



The bridge sign already seems to be influencing motorists' behaviour. Even while we were installing it, drivers were slowing down, and subsequent observations showed it was having an effect. We can only hope that once the second one is placed on the north-bound side of the A12, it will be equally effective.

Once the unit currently on the Dunwich Road has been moved to the A12, it will be replaced by one of the original units, so speeds will still be monitored there.

The devices record the speeds, and the data can be downloaded. These data will be published in subsequent issues of *Blythburgh Focus*.

WATCH YOUR SPEED



You may well have noticed that the Parish Council has installed new vehicle speed warning signs in the village. They're more sophisticated than the earlier devices, and can be programmed to display, in different colours, the speed vehicles are travelling. They have solar panels to charge their batteries, allowing them to operate for longer.

One is on the north side of Blythburgh, by the river Blyth bridge. The second is currently on Dunwich Road by the entrance to Mill Farm, displaying to motorists approaching the village down the B1125, a regular 'rat-run'. Eventually, this second unit will be repositioned on the north-bound A12 near the bus stop, once Suffolk Highways have replaced the mounting post that was demolished last August.

HIGHFIELD PLAYSITE – HAVE YOUR SAY

The Highfield playsite, which was opened in 2000 to mark the millennium – and has been enjoyed by several generations of village children – is about to close. The equipment has aged, and is in need of major repair or replacement. The Parish Council believes that – given the falling number of children in the village – this space (owned by the Parish Council) could be given a new lease of life and a new purpose.

So, readers of *Blythburgh Focus*, and anyone resident in the parish of Blythburgh with Bulcamp and Hinton is invited to suggest ideas of how this small plot could be used as a worthwhile local amenity, such as: allotments; planting a semi-circle of drought tolerant, wildlife friendly native trees leaving a grassy area for picnics etc.

If you have a practical proposal of how this space could be transformed, please email Parish Council Chair Roderick Orr-Ewing: roderick@millend6.plus.com; or Parish Clerk Al Besly: blythburgh.pc@gmail.com.

Village Precept

In recognition of the increased cost of living, Blythburgh Parish Council have decided not to increase the precept this year. Although Council Tax, which is set by East Suffolk Council, will be increasing generally, the portion which funds your Parish Council will remain the same as it was last year. In fact, it will be very slightly less as there are now more houses in Blythburgh contributing to the precept.

NEW MOTH, NEW NAME – THIS TIME IT'S PERSONAL

One night in August 1992, many years ago when I was a relatively young, energetic chap and most good people would have been tucked up in bed, I was collecting and recording moths. I used light traps on the shingle and scrub at Dungeness, Kent, a site long known as good for immigrant moths, birds, and now boat people.

An unspectacular night like many others, I took one rather drab tatty specimen of what would normally be considered a common moth. I can no longer recall why I retained this specimen, but I kept it and put it aside in my collection until 2014



when – because I was uneasy about its identity – I showed it to other lepidopterists who had wider experience of European moths. After some scepticism (as there are a couple of very similar very common moths in Europe), a deeper investigation began, that ran firstly to

dissection and then to DNA. At this point, it was realised that it might be a species that had only been described as new to science in 1991, and only known then from the eastern Mediterranean, Bulgaria and Cyprus. This investigation has taken from 2014 till recent months. The conclusion? This moth was indeed the first record for the British Isles.

Noctua tertia was first described to science in 1991, when what had been thought to be two species of Underwing moths were identified as three. As moths are added to the UK list, it has become the norm to apply a vernacular and unscientific name – as the new army of moth watchers and enthusiasts don't seem to do Latin. The original species common in Britain and Europe has the vernacular name of the Lesser Broad-bordered Yellow Underwing. In 2002, Dr John Langmaid found the second species in Hampshire, and this was named after him as Langmaid's Yellow Underwing. Adding my record of this third moth species to the British list meant a common name was also called for. So there you have it: Wilson's Yellow Underwing.

A bit self-explanatory really! A rather dull little moth - but fame at last!

David Wilson

Get Ready to Grow!

At the time of writing (early January), our garden is starting to wake up and the white heads of the snowdrops are clearly visible – although they do still have some way to go before they display their full beauty.

Your Hort Soc committee is putting together a programme of events for 2023 which will be circulated in due course, and we look forward to welcoming members to a variety of events throughout the coming year. Thanks to all of you who've paid your annual subs to our Treasurer Jenny Allen, and just a gentle reminder that there is still time to renew if it has slipped your mind.

New members are always welcome, and with membership at just £5 a person, we think it's particularly good value. Do please get in touch with Val Carse our Chair, or myself if you would like to know more.

Sonia Boggis

Secretary, Blythburgh Horticultural Society
sonia.boggis@btinternet.com

BLYTHBURGH CHURCH

Happy Christmas

It now seems a distant memory, but the festive period was happily busy at Blythburgh Church. It felt as though we'd properly recovered from Covid uncertainty. Attendances were up – some of them higher than they have been for some years. And congregations responded generously to our Christmas appeal. We raised around £960 to be divided between UNICEF's UK programme supporting children in Ukraine, and The Children's Society (Formerly the Church of England's Children's Society) which protects children threatened by abuse, exploitation and neglect.

Sad goodbye

After 12 years as Team Rector of the eight-church Sole Bay Team, the Revd Canon Simon Pitcher is leaving, to become Rector of Lavenham. We'll say goodbye to him at a farewell team service at St Edmund, Southwold on 26 February at 11am. We're sad to be saying goodbye to Simon and his wife Rene – Simon has been huge support to the congregation here in Blythburgh, and we wish him and Rene the very best in this new venture.

Malcolm Doney

DAISY BANK CXI

When I first came to live in Blythburgh, I served on the parish council for seven years. Bob Stringer was then the chairman. In that time, we achieved refurbishing the village hall and several other things – like reinstating and improving the play site in Highfields. Among my many bones of contention then, were the motorbikes, and the horrendous noise that they issue on the day of their meetings, and the implications for Daisy Bank with the marsh flooding when surge tides occurred. With the former, I was considered a killjoy, and with the latter I was ignored. Both voted down by my colleagues on the council. Such is democracy.

In the half-dozen or so times when it has happened since I came to Blythburgh 34 years ago, besides flooded gardens, the old railway path has been covered in water up to a depth of two feet. Beneath that path, and running most of its length is the main sewer for the village of Blythburgh. It ends up at the pumping station on the Wenhaston road and then is diverted onwards. Not many people will know that we call out the sewerage authority as often as twice a year, when the sewer blocks up. And with the increased building of houses in the village, this is going to make the problem worse.



The answer is to either reroute the pipe or – failing that – build a sea wall on the other side of the path to prevent flooding. Of course, neither will happen and eventually when I am tucked up cosily in the churchyard, the inevitable will take place, and the sewer pipes will be permanently covered making it impossible for any de-blocking. Then the whole of the village, situated higher than us marsh-landers, will find their sewage backing up with very unpleasant results. Something for someone else to worry about now, as I definitely won't be involved.

Other than worries about village infrastructure, Christmas passed reasonably well. The card which B thought not very Christmassy was a Renoir copy I did several years when I was into all that sort of thing. I just added the Christmas tree recently, so I suppose it was really a bit of a cop-out. I have promised B to come up with an original next year.

Paul Bennett



MRWCF
Electrical Ltd.

- Domestic and commercial
 - Rewires
- Additional sockets and lights
 - PAT testing
 - Inspection & Testing




PLEASE CALL FOR A FREE ESTIMATE
24 HOUR CALL OUT

T:01502 478473 M:07884 477110 M:07717 176655
E:mrwcfelectrical@hotmail.co.uk
W:www.mrwcfelectrical.co.uk

WILDWATCH

The path from Blythburgh Station, following the line of the old railway, is pock-marked with holes. Some are mere scrapes but, here and there, are larger ones, probably the work of badgers.

Badgers are nocturnal and rarely seen during daylight hours. They are also social animals and their burrows or setts are extensive, with several families using their own tunnels and bedrooms.



Many creatures excavate or use burrows. These can be temporary refuges for nesting or procreation, but they can also provide a more permanent protective home, used over centuries and passed down through many generations.

On an evolutionary scale, burrows have been an important factor in the development of many mammalian families and species. The history of burrowing goes back much further than you may think.

It's a common belief that mammals evolved after the dinosaurs became extinct some 66 million years ago. In fact, they were around, in a somewhat different form, well before the dinosaurs began their 170 million-year reign.

About 250 million years ago, the Earth underwent a mass-extinction, called the Permian-Triassic event. It wiped out over 80% of marine life, and at least 70% of life on land.

In the millions of years that followed the Triassic extinction, a variety of different life forms evolved, including a group called Synapsida, also sometimes called the "mammal-like reptiles".

Alongside them were the Sauropsida, a group that eventually gave rise to the reptiles and birds. It is from the Sauropsida that dinosaurs evolved.

Synapsida evolved many different forms. Over time, many species died out, but there is fossil evidence that some of the smaller synapsids began to use burrows as refuges from the extreme changes in climate that favoured dinosaurs.

In due course, synapsids also evolved warm blood and fur. They evolved a hard palate in the skull too, which made them more efficient feeders, and gave them resistance to the climate changes that followed the extinction event of 66 million years ago.

These mammals were very different from those of 200 million years earlier. Small, furtive, and resembling present-day shrews, many of them still lived in burrows. It is from these small, furry creatures, that all present-day mammals, including us, evolved.

In historical times, going underground has proved a survival option for humans. Air-raids and "buzz-bombs" drove many Londoners down into the tube during WW2.

One wonders if we'll have to learn to 'dig in' again.

Paul Lacey



NORTON PESKETT
SOLICITORS

A local firm with a world of experience



For you

- Buying and selling your home
- Re-mortgages and transfers of equity
- Wills and probate
- Court of Protection
- Family and children matters
- Criminal matters
- Personal injury claims

- Civil matters
- Notarial services
- Care home fees
- NHS continuing healthcare
- Trusts and deceased estates

For your business

- Commercial property
- Partnerships
- Employment matters
- Planning and regulatory issues
- Licensing
- Company formations
- Agricultural law

Lowestoft,
148 London Rd North
T: 01502 533 000

Beeches
Exchange Square
T: 01502 718 700

Gorleston
66a Bells Road
T: 01493 652 204

Great Yarmouth
141 King Street
T: 01493 849 200

Hailesworth
52 Thoroughfare
T: 01198 872 513

enquire@nortonpeskett.co.uk www.nortonpeskett.co.uk

No hidden costs

Same day response



Wickham Care Company t/a Walfinch Suffolk Coastal

01728 666232
 sarah@walfinch.com
 www.walfinch.com

Walfinch
 INDEPENDENT HOME LIVING

QUESTIONS IN A GOOD CAUSE

Do you know who said “Back again? Dear, oh dear”* or even, “I don’t get out of bed for less than \$10,000 a day”**?

Many of us enjoy a good quiz and on a dark winter evening Ro Williams gathered together a group of keen quizzers to compete in the 2022 Owen Williams Memorial Quiz and raise funds for SUDEP.

Friends of Ro (you know who you are) provided a warm welcome, food, drink, a lucky dip raffle, prizes and an interesting and unusual quiz format. Pay your entry fee and pick a card to find out which team you’ll be a member of for the evening: a great way to meet different people. The other innovative feature was that the team who had the least number of points selected the theme for the next round and, yes, the quiz master had thoughtfully prepared nine sets of questions for a total of six rounds plus an additional two tabletop rounds on “Quote Unquote” and “Letters and Numbers”. I always think that one of the key attributes of a good quiz, is good questions – and these ones were brilliant. Competition was keen, to say the least, with all teams scoring well, and team “Shelduck” finally taking the honours for 2022.

What a great way to spend an evening: testing out our knowledge and powers of recall as well as raising money for a very good cause.



The Owen Williams Memorial Quiz has been held in the village annually since 2015, and many reading this will recognise some of the past winners indeed may have even been in that winning team: Mother Truckers (2015), djswill in da house (2016), Stow Highers (2017), Stuck in the middle (2018), Rafael’s Club (2019), The Numbskulls (2020) and Shelduck (2022).

As mentioned, these quizzes certainly test us but, probably more importantly, they are raising funds

for SUDEP.

Ro lost her son, Owen to SUDEP in 2014. SUDEP or Sudden Unexpected Death in Epilepsy is when someone with epilepsy dies suddenly and no reason can be found. Since 2014, Ro has regularly raised money to support SUDEP Action which is a charity dedicated to raising awareness of epilepsy risks, and tackling epilepsy deaths. It is the only UK charity specialising in supporting and involving people bereaved by epilepsy.

Their services include bereavement support, counselling, help with understanding the inquest process and in collaboration with UK research teams, the involvement of bereaved families and professionals in research through the Epilepsy Death Register.

Ro is a regular fund raiser for SUDEP – so watch out for her at the next Blythburgh Day or Christmas Market where you can have a go on her stall and support fund raising for SUDEP.

Sonia Boggis

**What King Charles said to Liz Truss at her audience with him in Buckingham Palace*

***Canadian fashion model Linda Evangelista*

**Specialist legal advice
in Southwold**

Residential Property

Commercial Property

Wills and Powers of Attorney

Probate

Notarial Services

01502 724750

23a High Street,
Southwold, Suffolk
IP18 6AD

MANTINS.CO.UK



MANTINS
SOLICITORS & NOTARIES



BLYTHBURGH FIELD NOTES

The winter so far has been a relatively poor one for northern species. The short spell of hard weather before Christmas did provide a considerable increase in wader species on the Blyth, particularly Dunlin, Lapwing and Black-tailed Godwit. A Peregrine has also regularly frequented the estuary, roosting at night on an old dead pine tree, while a Spotted Redshank and Water Pipit have also been seen on several occasions. The highlight for the period however were five Bean Geese seen on the east side of the Estuary on the 30 December, these being a very rare species nowadays.

Our parish is an inland one, with the estuary only created by high tides breaking the river walls and flooding the grazing marshes in the 1950s. However, it has still produced a surprising number of rare birds, including four species of shrike. The Great Grey Shrike was a regular migrant and winter visitor, while our parish was still one of the strongholds for Red-backed Shrike until the mid-seventies. The exceptionally attractive Woodchat Shrike from Southern Europe has also occurred at least twice, while the extremely rare Lesser Grey Shrike has also been seen on Newdelight Heath.

Their scientific family name, *Laniidae*, is from Latin meaning “butcher”. These ferocious small songbirds regularly stock up their larder by gruesomely impaling their excess prey on thorn bushes, including small mammals, birds, lizards and insects, particularly Bees and Beetles. Although they lack talons like birds of prey, their strong hooked beaks are sufficient to do the job effectively.

Our parish’s real claim to fame in the bird world was the discovery of Britain’s last record of MacQueens Bustard, found by Percy Muttitt (gamekeeper for Sir Gervase Blois) at Hinton in November 1962, which stayed until the 29 December. The population of this species has been decimated in Arabia and the eastern Stans by falconers. Due to its rarity, this species is unlikely to occur in Britain again. At the time, it was classed as a race of Houbara Bustard, from which it has now been split.

I. Noknowt



Suffolk **Car** Centre

At Suffolk Car Centre
we have over 40 years main dealer experience
and bring quality used car sales
to Reydon & Southwold
at our Reydon Business Park site.

All our cars are fully serviced with new MOTs
plus 6 months' warranty
to give a complete peace of mind package.

With over 50 cars in stock
and with finance packages available,
we are sure that there will be a car to suit you.

Suffolk Car Centre Ltd
Exchange House
Reydon
Suffolk
IP18 6SZ

sales@suffolkcarcentre.co.uk

01502 451047 www.suffolkcarcentre.co.uk

STARRY, STARRY NIGHT

The long nights at this time of year mean that some of the best sights can be seen in the early evening. No need for late nights in the cold.

The giant planet Jupiter has been on display now for several months. From about 20 February it will be joined by Venus. Both will be visible once the Sun has set and the sky starts to darken. Venus is even brighter than Jupiter.

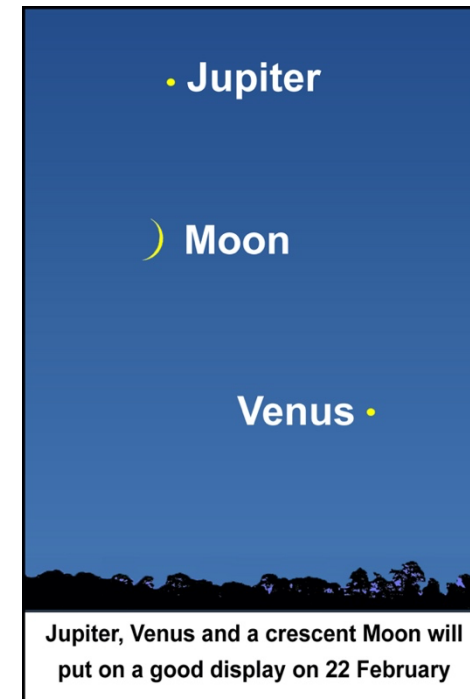
To view these at their best, here are some dates that you might want to put in your diary. On **22 February** the two planets will be joined by a crescent Moon which should be a good sight to see. A week later, while the Moon will have moved away in the sky, the two planets will appear very close to each other. They will be at their closest on the evenings of **1 and 2 March**. At this time they will be about the diameter of a full Moon apart.

Of course these objects are not really close together. They appear close in our sky as a result of the alignment of their orbits as we all travel anticlockwise around the Sun, or in the case of the Moon, around the Earth.

The Moon, Venus and Jupiter are the three brightest objects visible in the night sky. They will be quite low towards the horizon. Good vantage points from Blythburgh will be Chapel Road, or from the tower end of the church, looking roughly west.

The brightest of these is of course the Moon, although it is also the smallest with a diameter of a mere 2,159 miles. Its brightness is because at 229,000 miles, it is only a stone's throw away in astronomical terms.

The next brightest is Venus which is only slightly smaller than Earth. It is currently 130 million miles from us. It is closer to the Sun than us



and therefore, like the Moon, it exhibits phases, but you would need a telescope to see these.

The dimmest as we see it is Jupiter, but it is by far the biggest of the three. Jupiter has a diameter of 87,000 miles, and is the largest planet in our solar system. When you consider that it is currently 530 million miles away from us you may be surprised that it shines as brightly as it does.

Colin Huggins

VOTER ID – WHAT YOU NEED

The UK Government has introduced a controversial requirement for voters to show photo ID when voting at a polling station at some elections. Whether or not you agree with this, the new requirement will apply for the first time in England at the local elections on Thursday 4 May 2023.

Which forms of ID can you use?

- Passport
- Driving licence (including provisional license)
- Blue badge
- Certain concessionary travel cards
- Identity card with PASS mark (Proof of Age Standards Scheme)
- Biometric Immigration document
- Defence identity card
- Certain national identity cards

For more information on which forms of photo ID will be accepted, visit electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID, or call their helpline on 0800 328 0280.

If you don't have an accepted photo ID

If you don't already have any of the above, or you're not sure whether your photo ID still looks like you, you can apply for a free voter ID document, known as a Voter Authority Certificate. You can apply for this at: voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk.

Alternatively, you can complete a paper application form, and send this to the electoral services team at your local council.

If you need any help with applying for a Voter Authority Certificate or want to request an application form, contact your local council. To find their contact details visit electoralcommission.org.uk/voter.

The Blythburgh Latitude Trust is making grants

**The Blythburgh Latitude Trust
makes grants to individual
parishioners, families and
organisations to meet specific
needs.**

**For your grant, contact
the honorary administrator,
Jim Boggis, Marsh End,
Church Road, (478 687)**

*All applications will be treated in
complete confidence.*

Apply now

**The trustees are Jenny Allen, chair, Sarah Wickham, Michael
Nicholls, Val Carse, Malcolm Doney, Roderick Orr-Ewing, Paul Lacey and
Harry Waller.**

Your Parish Councillors

Chair: Roderick Orr-Ewing

Planning Advisory Committee:
Paul Lacey

Finance Advisory Committee:
Roderick Orr-Ewing, Chiara Saunders,
Al Besly

Councillors: Matthew Saunders,
Ashleigh Sendin, Jude Blois, Claire Orr-
Ewing

Clerk: Al Besly

Blythburgh Associations

Blythburgh Latitude Trust
Jim Boggis 01502 478687

Film Club
Olive Forsythe 01502 478521

Village Hall Mgement Committee
bookings@blythburghvillagehall.org.uk

Horticultural Society
Val Carse 07973 389898

Blythburgh Matters
Ro Williams 01502 478484

Blyth Belles
Sarah Wickham blythbelles@gmail.com

www.blythburgh.onesuffolk.net