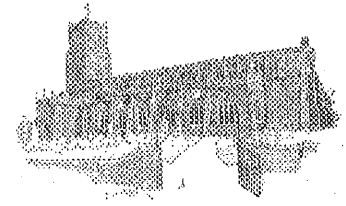


BLYTHBURGH PARISH NEWS

Issue 34

May/June 2007



COUNCIL SETS OUT VISION FOR THE FUTURE

The new Parish Council made a series of promises to everybody who lives in Blythburgh, Bulcamp and Hinton at the council's annual general meeting in May. The new council consists of David Tytler, chair, Ro Williams, vice-chair, Robert Benson and Binny Lewis with co-opted members, Lucy Clapham, Alan Mackley and Cliff Waller.

In a mission statement the new councillors said:

"The new Parish Council will build on the invaluable work of its predecessors over many years and set out to be professional, accessible and pro-active through a collegiate approach to its work. As a start, we will undertake initial training in June and July to ensure that we have a sound understanding of our roles and responsibilities and how to carry them out to the best of our ability.

"In an attempt to improve scrutiny and streamline council business, we will form sub-committees, initially to consider financial and planning matters. The sub-committees will present their recommendations to the whole council for discussion and ratification. We will seek ways to involve everybody in the village in the decision making process.

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"In the longer term, we intend to write a village action plan involving the local societies and everybody in the parish so that we all have a clear idea of what the parish wants for the future and how to achieve it. We will seek the help of Suffolk Acre (the Suffolk community development agency) in formulating the plan.

"We look forward to working in partnership with everybody in the village and we will wel-

come suggestions as to how this partnership can best be achieved."

Robert Benson is to chair the planning sub-committee with Alan Mackley and Cliff Waller, whilst Ro Williams will oversee finance with Binny Lewis and the Responsible Finance Officer (the parish clerk). The sub-committees will review their areas, probably between council meetings and report back to the full council with their recommendations. Given the setting up of sub-committees, the council will meet every other month but this will be kept under review.

Initial training dates were agreed, with the cost not to exceed £500. It is hoped that the training will take place in Blythburgh Village Hall and be advertised to other councils, which will reduce the cost. The intention is to involve all councillors.

The council will write a job specification for the clerk, to include the role as Responsible Finance Officer working with the finance sub-committee and as correspondence officer, distilling correspondence and distributing it before council meetings.

Where appropriate the views of villagers will be accommodated before decisions are made. The formal meeting will be closed for a few moments for views to be taken, then re-opened for the council to decide. Each parishioner will be allowed three minutes with a right of reply and, unless there are special circumstances, will be able to talk once on any particular subject. Once decisions have been made they cannot be reconsidered for six months.

Blythburgh Parish Council followed Southwold Town Council in roundly rejecting plans for the first stage of the reinstatement of the narrow-gauge Southwold to Halesworth railway. The proposed route would run from a park-and-ride at Henham Park to Reydon, pass under the B1127 and terminate close to the car park at Southwold Pier.

OTHER COUNCIL NEWS
Pages 7, 8, 9 and 10

MUSIC, FLOWERS & PICTURES

Three Blythburgh residents are planning a Weekend Festival in Holy Trinity Church on June 2 and 3. As well as showing Blythburgh paintings, drawings and the Lost Glazing of Blythburgh, there will be organ recitals, flowers and refreshments on both days. In addition, on Sunday 3rd, Holy Trinity Sunday, there will be Said Eucharist at 9.30am and music and readings at 6pm with the Blythburgh Singers.

The organisers also hope to collect sufficient photographs of the village, its people, houses and river to put on a rolling programme in Holton Chapel. To do this, they need to find as many photographs as possible. Several photographs from the distant past have already been lent but more – ancient and modern – are needed. People living in Blythburgh are invited to an open evening at the church on June 1 to view the exhibition over a glass of wine. If you can help please contact Brenda Motley, 478289, Margaret Nichols, 478515, or Peggy Meredith, 478580.

BLYTHBURGH VILLAGE HALL

A hall management committee of seven runs the hall, owned by the Parish Council. Binny Lewis and Alan Mackley were appointed as parish council trustees at the council's annual general meeting.

Lettings are steady and over the last 12 months included band rehearsals, Morris Dancers, parties, a three-day art exhibition and local organisations, producing £1,041. The management committee use the lettings income to pay for the day-to-day running of the hall, such as cleaning and electricity, other than the heating which is on a meter. It has also financed some interior and exterior redecoration, repairs to the heaters, a replacement water heater in the ladies' cloakroom and for the refurbishment of the ramp for disabled entry. The committee also pays the public indemnity insurance for users of the hall. It currently has a surplus of £606.

David Tytler

The next meeting of the PARISH COUNCIL is on 10th July at 8pm in the Village Hall

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NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

HOW TO BEAT THE OPPORTUNIST

Thankfully the last 12 months have been relatively crime-free in Blythburgh and in the county as a whole we continue to enjoy one of the lowest crime rates in the country. Unfortunately there was a house burglary in the village one Sunday evening in March when antiques were among the items stolen. There were two similar thefts, in Melton and Bramfield, over the same weekend.

Whilst this sort of crime is rare it does show that we can all be victims of crime. As Neighbourhood Watch, we passed on details of several suspicious vehicles seen in the area to assist police with their on-going investigations. If you do notice any suspicious behaviour or vehicles with occupants acting strangely or looking out of place, take the details including time/date, a description of the people and car registration number(s), and report it to the police.

In the county as a whole there has been a noticeable increase in thefts from unlocked cars and houses, through doors and windows in recent months in Suffolk. The message is clear: we should take care at all times not to present opportunities for thieves to feed and prosper:

- Keep your car locked on the driveway and close the windows in an empty car (although don't forget the needs of your dogs on a hot summer's day)
- Don't leave items in the car such as shopping bags, handbags and any other valuables that

are clearly visible to the passing thief.

- Always ensure that house windows are not open in such a way that will allow somebody to reach in and grab personal belongings
- Don't leave house doors open: it only takes a few seconds for a thief to enter and steal.

By continuing to pass on information and look out for each other we can help deter criminals from operating in the village. If any of you would like to become a member of Neighbourhood Watch please let me know.

Robert Benson

Blythburgh Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator
01502 478047



Your Parish Councillors

Chair

David Tytler
Telephone: 478521

Vice Chair

Chair, finance sub-committee

Ro Williams

Chair, planning sub-committee

Robert Benson

Binny Lewis

Co-opted

Lucy Clapham

Alan Mackley

Cliff Waller

Blythburgh Carpet Bowls

Beryl Stringer

Horticultural Society

Secretary: Jenny Allen 478314

Neighbourhood Watch

Robert Benson 478047

Village Hall

Chairman: David Tytler 478521

Bookings: 07850 140581

Blythburgh Society

Chairman: Alan Mackley 478438

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Blythburgh Suffolk



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LITTLE HOPE FOR RIVER FOOTPATHS

It seems that there is very little chance of the early re-opening of the two public footpaths which run on the clay flood banks on the north and south side of the River Blyth, west of the A12. The main responsibility for the flood banks has been with the Environment Agency which has carried out major work in recent years on a number of sluices. The banks themselves have had very little work done in recent times.

In November last year several exceptional surge tides over-topped the banks, putting extreme pressure on them and causing flooding of the A12 and extensive flooding of farmland both sides of the river. Following an inspection of the southern bank, it was decided to close the path on safety grounds: the path on the northern bank remained open.

Very high tides continued through November and December with repeated flooding of farmland. Suffolk County Council kept the northern path open with some warning notices. In mid-January, the council was contacted by the Environment Agency, which expressed surprise that one path was still open giving rise to grave concerns about public safety.

The Environment Agency has advised informally that the cost of putting the banks in order would

be several hundred thousand pounds and the criteria for selecting flood defence schemes would not cover this work. The work could be undertaken by the adjoining landowners but as far as the council is aware they are not planning to do any work.

The county council is responsible for ensuring that the Public Rights of Way are safe to use but not for maintaining the banks that they neither run on, nor is it prepared to pay for the remedial work. It is unlikely that the council will open the paths this summer. The future of the banks is being considered by the Environment Agency in its Blyth Estuary Study.

In a letter to Blythburgh Parish Council, John Dawson, assistant rights of way officer, Suffolk County Council, wrote that a wider debate has started about which areas of coastal land in the county can be defended economically and which cannot and where the damaged flood banks can be restored.

He concluded: "For the longer term, it may be the county council has to look for replacement paths that are less vulnerable to flooding. This will require goodwill from landowners, co-operation from other agencies, funding for Suffolk County Council for investigation and legal work and a lot of patience."

FLOOD RISK FEAR REJECTED

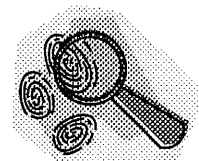
Concerns about flooding in Church Lane and more widely across the village have been rejected by the Environment Agency in Peterborough. Nigel Pask, project manager, was responding to concerns raised by the Parish Council following representations by long-time resident and former parish councillor Paul Bennett.

In a letter to the council, Mr Pask wrote: "You raise the question as to the impact on the main sewer from Blythburgh to the Wenhaston Road pumping station if Appleton Marsh is flooded. We have consulted Anglia Water and they are confident that the sewerage system will be unaffected by future water levels if the existing river banks

are not maintained." Mr Pask went on to say that the agency was aware Mr Bennett's proposal to raise the height of the old Southwold railway track. Nothing will be done until the final decision on flood protection for the Blyth estuary over the next 100 years. The preferred option for this section is to withdraw maintenance from the existing riverbank.

Mr Pask concluded: "It does seem likely that this will be the conclusion. If so, we will also consider whether it is necessary to provide a localised defence to the properties in Church Lane and if so, how this might be achieved."

MRS CLAPHAM INVESTIGATES BEING LED UP THE GARDEN PATH



I've often thought being a country postman must be a pleasant number - fresh air, exercise and the opportunity to be nosey. Having delivered several hundred election leaflets for local candidate - "Dodgy Dave" - I haven't changed my view.

Having already come across Blythburgh's hidden treasures, it was a delight to discover tucked away corners of Wenhaston and Walberswick, invisible to anyone bombing along at break-neck speed.

Doing this kind of work during a spectacularly beautiful April heat wave added to the charm. Clouds of apple and cherry blossom, the heady scents of broom and early lilac, cottages hidden under curtains of Clematis Montana: sleepy cats sunning themselves on mossy walls, dogs with tongues lolling in the heat, heaving themselves up out of the shade to greet you with a lazy woof.

There were unnerving moments - the first being a letterbox guarded by a small but aggressive terrier, determined to attach itself to the end of your fingers. The second was a sign announcing *Beware of the Dog* which, as I discovered, meant exactly

what it said on the tin. Having glanced nervously around, I crept up to the letterbox to hear a low menacing rumble echoing round the hall, before what sounded like a rhino with tusk-ache hurling itself at the door. I can move fast when I have to.

Another problem is postman's knuckle, a common complaint due to the number

the common decency to install a mail box - U.S. style - and send one of the servants to collect the post.

Having been charmed with Wenhaston, almost every house loved and lived in - geraniums on doorsteps, washing on the line, bikes being tinkered with, Walberswick, in contrast, seemed sadly deserted.

As a weekender myself for the first year after buying my cottage in Blythburgh, perhaps I can't talk, but at least I didn't own any other property - let alone a town house in Notting Hill and a pad in the South of France. The number of empty houses waiting for the summer army of 4x4s to occupy them for a couple of weeks seems such a sad waste of what could be a delightful, permanent home. Perhaps that's why

Walberswick, for all its beauty seems a little soulless compared to its neighbours, Blythburgh and Wenhaston.

We may be a little more frayed at the edges but a cat on a windowsill or a pair of muddy wellies in a lean-to is a far more welcoming and human sight than a dead fly, the only sad occupant of a pristine conservatory with a sea view.

of letterboxes waiting to remove several layers of skin, more painful but no more annoying than letterboxes at foot level - *why?* - and places with no letterbox at all (a good plan we may adopt).

For all our posties' sakes, could anybody grand enough to have a driveway more than fifty feet long (or so posh you can't even spot the house from the gate) have

CHANGING TIMES FOR THE PARISH COUNCIL

The village and the Parish Council owe a debt of gratitude to Henrietta Maslen who has been acting chair for more than a year before standing down at the annual general meeting in May. It is probably not an exaggeration to say that without her the council may have ceased to exist. Her successors can learn a lot from her example. We should also thank Toby Lond-Caulk for his services over a number years and June Waller for her work while on the council.

For a while the council was without a clerk but Jim Boggis was appointed in October last year. He is currently in America and the council is indebted to Maureen Hodges who has filled the breach as acting clerk. In a very short time, she has proved invaluable.

This annual report may not be as complete as you would have wished as it has been compiled by relative newcomers. Future reports will be more formalised to enable the parish to judge whether or not the council has delivered on its promises and met the wishes of those who live in the parish.

Over the last 12 months, the council has dealt with the three recurring complaints: the motorcycle track, speeding on the A12 and the use of Dunwich Road as a short cut to Leiston. There has been some success on the track since the operators introduced new bunds to act as soundproofing. The coun-

cil continues to monitor the position, particularly in the way the bunds are used and the number of machines on the track at any one time.

There has been little or no success on the A12 although the council is following up the suggestion that Blythburgh could take part in a pilot programme in conjunction with local police in which trained volunteers would measure the speed of traffic as it went through the village. Councillor Binny Lewis is leading on this project.

Flood protection is a growing concern for the parish and the council has kept a close eye on developments as decisions continue to be delayed. Whilst accepting that the Environmental Agency has limited resources, the council is not content that the alternative is no action at all.

Planning matters continue to be a major part of the council's work and it has considered a range of proposals over the year, some of which are supported by the district councils, and some of which are not. Repairs and replacements are needed on the play site and the council is actively seeking grants to finance the work. The council has arranged for the bus shelter to be kept clean and tidy and has made a number of small payments to various organisations and local groups over the year.

The income for the financial

year ending the 31st March 2007 was £8,720.75, consisting of the precept, £800 from the Locality Budget and £3,800 as a capital grant plus £120.75 interest gained. The two grants, which were received from Suffolk County Council, were used to cover half the £10,286.54 cost of the new roof for the Village Hall, the other half being met by the Parish Council. The £1,800.14 VAT has yet to be reclaimed. The total expenditure for the year was £11,749.86. As I have been unable to see the bank statements for the period in question I can only give an approximate figure of £6,000 for the current balance.

The council has been happy in the past to hear presentations from various groups. This practice will continue where appropriate but time limits will be applied so that the regular business of the council is not compromised.

David Tytler

ALAN PEGG

It is with great regret that *Blythburgh Parish News* records the death of Alan Pegg. He was a lovely man with an impish humour and will be sorely missed by all his friends in the village. A full appreciation of him will be published in the next issue.

NEWS FROM HOLY TRINITY

As a result of the parish audit of church activities throughout the diocese, two main themes have been identified:

- strengthening faith within the Church membership.
- increasing church involvement as an active part of the community – “being God’s people in Blythburgh.”

A start has been made on both fronts and they will be further developed during the next year. The occasional meditations in the Priest’s Room will continue – one was held in Lent and one in Advent. A monthly meeting of a fellowship group, initially for Parochial Church Council members, started in January 2007 and we hope to organise occasional study days.

Holy Trinity is a focal point for community activities in Blythburgh - one example is the very successful Christmas Tree festival in the church in December. Again this year the church has been used for an art exhibition and many concerts and performances. Plans are well underway to build on community involvement. We are also considering how lay people might work with the clergy in pastoral work in the village.

Again we are very grateful to the Friends of Holy Trinity for their help and support. They made a fur-

ther contribution of £500 towards the refurbishing of the nave lighting. They have purchased new kneelers and a new altar rail for the Hopton Chapel. Under the direction of Judith Middleton-Stewart volunteers have oiled the pews and worked on other woodwork, particularly in the choir stalls.

We thank all those people in this small community who contribute so much to the life of the church; those who look after the flowers; who cut the grass and keep the churchyard in order; who see that the toilets are kept clean and properly stocked; who play a part in our services by serving, reading, leading intercessions and leading Compline. Music is a strength of the church and we thank Patsy Murray our regular organist, the Blythburgh Singers, and Jenny Allen, who plays at the 9.30 services.

Work to replace the sides of the vestry to match the organ and provide some badly needed storage space finally got under way. The most pressing problem at the end of the year proved to be the 1933 south aisle roof. The first heavy storm following the hot summer resulted in a number of leaks and inspection revealed that water is getting under the lead and as a result lead oxide is forming. It is necessary to deal with the problems as soon as possible as delay will cause even greater problems. The best guesstimate of the cost of the work is around £150,000.

Thomas Lond-Caulk

HOLY TRINITY DIARY

Sun 27th May	Team Service for Pentecost at 11.00am at Wrentham– no service at Blythburgh
1st to 3rd June	Trinity weekend
Sun 10th 8pm	Aldeburgh Festival concert – The Masque of Moments – Music from the courts of James 1 st and Charles 1 st
Mon 18th 11am	Aldeburgh Festival concert – Italian Baroque – Members of the Amrita ensemble
Tue 19th 8pm	Aldeburgh Festival concert - Monteverdi Vespers
Thur 21st 5pm	Aldeburgh Festival concert - Darknesse Visible – songs for tenor by Dowland, Britten, Purcell, Ades
Sun 8th July 15th	Sung Evensong
21/7-12/8	Concert by the Britten Pears Choir Art exhibition by Paul Bennett (aka O’Leary)

13th-24th Aug Exhibition of paintings and photography by Jean Bacon and Ken Moody

Sat 18th Coffee morning and stalls for charity, Horticultural Society

Sun 26th 11am Service for the Blessing of Animals

The normal pattern of Sunday services are:

1st 9.30am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
6.00pm Choral Evensong led by the Blythburgh Singers

2nd 11.00am Sung Eucharist (Common Worship)

3rd 9.30am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
6.00pm Short service of Compline (evening prayer)

4th 11.00am Sung Eucharist (Common Worship)

Said Holy Communion takes place every Tuesday at 10am.

When there is a fifth Sunday, Holy Trinity joins with Reydun and Walberswick and the services rotate between the three churches.

SCHOOL CHANGES WILL RAISE STANDARDS

As a result of the May elections for Suffolk Coastal District Council, there are now 45 Conservative councillors, a gain of three; nine Liberal Democrats, an overall loss of two; and one Labour councillor, a loss of one. The results mean that across the county all six district and borough councils and the county council leaders and chief executives are able to work together easily to push forward plans to improve radically the way they operate by sharing resources, rationalising procedures and cutting out a good deal of the duplication of services that has happened from time immemorial in local government.

Both the district and county councils seem to have been discriminated against by central government in the amount of grant they have received and it has been a real struggle to continue to make efficiency savings without cutting services. Suffolk Coastal has managed to limit the council tax increase to 2.93 per cent while the county has struggled to keep the increase to 4.5 per cent, mainly due to the pressure on social services.

The big issue at county level is the schools' organisation review, which is underway. For years, the educational achievement of children in Suffolk has been significantly below the national average. At the beginning of last year it was decided to set up a policy development panel to examine the organisation of education in Suffolk. The aim of the review is to improve the standard of achievement – and therefore the opportunities – for all pupils across the county.

The review resulted in extensive research of the highest quality, much of the evidence externally validated. The research strongly indicates that the two-tier system (5 to 11; 11 to 19) performs better than the three-tier system (5 to 9; 9 to 13; 13 to 19) on key attainment measures.

The county council accepted the recommendations of the review panel that Suffolk should move to a two-tier system. We now move to the second stage of area-by-area preparation by schools, headteachers, parents and the local community to plan how to implement the change.

I see some very positive implications for schools in our area. The village primary schools will have a boost to their numbers by having an extra two years' worth of pupils – most rural schools in this

area have spare capacity and have no more than about 50 pupils. Middle schools such as Halesworth and Saxmundham are certainly going to be incorporated into whatever system is adopted – the facilities in each are second to none. I cannot see the land being sold off for housing as some mischievous voices have proclaimed. We are going to have the same number of pupils requiring the same amount of accommodation and being taught by the same number of teachers.

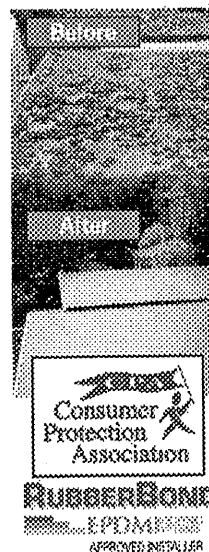
The county and district councils from Kings Lynn to Suffolk Coastal have joined in a partnership group of councillors to lobby central government and the Environment Agency more effectively over the financing and the priorities for coast defence.

Rae Leighton

Rae Leighton, who represented Walberswick, Wenham and Blythburgh on Suffolk Coastal District Council for 16 years, was moved to Wangford to fight off a Liberal Democrat challenge. He lost. The new district councillor is Kevin Keable.

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OF DUCKS AND DRAKES

Blythburgh Horticultural Society provided its usual programme for 2006 but ventured into pastures new when it visited Blacksmith Cottage, Dickleburgh, Norfolk, on June 2nd. The venue seemed small to begin with but when we wandered around it was evident that there was a large selection of unusual perennials to examine – and purchase. Having succumbed to the temptation, we were able to have tea while watching the cranes, guinea fowl, ducks and other birds in the adjoining field.

In mid-July about eight members visited East Ruston gardens on a very hot day. It is a favourite spot but there is a lot to see with new features regularly introduced. In spite of the difficult year (a cold spring followed by wet, then dry and then hot weather) we managed to have a successful annual show, although the roses suffered.

In September, the society raised £101.75p for the Christmas tree display. The annual dinner was held in The Griffin, Yoxford, with about 15 members enjoying a pleasant evening. The society seeks the support of the village for this year's Christmas tree festival in order to repeat the success of last year and in raising money for the EACH charity.

As the WI has been suspended, the society is keen to provide a range of activities that would appeal to as many as possible and it would also be pleased to hear suggestions from the village for new events.

Thomas Lond-Caulk

BOWL UP, BOWL UP

Blythburgh Bowls Club meets in the village hall on Tuesday evenings at 7.00pm. There are around 16 members, some of whom attend on a regular basis and others when they are able. We do not belong to a league but have very enjoyable friendly games with Reydon and Walberswick clubs during the year.

The club was able to send £40 to the charities EACH and Cancer Research after expenses such as the hire of the hall, heating and refreshments.

New members are always welcome, especially from the village – some of our members come from Wenhaston and Halesworth. We play for enjoyment with no pressure. None of us had any experience when we started, so we have improved together.

On a sad note, we must remember and pay tribute to Alan Pegg, a founder member, as was Sheila his wife. He really enjoyed the game and became a member of Wenhaston B team as well as a loyal Blythburgh member. We shall miss him.

Gillian Lond-Caulk

NOTES FROM ANGEL MARSH

Since we came back from our holiday, during which Blythburgh had lots of rain, there has been no rain at all. If, like us, your water butts are nearly empty yet you are trying to preserve plants and newly planted trees, you must be wondering if it will ever rain again.

There does seem to be a move in the country to think about drought-loving plants to cope with the more Mediterranean climate but imagine the sight of English gardens without their lawns.

When we, along with our neighbours, became owners of part of Angel Field we decided to make it a wild flower meadow with a new hedgerow along Old Angel Lane and some special trees to go with them.

So far, we have a wayfaring tree, a spindleberry, shepherd's bullace (yellow) and a black bullace, a Vicar of Winkfield pear, together with blackberry, hazel and a set of whips, which the guides put in with the help of Jenny Allen and Henrietta. Already there is blossom on the pear and yellow bullace, but how long will it be before I can gather enough to make a bullace brandy and pear wine is a matter for the future.

We felt a bit like Renton, who planned 200 hundred years in the future, although I think we will see some interesting foliage before too many years have gone by or we are no longer here.

Richard Maslen

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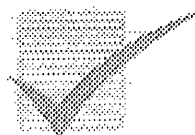
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BLYTHBURGH CHARACTERS

GWENDOLINE LONG (D. DECEMBER 2005)

Blythburgh School opened in 1875 and in 90 years had only four heads. Gwen Long, the last, was there from 1937 until the school's closure in 1964. After training in Norwich, she taught at Witnesham but her parents having come to White House Farm, Bulcamp, she was attracted back to Blythburgh School. Another factor was the presence of a fine piano at the school but she was soon disappointed to learn that it belonged to her predecessor Stella Dean and not the school. Gwen also learned that she was to be the sole teacher although help arrived after a term. The school had two rooms for its 25 pupils. A room was added to the original design to cater for children from Bulcamp Workhouse.

Conditions were primitive. There was no electricity or mains water: the caretaker brought a bucketful each day for school use. The school was surrounded by open fields and was very cold in winter. The lavatories were basic and the playground rough grit. Cuts and bruises were common. To pass from one classroom to the other it was necessary to go through the playground or out into the road. A connecting door was eventually provided to make life easier for the single teacher.

There were many trips from the school to as far as Christchurch Museum, Ipswich. Village concerts were held every three years. After Gwen's arrival it was about five years before a pupil

passed the scholarship to go on to secondary education. Thereafter about one a year succeeded. In 1939 some 12 evacuees arrived from Dagenham with a teacher but most did not stay long.

From 1939 Gwen lived at Mill Farm but in the early 1950s built a bungalow, now *Westlea*, next to the school, where she stayed until 1980. After 27 years at the school she learned that it was to close, hearing this not from the education authority but in a conversation with the school attendance officer. For the last two or three years she had been the sole teacher with 11 pupils. She then taught at Middleton for the final ten years of her career, eventually retiring to Southwold.

Gwen Long admitted that the school log books would not throw much light upon her years in Blythburgh: her terse entries filled only half a book in her whole time there, whereas Stella Dean had written five times as much in a shorter period. But she was an enthusiastic photographer and copies of nearly two hundred pictures from her album, mainly of the 1950s and 60s, have been made for retention in the village.

Alan Mackley

Were you, or anybody you know, taught in Blythburgh School? If so, please contact the Blythburgh Parish News, 01502 478521

Please send any comments, views and contributions to:

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Blythburgh Parish News

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17th July 2007

THE SWEET TASTE OF DEMOCRACY

"It's better than sex," said Bishop Tutu after casting his vote in the first fully democratic elections in South Africa. As he put his cross on the ballot paper, millions of other newly enfranchised South Africans were queuing in blazing sunshine for up to eight hours to put their mark on the ballot papers.

Over the centuries, millions have fought and died for the right to choose who should govern them. Britain took until 1929 before it allowed all adults – not just the men – to exercise such influence.

Yet in Britain, which regards itself as the cradle of democracy, turnout at general elections has been on the decline and the turnout at local elections is rarely more than a quarter of those eligible. Even more frightening is the appallingly low turnout in American Presidential elections – little more than 40 per cent yet America is the only super power. What it chooses to do affects you and me but we have no vote and those who do, fail to use it. Irresponsible, I call it.

Recently, in Blythburgh, Walberswick and Wenhaston, things were different. Just as one swallow doesn't make a summer, what happened here does not necessarily mean the whole country has reassessed its priorities.

We had two candidates for one seat on the district council. It matters little which party they came from – BNP apart. What matters is that those living in the ward had a chance to exercise their democratic rights. And more than 50 per cent did so.

As one voter put it: "It's good to see a bit of democracy round here".

Good for us. Those who moan and groan that all politicians are the same and refuse to make that bit of effort to go to the polling station should hush up. If they won't vote, they should keep quiet. I don't want to hear them moaning about the dustbins or the lighting or the roads. If they won't do that little bit for themselves to help determine what happens, they should button it.

Olive Forsythe

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YOUR CHANCE TO BE A TV STAR

Documentary film maker Melissa Waterson is looking for volunteers from Blythburgh and the surrounding villages to take part in an observational documentary series for Channel 4 that looks at family life in the UK, celebrating different life styles in modern Britain. She says: "The documentary is primarily about people learning from the way others lead their lives. It's an opportunity for families to open their doors and share their culture, way of life and family values.

"We are very keen to feature a country family who can show what it's like to maintain a large estate and grounds or give viewers a taste of life on a farm, or perhaps a family who can show the

reality and rewards of village life. This would be a wonderful opportunity to reach city-dwelling viewers and open their eyes to the perks as well as the hard work of country life.

"We are keen to reflect the different communities and groups of modern Britain, but ultimately it is about the universal themes and challenges of family life and how people deal with them. The format often enables people a greater insight and understanding into how others lead their lives, as well as affect a positive change in their own."

Ms Waterson can be reached on 0207 013 4514 or email: melissa.waterson@rdfmedia.com

HOW TO DEAL WITH THE SMOKING BAN

From Sunday, July 1, it will be illegal for people to smoke in virtually all enclosed public places and workplaces in England and managers should be getting ready for the new smoke-free law. To help local managers of public places and businesses comply with the new regulations, Suffolk Coastal is holding three special one-hour briefing sessions where free advice and guidance will be on offer about the new law.

Employers, managers and those in charge of smoke free premises and vehicles will need to:

- display no smoking signs (the required signs are available free by calling Smoke-free England on 0800 169 1697)
- take reasonable steps to ensure that staff, customers and visitors are aware that premises and vehicles are legally required to be smoke free
- ensure that nobody smokes in smoke free premises or vehicles.

The briefing sessions, which start at 10am, will be held on: Tuesday, June 5, the Riverside Centre, Great Glemham Road/Low Road, Stratford St Andrew; Thursday, June 7, the Richard Rooms, Martlesham Community Hall, Felixstowe Road, Martlesham; Friday, June 8, The Elizabeth Orwell

Hotel, Hamilton Road, Felixstowe

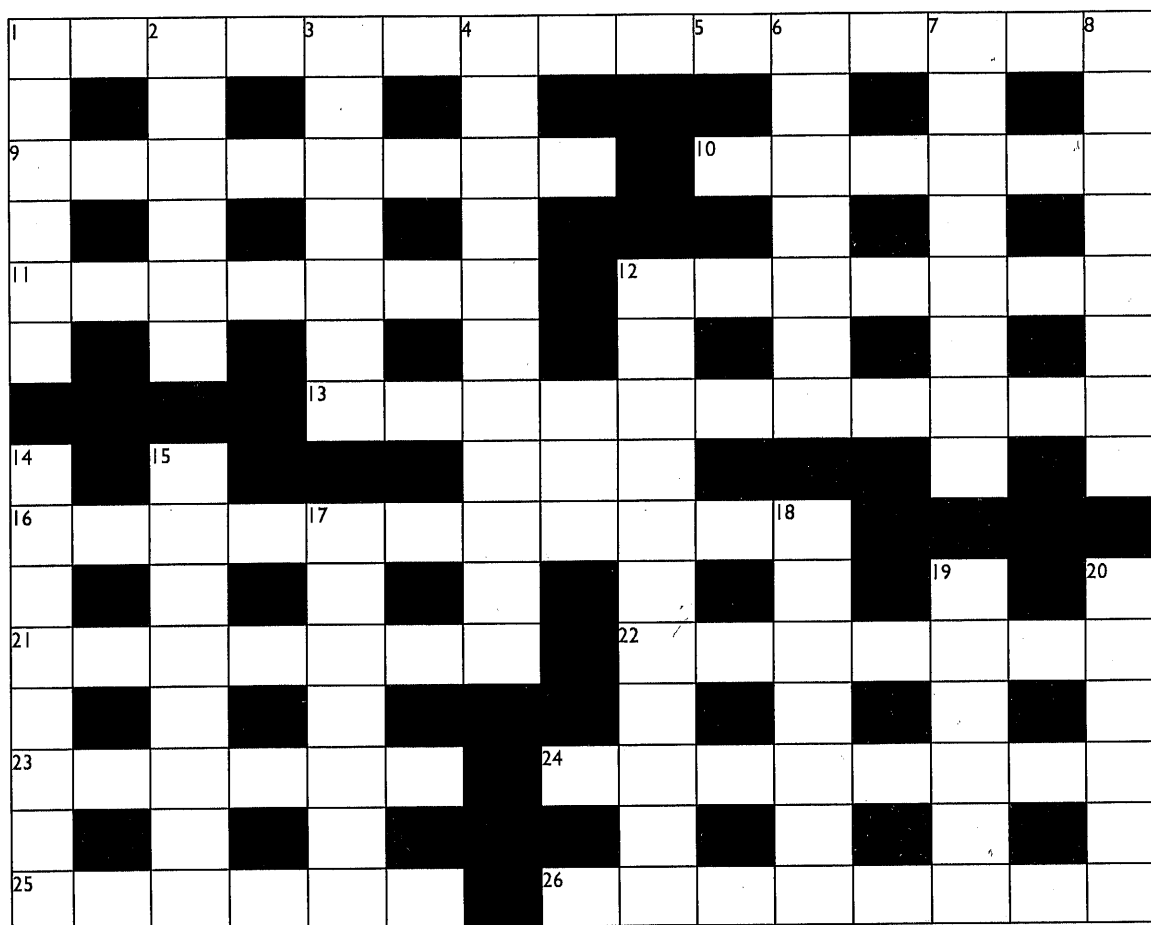
Telephone 01394 444501, email smoke-free@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk or visit suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/your-business/smokefree

SUFFOLK LINKS WITH USA

This May marks the 400th anniversary of the founding of Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in America. A Suffolk man, Bartholomew Gosnold was instrumental in the founding of this colony. For years the signature and seal of Bartholomew Gosnold were believed to be pieces of history lost to the ravages of time. That is until now.

While researching Gosnold's links with Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk Record Office staff discovered hidden in a bundle of Bunbury family papers a sixteenth century deed, written in Latin, containing the signatures and seals of six men. Despite being over four hundred years old, the document has remained well preserved with most of the seals still intact – including the signature and seal of Bartholomew Gosnold.

ENIGMA XX



Across

- 1. Forlorn – not as much after jump east. (8)
- 5. Collect pistol girl. (6)
- 9. Led by last letter I nag superior rodent. Tower. (8)
- 10. Mark. Cuppa in Greek letter? (6)
- 11. Beat one with Tyneside – S.O.P. (7)
- 12. Row or bolt. (7)
- 13. Domestic confuses murine drays. (7,4)
- 16. Trousers planet. Little beauty! (6,5)
- 21. Dress. Horrify with scripture lesson. (7)
- 22. See old boy deliver. (7)
- 23. Praise Europe with unknown following mathematical device. (6)
- 24. Intimidate. Personnel scoffed after tea it's said. (8)
- 25. Abuse commerce with one. (6)
- 26. Credit a mannerism with Capone? Judgmental. (8)

Down

- 1. Dodgy possibility – whole gamut in slip. (6)
- 2. Swine and lunatic. Caliban digs it? (6)

- 3. Being a High Churchman praise Scot? (7)
- 6. Point stride. Sounds like a meal with French composer. "To boldly go"? (5,6)
- 7. Exhilarated route for main drag? (4,4)
- 8. Spanish royal title for gracious woman. (4,4)
- 12. Top hymenopterid followed by lepidopterid with exclamation. Royal Progenitor. (5,6)
- 14. Obvious armour-piercing Pop. (8)
- 15. Garment upset Paul with scar. (8)
- 17. Points to a newspaper editor infuriated. (7)
- 18. Take dim view of a religious group with internet address. (7)
- 19. Polar convulsion after short circuit. (6)
- 20. Marsh girl short for herb (6)

Answers to Enigma 19

Across: 1, parasitical; 9, programme; 10, curse; 11, scampi; 12, statutes; 13, simoon; 15, bothered; 18, blackcap; 19, adroit; 21, role play; 23, catnap; 26, Thane; 27, incognito; 28, temperament.

Down: 1, Papists; 2, Rhoda; 3, scrapbook; 4, tome; 5, creartion; 6, licit; 7, blessed; 8, oratorio; 14, meatloaf; 16, hydrangea; 18, biretta; 20, top coat; 22, pleat; 24, niece; 25, ache.

NOTES FROM DAISY BANK XXI



At the risk of sounding like Disgruntled From Daisy Bank, this month I have a couple of moans that I'd like to share with you. Several years ago, when I was on Blythburgh Parish Council, we investigated the planning permission surrounding the motorbike racetrack south of the village. Realising that we were responsible if the planning permission was not being adhered to and there was an accident, we made some enquiries.

We were quickly labelled a bunch of do-gooders wanting to stop *the kiddies'* fun. Letters from Walberswick and surrounding villages, few in number but vitriolic in content, were happy to remind us of the social and altruistic side to the story. We as a responsible council took that into consideration and with certain restrictions allowed the bikes to continue.

Many years later and to the present day, it appears that the kiddies have grown into adults and that such is the size of the meets, it won't be long before Blythburgh will be more famous for its World Championships than its Cathedral. Please don't let it get any bigger.

Moan number two concerns the Environment Agency and their decision at their last review not to repair and maintain the southern bank of the Blyth west of the A12 Bridge. When I bought my house in 1987 I did so knowing that I would have to compromise with the noise from the A12 and the occasional flooding of the extremities of my back garden. When covered with water what could be nicer than Appleton Marshes in flood?

But with the southern bank eventually being permanently breached and the threat of global warming, rather than the extremities of the garden, it could be the whole garden and eventually, as my neighbour Derek puts it, watching the telly in wellies. A dozen homeowners in Church Lane/Daisy Bank I know feel the same about the prospects of boats in the back yard. The further down the lane, the worse it gets.

So, over the last 18 months I have struck up a

correspondence with our MP – not my politics but a good constituency member – the Environment Agency, Anglia Water and Uncle Tom Cobley and all. My proposal is that, courtesy of the landowner, perhaps the level of the old railway track could be raised by two or three feet to act as a permanent barrier. As the main sewer runs along the back of our gardens where it eventually finishes up at the Pumping Station on the Wenhaston Road, permanent standing water over the unsealed man hole covers would possibly put the whole sewerage system for Blythburgh at risk.

I can hear what some of you are thinking: first it was the proposed railway, now it's the motorbikes and flooding. Hasn't he got anything better to do?

Personnel change in the Daisy Bank team. Heidi and Jim and Peter and Diana have moved to Halesworth, probably one of the nicest towns in this part of Suffolk. Yes, Southwold has the glitz and glamour but Halesworth is a real town with real people and not an endless succession of holiday cottages, which the owners rarely visit. I priced a two-way electrical plug the other day in two shops in Southwold and came away with prices ranging from £2.50 to £3.50. In Coopers, formally Jacksons in Halesworth, probably the best ironmongers in East Anglia, that same plug was 99p.

On the main line to London with a direct bus route to Norwich, a medium sized supermarket with discounted petrol, a pedestrian high street with a myriad of interesting and competitive shops, a famous arts centre and a decent library, perhaps I should think of moving to Halesworth. No, one look out of my window at the church and the view across the marshes flooded or not, is enough to prevent that.

Paul Bennett

