galloper offshore wind farm to reach homes and businesses.

Jail gates shut for final time

It has been a part of Blundeston's history for the past 50 years, but the village's former jail has now finally shut its gates for the last time. With Lowestoft-based Badger Building redeveloping the area, a new era now begins.

Lowestoft loses one of its on call fire engines

A decision to reduce the area's fire cover as part of a cost-saving programme has resulted in Lowestoft losing one of its fire engines. The move means just two engines at Lowestoft South and one at Lowestoft North remain, even though more than two engines are often required to attend a house fire. A public consultation earlier in the year showed residents were overwhelmingly against the cuts, with concerns that firefighters would not have the resources to respond to large incidents, such as the boat fire in Oulton Broad that happened recently. Although it will no longer service Lowestoft south Fire Station, the 2003-registered Volvo won't be leaving Suffolk completely as it will still be retained by the fire service and used at stations elsewhere.

New rail franchise

Greater Anglia (formerly Abellia – a Dutch company) has won a nine-year franchise to run the region's trains. It has promised to completely renew the rolling stock by 2020 with the first new trains appearing early in 2019. It will pay the Treasury £B3.7 for the right to run services.

November

Temporary barriers will protect town

Almost three years on from the devastating tidal surge that hit the east coast, temporary flood barriers are ready for deployment to protect the town against winter floods. 1.4km of temporary flood defences were handed over by the Environment Agency to Waveney District Council to safeguard five areas around the harbour – at Riverside Road, Kirkley Ham, Waveney Road, Belvedere Road and Commercial Road. The Geodesign barriers, which have been designed for flood rescue operations, are described as “the 21st century alternative to sand bags”.

Beach huts approved despite space concerns

New beach huts along a popular coastal promenade have been given the go-ahead despite fears from residents that they were being packed too closely together. A bid for 72 standard 2m x 2m beach huts in Pakefield was approved two years ago, but WDC has since sought to alter that plan to 61 3m x 2m huts, 0.5m apart.

Pub to become new homes site

The Kings Head public house in Kessingland is to be partly demolished and turned into homes. The facade facing the High Street is to be retained and the remainder is to be demolished to provide eight homes. The pub - which dates from 1750 – has been closed for three years as successive landlords have struggled to make a success of the business. There are two other pubs in the village.

Appeal launched to save church

An appeal has been launched to raise £300,000 to save St Margaret’s Church, Lowestoft. Six leaking windows need replacing at a cost of £150,000, and replacement of a 50-year old boiler and associated pipework at £100,000, mean that the church could face closure. An approach has been made to the Heritage Lottery Fund and to the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust but most of the money needs to come from the townsfolk.

Strong case for reallocating court hearings

When Lowestoft Magistrates Court was closed last year, its work was reallocated to other courts in the area. This has meant that some people have to travel to Ipswich to give evidence. Local solicitors believe that this could cause a reduction in the quality of justice. They, and Mr Peter Aldous have petitioned HM Courts and Tribunal Services (HMCTS) with a view to getting them to reverse their decision.

December

Car park demolition may harm trade

Waveney District Council (WDC) has announced that the Battery Green multi-storey car park is to be demolished as it is uneconomical to repair. After it is demolished, the area will be used as a temporary car park until the land is developed. WDC hopes that the land will provide homes, retail and commercial opportunities. Local businesses declare that the loss of the car park will affect trade in the town. (After note: The closure has been postponed to March 2017)

Roundhouse replaced

The replica Celtic roundhouse at Carlton Colville Primary School which was destroyed by fire in February has been rebuilt. A £10,000 appeal was launched to rebuild the 10ft high wood and reed structure and provide CCTV coverage. Many local businesses, families and local councillors responded to help re-provide the important educational resource.

Stall holders to be evicted from town's market

Stall holders on the outdoor market in the Britten Centre have been given one months notice of eviction. The news was delivered by letter from Way Shop 2 (Lowestoft), the owners of the centre. The company bought the site in January and said that the move is part of plans to refurbish the site.

Lifeboat appeal

An appeal has been launched to fund a new lifeboat. RNLI needs to raise £640,000 to fund a new Shannon class vessel to provide cover at existing lifeboat stations when their own craft go off service for repair or maintenance. The Patsy Knight, Lowestoft's own Shannon class lifeboat, was launched more than 30 times during 2016 and is declared to be the best lifeboat boat Lowestoft has ever had.

Closure of Tyndale Press

After 80 years of trading, Tyndale Press has closed its doors for the last time. The company was established in 1936 by a printer who had been made redundant and was gifted some money to set up a company to help the people of Lowestoft to get back to work following the great depression. Based in Newcombe Road, the company employed 26 people when in its prime. But technology changes introduced have gradually whittled this number down to two.

Festive treat for town as lifeboat welcomes cruise liner

The P&O Arcadia made an unscheduled stop off Lowestoft on Christmas Day. The ship had been on a round Britain cruise and decided to moor off Lowestoft after enduring several days of storm Barbara before continuing her cruise. The lifeboat Patsy Knight made a courtesy call and one of the crew, dressed as Santa, went aboard. The visit also sparked some historical memories, with Lowestoft being home to the Arcadia theatre in the late 1940s and 1950s (now the East Coast Cinema).

Sponsor announced as town's first free school is unveiled.

Catch22, a non-profit organisation has been appointed sponsor of a new free school on the site of the old Carlton Colville primary school. Refurbishment contracts for the new school, which provides social, emotional, and mental health education, are to be let in the new year with the new school opening, hopefully, in 2017.

Last trawler in line for a makeover

Built in 1961, the Mincarlo is the only surviving Lowestoft registered trawler. Although no longer sailing, she is used to teach the public about the history of the town's maritime past. The vessel has been put into dry dock to ensure her hull is still intact and to clean her up.

Local News – by Paul Durbidge

Housing development in North Lowestoft

During the summer of 2016, county archaeologists investigated two locations in North Lowestoft prior to the continuation of a housing development. Both areas were adjacent to Compass Street, one directly behind the old town hall building the other on land running parallel to Jubilee Way.

Behind the town hall, three large squares each approximately three metres by three metres, were cut through tarmac to a depth of just over one metre. This yielded much rubble and infill lying over disturbed sand. The rubble was made up of broken bricks, mortar, broken pan tiles and several pieces of mild steel reinforcing rods. The fill was mostly of 19thC date with a few shards of white earthenware and the abraded remains of a large, light green glass stopper. Beneath the sand was a mixture of sand and loam with a scattering of small oyster shell and a few fragments of animal bone in one square. Darker soil in the corner of the square suggested the possibility of a small pit. Examination of the soil heaps after heavy rain showers showed more small pieces of tile and brick, together with several small round flint stones, but nothing else. At depth, all the squares showed disturbed ground right down to clean beach sand, but there was not enough material, or features encountered, to warrant an excavation and the investigation was concluded after some five days and later backfilled.

The second area of investigation, that running parallel to Jubilee Way, involved scraping back the surface of light sandy soil exposing no fewer than seven water pits, or well shafts. Shapes varied from circular to rectangular. One circular feature, measuring only 70cm in diameter, was constructed by using soft, red, post medieval bricks. The larger rectangular wells had been constructed using large nodules of tabular flint and occasional bricks, all of which were held together with mortar. Such features were frequently used to deposit rubbish at the end of their use. No attempt was made to remove any of the infill by the evacuation team because of safety concerns.

The foundations of a rectangular dwelling were also exposed showing thick walls formed of flint and brick with an inside floor covered in dark green floor tiles, averaging 23cm x 23cm, along with an adjacent area covered in smaller plain tiles, measuring 10cm x 10cm, the latter being notably damaged. There was a suggestion of a drainage hole where a number of the tiles were missing. This may indicate some form of working area, although for what purpose is not clear. In the vicinity of the foundations, small pieces of bone were encountered along with oyster shell and whelk. Some of the bones had been bored out to fit knife handles or something similar. Fragments of glass were also present along with remains of pipe clay. In conversation with the site director, he was of the opinion that several heavier pieces of mineral-like substance may well be iron slag. Bronze finds were slight and included part of a brooch and a jetton. More indications of trade were indicated by the amount of shards of imported pottery from the Low Countries scattered across the site.

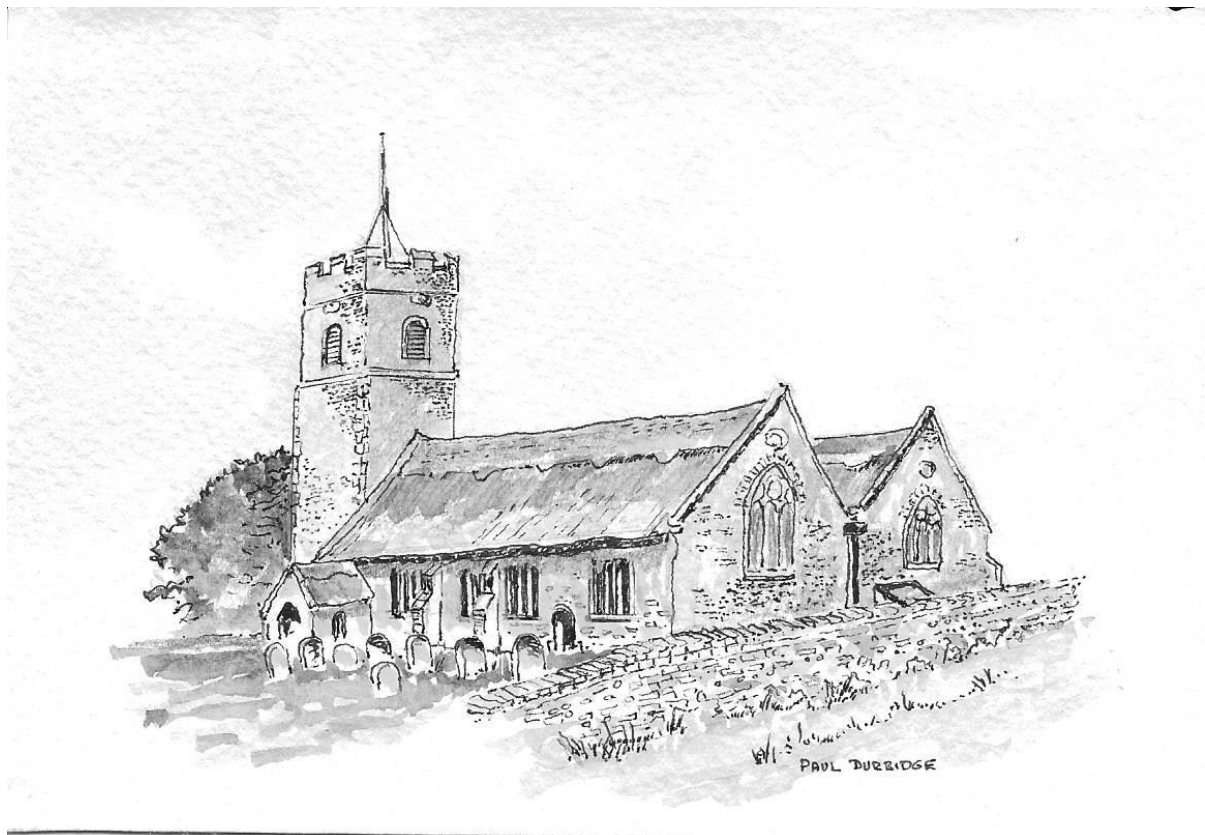
The Station Arches Project.

During the early part of 2016, management from Abellio Greater Anglia chaired a meeting with local groups at the Lowestoft Library where they offered local organisations the opportunity to design panels about their activities which in turn would be later supplied and fitted in the tall recessed arches which form part of the perimeter wall of the Lowestoft Railway Station. Some of the contributors include East Anglian Transport Museum, Maritime Museum, Royal Naval Patrol Service Museum and Lowestoft Museum. After some required adjustments, all ten of the colourful panels are now finally in place and they give a colourful display to visitors viewing them from the railway platform and they are certainly worth a visit.

Parish church of All Saints and St Margaret, Pakefield

In all likelihood, there was once an earlier wooden church on the present site. In the Domesday Book, Pakefield is recorded in the Hundred of LUDINGA, the old name for Mutford. Here, Pakefield is recorded as having six freemen, 30 acres and one plough. At the time, the two churches were already in existence, side by side, divided by a wall where there is an archading, with each church having its own Rector and Patron.

This state of affairs remained until 1746, when in response to a petition from Sir John Playters and Edward North, the two patrons, the Bishop issued an order for the consolidation of the two medieties.

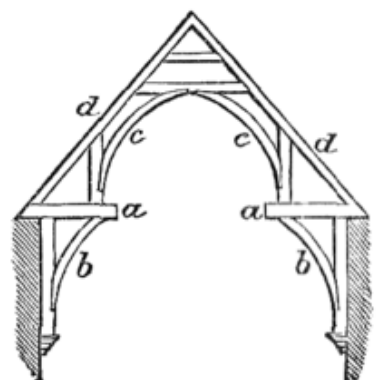


Donations to Lowestoft Museum

Over the last year there have been several donations to the Museum including a large bone discovered from the Crag deposits at Covehithe, Suffolk. It took the form of a Tibia or rear leg joint from a Southern Elephant and was picked up partially covered by sand along the beach by a walker en-route from Kessingland to Southwold during the summer months. The Crag deposits date from five to two million years ago.

Thoughts of a retired carpenter on the Angel Roofs in East Anglia

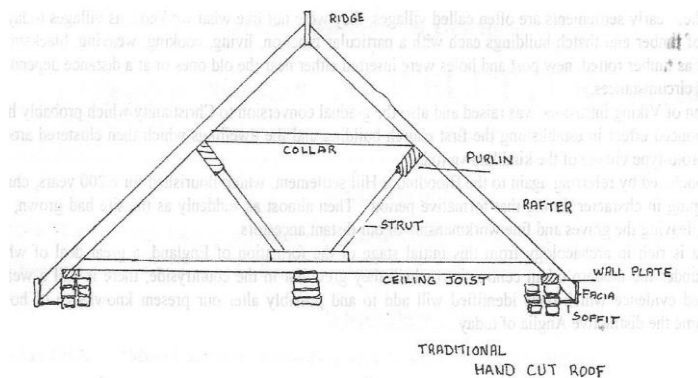
As a retired carpenter with involvement in roof construction, I found the lecture by Michael Rimmer “The Angel Roofs of East Anglia”, of particular interest and in spite of medieval builders using the wheel, the thought of manhandling heavy roof sections of green oak into position can only be described as awesome.



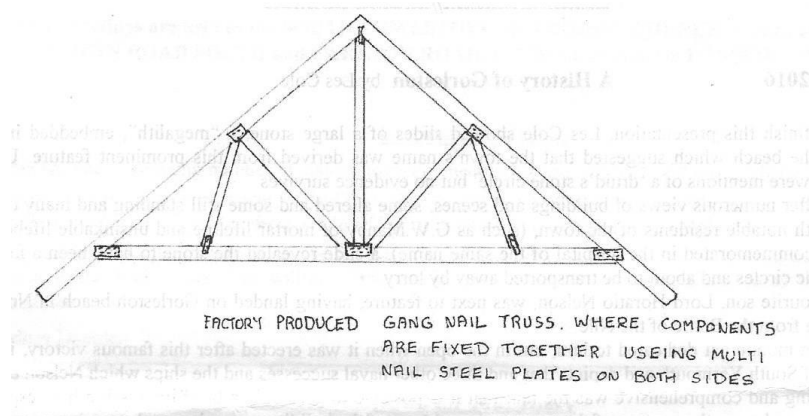
Section of Hammer-beam Roof:
aa, hammer-beam; bb, hammer-brace; cc, collar-brace; dd, rafters.

There must have been several cases of roofs moving and even collapsing under such weight before a more general understanding of both weight and movement was understood. Whilst some iron nails were employed, wooden pegs, or tree nails, were widely used during these early assemblies and components would have been bored out in such a way that when the pegs were driven in, it would draw the joints tighter together. The heavy oak trusses would have been dragged into position outside the wall and then on the inside scaffolding, where they finally reached the opposite side and spanned the building. They would then have been strapped to keep them upright and stop them falling over – the process repeated time and time again until all of the timbers were in position. Small round wooden pegs were also used to fix clay roofing tiles, usually two round holes were made in the wet clay, and when finally used, the pegs would have protruded through the tile and were hooked over a horizontal batten.

All the weight on a roof, and it is considerable, pushes downwards from the ridge and this results in the rafters, which are fixed to wooden wall plates, being pushed outwards. To combat this, cross beams or ceiling joists are used from one side to the other, being nailed to the toes of the rafters and the wooden plates, which results in the whole roof being tied together. A thick section timber called a purlin, is usually fixed to the underside of the rafters, halfway down from the ridge on both sides, running parallel to each other and to the wall plates, and this in turn, is supported by angle struts which transfer the weight to the inner walls. Just above the purlins, collars are fixed across the width of the roof which again helps to combat any outward push higher up.



During the Roman period, both reed and sedge were used as a roof covering as well as large heavy clay tiles, often weighing between three and four pounds each. These would be laid in rows and bulled together with tapered half round tiles covering the joints. Whilst the face of these hand made tiles were made with two upstands, the undersides were quite flat with no provision for hooking over wooden battens, so the angle of the roof had to be quite shallow to stop the tiles sliding off. Such roofs with a very shallow pitch would result in a considerable spread at the eaves and the probability of snow in the winter months would increase the weight significantly, resulting in a need for many extra supports beneath the rafters.



The construction of a modern roof has progressed considerably with the majority now consisting of purpose-made gang nail trusses and while timber sections are thin, struts are incorporated in the specification. These are usually lifted into position by mobile cranes after the wall plates have been marked out and once nailed into position, they are braced to combat any movement allowing the bricklayers to build up the gables leaving the roof ready for tiling.

Stirrup

The gilded copper alloy late Saxon stirrup strap mount is pentagonal in shape with straight sides and base with a pointed undulating upper edge. It is decorated with a group of tendrils at each side extending upwards from the base and then curling outwards into a spiral joined by a knot in the centre. Unusually there is a small round cut garnet gemstone set in the centre of the mount. Examination by experts in Bury suggest the stone is exceptionally well cut in a style that does not appear to have been used in Britain in the 11th century and it is possible that the stone is a later addition, something not unheard of as antiquarian finds were occasionally embellished to increase their monetary value. The discovery was originally made by a metal detectorist in the mid 1980's at Bloodmoor Hill and has now been given to the Lowestoft Museum where it will be on display in 2017.

Covehithe Suffolk

Here over the last few months there has been quite a loss of high cliff which has exposed a new black horizontal stain nearly two metres long in the cliff face. It contains evidence of burning and a small number of greyware shards including rim and base of Romano British date. Part of a small red Samian base was also recovered. Its shape and size indicating DRAGENDORFF 33 which is a small cup. The first detailed study of Samian was made by a German archaeologist HANS DRAGENDORFF in 1895 and his table of fifty five forms including ARRETINE (Samian ware) remains the standard classification.