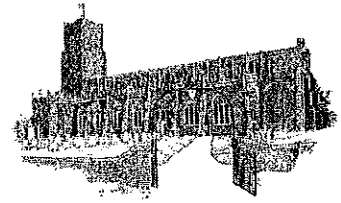


BLYTHBURGH PARISH NEWS

Issue 36

October/November 2007



VILLAGE TAKES FIRST STEPS INTO THE FUTURE

Nearly 50 people attended a special parish meeting in September to discuss the possibility of devising a Parish Plan on the long term future of Blythburgh, Bulcamp and Hinton. Parish Council chairman David Tytler said: "We were delighted to see so many people, many for the first time and representing all ages and parts of the community."

Many stayed after the meeting just for a chat with each other. Eight people volunteered to sit on a steering committee, with several more offering to help in other ways. Steering committee volunteers have been contacted by letter to plan the next steps. The Parish Council will appoint two parish councillors to sit on the committee.

Sunila Osborne, from Suffolk ACRE, explained that a Parish Plan represented "a unique opportunity for a community to play an active part in determining its own future". She explained the reasons for devising such a plan:

Objective: To inspire the community to look inward, highlight issues that are effecting that community and to generate a plan on how to resolve these. One of the main benefits was to bring the

community together and as a result strengthen it.

Aim: For the community to produce a statement for the future highlighting key problems and opportunities to improve the quality of life. Current Government policy encourages active citizenship and the action plan is seen as a great opportunity for community involvement, leading and working with other organisations.

Why? The Parish Plan is a way for the community to influence current issues by giving it a formal and recognised role in planning for the future. It can help integrate the community by working with local businesses, landowners, farmers, etc. The plan can identify current local community groups and where there are gaps in provision. The underlying drive is to bring people together, to help resolve any misconceptions and to decide collectively how best to improve the parish.

The Parish Plan is designed to target social, economic and environmental issues. Suffolk ACRE will support the Parish in finding the correct agencies to resolve any issues raised. Once produced the Parish Plan is made available to the whole community so they can have their say.

Questions raised by the meeting included would a Parish Plan really change anything? If a number of adjoining Parishes raised the same issues would it strengthen their cause? What happens to the plan longer term? Is it a cyclical process? Is this another short-term initiative with the plan just being filed away?

Ms Osborne said that it was felt that in the past not all the correct channels were available or open and by focussing issues in a Parish Plan, organisations such as Suffolk ACRE could support communities and look for common issues. There was no guarantee that parishes working together would strengthen their hand. It is recommended that the plan is revisited and updated every 3 to 5 years. The plan would not be filed away: Suffolk ACRE would support the Parishes in chasing the various agencies involved.

She pointed out that most of the discussion had been about change. However if the outcome of the analysis was that everybody was happy with the community as it was, that, too, would be a valuable outcome.

Jim Boggis

How to devise a Parish Plan: Page 7

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NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

HOW TO SPOT A BOGUS CALLER

Unscrupulous door-to-door callers selling unsolicited services have been active recently in Suffolk. Other bogus callers can also present a risk, but not if we are aware of the threat and know how to handle the situations that may arise.

Bogus callers at your door will pretend to be any one of a number of authentic callers. They may claim to be officials from the council, service companies, health authority or other organisations. They may also pretend to be genuine dealers or salespeople. They may impersonate workmen and say that they need to come in to check something or make urgent repairs. Even young children and women may be used to gain your trust and entry to your home. They all want to steal from you, trick you, or overcharge you for work that they do. Therefore it is very important to make sure any callers to your home are genuine.

Here is some simple advice to follow:

Think before you open the door. Are you expecting anyone? Do they have an appointment? If you can, look or talk to them through the door or window.

Secure the door bar or chain before opening the door.

Use a door viewer if you have one to see the caller and ask the caller for proof of identity or identity card. Check it carefully, but keep the chain on, or door closed whilst doing so.

If the caller doesn't have an appointment, tell them to wait outside while you ring their office. Use the number from the phone book and not a number on the ID card provided by the caller. If the caller is legitimate you can ask them to call back when you have a friend or family member with you.

Robert Benson
Blythburgh Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator
01502 478047

The next meeting of the PARISH COUNCIL is on 19th November at 8pm in the Village Hall, preceded by the Open Forum at 7.30pm.

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NEWS FROM COUNTY HALL

FOSTER CARERS NEEDED

Foster carers from across Suffolk were praised at the county's childcare awards, when Suffolk County Council appealed for more people to come forward to foster local children. During Fostering Fortnight earlier in the year, more than 100 people asked about how to become a foster carer, but many more people are desperately needed for some very vulnerable children.

A range of different types of care is needed for children and young people across the county. Foster carers are needed from all communities for brothers and sisters, only children, children with disabilities, teenagers and babies. Some need care for a few weeks, some for several years

All foster carers receive 24-hour support, allowances and specialist support and training. A fee paid scheme is available, and allowances are paid for experienced carers and those looking after children with more complex needs or in more challenging circumstances. Anybody interested in becoming a foster carer for Suffolk County Council should visit the website

www.suffolkfostering.com or call 0800 328 2148.

Give it a go! is a new hotline for older people in Suffolk to find out how and where to volunteer their services. Research shows that volunteering helps people stay active, happy and feeling valued and even volunteering for twenty minutes a week can make all the difference. The hotline will be managed by Age Concern Suffolk working with Suffolk County Council. It will offer information

on opportunities for older volunteers, as well as helping to introduce volunteers to their new roles, and offering support should they need it. Councillor Graham Newman said: "There are more active older people in our society, many of whom have time available. Suffolk's older people have a lot to offer our local community, not least a wealth of experience and skills. Volunteering is a two-way street: contrary to what people might think, they find they both give and receive."

Daphne Savage, Chief Executive of Age Concern Suffolk, said: "By 2020, nearly 50 per cent of the population will be over 50. Longer active lives means that in the UK as a whole the 60-79 age group will add an amazing £59 billion of value a year through volunteer activities, tax payments and support to their families. Through volunteering, there is massive potential for stronger and supportive local communities in Suffolk."

BANGERS AND MASH QUIZ

The Southwold and Dunwich RNLI Fundraising Branch is holding a Bangers and Mash Quiz at St Edmund's Hall, Southwold, 7.30pm Friday November 23. Tickets, including supper, £7.50 each. To enter teams of four, ring 01502 726176 or 0779 061 2225. Prizes, grand raffle, licensed bar. All proceeds to the RNLI.

Your Parish Councillors

Chair

David Tytler

Telephone: 478521

Vice Chair

Chair, finance sub-committee

Ro Williams

Chair, planning sub-committee

Robert Benson

Councillors

Binny Lewis

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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PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

NEW OPEN APPROACH TO PLANNING

Planning: The Parish Council's planning sub-committee is developing a new approach to dealing with planning applications, explaining why they have agreed with applications as well as why they object. At its August meeting, the council considered an application to make improvements to the ground floor living accommodation at The Priory in Church Road. Cllrs Rob Benson and David Tytler declared personal interests and took no part in the decision.

The council accepted the recommendations of the planning sub-committee, which clearly set out the reasons for having no objections:

"With its near neighbour, The Green, The Priory forms a picturesque group in Priory Road, a quiet lane close to Blythburgh church. The present appearance of these properties is the result of work by Ernest Crofts RA and Sir John Seymour Lucas RA, respectively in the early twentieth century. The proposed alterations to The Priory do not affect the view from the road except across the west side entrance from which the reinstated garden wall containing the log store will be visible. Given that the alterations to the rear are single storey, neighbours will not be overlooked. There are no changes to vehicular access.

"Provided that in the execution of the work the historic core of the building is respected, the alterations are to be commended for their professional design and choice of materials. The parish council believes that it is important to allow the sensitive updating of old buildings in the village to facilitate their continued use as family homes by full-time residents."

Playsite: RoSPA are to carry out an annual inspection of the Play Site on an unspecified date in September. The report will be available in October. The council has forwarded the current estimate of £1,955 for work already agreed to County Cllr Rae Leighton, who is hoping for a grant towards the work from the county's locality budget.

Roads: Following consultation, the 40 mph speed limit to the north of Blythburgh will not be removed as originally proposed. The Parish Council was amongst those who objected to the proposal. A decision about the speed limit south of Blythburgh will be made

once improvements to the junction of the A12 with Toby's Walks are completed. Cllrs Williams and Lewis are to monitor the use of the Dunwich Road to check whether or not heavy lorries are using it illegally. Signs at the junction of Angel Lane and the A12 show that the road is unsuitable for 7.5-ton lorries. Any incidents will be reported to Trading Standards.

Footpaths: It was agreed that the council would support a write-in campaign to demand repairs to the sluices between Wenhaston and Blythburgh. It will be targeted at the Environment Agency, and is being organised by Wenhaston with Mellis Hamlet Parish Council. Residents in Blythburgh are invited to sign individual letters. Lack of repair has resulted in the loss of two public footpaths. If left unrepaired the result will be a change of the reed bed/marsh environment to saltings. However, a recent report from an independent consultant suggests that repair now could easily put things right, and that future risk to the riverbank is low. Copies of the letters were put in the village shop and distributed at the village meeting on September 17th.

Village Hall: It was agreed to carry out a survey of the village hall in order that any necessary large expenditures can be built in the council's budget for 2008-09 and future years. Three quotations have been sought to repair the driveway to the village hall. No quotations had been received. Cllr Tytler declared an interest in these items as he is chairman of the hall management committee and took no part in any decisions. He did explain, however, that income from lettings was used 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.

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MRS CLAPHAM INVESTIGATES: ALL THAT ANIMAL MAGIC...



Having the greatest respect for all living things - or being a big softie - be they rooted to the ground, clucking round a farmyard or building a web above the bed, I am always happy to mind various animals and plants when their owners need a holiday.

So, over the past few weeks I've made the acquaintance of several horses, dogs, cats, geese, hens, goldfish, a large selection of flowers, fruit and veg, plus a donkey and a cockerel.

And, pottering around with watering cans, mixing buckets of feed etc I had a little time to work out why their company is such a delight. Firstly, they're always pleased to see you - yes, even the goldfish.

One gang, on hearing me foot-tapping at the edge of their pond (as instructed) would come hurtling over, leaping about, mouths open, as if squealing with delight and desperate to envelop me in a huge bear hug. A few doors down in the other pond, the inhabitants took life at a slower, Suffolk-style pace, politely nodding as they made their way towards me with a sweet smile as they stopped for a yarn and a nibble.

They say dogs get like their owners - but goldfish?

Almost unfailingly, all these creatures have good manners. I say almost. There is one particular gander - he knows who he is - who practically chokes himself trying to gobble the meal I've prepared for him while hissing and snapping at me at the same time. Watch yourself mate, women

within a five-mile radius.

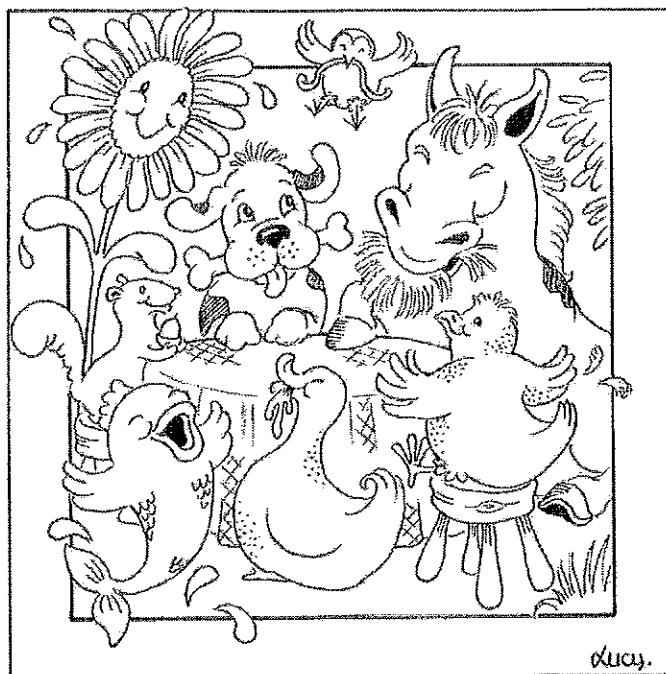
The horses are especially welcoming, blowing hot breath up, down or through any gap in my clothing as they frisk me for apples or Polos. These two charmers are invariably polite - always apologetic if they should happen to stand on me or stun me accidentally with a massive shoulder - but boy, is she a monster when it comes to feeding time.

You get the odd malicious creature but they're far rarer than a spiteful human. Best of all - they don't judge.

Can you imagine a couple of hens, for instance, making catty - even henny - remarks about your age or how much weight you've put on? Chickens may be a trifle short of grey matter but you won't catch them looking you up and down, whispering about your private life. Possibly they

do, but you won't hear about it from a passing duck, who says "thought you ought to know..."

Whether galloping through a field for the sheer joy of it, or lolling through the woods, tail wagging, stick in mouth - their philosophy is clear: "Who cares about the grass over the hill? It's nice and green here, thank you very much."



don't take kindly to that kind of treatment.

But I feel sure that the donkey, for instance, is merely asking after my health when I turn up with carrots in my pocket, although it would be more peaceful if she turned down the volume a little and tried to sound less like a pack of hyenas with whooping cough, terrifying every dog

HOW TO SET UP A PARISH PLAN

The first two stages for devising a Blythburgh, Hinton and Bulcamp Parish Plan have already been achieved at an open public meeting in Blythburgh Village Hall, which showed considerable interest and identified a steering group of at least six people, two of whom have to be Parish Councillors, which will drive the Plan forward.

Further steps now to be taken are:

- Consult the community to find out what the issues are in the Parish and draw up a needs analysis. The steering group will decide how this is to be done.
- Send a questionnaire to each member of every household in the parish based on the needs analysis, giving everyone a chance to contribute.
- Analyse the results of the questionnaire. The steering group will do this with support from Suffolk ACRE.

- Produce the Parish Plan

The Steering Group's role is to drive the whole process through to the generation of the Parish Plan and beyond. It would need to produce estimates on the cost of the process and a timeline of events, organising and publicising such events. Members would attend workshops organised by Suffolk ACRE to help them through this process and be able to request support from Suffolk ACRE. It would produce a report listing the issues and keep the community informed on what they are doing and how they propose to achieve the Parish Plan.

Suffolk ACRE will provide 95 per cent of the funding with the remainder coming from the Parish Council. Anyone wishing to be involved in drawing up the Parish Plan or help in other ways should contact David Tytler, Chairman of the Parish council.

Jim Boggis

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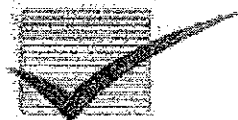
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BLYTHBURGH CHARACTERS

THOMAS NEALE (CA 1651 – 1704)

Among the many Blythburgh photographs collected earlier this year were pictures of pupils at Blythburgh school in the 1950s holding bibles received from Neale's Charity, established in Thomas Neale's will dated 1701. Neale is usually described as "of Bramfield", where almshouses carrying his name were founded in 1723 and demolished in 1968.

His memorial inscription in Blythburgh church describes him as "one of the best of magistrates". He entered St Catherine's College Cambridge in 1667. The valuable collection of books amassed during his legal career was transferred to his old college by his executors in 1705. The books reveal an interest in medicine, politics of the day, and include Civil War tracts and King James's counterblast on tobacco.

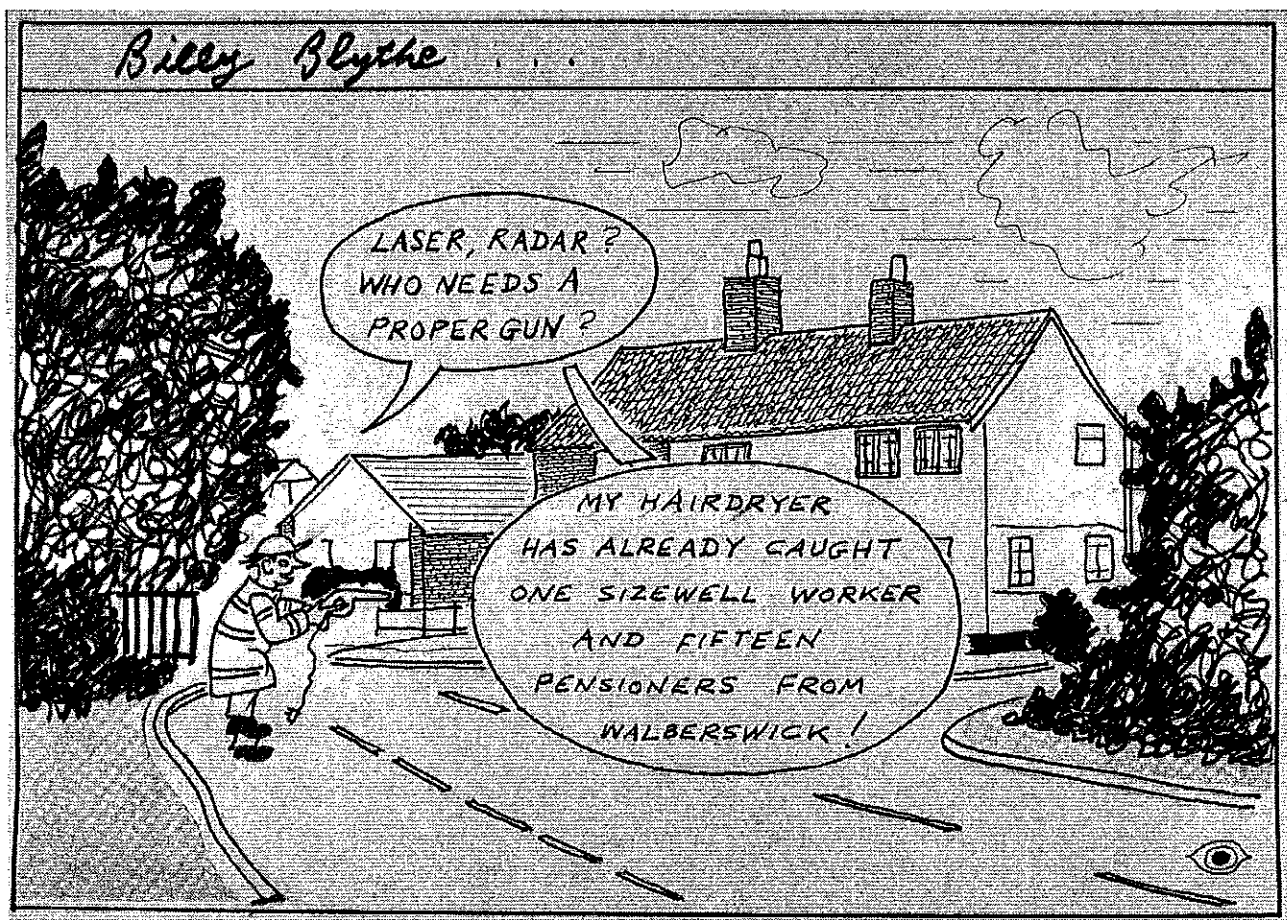
Neale's name crops up in the Blythburgh Vestry minutes in the 1890s when the church was in dispute with the Parish Council, newly formed by the Local Government Act of 1894. The question was: should Neale's Charity be regarded as ecclesiastical or parochial? Should the Church or the Parish Council control the funds? At stake was the annual payment of £3 out of an estate in Bramfield, £2.10.0d to be used for teaching five poor children of the parish to read and 10s to buy bibles or other religious books for young

persons. It had become customary at some date after the formation of the Blythburgh School Board in 1878 for the churchwardens to pass £2.10.0d (and on at least one occasion the full £3) to the Board.

It appears that when the Parish Council applied to the Charity Commission to transfer control of the charity away from the church to themselves, the incumbent, the Rev. Oakes, wanted the money for his Sunday School. He argued that payment to the School Board ultimately helped the ratepayers and not children, hardly a charitable objective. However, the Parish Council could have countered that restricting the benefits to those attending the church Sunday School (probably a minority of the children in Blythburgh at the time) was a constraint not within the spirit or law of Neale's bequest.

In 1896 the Charity Commission found for the Parish Council. The churchwardens protested but to no avail. The Parish Council continued to appoint trustees and distribute the funds until inflation wiped out the real value of the bequest. Sadly, Neale's Charity has not survived into the twenty-first century but he lives on through his books in his old college library.

Alan Mackley



NOTES FROM ANGEL MARSH

In continuing to recall our 20 years in Red House Cottage, there did seem to be quite a number of what one might call "indomitable old ladies", whose advancing years did nothing to deter them from adventuring out. In particular, Peggy Jeans, the widow of a clergyman, was such a lady. She was struck down with Parkinson's Disease and was nursed by my wife for a few years after we arrived until her death. I worked in her garden and looked after her flowers, which were always entered in the Horticultural Society Show, often winning a prize.

We also played Scrabble together, although her wildly flailing arms made life difficult. I moved her pieces as she directed me and almost always thrashed me with huge scores of 400 to my 150.

Towards the end she wore an alarm button, which alerted various people in the village if she was in difficulties. Being the first call, we soon found out what the difficulties could be when the button holder was one of the indomitable kind. When the call came, one of us would race up to Church Farm and search the house and garden calling her name. Usually she had fallen outside, often missing the wall or the pond by a whisker. Sometimes there would be blood on the path where she had hit the concrete. Once I arrived and was unable to find her. I called as I searched the house, the garden, the outhouses, and the house again when, suddenly, the gate opened and she came in with her carer. "I've been to the shop," she said, having negotiated the A12 to Ron's shop at the end of the village. She had leaned on the counter and pressed the button. A character and well-loved.

When we arrived, Angel Field was under cultivation by Bob Stringer. Beet, alternating with barley and potatoes. We miss the golden barley swaying in the breeze; the swallows cruising up and down and twice nesting under the eaves of the summer house. There are photographs of the last harvest and, after Bob died, the long decline when somebody tried raspberries and then it went fallow. Now, with our neighbours, we have bought part of the field and Natural England has brought sheep on to the rest. So now we have a good Suffolk sight to gladden the eye.

After Bob's funeral Richard Maslen wrote

Nightingale Tape

When you hear it
You will know it.
Those first, haunting notes,
A following flourish,
Clearing its throat
Preparing you for what comes next.
But there can be no preparing.
Anticipation, perhaps;
Disbelief at what people have said;
Honest refusal to entertain
Possibilities of bliss.
But preparation?
When you hear it
Everything is cast aside.
You wonder at your unbelief.
How could you, even for a moment,
Have doubted this ethereal melody?
Count the songs,
Be prepared to run out of memory.
Hear the sound,
Be defeated in your search for words.
Listen with tears,
Be ready to swoon with ecstasy.

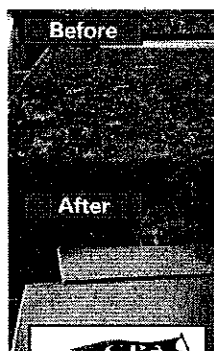
Richard Maslen

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READING OTHER PEOPLE'S LETTERS

Blything Union Workhouse at Bulcamp has loomed over the Blyth valley and been part of Blythburgh history for nearly 250 years. Originally opened as a House of Industry in 1766, it became a feared Poor Law Workhouse in the nineteenth century, a hospital in the twentieth century and since its closure in 1994 has been developed as private residences.

Blything is one of a number of Poor Law Unions that The National Archives has selected to take part in a much larger transcription and cataloguing project. The project will create a rich and vivid digital collection of nineteenth-century letters, reports and correspondence from London to the Blything Union Workhouse.

Once the records have been transcribed they will form part of a fantastic free resource for local historians, academics and schools interested in poverty, education, health, labour, and wage levels, as well as bringing to life the experience of many in-

dividual paupers. Riots, strikes, deaths, medical negligence and workhouse overcrowding are just some of the issues likely to emerge from the study.

The work will be completed at home on a computer (using Word) and the documents will be provided by The National Archives on CD Rom. The National Archives will provide local training by records experts, as well as ongoing support for a project that is expected to run for four years nationally.

For a taste of what can be achieved look at the results of a pilot scheme for Southwell Poor Law Union on <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documentsonline/workhouse.asp>

If you are interested in helping with this project, contact Alan Mackley (01502 478438).

Alan Mackley

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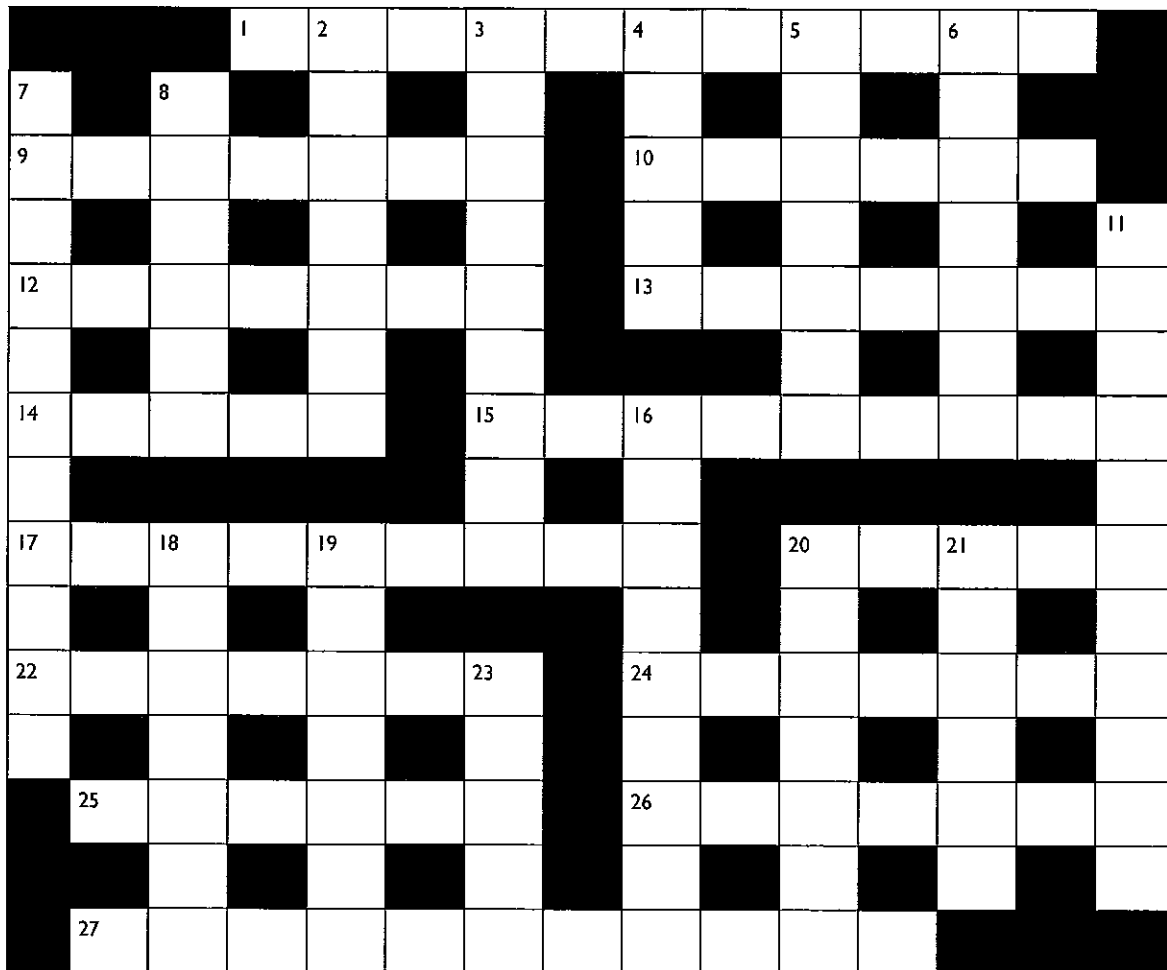
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**Across**

1. Sounds like Yank with crude, crude hit. Beauty. (11)
9. Polish image at historic crossing place. (7)
10. Fight race in package. (6)
12. Without perceptible lapse of time worker follows fashionable street. (7)
13. Cavorting – sounds like lion boy's told to warble. (7)
14. Greasy Rupert. Sweetheart? (5)
15. Celestial being confused old Roman god about mutability. (9)
17. Mythical country. Are you and are I with girl? (9)
20. Home Counties spirit? Product of blood. (5)
22. Astral body allowed for actress. (7)
24. Disclose international body's insurance. (7)
25. Straight fibber about Geordieland. (6)
26. Tumble text in Old Testament. (7)
27. German river interrupted by trademark this month? Talking shop?

Down

1. Let go negated decoration. (7)
2. Limit criminal effort. (9)
3. Mad gunners try. (5)
4. Giant followed by first class Shakespearian Queen. (7)
5. Digging led back no good following missile. (7)
6. British Telecom in lead of Monsoon and Iron Oxide. Panel game. (6,5)
7. Taking advantage of sailor. (6)
9. Mix game to lager to stick together. (11)
12. Inebriated posh girl in dice game? (9)
18. Sounds like pukka optics. Cash. (7)
19. Most elevated all in trial. (7)
20. Hide in bottom right of Med. Island. (7)
21. With regard to said bad behaviour – do it again. (6)
23. Sailors with one set of foot bones. (5)

NOTES FROM DAISY BANK XXIII



It frightens me sometimes that Blythburgh might be turning into one big holiday cottage. Properties change hands and Blythburgh is eminently suitable for having a small cottage as an escape or a financial investment. You may ask, how can I blame anybody when I am, and have been for the last 20 years adding to the problem. My only defence is that I live in a one up, one down in order to get an income from another property that I could add to my own to make a bigger house. But it's still not a valid enough excuse and I know it.

When winter comes, Southwold and Walberswick have many dead and unlit windows. It's almost as though their souls have left for the warmth of the towns and cities in the south. And as prices rise, the people who for generations have kept this part of Suffolk alive, move to other areas where they *can* afford to buy a house. Are we going to end up with the predominant accent in this area being that of the south instead of the east? That lovely lilting Suffolk sound will disappear as incomers such as myself swallow it up. The other day I saw a two up and two down semi in High Street Walberswick on the market for more than half a million. That's just obscene.

And the answer? I don't believe in a one house per person policy – that's not a democracy I want to live in. But surely when developers build, there should be some form of legislation that for every executive house built there must also be a low cost house with a price that ordinary working people can afford. When properties like that one in Walberswick are sold to somebody who only uses it for a few weeks in the summer, then look out. The huge difference between those who have and those who have not will inevitably cause division and bitterness. Please God I'm not around when that happens.

One of my ideas before I started serious painting was a business I called *Country House Stationery*. This involved doing a pen and ink drawing of the client's house and then getting a printer to do the stationery, which included notelets and letter headed paper. The whole business relied on the client buying the framed portrait of their house: the

printing costs took care of any profit I could make on the stationery.

The whole thing gradually took off and to be fair, we saw some interesting houses over the next few months. Jobs included everything from menus and stationery for the old Southwold Arms to a portrait of pedigree cows on a farm the other side of Suffolk. With a few creeping plants and some unusual angles, a rather boring house can be made to look interesting.

The deaths knell happened when I was asked to do a house near Dunwich. Difficult to get to I very nearly lost an exhaust getting there. An interesting house to draw, I returned a couple of weeks later to be told that they preferred a different angle and could I do it again. With some reluctance, yes I could and returned week later with the second drawing to be told that they preferred the first. Good night Vienna!

Finally it was to be a cattery here in Church Lane. Plans drawn up, neighbours and vets approval and finally planning permission granted. Then, a month before building commenced, the regulations changed and instead of being allowed 16 cats on the premises, it became eight cats only. Financially unviable, I became a painter and the rest is a history. A history that ended with me changing my name.

Paul Bennett

OVERHEARD IN THE HART



**“I've got to find
somebody to darn my
old socks...”**

A confirmed bachelor
contemplating marriage