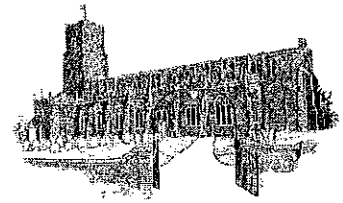


# BLYTHBURGH PARISH NEWS

Issue 38

February/March 2008



## LATITUDE TO PROVIDE FESTIVAL TICKETS

Half price tickets to the Latitude Music Festival at Henham are to be made available again to Blythburgh Parish Council for distribution to residents. Twenty-five tickets for each day, July 18, 19 and 20, will be on sale for £20 each on a first-come-first served basis to residents in Blythburgh with Bulcamp and Hinton. Initially, each resident will be entitled to two tickets each and can register on a waiting list being held by Jm Boggis, clerk to the council. No cash will be required before the tickets are sold four weeks before the start of the festival.

There were concerns last year that there was no pedestrian only access to the site – a ten-minute walk from the village could easily turn into an hour and a half trek. Organisers say that for security and other reasons pedestrian access to the village is difficult. However, they are seeing whether it would be possible to provide a time-tabled shuttle-bus service between the village and Henham Park. A notional cost of £1 each way would be deducted from the ticket price. Villagers would have to show proof of identity on entry to the festival, although this was not always the case last year.

At its last meeting, Blythburgh Parish Council discussed how to use the £1500 plus interest raised from the sale of last year's Latitude tickets. Proposals included leasing land for general village use such as sport, fetes or garden parties; plant bulbs and shrubs to brighten up the village; and erect a further notice board for use by villagers to publicise events and exchange news. These were all rejected: the field because

ongoing maintenance would prove too costly; the extra notice board due to expense and the provision of the existing boards; the planting because unless looked after properly, it could end up as an eyesore.

After some discussion it was agreed to see whether it would be feasible to use the Latitude fund to give small bursaries to the young people of the village to help finance a range of activities such as starting school, changing school, joining university, taking up a new sport or interest such as art or music.

The fund would be managed by a committee of three, which would distribute money according to clear guidelines. There would be an annual report on how much had been distributed and for what, although the names of the recipients would not be published. The clerk to the council is to have discussions with Suffolk Acre and the Suffolk Association of Local Councils as to how such a fund could be administered.

**Suffolk Coastal District Council** has refused a planning application for a shed/summerhouse to be built on land to the east of Angel Lane, and for the erection of two two-storey dwellings on land opposite Priory Lodge, Priory Road.

**County Councillor Rae Leighton** agreed with the parish council at its last meeting that the locality budget grant of £800, originally agreed for repairing the play site, could be used to provide storage for the village hall. The change has been agreed as plans for the play site are awaiting proposals in the strategic plan for the village.

**The parish council** planning sub-committee is producing a document on the planning requirements for applications in Blythburgh. It has been distilled from the SCDC Local Plan and is seen primarily as an aide memoire. A draft will be sent to parish councillors before the next meeting so that it can be discussed at that meeting.

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## COUNCILLORS DEMAND NUCLEAR SAFEGUARDS

Senior councillors at Suffolk Coastal are demanding that the Government ensures that the impact of new nuclear plants on local communities is fully considered before the final go-ahead for the stations is given. It is likely that the chosen sites will be alongside existing nuclear stations, which include Szevell.

Commenting on the Government's decision for an expansion in nuclear power to help meet future demand and help reduce future carbon emissions, Councillor Andrew Nunn, Suffolk Coastal District Council's Cabinet Member for the Natural Environment, said:

"Nobody can be surprised by the Government's decision as it has clearly been minded to endorse the building of more nuclear power stations. However, we strongly believe that local communities should have their say - with the right to reject plans for a Szevell C if, after detailed local consideration, if that is seen to be the correct decision for this district.

"It is still not clear whether there are any guarantees that the views of local people will have a real influence on the decision. The council believes that we should still have the right to control the impact that

any proposed development could have on what is a unique environment around Szevell. Local knowledge and requirements must be taken into account.

"We are strongly opposed to any rewriting of the rule book to allow plans to be fast-tracked in a way that would deny the chance for the local voice to be heard and acted on."

Suffolk Coastal has already identified a number of local issues. The existing Szevell site is within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Heritage Coast and close to internationally important sites for wildlife. The buildings and other installations must be suitable for, and respect, their siting in this unique location. There are also concerns that any new nuclear plant should be restricted in output so that it can use the existing transmission lines at Szevell, rather than needing new power lines and pylons to be erected in the surrounding countryside.

The council also wants the possible effects on coastal erosion at the site and north and south of it, to be addressed, along with assurances that disruption caused by the construction process is kept to a minimum, and that generous compensation is available for the community.



## NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

**HOW TO BEAT THE SCAMMERS**

By following this useful guide we can help be alert to the growing threat posed by scammers (or con-men) especially in the age of cold telephone calls at home or online spam on the Internet. A scam is a scheme designed to con you out of your cash. If you let down your guard and think that you won't be fooled, then you too could become a victim.

Scammers are becoming more sophisticated and aim to con us all. Deceptive premium rate competition scams, bogus sweepstakes and lotteries, get-rich quick schemes and fake health cures are some of the favoured means of separating the unwary from their money.

**How to recognise a scam**

Scam artists will:

- Catch you unawares, contacting you, without you asking them to, by phone, email, post or sometimes in person
- Sound pleasant, well spoken and kind (on the phone or at your door) and want you to think they're your friend
- Have slick, professional leaflets

and letters

- Be persistent and persuasive
- Rush you into making a decision
- Ask you to send money before you receive their tempting offer or win.

Scammers offer you something for nothing - such as:

- A major prize in a draw or a lottery (even though you haven't entered one)
- An exclusive entry to a scheme that's a surefire way to make money
- A way to earn easy money by helping them get untold millions out of their country
- The chance to join an investment scheme that will make you huge amounts of money.

We can all protect ourselves by being sceptical. Is it likely that someone you don't know, who has contacted you out of the blue, will give you something for nothing?

**The sting**

- Scammers will ask you to:
- Send money up front - an administration fee or tax, the list is end-

less but it's always a ruse to get you to give them money

- Give them your bank, credit card or other personal details
- Ring an expensive premium rate number (all UK premium rate numbers start with 090)
- Buy something to get your prize.

They will lie to you and give you what seem to be good reasons why you should do what they say. They will answer all your objections. Don't send any money or give any personal details to anybody until you have checked that they are genuine by talking to a professional or family and friends.

If they ask you to do any of the above, they are trying to cover their tracks and get your money and it's likely to be a scam.

**Other danger signs:**

- Scammers give you a PO box number as their address
- They ask you not to tell anyone about the deal.

**Robert Benson**  
Blythburgh Neighbourhood  
Watch co-ordinator

# Paul Cook

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## NOTES FROM ANGEL MARSH

Many years ago in my other life, two little girls came into my class. They were from Morocco and spoke Arabic and the most beautiful classical French. Years later they married and became midwives. One of them gave up midwifery and is now a classroom assistant in the very school and the very room where she was once a child and a pupil of mine.

To cut a long story short, we have met a couple of times and spent a long time talking and remembering those lovely times in what is still a very happy school.

Her Christmas letter to me contained these beauti-

ful words, wishing us:

A relaxed mind, a peaceful soul,  
A joyful spirit, a healthy body  
and a heart full of love, is all I can wish you  
and your family every day in the New Year.

May I wish you *all the joys* of the New Year, as my old neighbour Jack Stannard used to say to us.

**Richard Maslen**

PS. Don't forget to recycle your bottles, paper and now your tins. All the money goes to support the upkeep of the village hall, a worthy cause. I hope you agree.



### OVERHEARD IN THE HART

"I can't see the point of acupuncture."

"There's more than one point to acupuncture."

**The next meeting of the  
PARISH COUNCIL  
is on 10th march at 8pm in the  
Village Hall, preceded by the  
Open Forum at 7.30pm**

### Blythburgh Carpet Bowls

*Beryl Stringer*

**Horticultural Society**

*Secretary: Jenny Allen 478314*

**Neighbourhood Watch**

*Robert Benson 478047*

**Village Hall**

*Henrietta Maslen 478438*

*Bookings: 07850 140581*

**Blythburgh Society**

*Chairman: Alan Mackley 478438*



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David Tytler

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**Vice Chair**

**Chair, finance sub-committee**

Ro Williams

**Chair, planning sub-committee**

Robert Benson

**Councillors**

Binny Lewis

Lucy Clapham

Alan Mackley

## MRS CLAPHAM INVESTIGATES: LIFE IN THE FAST LANE



I don't know if you've started playing Blythburgh's latest game, *Beat the Speed Maniacs*. This involves actually keeping just under the 40 and 30 mile-an-hour legal speed limits in and around the village.

Every time you do this you take your life in your hands, particularly when there's a

massive juggernaut determined to climb in boot. But played carefully it's almost as good as traffic calming (if not driver-calming) as a stinger. Sadly, only the police are allowed to use stingers to burst the tyres of lunatic drivers. So, to play the game.

If you are one of those drivers who roars up to a 30 mph sign then slams on your brakes - forget it, because as nobody behind will be keeping to the speed limit you are likely to end up in the River Blyth. There's plenty of it to aim at these days.

No, a steady drop in speed as you approach the signs does the trick. Boy, does it annoy the bloke behind - yes, they are occasionally women in flash four-by-fours but in my experience the worst culprits

are white-van-man (not the ones I know, obviously) male lorry drivers and those fat blokes on their mobiles, sealed off from the real world in their ludicrously expensive BMW or Mercedes saloons.

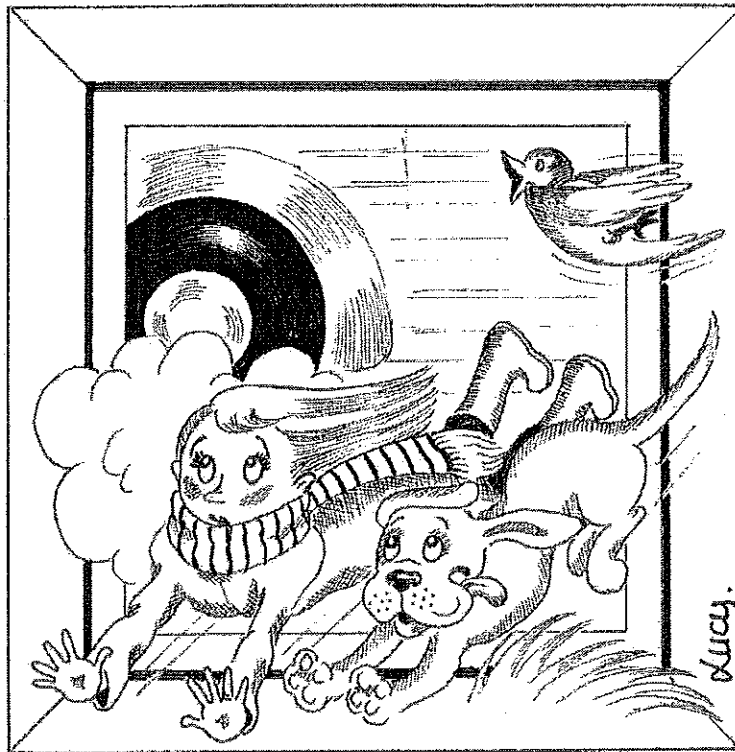
Just why are our signs so hard to decipher? Are these idiots foreign or illiterate, or simply

stopped by police in a Blythburgh lay-by as they drove legally through the village because, I quote: "We were bored. Sorry." Bored! They could have issued more speeding tickets than I've had hot dates (joke) if they'd just sat there for half an hour eating their sandwiches.

I had a car written off, turning right in to Church Road because the charming chap said he was going too fast around the bend to see me in time. And I'm heartily sick of diving for cover when trying to cross the road to the shop, or driving Mr. C to work, heart-in-mouth, when the A12 becomes a race track between six and eight as van-man hurtles to work. There is a ray of hope though.

Thanks to Parish Councillor Binnie Lewis, Blythburgh and our neighbouring villages are taking part in the Community Speedwatch campaign,

which means we will share a speed gun to monitor the traffic. Binnie's terrier-with-a-bone-like attitude has helped to achieve this at a minimal cost to the council but she is having trouble finding a handful of willing helpers. Having whinged so loudly about this problem, I feel obliged to abandon the usual let-somebody-else-do-it lethargy, draw my gun and do battle with the enemy.



in a hurry to get to the scene of an accident? Well, the answer to that is - very likely. The Beccles, Walberswick and Wenhaston turn-offs are notorious black spots. The most recent accident involved the attendance of no fewer than three fire engines, three police cars, two ambulances and the air ambulance (heroes that they are).

This was a few days after somebody I know was

## NOTES FROM THE NATURE RESERVE

With the waters of 2007 finally beginning to recede on most of the site, it has been a pleasure to spend some time assessing how the wildlife has coped and to get on with the management of the site.

Some of the highlights at the moment include up to 600 avocet feeding on the mud flats of the Blyth. We have a healthy breeding population of up to 30 pairs each spring. These birds are joined by many more in the winter exploiting the huge amounts of food in the inter-tidal mud.

The marsh harrier roost at Westwood marsh continues to hold more than 20 birds, sharing the safety of the reeds with a sprinkling of hen harriers, wintering locally before returning to their breeding sites in the moor lands of upland Britain. Joining them breeding further north is the twite flock currently feeding around the Walberswick shore pools, before returning to their nesting grounds in the Pennines. Together with the snow bunting this flock is a diverting interlude on any beach walk at this time of year.

As part of our inventory of the November floods and continued reporting of bird corpses for DEFRA's Avian Influenza monitoring, we have walked all of the shore line of the site (or at least where paths still exit). If nothing else, these walks have highlighted the enormous amount of rubbish and other debris washed up on the extreme tides. As well as the expected wood and variety of plastic, a canoe has also appeared. Should you have had one washed away please do contact the reserve office.

Hopefully by the next time of writing, spring will be in full bloom, bitterns will be booming, birds nesting and butterflies on the wing. Until then we shall be removing some of the gorse from the heaths, coppicing birch scrub as well as ensuring the footpaths are still in proper condition. Natural England would be particularly interested in any suggestions for the paths network.

**Adam Burrows**  
01502 676171

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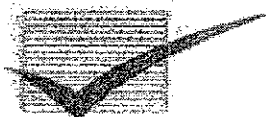
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## BLYTHBURGH CHARACTERS

## JOHN PALMER (BORN ABOUT 1760)

It is a sad fact that we are more likely to leave a mark on history by doing wrong than by leading a blameless life. "The evil that men do lives after them. The good is oft interred with their bones." So it is with John Palmer. In 1793 he was about 5ft 9in tall, stout and well proportioned, with light brown lank hair, and aged between 30 and 40. How do we know this? Because the *Ipswich Journal* reported on 24 August that John had left his house on 13 June and done a runner.

John Palmer was the Blythburgh miller. In 1790 he bought the mill, in the corner of Dunwich Road and Blind Lane, from Brame and Sarah Oxford, a Halesworth merchant and his wife. At the same time they lent Palmer £104 10s. This loan was repaid to the late Brame's executors in 1793. But John and his wife Mary still needed money. They borrowed £250 at 4½% from widow Sarah in 1793. The interest was paid on time, and £80 capital was repaid in 1797, when the interest rate on the balance was increased to 5%. The capital was repaid in 1800 to Samuel Fuller, executor of the late Sarah. But in the intervening years something went badly wrong. The *London Gazette* recorded in December 1793 that a com-

mission of bankruptcy had been awarded against John Palmer, miller, late of Blythburgh.

In buying the mill John Palmer had become a copyhold tenant of the lord of the Blythburgh with Walberswick manor, Sir John Blois, 5<sup>th</sup> baronet. This form of tenure originated in medieval times. The tenant was protected by the title written on the manor court rolls, of which he was provided with a copy – hence copyhold tenure. Subject to the custom of the manor, property could be inherited, bought and sold, and mortgaged. John Palmer obviously exploited this freedom. We don't know whether milling in Blythburgh was profitable but in 1792 the Royal Exchange insured the mill for £50 and the stud and plaster, thatched mill cottage for the same amount.

In 1800 William Green Smith paid £340 for the mill and he soon sold it at auction to William Brightly and his wife Mary who borrowed £500 which they repaid in 1802. The mill changed hands several more times before the 1820s when Sir Charles Blois 6<sup>th</sup> baronet converted the tenure to freehold and sold the mill. Perhaps he had had enough of copyhold tenants who could not make a go of the business.

Alan Mackley

## ROUNDUP

As part of its 60<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration, Age Concern Suffolk is holding a Day Care Awareness Month in February. Since Age Concern Suffolk was formed in 1948 it has set up many support services for older people in Suffolk, including day care. Age Concern is offering a chance to come along and see the 'difference a day centre makes' at one of the open days being held from 10.30am – 3.30pm at:

Harry Chamberlain Court, Hollingsworth Road, Lowestoft, Tuesday 19th February

New Horizons, St John's Street, Woodbridge, Tuesday 26th February

Jubilee Court, Halesworth \*, Wednesday 27th February \**Dementia Centre*

Many older people, many of them frail, vulnerable and some with dementia, benefit from a day out at one of the Suffolk care centres, which provide a meal, a range of activities and entertainment. For further details on each centre please contact Sherry Harrow, Day Services Administrator, Age Concern

Suffolk, 8 Northgate Street, Ipswich IP1 3BZ on 01473 353525 or [sherry.harrow@ageconcernsuffolk.org.uk](mailto:sherry.harrow@ageconcernsuffolk.org.uk)

**Suffolk County Council** has been awarded £35,700 by the Lottery Heritage Fund for an innovative project to preserve the authentic voices and experiences of Suffolk residents for future generations. The grant will be spent on digitising more than 800 tape-recorded oral history interviews from the collection of Suffolk Record Office and making them accessible to new audiences through digital re-recordings and selected extracts, with a full online catalogue.

These recordings were made between 1966 and 2004 and cover many aspects of life in Suffolk. Particularly well represented are experiences of the farming industry, domestic service, fishing, of living through both World Wars and the experiences of first-generation immigrants from the Caribbean. Suffolk Record Office's collection is one of the most comprehensive oral history projects in the UK.



## SPEED VOLUNTEERS STILL NEEDED

Plans to introduce Community Speed Watch (CSW) in Blythburgh have been held up because only three villagers have so far volunteered to be members of the speed monitoring team – half the required number. Councillor Binny Lewis told the January meeting of the Parish Council that other aspects of the scheme are well advanced. If the volunteers are forthcoming, there is no reason why speed monitors could not be operating in Blythburgh within a matter of months.

She said it would be a great shame if the scheme failed because of a lack of volunteers, particularly as Blythburgh had been at the forefront of getting the scheme introduced. Walberswick Parish Council has confirmed that it will take part in a joint scheme with Blythburgh. A decision from Wenhaston, Bramfield and Middleton on whether or not to take part depends on the final costs.

There had been concerns that the volunteer forms were rather intrusive. Councillor Lewis (478624) pointed out that the information was necessary as volunteers were signing up to being official Police Support Volunteers. They would be issued with ID cards and be covered by Suffolk Police insurance. Each volunteer will sign and agree to a risk assessment before they will be allowed to participate. Suffolk Constabulary has produced a quick guide for volunteers, which they would be expected to carry with them.

CSW schemes consist of members of the local community monitoring speed at police selected locations in 30mph zones with hand-held speed detection devices. The speed and vehicle details of offending vehicles are recorded and passed to the police. At least two people must carry out the checks between dawn and dusk wearing reflective jackets and be visible at all times. Volunteers are expected to be available for at least one hour a week.

All community Speed Watch Schemes must be self-funding and will need to raise sufficient funds to cover the cost of a speed detection device, high visibility jackets and portable road signage. The cost of the speed detection device alone is approximately £2200. Grants can be applied for or costs can be shared between various parishes or schemes. Blythburgh Parish Council has already agreed to support the scheme financially in conjunction with other villages.

Each scheme is to have a designated co-ordinator and deputy responsible for the storage of equipment and organisation of the scheme. Volunteers

must be aged 18 or older with no upper limit. Training provided by Suffolk Police will incorporate the use of speed enforcement equipment, administration, health and safety and risk assessment.

A letter has been produced in order to hand to motorists who question what is being done. This gives the motorist a point of contact within Suffolk Constabulary should they want to raise any questions.

A CSW survey form has been compiled in order to record the details of offending vehicles. Both volunteers carrying out the check will record their own details to verify the recorded speed on the monitoring device. Full registration numbers must be obtained along with the make/model of the vehicle, colour, direction of travel, time and recorded speed. Partial information will not be accepted.

On completion of the survey form the volunteers will highlight any vehicle that they know to be a repeat offender and send the form to a pre-arranged police station. A police computer check will be carried out on the vehicle and a warning letter sent to the registered keeper. Any highlighted vehicles will be sent a final warning letter. If a vehicle persistently offends consideration will be given for more targeted intervention by a qualified Speed Enforcement Officer with a view to prosecution.

### GUIDELINES ON SPEED CHECKS

#### DO

Let somebody know that you are carrying out a speed check and how long you anticipate this to last.

Carry a mobile telephone with you in case you need to make an emergency call.

Make sure that you are carrying out the check at the agreed site.

Ensure you are wearing a high-visibility jacket.

Take care of your own personal safety and be vigilant of the traffic at all times.

Make sure you have a copy of the pre-signed letter to hand to any motorist who may require more information.

#### DON'T

Let anybody under the age of 18 assist in the speed check.

Carry out the check in times of bad weather or poor visibility.

Carry out the check in the hours between dusk and dawn.

Obstruct the highway at any time.

Enter into any conversation that could be antagonistic.

## BLYTH VALLEY RADIO RADIO BLYTHBURGH CALLING

From Easter 2008 a new voice will emanate from a WW2 bunker at St Felix School in Reydon. Blyth Valley Radio should be on the air. A small enthusiastic group has carried this community project to the point of setting up a studio and the transmitter and licence to operate will soon follow. The FM stereo signal should reach as far as Saxmundham and, on a good day, even to Beccles and Bungay. The station will be for and about the people of the Blyth valley, young and old and in between, mixing music and speech and whatever the listeners want – as long as it is legal.

The project has attracted a tremendous amount of interest and goodwill. There is, for example, the prospect of training in presentation from BBC Radio Suffolk. But more effort is now needed. If you fancy yourself as a producer, presenter, interviewer, outside broadcaster, or can answer the phone or make the tea, now is the time to get in touch. No previous experience is needed and there's no lower or upper age limit. You may still be at school but can also have a go. Give Sylvia Jagger a ring on 01502 726106 or email blythval-

leyradio@aol.com. Who knows, you might be the next Chris Moyles, Sarah Kennedy or John Peel.

**Alan Mackley**

**BLYTHBURGH PARISH COUNCIL** currently holds a total of £9,854.52, £2,296.62 in its current account and £7,632.90 in its business reserve account. The last meeting of the council approved a payment of £75.00 to Suffolk Coastal District Council for the May 2007 Local Elections.

**SUFFOLK ACRE** has reviewed and proposed changes to the grant application form from the Parish Plan Steering Committee. The committee is waiting to hear whether or not it has been successful. In addition to Blythburgh Parish Council support for the project has been received from Wenhaston Primary School, Bungay High School, SCC Children's Services (Blyth Cluster), Henham Park, Adnams Brewery, County Councillor Rae Leighton obtained financial support from the county council.

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**DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE OF PARISH NEWS: 14th March 2008**

## JOSEPH FRAMPTON LONDON 1925 - 2007

### REMEMBERING OUR GRANDAD (POP)

Pop died peacefully on the 24<sup>th</sup> November last year after a very short illness. He was born in 1925, just off of the old Kent Road. After living in London for several years, his Mum and Dad 'moved up' in the world and went to live 'out in the sticks' to Rush Green in Romford.

He began working for the Times Furnishing Company when he was 14 before moving to London Transport as a booking clerk. When he was 17 he volunteered for the Royal Navy and became a Leading Torpedoman, serving on escort ships on the Atlantic and Russian convoys, before moving to the Far East towards the end of the war.

In 1946, he married his sweetheart, Joyce, and they moved to Hornchurch. They had three children Joe, Paul and June, our Mum. Pop returned to London Transport and worked hard until he became a station master in charge of, amongst others, Holborn,

Oxford Circus and Bethnal Green. He eventually acquired a nine to five post at Dagenham East and Dagenham Heathway.

In 1974, he took early retirement and moved to Suffolk to become landlord of the Shadingfield Fox. In 1985, after 12 successful years, he and Nan decided to come to live next door to us, here in Blythburgh.

Nan died in 2002 and although Pop missed her dreadfully, he was always cheerful and never failed to make us all laugh with his 'funny sayings', which will live on for many years, via all his grandchildren. He was always kind with inexhaustible patience and understanding. We are both grateful that we have been able to grow up with such a wonderful Granddad.

We will miss him very much.

**Matthew and Harry Waller**

### COME ON GUYS, LETS GET REAL

Henry Ford is supposed to have said that history is bunk. When I read some versions of Blythburgh's past I'm inclined to agree with him. Consider these current snippets:

"The interior beams and studwork originate from redundant ships when Blythburgh was a flourishing port and shipbuilding town."

"In medieval times Blythburgh was a major wool port."

"The White Hart Pub, with its impressive roof beams, reputedly from a dismantled Man 'O War'."

Apart from being historiographically wayward, these statements have something else in common. They all appear on websites promoting holiday lets on behalf of Blythburgh residents. Now come on guys! If you can support your assertions why not share the evidence. There are respected institutions and societies whose current view is that the use of ships' timbers for building is simply a persistent popular misconception. They would be delighted to consider your cases. Otherwise a bit of editing is suggested so that you don't continue to mislead the public. After all, respect for evidence is important. Isn't it?

**Alan Mackley**

PS On the other hand, why not reverse the process and promote the use of house building materials to construct boats. Be prepared for the next flood...

### BLYTHBURGH VILLAGE HALL

Blythburgh's New Year Quiz raised £135 for hall funds. There were 11 tables, with all but one having a full complement of four players. The winners and runners, all four of them experienced quiz players, came from Westleton. Blythburgh's honour was upheld by the Holy Trinity Team of Toby and Gillian Lond-Caulk and Dick and Jenny Allen, who came third.

The organisers are now considering whether or not to hold a similar event in the summer.

## NOTES FROM DAISY BANK XXX

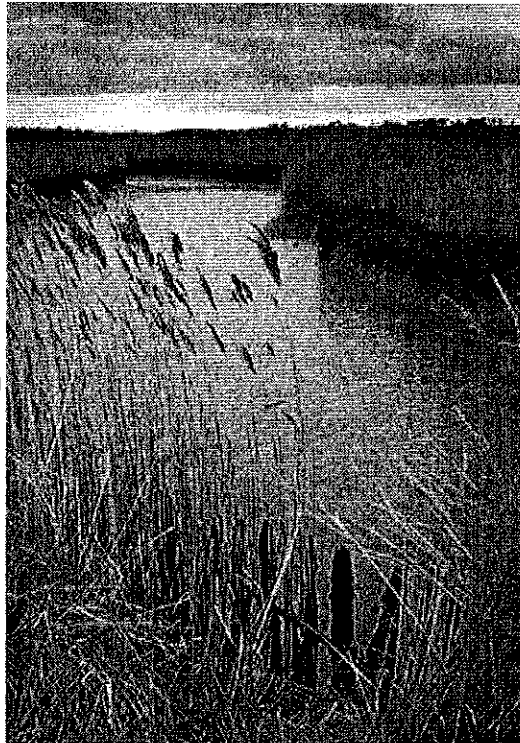


As you probably all know now, the predicted five-year event of the river wall breaching happened on November 9 2007 and since then the breach has continued to increase in size and length. This means that any high/spring tide will flood the marshes automatically. The one positive result is that the breach will act as a giant sluice gate and the floodwater won't lie around for weeks on end. The old sluice gates on our side of the river have always been suspect. But obviously as the breach is gradually scoured out at high tide, the whole of the marsh will assume its previous 18<sup>th</sup> Century condition. The river walls are, of course, manmade and were originally built so that cargo could be barged up to Halesworth from the port of Blythburgh; pasturing cattle on the reclaimed marshes was a bonus.

I've been down a couple of times to stand near the edge of the breach when water is coming on or off the marsh depending on the state of the tide, and really it's quite frightening, the volume of water that thunders either way. Just standing in our garden, it almost over powers the noise from the A12. I suspect that the bank and the footpath have now gone forever and it would take a monumental amount of money and effort to restore it. But us poor little Daisy Bankers are still hoping for succour from the Environment Agency. Meanwhile Derek K and myself with the help of Paul C are still building our wall just in case. Environment Agency surveyors came the other day and measured levels. As a result of that I now know that the level of my house floor is a meter above the existing level of the railway track. So, the chances of our house being flooded are pretty remote. However I suspect that the cottages at the end of the lane would not be so lucky. And remember the sewerage problem; that would affect us all.

A villager stopped me the other day and asked how

we were getting on and how sorry he was for our predicament. My reply was that we marshlanders were hardy creatures and a bit of flooding was neither here nor there for us. Sometimes I think we take our safe and secure lives too much for granted and it needs a threat to that existence, however small, to make us appreciate it all the more.



When I first came to live in Blythburgh 20 years ago, one of the first pictures I painted was of the sunflowers in the vegetable garden on the A12. In subsequent years I always looked forward to seeing them, as did the many friends that came to stay with us in Daisy Bank. Eventually curious as to who owned and worked that garden, Brenda and I came to know the man behind it all. I once said to Tussy Brown that his vegetable plot was like a work of art and it was, not that he would ever have agreed to that. To him it was a pleasurable task that consumed his interest and produced a wealth of vegetables and flowers.

Once a week in the season we would find a bag of vegetables inside the kitchen door when we came down in the morning where he had cycled down to Fern Cottage to make our day that bit happier. His new potatoes were a treat to be anticipated. Money had to be forced on Tussy and it was only with reluctance that he eventually accepted the few pence that we gave him.

Walking into his shed, smelling of the good earth and onions, was like stepping back into the past, to the days where honest values and simple pleasures were important. Characters like Tussy are now beginning to disappear from dear Suffolk and, quite simply, are irreplaceable. The old world of Suffolk is going with them and it is a poorer place for it.

**Paul Bennett**