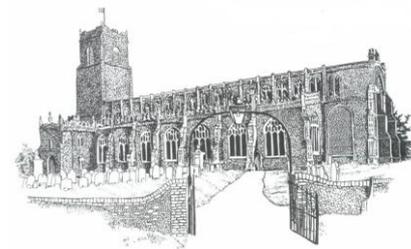


BLYTHBURGH PARISH NEWS



Issue 46

June/July 2009

NEW LIFE BEATS AT THE HART OF BLYTHBURGH

It's hard to believe the White Hart changed hands only a couple of weeks ago, Sean and Laury Lofty – who have taken over – make you feel you've known them for years.

This warm and welcoming couple has moved – along with their five-year-old son Todd and Missy the bull mastiff – from the Oyster Inn at Butley, where, last year, they won Best Newcomers at the Adnams' Pub of the Year awards.

They do plan to make some alterations. "There will be significant changes to the menu and restaurant from June," says Laura, "and the shop will be promoting locally sourced and locally grown produce as soon as we have time to organise it!" With a large pub, a small boy – with a preference for blondes, I gather – and a dog the size of a Shetland pony, they have quite a job on their hands.

The delightful Heidi will still be looking after the Post Office and shop (it's a real pleasure to have her back full-time and bouncing with health again) so we won't be

Inside:

Blythburgh Character	3
Society Reports	5
Council Annual Report	6
Parish Council	7
Speedwatch	9
Village Plan	10
Latitude Trust	11
Holy Trinity	12

deprived of our daily giggle.

Sean and Laura are keen to get involved with the community and would welcome ideas for the pub and

village shop. They've already pleased a number of customers by re-instating the dart board: "It would be great if we got a darts team together," says Sean, "we're also keeping the live music going."

As Laura sings with a twelve-piece big band, we should have high hopes of being entertained by our highly decorative new landlady.

Laura was a financial advisor, Sean, an Essex policeman for 18 years, before they moved to Spain for seven years. Then it was the Butley Oyster. A handful of Oyster staff have moved to the Hart with them; Emily – a suitably kooky art graduate, who plans to use her artistic skills to cheer up the pub (her clothes and sense of humour have done that already) – and Tracey Wasik, their new manager, feisty and fun, and capable, you would imagine, of silencing a rowdy bunch with one quelling look over those spectacles.

It's good to hear that Sean is keen on all water sports, including fishing and canoeing – he's certainly come to the right place, surrounded by water – sometimes even in his own back yard. They are both eager to meet the village, as Laura says, "please come and say hello." You'll be guaranteed a harty – sorry, hearty – welcome.

Lucy Clapham

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BLYTHBURGH CHARACTERS

Major Leonard Crane (b. 1902)

Major Crane was a person of importance. A King's Messenger, a C.B.E., and a major in the Second King's Horse Guards. Even more impressive, he claimed to be a co-plaintiff with no less a person than his Majesty the King in the recovery of £10 million from the National Provincial Bank: a staggering sum, worth perhaps £500 million today. All he needed was a little money up front to pursue the law case.

His supporters could expect the princely reward of £500,000 each. A likely story? Well, Oswald Spindler, a Wenhaston motor dealer, and Edward Percy Rawlins, of Hawthorn Farm, Blythburgh, believed him. And Mrs Muriel Duke, housekeeper at the farm, married with young children, was so convinced that she accepted a proposal of marriage from the major, went with him to see the rector at Southwold to arrange a date, and believed that through Crane's powerful friends in

London he could expedite a divorce from her present husband.

The truth was revealed in Southwold Police Court in July 1934. 'Major' Crane was in fact David Percy Caprice, a London timber merchant's traveller. There was no impressive record. His regiment did not exist. There was no law case. He was already married. The claims were simply means to defraud. He had been exposed by the *Daily Mail* and the now alarmed Mrs Duke doubted that the telephone conversation he purported to have with the paper's editor to demonstrate his innocence was real. She left him at Liverpool Street station and did not see him again until his arrest. After a warrant was issued for his apprehension he tried to fake suicide at Newhaven by leaving his clothes on the beach, but was caught selling greengrocery. "A bedlam of false representations" was the prosecution's description of

Crane's fraud. The accused countered that his victims had attributed to him "almost divine powers" and he had not the moral courage to disillusion them. They had been seduced by the prospect of unimaginable wealth for little effort, and had believed the forged documents produced by Crane to support his case. Spindler and Rawlins each lost hundreds of pounds but perhaps Mrs Duke suffered more. She was left to ponder the real value of her new £40 engagement ring and the inscription in a prayer-book given to her by Crane before she saw him for the last time: "To my beloved wife Muriel, upon her wedding day. From her loving husband, Len. 31st January, 1934. For ever and ever." The fraudster was fortunate that ten months later at Ipswich the judge thought in less eternal terms. But four years in jail was still the sentence.

Alan Mackley

An open invitation

to the next meeting of the Parish Council on

Monday July 13

at 7.45pm in the Village Hall

Everybody is welcome and you are invited
to raise your own concerns and questions at the
Open Forum from 7.30pm



Blythburgh Suffolk

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PLANTS, PRIZES AND FISH AND CHIPS

When the Blythburgh Horticultural Society was formed in 1985 its main purpose was to hold a competitive summer show. Whilst this is still held each year, the society has developed into more of a social club with a horticultural slant.

The Summer Show, held on the last Saturday in July, is a competitive event, with the usual range of classes for vegetables, fruit, flowers, cookery and flower arranging. No special expertise is required to enter, and the more people that do so the more fun it is. Local experts judge the entries and in the afternoon the show is open to everybody to enjoy the exhibits and home made cakes and tea. Cups are presented for each section of the show and for some of the individual classes. The 2008 show had the largest number of entries since 1996, the earliest year for which the society has records.

Each year we try to raise money for charity. In August 2008, the society ran cake and plant stalls in the church and served teas, raising £200 for the Church Repairs Appeal.

BOWLING ALONG...

The Blythburgh Bowls Club is still going strong and club night is a great fun evening. We have had more friendly matches this year and enjoyed meals out when we played away at some of the venues. We had a most enjoyable garden meeting at Rhona and Eric Thompson's. The weather was hot, we played croquet and had a wonderful buffet. In October we entered three teams in a charity match for cancer.

The 2008 programme of outings began in February with a snowdrop walk in Dunwich followed by lunch at Bridge Nursery. A visit to Ladybird Nurseries followed in May, where members stocked up with bedding plants and went on to Friday Street for tea. On 25 June, members visited Hales Hall, off the beaten track but with an impressive array of exotic plants and a medieval barn. Members went on to Highway Nursery for tea and then to Surlingham for fish and chips on a beautiful evening beside the river.

In August, the society held a successful garden party at Heronsway, and held its annual dinner at the Five Bells, Wrentham, in October. The year ended with the AGM at the end of November, followed by an Italian themed supper.

There is no need to have green fingers to join the society, just an interest in gardening – if only from a deckchair. The society ended 2008 with 52 members, most but by no means all living in Blythburgh. The annual subscription remains £1.50 per member.

Thomas Lond-Caulk

We played well: one team got through to the quarter-finals, another to the semi-final. We as a club did not donate to the charity this year as we spent money on under floorboards for the mats which has made them more accurate to bowl on. We would be pleased to welcome anybody who would either like to play or watch us. Our club night is Tuesday at 7pm, cost £1.00 to include coffee/tea and biscuits.

Beryl Stringer

A very big thank you to everybody

I would like to thank everybody I know in Blythburgh through the shop and the White Hart for all their cards, gifts and best wishes when I was recovering after my major operation in Addenbrokes Hospital. They helped me a lot. Thank you all very much.

Heidi Rae

Royal Blythburgh back in the limelight

Blythburgh is used to its share of the limelight and this year has been no exception: with the visit of Charles and Camilla in August and Channel 4's *Time Team* programme on the Priory, which was filmed in October and screened in March.

The natural environment continues to be a source of delight and despair: the overhead power lines were removed last summer, which has greatly enhanced the views over the marshes but flooding remains a problem. Local landowner Andrew Blois has permission to repair the gaps in the riverbank, which the council agreed to support, although these repairs are currently on hold. Separately, the Government has agreed to support the raising of the A12 in order to prevent further flooding of the road.

Like it or not, local government in Suffolk will be changed. At a special meeting of the Parish Council, it was decided to support the proposal for three unitary authorities: West and East Suffolk and a Greater Ipswich.

The council continues to have very good relations with Latitude, the music and arts festival in Henham Park. For the past two years a number of tickets have been given to the Council, which sold them to parishioners at a much reduced price. The profits have been transferred to the Blythburgh Latitude Trust.

Latitude also paid for the cost of the radar gun for Blythburgh Speed Watch, which went live earlier this year, the first in the county. The success of the scheme owes a great deal to the efforts of Parish Councillor Binny Lewis.

The Parish Council initiated the move towards a Parish Plan, which has been overseen by a steering committee. The findings of an exhaustive parish survey were published in March and the plan is expected to be presented in July.

The council organises its work through two sub-committees, finance and planning. It has considered planning applications and made recommendations to Suffolk Coastal District Council, based on a set of agreed principles. The council is seeking to provide a bus shelter on the south side of the A12.

The council raised the precept for the year ending 31 March 2009 by £1000 to cover an anticipated five percent rise in running costs and specific maintenance grants for the Village Hall. There will be no increase in the precept for the current financial year. The Council, which continues to make grants to local organisations, estimates a balance of around £6,500 at the end of the 2009 financial year.

I would like to thank my colleagues on the Council for their support and the Parish Clerk, Jim Boggis, who actually ensures that we all do the right thing. However, it is the people of Blythburgh who make the parish what it is. To recognise this, the Council has introduced a Villager of the Year Award. It is fitting that the first goes to John Ellis of Highfield who, for many years, has without being asked or properly recognised, kept the pavements and borders clear of rubbish. We are all very grateful to him.

David Tytler

Thank you, Teresa

The Blythburgh Parish News owes much to its production editor, Teresa Holman, since it was relaunched in October 2003. Her lay-out skills established the News as it now appears and she will be sorely missed as she concentrates on her career with Adnams.

Let a flower bloom on every corner

Blythburgh resident Clare Orr-Ewing has asked Blythburgh Parish Council for permission to plant shrubs and flowers along the village roads and on spare pieces of ground. She believes that such a scheme would make the village considerably more attractive.

Whilst councillors were interested in the idea it was decided that more information was required. Councillor Cliff Waller was keen that only native species were used and Councillor Alan Mackley said: "We do not want to become a hanging basket village." There were also concerns about site-lines on the roads, and the general question of maintenance.

Parish clerk Jim Boggis is to ask Mrs Orr-Ewing for more information so that the council can make a reasoned decision. Wheelie bins in Church Lane: Councillor Lucy Clapham was concerned that the brown wheelie bins had been removed from the lane and had not been replaced. Suffolk Coastal District Council replied that the small vehicle used to collect the bins in the lane was no longer available. The bins will be replaced by brown bags, which will be collected weekly.

A three bin system for different types of waste is due to be introduced in Blythburgh in October. This will be matched by a similar bag scheme for Church Lane. There will be a publicity campaign

and road shows before the scheme is launched.

Council officers. The following were elected at the annual council meeting: David Tytler, chair; Ro Williams, vice-chair, chair of the finance sub committee and the council representative on the Suffolk Association of Local Councils; Rob Benson, chair, planning sub committee; Binny Lewis, finance sub-committee; Alan Mackley and Cliff Waller, members of the planning sub-committee. Binny Lewis and Alan Mackley were appointed as council trustees on the Village Hall Committee. Binny Lewis is Speed Watch Co-ordinator.

Planning: The council maintained its objections to the erection of poultry barns at Thorington Gravel Pit, London Road, Thorington. The council had no objections to the erection of a single-storey extension to 4, White House Cottages, Bulcamp Drift, Blythburgh or to the installation of six 2G/3G sectorised antennas in place of the existing six on the Telecom mast on the Essex & Suffolk Water Tower, Walberswick Rd. The council is to ask Essex & Suffolk Water if they would give permission for the erection of house martin nest boxes on the tower as suggested by Councillor Waller.

Playsite: Parish clerk Jim Boggis reported that the installation of the new gate has had an immediate impact. The site is getting more use and is looking better maintained. The roofs on the large climbing frame, however, are showing further deterioration.

David Tytler

Village crime rate stays low

There were 11 recorded crimes in Blythburgh for the year ending 31 March 2009: a house burglary, unsolved; criminal damage to a vehicle, unsolved; one aggravated taking of vehicle, solved; two burglaries of other buildings, unsolved; criminal damage to a house, solved; two thefts, unsolved; one accosting, unsolved; one assault, solved; criminal damage to a building, unsolved. 10 crimes, mainly theft,

at the Latitude festival and four related to motor vehicles near the A12 were recorded.

The mobile police station with PCSO Mann continues to visit the village; times and days of visits can be found on the Suffolk constabulary website (these may be subject to change as the mobile station is an operational vehicle).

Jamie Newson
Police Community Support Officer

BLYTHBURGH LATITUDE TRUST***Cut-price Latitude
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camping: £35 Day tickets: £12.50****Thursday evening: £10**

Blythburgh, Bulcamp and Hinton residents are entitled to two tickets, day or weekend, each. Please apply on a first-come first-served basis to Jim Boggis, Blythburgh Latitude Trust, Marsh End, Church Road, 01502 478687

blythburgh.trust@btinternet.com

Payment will be required by June 30: proof of identity will be required on the gate

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Just watch that speed – we're watching you

The Community Speedwatch Scheme, run under the banner of the Suffolk Roadsafe Partnership, brought together the County Council, Police, Fire and Ambulance Services, the Highways Agency and Suffolk Safety Camera Partnership. The common aims: to secure a reduction in the number of drivers exceeding the speed limit and thereby reducing the number of road casualties, and to promote an awareness of road safety across the county of Suffolk.

Suffolk's first Community Speedwatch Scheme was launched in Blythburgh in January with the assistance of five local volunteers from the village. Each Speedwatch Scheme has to be self-funding and our thanks go to the organisers of Latitude who kindly sponsored the purchase of the laser device, the Parish Council which paid for the road signs and to Sizewell A who donated the high visibility jackets worn whilst volunteers are monitoring traffic.

Each volunteer has been trained by the Suffolk Police Safer Neighbourhood team to use the speed detection device and trained on completing the necessary documentation for traffic monitoring. Working in teams of two, they dedicate their own time (a minimum of one hour each week) to monitor local road traffic, both on the A12 and the Dunwich Road. Following the successful launch in Blythburgh, this summer will see a further four schemes covering 16

parishes with a total of 55 volunteers. Four more schemes covering 23 parishes in Suffolk will be launched at a later date.

Since February, the Blythburgh Speed Watch has completed 58 hours of traffic monitoring, forwarding the registration numbers of 23 vehicles which were exceeding 37 mph in the 30 mph speed limit.

The five volunteers are about to be joined by a sixth person, but we would welcome anybody from Blythburgh or the surrounding district who would be willing to spare just one hour each week to join us. The minimum age for volunteers is 18; there is no maximum age limit. A full training session is given on the job in Blythburgh, working with a friendly team of locals. Please think about joining the team and giving something back to the community. For an application form or more information please contact 01502 478624.

Local statistics for 2007 show that on average, 25 people were killed or seriously injured in Suffolk each month and eight were injured on Suffolk's roads every day. In accidents where people were killed or seriously injured, 64.7 per cent were recorded as being as a direct result of speeding.

Please join as a Speedwatch Volunteer to help reduce these statistics.

Binny Lewis

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Parish plan to be presented in July

This past year has seen a huge amount of hard work and progress on writing a parish plan for Blythburgh, Bulcamp and Hinton. In May 2008, the parish plan steering group held a needs analysis event disguised as a village fete. It was extremely well attended by around 120 people. It was great fun for all and achieved the aim of gathering initial issues to be included in the questionnaire.

Following this the steering group set to writing the questionnaire using software and guidance from Suffolk ACRE. This resulted in an initial trial run of Highfield residents in early August. As a result, some minor amendments were made and the final questionnaire printed.

With gratefully received assistance from volunteers, a total of 180 households had questionnaires hand-delivered and collected in late August. One of the advantages of the

hand-delivery and collection is that the committee gained an overview of the number of occupied households in the parish, taking into account those that were pure holiday lets. The response rate was excellent, at slightly more than 70 %.

The steering group then spent considerable time putting the results into the Suffolk ACRE database and started to analyse them. This resulted in the presentation of the survey results and the issues arising. The main issues will be listed in order of priority and used as the basis of an action plan.

The committee is now in the final stages of writing the plan, which will be presented to the parish in July.

Siobhann Quinn
Chair
Parish Plan Steering Group

FOUR STARS FOR SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

Suffolk County Council is two-thirds of the way to making critical decisions on how to improve and raise the levels of achievement of Suffolk children. For too long, our children have not attained standards that match the national average.

The council's singular success has been in financial management and the efficiencies that have followed from the internal review of how services are provided. Despite severe economic restraints and a government grant, which is much less than hoped for, the council has limited the council tax increase to 2.45%, the lowest ever. The council made savings of £240,000 a week without cutting services. Importantly, the council has built up reserves which had previously been sorely depleted. The County Council element of the Council Tax amounts to 80%. Taking account of the District Council share, the Police Authority precept and the Parish precept, the total increase is 2.7%.

In March the Audit Commission awarded Suffolk County Council 4 Stars and graded it as excellent, the highest grade. The commission said that plans were in place to improve even further. It has also just been announced that Suffolk County Council is the most cost efficient county council in England.

The one area that has stalled is the Local Government Review. The Boundary Committee should have reported to the Secretary of State in December but has now been given until July 4. The Boundary Committee has dropped the proposal that Lowestoft should be part of Norfolk and is now consulting on two proposals of equal status: One Suffolk, to be responsible for all services throughout Suffolk, or a North Haven (Ipswich-Felixstowe) authority and a Rural Suffolk authority.

Rae Leighton
County Councillor

Latitude Trust pays out first grants

The Blythburgh Latitude Trust was set up by the Parish Council last summer. Its purpose, as set out in its Deed of Trust, is to “make grants to assist financing a range of activities or equipment for those in need, or to support and build community life in Blythburgh”. The Trust is funded by the sale of tickets to the Latitude Festival, donated by the organisers. The Trustees wish to express their thanks to Latitude for their generosity. In addition, the Trustees are very grateful to the Blythburgh Society for their contribution of £2,000.

The Trustees are: Jenny Allen, chair, Lucy Clapham, Michael Nichols, David Tytler, and Harry Waller. Jim Boggis has kindly agreed to be Honorary Administrator, and we are very grateful to him for all his hard work in getting the Trust off the ground.

The Trustees decided that grants should be made for one-off expenditure to benefit full-time residents or families from the Parish of Blythburgh who can show a need, which cannot be met from other sources. Grants will also be made to local organisations, where a majority of members are full-time residents of the Parish.

The Trustees decided that normally grants will not exceed £200, though exceptional

circumstances could result in a higher award, and that the grant would not normally cover the full cost of meeting the need. It is expected that only one payment a year will be made to any applicant but exceptional circumstances could result in more. However, successful or not, all will be able to re-apply the following year.

The existence of the Trust has been publicised in the Parish News and through separate fliers and posters. The Trustees will consider applications each quarter, with deadlines of 30 November, 28 February, 31 May, and 31 August each year for receipt of forms. They will meet two weeks after each deadline to consider applications. One such meeting has so far been held, and two grants have been made.

The application process has been kept as simple as possible and we hope parishioners will make full use of this new facility. Please get in touch with Jim Boggis for application forms. We look forward to hearing from you.

**Jenny Allen
Chair, Trustees**

An even better village hall

The hall committee is pleased to welcome Jenni McElroy as secretary: it is good to have an efficient secretary after such a long time without one.

Regular users continue to support the hall, including the bowls club, the Morris Dancers and for band rehearsals. Extra income came from the sale of the portable stage to Wingfield Arts Centre for £200 and £200 from Channel Four's *Time Team* for the use of the hall.

An electric storage heater, kindly donated by Brenda Motley, was installed in the kitchen by local electricians MRWCF. As a result, the damp and mould problem should be eliminated. Binny Lewis has made laminated notices reminding

users to leave cupboard doors ajar so that air circulates.

While the electricians were in the hall, they did an electrical check making various repairs and fitting low energy bulbs at cost price, for which we are most grateful.

The committee strongly urges everybody to recycle their paper, bottles and cans in the recycling point in the old station yard. This year, the hall benefited by £815.

The hall currently has a balance of £1,260, out of which are paid the utility bills and any routine maintenance.

Henrietta Maslen

Church donations hit the roof and keep it up

The Team Vicars with responsibility for Holy Trinity continue to be Julie and David Eaton, who hold the post as a job share. The PCC voted for a new scheme of eight parishes in the Sole Bay Team Ministry (the original 12 minus Wrentham and surrounding villages). Recruitment has begun to fill vacant posts, including that of Team Rector.

Choral evensong on the first Sunday of the month continues to be the best attended of the regular services. Matins was introduced once a quarter to replace one of our 9.30am Book of Common Prayer Communion services. Regretfully, Compline, on the third Sunday of the month, and the Tuesday morning Communion service have been discontinued because of lack of support.

At the Easter, Christmas, and Harvest Festival the small but loyal congregation is joined by a large number of visitors: the Blessing of Animals service at the end of August continues to be very popular. Holy Trinity continued the custom of serving lunch in the church after the Harvest Festival service.

During 2008, the PCC decided that collections at Choral Evensong about once a quarter should be designated for a charity. The Harvest Festival collection was donated to Christian Aid and half the collection at the Blessing of Animals service was given to the World Wildlife Fund.

On Trinity Sunday, the village was invited to tea in the church, and more than 100 teas were served. This event formed part of the village Fun Day to launch the parish plan project. In the evening we held a Songs of Praise service,

with hymns chosen by church members. The church has continued to be used for a variety of concerts and exhibitions.

The year was dominated by the re-leading of the south aisle roof. The timbers required very little remedial work: so, scaffolding was not needed in the church and the work came in under budget. Fundraising, particularly individual donations, continued to exceed expectations and came to nearly £100,000, enabling the church to meet the cost of the roof repairs without borrowing.

Rather more than half came from around 500 individuals, who have left money, much of it gift aided, in the wall safe of the church or sent through the post. With the donations have been delightful, and sometimes sad, letters from people talking of their association with Blythburgh. Clearly Holy Trinity means much to people from all over the country. It is our duty to keep it well maintained.

Holy Trinity had two burglaries during the year: one lead downpipe and three pieces of furniture were stolen. There was a silver lining to the latter event, since it generated much interest in the media: contributions were received from far and wide, often via our website.

A further programme of repair work has been identified for 2009, including the high level re-pointing recommended in the previous Inspection. This will form Phase 2 of the work, at an estimated cost of about £51,000. The appeal will remain open until the necessary funds have been raised.

Thomas Lond-Caulk

Learn to be an on-the-spot life saver

Come and learn the latest life support techniques and meet the amazing talking defibrillator. There has been a suggestion in the parish that the village set up a Community First Responder scheme, similar to that already established in Southwold.

A Community Responder scheme is made up of volunteers who live or work in the parish and can be available to provide emergency first aid whilst waiting for an ambulance to arrive. This

kind of first response is particularly important when someone is having a heart attack, has breathing difficulties or has had a fall.

First responders will be trained by East of England Ambulance Trust. A demonstration and talk will be given by the East of England Ambulance Service on Wednesday 27 May at 7.30pm in Blythburgh Village Hall so come along to see the equipment and learn more.

Alan De Thabrew