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September/October 2017

Blythburgh's Sarah makes history

Blythburgh resident Sarah Wickham has been named the first female president of Southwold Rugby Club. Sarah has been involved with the club since 2000, when Southwold first launched its women's team, the Swallows.

Sarah says: "I am totally elated to have been named the first female president at Southwold – it is an absolute privilege.

"My main aim is to ensure the club thrives and the (men's) first-team will be looking to win promotion next season, as will the seconds, while the ladies' team will hopefully stabilise and grow in numbers. "



As well as the adult teams, Southwold also runs a successful youth set-up and Wickham is keen to attract more youngsters to the club.

"It's not just the adult set-up, we have a really strong minors and youths section which is so beneficial for the club and we are hoping to attract more younger families to the club in the future," the new Southwold president explained.

Sarah has hung up her boots, having played as a front row, but is proud of the way the ladies' section has grown over the years: "The Swallows were first accredited in 2002 and going back to the early days, we were going all over the country just to get a game, playing in the East Midlands league against teams like Loughborough and Olney. That has improved but it is still very difficult to recruit people into the women's game."

Words: Chris Brammer

Picture: Sarah Lucy Brown

This article and photograph is reprinted by kind permission of the East Anglian Daily Times

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Home thoughts from a broad...



TRAFFIC WATCH

Once again the speeds have been divided into three categories: Acceptable (0 to 35mph), Illegal (35 to 55mph) and Highly Illegal (55 to 80mph) and again I have looked at different periods of the day so as well as the whole 24hours of each day I have figures for Daytimes (07:00 to 19:00); Nights (19:00 to 07:00) and Late Nights (22:00 to 05:00)

A12 Northbound

After Latitude we monitored from 17th July to 7th August. The overall figures show that 90% (4664 per day) were driving at an acceptable speed, 10 % (529 per day) were at illegal speeds and 0.25% (13 per day) were driving at Highly illegal speeds. During the daytime from 07:00 to 19:00 the figures are slightly better at 93% acceptable; 7% illegal and an average of only 2 vehicles per day were highly illegal. At night, as we know, the pattern changes, with lower volume and higher speeds. Only 72% were acceptable; 27% illegal and 1.5% highly illegal.

Late at night between 22:00 and 05:00 the figures are 60% driving at or below 35mph; 36% between 35 and 55mph and 4% (8 vehicles per night) between 55 and 80mph.

Dunwich Road Northbound

Period monitored: 7th August to 3rd September. The lower overall volumes and the nature of the road means that, on the surface, the Dunwich Road figures always look better than the A12. However with a large number of hidden and semi hidden drive ways and turnings onto the road the danger and inconvenience to residents of cars ignoring the speed limit even by a 'moderate' amount (say 45mph) is considerable and, it could be argued, has a greater impact than similar speeds on the A12. This should be borne in mind when reading these figures.

Overall 92% (1594 per day) were acceptable, 8% (132 per day) were illegal and over the whole period 11 vehicles were highly illegal. Daytime the figures were 93% acceptable, 7% illegal and 3 vehicles highly illegal. Nights were 84% acceptable, 16% illegal and 5 vehicles highly illegal. Late nights were 82% acceptable, 18% illegal and 3 vehicles highly illegal.



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REFLECTIONS

Magnificent men in their flying machines

Man has always been fascinated by the idea of flight. In Greek mythology, Icarus is often depicted attempting to escape Crete with wings constructed by his father from feathers and wax. His father warns him not to fly too low or too high. Icarus ignores his father's instructions by flying too close to the sun; the wax in his wings melts, he tumbles out of the sky, falls into the sea and drowns.

Back in 1485, Leonardo da Vinci made the first real studies of flight. Leonardo made over 100 drawings to illustrate his theories on flight and, although the first helicopter wasn't built until the 1940s, his sketches were considered the predecessor to these modern day flying machines.

But I race ahead.... and it was wind, sand, and a dream of flight that brought Wilbur and Orville Wright to Kitty Hawk in North Carolina at the end of the 19th century. These self-taught engineers worked

tirelessly and after four years of scientific experimentation (and much hardship) they achieved the first successful powered flight on December 17, 1903. Their first flight may have only covered a distance of 37 metres but their achievement changed our world forever.

The aerospace industry in the UK is the fourth largest in the world and has contributed much to the history of flight including the development and production of the first aircraft with an enclosed cabin (Avro Type F), the first commercial jet airliner (De Havilland Comet), the first supersonic commercial jet airliner (Concorde), and the first fixed-wing vertical take-off and landing combat aircraft (Hawker Siddeley Harrier).

These names are familiar to us as are those of the great aviators: Amelia Earhart, Howard Hughes,

Steve Fossett, Douglas Bader, Amy Johnson and Charles Lindbergh to name very few. These are names that conjure images of daring deeds and cutting edge technology.

Over the years, the concept of flight has captivated many and Blythburgh residents past and present have not been immune to this magic.

Many will remember Peter Nash who, for many years, travelled the world as a British Airways steward and also Group Captain Ken Hubbard who piloted the RAF Valiant bomber which dropped Britain's first live megaton H-Bomb in

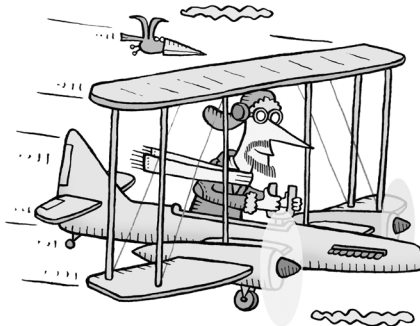
1957. Angel Lane resident, Professor John Allen, has had a life long association with the aeronautical industry and, as chief future projects engineer with Hawker Siddeley, was involved with the development of the Harrier and Hawk aircrafts made famous by the Red Arrows.

What is it about Angel Lane? Alan Mackley,

resident at Number 1, shares a birthday with the De Havilland Dragon Rapide. The Rapide is an all-wood, twin-engine biplane passenger aircraft which made its public debut in the 1934 King's Cup Air-Race. It averaged 158 mp before retiring due to hail damage!

To celebrate their shared 83 birthday, Alan traveled to the Saxonair Aviation Centre at Norwich on September 10 and, in a tale straight from "Boys Own", will take to the skies in a restored De Havilland Dragon Rapide (one of only two left flying). In my mind's eye I can see Alan - aviator helmet, leather jacket, white silk scarf and sporting the most enormous grin as the Rapide accelerates towards take-off.

**Words: Sonia Boggis
Illustration: Spike Gerrell**



Riding and striding to support our churches



Colin Huggins takes you on a walk and a bike ride through tranquil Suffolk

Saturday 9 September was the day for the annual *Ride and Stride* event in support of the Suffolk

Historic Churches Trust (SHCT). The Trust makes grants towards repairs and restoration to churches and chapels of all denominations and this event is its main source of income.

Blythburgh resident Colin Huggins, and Paul Simmons who lives in Halesworth but attends Holy Trinity Church, took to the road.

The idea is to walk or cycle between 9am and 5pm, visiting as many churches/chapels as possible, and to raise funds through sponsorship.

Colin is a keen walker but this was his first *Ride and Stride*. He covered 20 miles, setting off from Holy Trinity and taking in a further 12 churches before returning to Blythburgh.

Paul, who hasn't cycled for a while, had his bike newly serviced for the event.

He remembers taking part in one of the first *Ride and Strides* in the early 1980's. Paul cycled some

12 miles, taking in 10 churches, starting at Halesworth and finishing at Blythburgh. Similar *Ride and Stride* events take place around the country, all on the same day, ranging from Northumberland to Cornwall.

Despite the storms of the previous evening, the weather was generally good.

Colin enjoyed getting away

from the main routes that we all use and to appreciate the quiet country lanes. The lanes and tracks from Blyford to Sotherton and Uggeshall were particularly tranquil. St Mary's Church at Uggeshall was a great discovery.

Although the legs were a little stiff and the feet a bit sore after walking for more than 7 hours, it was a good way to spend a day, and to raise some funds for a good cause.

Paul's lasting memory was of the amazing skyline behind Walpole Independent Chapel and how much more you can see when cycling along



Wenhaston Methodist Chapel



St Mary's Church, Uggheshall

lanes that you normally drive along. Things such as odd-shaped trees and the names of farms and he had no idea there was a Methodist chapel in Wenhaston - complete with gallery painted pink and a pipe organ. Paul even went so far as himself to sponsor the welcomers at the Walpole Chapel



Paul ends his ride at Blythburgh

at 10p per visitor much to their consternation and amazement.

Thanks to the generosity of their sponsors, Colin and Paul raised a total of £280, split between Holy Trinity and the SHCT.

POST BOX

Thanks a bunch Therese Coffey...

Sir, A few of us turned out to meet Therese Coffey on her annual tour of Suffolk villages. She arrived accompanied by four assistants/ observers/ apprentices. We asked what stance the government plans to take on the use of neonicotinoids, as there is evidence that the EU ban on these bee and other polinator-harming pesticides may be lifted in the UK post Brexit.

Unfortunately Dr Coffey informed us that this is not a matter within her portfolio of Environment but sits with Farming.

She did point out that most of the research has been carried out in the US or Germany and is therefore less relevant in the UK.

In addition she believes that there are worse pesticides than neonicotinoids so we could be in a worse position if we change.

Dr Coffey was informed that these answers were not felt to be satisfactory. We then moved on to the increasing amount of traffic on Angel Lane



and the speed of the traffic on the A12. We supplied Dr Coffey with the statistics on traffic speed and flow which have been compiled for the Parish Council by Roderick Orr-Ewing.

Dr Coffey said that, again, this was not in her remit and asked us to refer this matter back to the Parish Council.

One of her assistants took our contact details and then they all left in Dr Coffey's new diesel car, heading for the next village.

Val Carse

The joy and comfort



The Rev Malcolm Doney told the congregation of 120 people, including 23 under-16s, with 21 dogs, five horses, three cats and two chickens at Holy Trinity's annual blessing of animals:

“People – quite clever people – sometimes ask me why I do these animal services. They think it's some kind of village fête, a sentimental rural sideshow. And yes, it is a bit of fun, and we enjoy ourselves.

“But beneath this is something which I believe is very serious and profound. And that is that the animals we love and live with are, to us, the sharp end of the swarm of other creatures, the huge multiplicity, the bio-diversity, the co-dependency that is part of the glorious interwoven tapestry of our world.

We and our animals need each other. They bring us joy, comfort us when we're despondent. And when they're gone, we're heartbroken.”

ort of our animals



Oh, to live in Bawdy Blythburgh...

Penelope Keith came to Blythburgh in August to film a programme in a new series on 'Hidden Coastal Villages' to be shown on Channel 4/More4 in 2018. The interest was the association between the legend of the ghostly hound of the East Anglian marshes, Black Shuck, and Blythburgh church.

The link was first made by a zealous cleric, Abraham Fleming, in a pamphlet describing a great storm in August 1577 that hit the church during morning service, causing great damage and killing members of the congregation.

Fleming wanted to get across a message: repent your sins or the wrath of God will be visited upon you. He used the image of the devil in the guise of a great black dog leaping from a beam above the screen into the terrified congregation, killing two men and a boy before flying from the church 'in vicious and hellish likeness'.

Fleming knew that his superstitious audience would recognize the dog as Black Shuck: if you saw him you, or a close relative would shortly die. The TV programme's polite treatment of

the subject belies the vigour of Fleming's language. He despaired of the sinfulness of the times and wrote:

"But we will not be warned, we will tumble still upon the bed of wantonness, and drink ourselves drunk with the wine of sensuality, that while we wallow in the sink of Sodomatical sin, we may be consumed with a Sodomatical or a Babylonical destruction."

Strong words! Was he speaking generally or did he have Blythburgh in mind? It is an uncomfortable thought that one of the benefactors for the newly-rebuilt church in the fifteenth century was Alice Stapleton, arraigned in court for keeping a brothel. Then there is the poem current in the seventeenth century:

***Beccles for a puritan
Bungay for the poor.
Halesworth for a drunkard,
And Bliborough for a whore.***

Fleming might have had a point. Bawdy Blythburgh indeed.

Alan Mackley

A MUST DATE FOR YOUR DIARY: The annual visit to the Theatre Royal Norwich to the matinee is on Saturday December 30 to see *Sleeping Beauty*. Transport plans and how to apply for your free tickets will be in the November issue of *The Focus*.

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NEWS FROM HOLY TRINITY

Festival to celebrate local composer

Local composer, the late William Alwyn (he used to live in Dunwich Road, Blythburgh) is celebrated in his own festival which runs this year from 11-14 October. Most concert performances will take place in Blythburgh Church, featuring Alwyn's own compositions, among others. Also, since he was known best for film music – writing some 200 scores – there will be a screening of one of his films at the Electric Cinema in Southwold. Details at: www.williamalwyn.co.uk. Leaflets are available in the church.

Coffee time: Blythburgh's monthly café and minimarket in the church from 10.30-12.00 on Saturday 29 September and 27 October.

Early for Christmas: Nobody wants to think about Christmas, but he's a reminder that on Saturday 25 November, Holy Trinity will be hosting the hugely popular Blythburgh Christmas market.

Calling children and young people: The Sole Bay team of churches are planning a musical production of the Christmas story set in ancient China, to be performed in Blythburgh Church. The cast of *A Lion for the King* – written by Blythburgh's own Meryl Doney – will be recruited from local youngsters. The cast and crew will need actors, singers, dancers, stage hands, lighting technicians, and more. There's an open invitation workshop for anyone interested in helping or being involved from 2.00-4.00pm on Saturday 14 October, at St Margaret's Church, Reydon.

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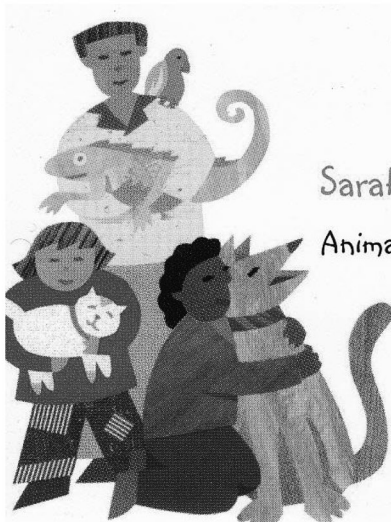
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Notes from Daisy Bank LXXX

By the time you read this Latitude will have been and gone. This year one of my favourite groups – 1975 – were there but unfortunately we were unable to go. Still, I listened in the garden every night just in case I recognised them from afar. Similar in a way, to me recognising the motor bikes I am forced to listen to for 26 weekend days a year from ten in the morning to three in the afternoon

When I moved to Blythburgh thirty years ago, I accepted the compromise of the A12 traffic noise and possible flooding in the back garden. However, I did not and do not accept the motor bikes and their ghastly noise. They of course came later as a sort of bonus.

The horticultural society came to see the garden in June. I suppose with all those lovingly kept gardens that they visited before and after Fern Cottage, our wilderness garden provided a contrast to the well-kept ones. But at least the roses hopefully made an impression: 120 now and from now on I am going to go rose-cuttings mad and any additions to the 120 will of course be free. Hurrah.



When I first came to Blythburgh, Appleton Marsh at the back of us was frequently pastured by cattle. Then the first breach came and after a couple of years was repaired and the cattle came back again. When the second and much larger breach appeared it was obvious the marsh would never be viable as agricultural land again.

Unfortunately the reeds have grown back in profusion and to a great height so that the wonderful vista of continuous water has disappeared which makes the view from our back gate just reeds and more reeds. However from the house which is a lot higher, we can still see a lot more of the marsh and the tidal water. Eventually, probably in another 30 years, the marsh will look something like it does on the other side of the bridge and the reeds will be confined to the edges.

Whilst I am sad at the loss of the view I am glad that the marsh has returned to what it was 100 years ago because of the amount of wild life that must enjoy the prospect of no human intervention. In other words they are safe from us, the polluters, once again.

What a wonderful thing it is to have good neighbours. If it were up to me, I'd transport Fern Cottage and garden to somewhere in deepest Suffolk well away from neighbours good or bad. But B likes the cosiness of having people around and passing by. Not that many people pass by in Daisy Bank of course but that is no bad thing. But if neighbours are a prerequisite of living here then we couldn't wish for better, especially the ones that live either side of us. In another life I will live in the centre of Suffolk and well away from the sea which as you probably know I have no love for.

Even Southwold has lost its allure. Nowhere to park and when you can find space, you might as well be shopping in Notting Hill or one of the more up market areas in North London. It's Halesworth for me. Good and varied shopping, easy to park and a nice traditional inland Suffolk town with friendly people. Having hated supermarkets since their inception, even the Co-op is more than bearable than most and Jacksons, or Coopers as it's called now, is the best ironmongers in these here parts.

Paul Bennett

A date for your diary: The next meeting of Blythburgh with Bulcamp and Hinton Parish Council will be in the village hall on Tuesday November 14 at 7.30pm with the public forum at 7.15. Everybody is welcome to have their say, Please be there.