

# BLYTHBURGH PARISH NEWS



Issue 50

[www.onesuffolk.co.uk/blythburghPC](http://www.onesuffolk.co.uk/blythburghPC)

January/February 2010

## Welcome to Blythburgh's biggest party

It will be the biggest and best party Blythburgh has ever seen with something for everybody so that the whole parish can enjoy everything that the village has to offer, its history, its natural and beautiful environment and the people and groups that help to make up the modern village.

*Celebrating Blythburgh* will be part of a nationwide celebration of art, culture and sport in the run-up to the London 2012 Olympic Games.

Communities across the country have been asked to organise their own London 2012 Open Weekend over July 23 to 25 this year. Blythburgh Parish Council decided at its January meeting to take part and to apply for the £500 grant offered by Suffolk County Council to support Open Weekends across the county.

The Blythburgh event will be on July 25 and will centre on the White Hart, the garden of The Priory, the village hall and Holy Trinity Church. There will be guided tours of the Priory ruins and Holy Trinity and escorted riverside nature walks. Tides willing, Natural England will organise trips on the River Blyth.

Local bands and the Blythburgh Morris Dancers will be invited to perform in The Priory gardens, where there will be a free hog roast or barbecue using local meats and produce, a licensed bar provided by the White Hart and displays from the Horticultural Society and Blythburgh Speed Watch. There will be a

bouncy castle in the White Hart car park, which is also considering running a darts and/or petanque tournament.

The village hall is expected to host a display from local artists, an illustrated history of Blythburgh, including a video of *Time Team* at The Priory and a photographic competition, *Blythburgh in Pictures*. Visitors will also be able to try their hands at carpet bowls, air hockey, table tennis, and Pool.

To qualify for the Suffolk County Council grant of up to £500, the London 2012 Open Weekend has to offer activities such as architecture; archives; carnival and street theatre; crafts; dance; design; fashion; film and video; food; gaming; gardens; heritage and historic environment; libraries; literature; museums and galleries; music; opera; photography; poetry; science; sport and physical activities; and theatre and visual arts.

There are two funding rounds, the first closes on 22 January 2010 and the second on 16 April 2010. Events must be scheduled to happen within Suffolk during the 2012 Open Weekend, 23 to 25 July 2010. The Parish Council is hoping to have its application completed in time for the first round. The organisers say that the open weekend is "an opportunity for local community groups to showcase themselves and inspire others".

**David Tytler**

**For more information visit**

[www.openweekendinsuffolk.com](http://www.openweekendinsuffolk.com)

### INSIDE

Village Round up	3
Character	5
Mrs Clapham	6
News round up	7
First responders	8
Latitude Trust	9
Village Plan	10
Steve Manning	11
Daisy Bank	12

### Tapas night at the White Hart, ole!

The White Hart is offering a special tapas menu including paella, chorizo stew, crispy fried squid and much more on Friday 22 January with a free glass of sangria all for just £15.95 per person. To book, call 01502 478217. Laura Lofty, the landlady, is now a fully trained postmistress and hopes to extend the post office opening hours in the near future. New services will include commission free foreign currency and travel insurance.

# **NEAL'S TAXI**

**& PRIVATE HIRE**

**Airports, Local and Long Distance  
Friendly Reliable Service**

**Tel: 01502 575 888**

**Mobile: 0899 011 383**

# **Paul Cook**

## **Gardening Services**

**Fully Insured**



Gardening • Grass Cutting  
Strimming • Hedge Cutting  
Fencing repaired or replaced

*Free Quotations On Request*

**Tel: 01502 478676**

**Mobile: 07879 285971**

## Around the Village

# The Parish News makes history

Lyn Smith, from Lewes, was visiting her daughter in Blythview recently, when she picked up a copy of the Blythburgh Parish News containing a profile of Blythburgh resident John Allen, *Last of the boffins recalls the great days* (BPN No 49).

It just so happens that Mrs Smith is a university lecturer and has been an oral historian for London's Imperial War Museum since the 1970s. She has written a number of well-received books, including *Forgotten Voices of the Holocaust*, *Pacifists in Action* and the best selling *Young Voices*.

Having read the BPN, Mrs Smith decided that she would like to meet Professor Allen, who is said to be "tickled pink". She is due to interview him at the end of the month.

**The bad weather** in December meant that Blythburgh Community Speed Watch volunteers were able to monitor traffic through the village for six hours, reporting eight vehicles exceeding the speed limit. During 12 hours of monitoring in November, five vehicles were reported. In October, volunteers monitored village roads for nearly 22 hours, reporting 57 vehicles, the highest figure so far. Volunteers

were surprised when they clocked a car travelling at 57mph when it entered the 30mph limit, particularly as it was slowing down.

**New Angel Lane** residents Malcolm and Meryl Doney were featured in BBC2's *Escape to the Country*. It covered properties in East Suffolk but not the Blythburgh house the couple eventually bought.

**A night to remember** was enjoyed at an impromptu get-together in the White Hart on January 8 when 20 or so villagers found themselves thrown together because of the week-long fall of snow. Some had run out of food, others just felt they needed some company to cheer them up. All agreed that it was just how a village pub should be.

**Thanks** to Blythburgh's postmen who kept the daily letter service up throughout the bad weather.

*Overheard in the Hart*  
 'Incest...a game for all the family.'



BLYTHBURGH  
VILLAGE HALL

## BLYTHBURGH VILLAGE HALL FUN QUIZ

7.30pm Friday January 29, 2010

Refreshments provided by the Blythburgh Latitude Trust

**Bring your own drinks**

*Raffle with bottles of wine for the winners*

*Teams of up to four at £10 a table*

To book your place ring 01502 478521



## Blythburgh Suffolk

THE INN ON THE RIVER BLYTH

**NOW UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT**

### The White Hart Inn

Our restaurant boasts the best view around with a regularly changing menu offering fresh local produce.

#### WINTER WARMERS

Home made short crust pastry pies (changed daily) buttered greens and pan gravy.

Treacle cured ham hash sprouting broccoli and mustard mash.

Vegetarian options available.

#### A taste of Spain

Friday 22 January

Tapas including paella, squid, chorizo stew and a glass of sangria  
£15.95 per person

#### LARGE GARDEN – GREAT VIEWS

#### SPECTACULAR ACCOMMODATION IN FOUR REFURBISHED CHALETs

Double or twin rooms with en-suite

Full English breakfast

One night to weekly rates!

London Road, Blythburgh, Suffolk

Alongside the A12

**Tel: 01502 478217**

**Winter opening hours**

**Weekday 11-3, 6-11 Weekends 11-11**

### The Village Shop

*USE IT OR LOSE IT*

Re-organised and re-stocked  
If we haven't got what you want,  
tell us and we will try to get it  
for you.

**Our aim is to meet your needs**

**Monday to Friday**

**7 am to 4 pm**

**Saturday and Sunday**

**9 am to 4 pm**

Local fresh fruit and vegetables  
Dry cleaning, laundry service, mobile  
phone top ups.

Papers, magazines, pies,  
sandwiches, cold drinks, ice  
cream, cigarettes etc.

**Coal, logs, barbecue fuel and  
everything for breakfast, lunch  
and dinner.**

**Tel: 01502 478833**

#### Post Office Open

Monday to Friday 9am – 1 pm

**Support your local shop!**

## Rev. William Belcher (c.1836 - early C20th)

William Belcher is one of those characters around whom stories have accumulated to entertain his family's later generations. He was born in County Cork of a family with strong medical connections. The Belchers had moved to Ireland from the Bristol area in 1610. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin. He was priest in charge at Blythburgh for just three years, from 1867 to 1870. Some of the stories told about him are fascinating but are they true? His family credit him with rediscovering the angels in the church roof when he removed a false ceiling. An unlikely story.

He moved to Norfolk in 1870 when he was presented to the Larling living by the Hon. Lady Nugent, wife of Sir George Nugent Bt. In the same year he married Edith Charlotte Musgrave Bonham. He was 34 years old and his wife just 19. Edith was the daughter of Augusta, Countess of Stradbroke, by her first marriage. She married the second earl after Colonel Bonham's death in 1856.

Things now get interesting. The Belchers' first child, Edith Augusta Bonham, was born at Larling in 1871, suspiciously early, say the family, given the date of the wedding. Then in 1875 William Belcher was appointed to St Margaret's, Heveningham, on the Vanneck family estate. The name Vanneck was given to a later child.

As one of their descendants puts it: "One cannot help but wonder whether the connection to the Vanneck family was something more than that normally expected between a clergyman and the

owner of the estate." Was the clergyman really a convenient fall guy, persuaded to conceal the misdeeds of a wayward young woman?

Looking at the dates it seems unlikely but, on the other hand, Edith was certainly a lively lady. In the 1880s, when in her thirties, she decamped with her young male children to Natal, South Africa, in the company, it is believed, of an army surgeon.

William Belcher continued to serve Heveningham until his retirement in the early twentieth century. Daughter Edith Augusta was in her teens when she was abandoned by her mother. Eventually in 1899 she was to marry the orphaned son of a gamekeeper, continuing a branch of the Lipscombe family.

Several generations of Lipscombes served the Vanneck estate as gamekeepers, and they also worked for Sir Joshua Rowley, Bt, at Tendring Hall. One Lipscombe is supposed to have died at Westleton in the 1870s after being shot by a poacher.

So was Edith's husband the son of a murdered gamekeeper? I have not been able to confirm that. Whatever the truth about the alleged Vanneck union, certainly there was a link from the Countess Augusta between aristocratic and gamekeeper lines. Shades of D.H. Lawrence! A heady mix of family mystery and history.

**Alan Mackley**

### YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS

Chair

David Tytler  
01502 478521

[david@dytler.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:david@dytler.freeserve.co.uk)

Vice Chair/Chair finance sub-committee

Ro Williams

Chair planning sub-committee

Rob Benson

Councillors

Binny Lewis, Lucy Clapham

Alan Mackley, Cliff Waller

Parish Clerk

Jim Boggis. 01502 478687

### BLYTHBURGH ASSOCIATIONS

Carpet Bowls  
Beryl Stringer

Horticultural Society  
Jenny Allen 01502 478314

Neighbourhood Watch  
Rob Benson 01502 478047

Village Hall  
Henrietta Maslen 01502 478551  
Bookings 07850 140581

# There's snow business like snow business

There is something decidedly unglamorous about tucking your vest into your knickers. But, as always, our mothers knew best: it keeps out the freezing draughts.

Day-after-day of glorious snow have forced us to pack away our little frilly numbers – can't speak for you, chaps - and pile on layers of passion-killing thermals.

By the time I have dressed and then dressed again in outdoor layers, the dog – raring to go half-an-hour before – has given up and is now lying on the sofa with his legs in the air, sighing.

Toby simply loves the snow: so do I.

Luckily, I do not take it as far as he does, rolling around in deep drifts, burying my head up to the neck and emerging with eyes, nose and ears full of the stuff.

Maybe I might, if nobody was looking.

Actually, one of the nicest things about this winter wonderland is the lack of people. Acres of magical countryside covered by a glistening blanket, untouched by anything larger than the footprints of a rabbit or fox.

Talking of footprints, I recently accused my brother of skipping his usual 7am constitutional with the dog. "I know you haven't been out," announced little Miss Smarty-Pants, "because the snow on the path hasn't got a single mark on it."

He patiently pointed out that it had snowed just after they returned, while I was still tangled in my duvet. I really am an ass at times.

The lovely Mr C does not appear to find the snow nearly as entertaining as I do. Driving the length and breadth of East Anglia all week, stuck behind snow ploughs and gritters, appears to

have given him a distaste for snowball fights, sledging and taking romantic walks through the glittering white weeds. Spoil sport.

I do sympathise with people who dare not go out for fear of slipping.

I came a cropper on the super-icy slope at the top of Church Lane, which sent both me and the postman on to our rear ends on the same day. Not at the same time, I hasten to add, although it would have given the village something to talk about. Always happy to keep the gossips entertained, naturally, but not on this occasion. Sorry.

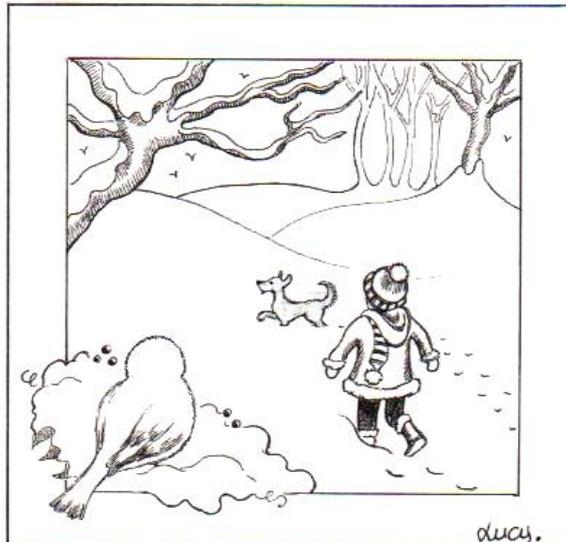
There is a slight thaw today, which has pleased the poor birds, which have been making do with mince pies, Christmas cake and Stilton for days on end.

It has been a real joy to crunch down the garden to my studio and pretend there is a handsome lawn under all that snow. And we now have a pet water rail and snipe under the bird table, deprived of the little brown shrimps which normally inhabit our stretch of bog.

But I'm sure their watery playground will be ebbing, free of ice, to and fro all-too-soon.

I will be really sorry to see the end of this little bit of white magic in, what is generally a wet, grey and thoroughly bleak mid-winter. Still I have popped some snowballs in the freezer – just for the dog's entertainment of course.

Happy New Year Blythburgh. I feel sure that 2010 – like every year before – will be the snowiest, coldest, driest, wettest "since records began". Whenever that was. Global warming? It is what we used to call good old British weather.



**Blythburgh Villager of the Year:** Nominations for the 2010 Blythburgh Villager of the Year should be sent to Jim Boggis, Marsh End, Church Road, by April 19. The winner will be announced at the Annual Village Meeting in the hall at 7.30pm on 19 May.

## NEWS ROUND UP

## Still clearing the village recycling point

After a period of calm, litter began to build up around the recycling bins on the old station car park after Christmas and the New Year. The dark bottle bin was full so, perhaps understandably, party-goers had left three boxes of empty beer and wine bottles. What was not understandable was the large number of empty cardboard boxes and black bags of kitchen waste – not to mention the galvanised steel bin.

The recycling team at Suffolk Coastal District Council is to empty the bins and clean up the mess. The council is also reviewing the signs at the site to remind offenders that fly-tipping can result in heavy fines.

At least one tipper was deterred when she realised that the number of her 2008 blue 4x4 was being taken as she unloaded a number of boxes. Having spotted the number-taker she quickly changed her mind and reloaded the car.

**The Suffolk Coastal Petanque League** is setting its sights on the 2010 season with the sport one of the five fastest growing in the country. It has virtually no age or gender restrictions and learning the basics takes 10 to 15 minutes. Matches last around 90 minutes.

Many new teams persuade their local pubs temporarily to cordon a section of gravelled car park or similar, to make a suitable playing

surface and avoid the need for a purpose-made playing area. The Suffolk Coastal league admits teams of four or eight players for a registration fee of £12 per team. For further information, contact the league co-ordinator, Mr Simon Fletcher at 18 Melville Road, Ipswich, IP4 1PN or e-mail [imogenlewiskira@sky.com](mailto:imogenlewiskira@sky.com) Registration closes at the end of February 2010

**Plans to introduce** sea eagles on the Suffolk coast will not go ahead this year to allow time for further consultation. Livestock farmers feared the birds would damage stock. Signs appeared in Blythburgh saying "Say No To Sea Eagles."

**Suffolk Coastal Residents** who receive state benefits or are over the age of 70 may be eligible for free loft and cavity wall insulation and may benefit from a loft clearing pilot scheme. Suffolk Coastal will arrange the insulation, including organising a quote for the work, an appropriate time for the it to be done. For further information call the Warm Front team on 0800 072 9004.

The council is also offering help to those who are retired, unemployed or on a low income and finding it difficult to pay rent or council tax. Call 01394 444838 or email [benefits@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk)

### The Little Plumbing Company

Domestic plumbing and heating

Specialist in underfloor heating

Central heating design and installation

Certificated in unvented/mains pressure hot water systems

Boiler servicing

Free estimates - Fully insured - Free consultation

Paul Sayer



[sayerpaul@btinternet.com](mailto:sayerpaul@btinternet.com)

01502 723191 / 07963 958772

## Volunteers needed for first aid team

First Responders are a group of volunteers within a community, trained in first aid and the use of resuscitation equipment. They take calls from the East of England Ambulance NHS Trust and usually arrive at a patient's house to provide help before the ambulance comes. This could be just to give support, oxygen or in the case of a cardiac arrest, defibrillation and resuscitation.

There is no doubt about the value of such a scheme especially in rural areas where ambulances may not arrive in the crucial first eight minutes after someone has a cardiac arrest. The availability of a trained community responder, with the right equipment, increases the chance of survival considerably.

In Blythburgh we now have four people who have completed the detailed forms to join the scheme. Several other people have received the first form which needs to be sent to the East of England Ambulance NHS Trust to receive more detailed forms.

If you are one of those people and you are still interested in joining the scheme, or would like to have more information, please contact me.

Each member contributes as much or as little time as they can. The more responders there are, the better the cover will be.

**Ursula Mackley**  
Tel: 478438

**The Red Cross** is looking for local collectors. It needn't take long, just an hour or so every couple of months, but it really does make all the difference. The Red Cross provides many essential services locally, including wheelchair loan and transport services. To get involved call 01842 768361 or email [ckeates@redcross.org.uk](mailto:ckeates@redcross.org.uk) for a free information pack. To find out more [www.redcross.org.uk/yourarea](http://www.redcross.org.uk/yourarea)

**The Boundary Committee** has published its advice on unitary local government in Suffolk. The Committee has made two proposals: a unitary county of Suffolk (the Committee's preferred proposal); and a two-unitary pattern comprising an Ipswich & Felixstowe authority and a Rural Suffolk authority.

# **MRWCF** **Electrical**

- Domestic and commercial • Rewires
- Extra sockets/lights • P.A.T Testing
- Inspection and testing
- Christmas lights III!

**CALL FOR \*FREE\* ESTIMATE**

**\*24 HR CALL OUT \***

**TEL/FAX BLYTHBURGH: 01502 478473**

**MOB: 07884 477110 / 07717 176655**

**Email: [MRWCFElectrical@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:MRWCFElectrical@hotmail.co.uk)**



National Association of  
Professional Inspectors & Testers

• **CITY AND GUILDS QUALIFIED**

# The Blythburgh Latitude Trust Competition winners

The Blythburgh Latitude Trustees have chosen two winners in its competition to find a logo: Elizabeth Boggis, of Church Road, and Anna Windsor, of Blyth View, both will receive two weekend tickets to Latitude in July. The trustees decided that Elizabeth's entry should be used as the trust logo.

## Elizabeth Boggis's entry

The trust has made several grants to applicants living in the parish since it was formed a year ago. The grants, worth several hundred pounds, have contributed to the cost of educational and leisure equipment as well as to village events and amenities.

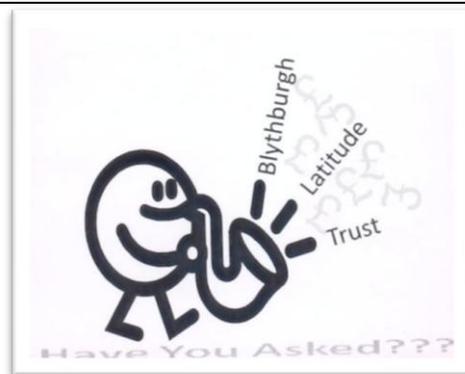


children under 16 Anna Windsor's entry should be endorsed by parents or carers. Only one payment a year will be made to any applicant but, successful or not, all can re-apply the following year.

## **BLYTHBURGH LATITUDE TRUST.**

**Please make all applications to the honorary administrator, Jim Boggis, Marsh End, Church Road, (478687)**

**He will offer advice on how to complete the application forms.**



## **SOUTHWOLD AND DUNWICH RNLI FUNDRAISING BRANCH**

# **Spend a Night with Christine**

**Local comedian Christine Webb returns in a Supper Cabaret at St Edmund's Hall, Southwold, Saturday, March 13 at 7.30pm. Licensed Bar**

**Tickets £10 each, including supper, from Tilly's Teashop, Southwold High Street or 0779 0612225**

**ALL PROCEEDS TO THE RNLI**

# It's all systems go for Village Plan

The first moves in achieving the main priorities of the Parish Plan published in the autumn were taken at a special meeting of Blythburgh Parish Council in December. The council suspended standing orders so that all at the meeting, including representatives of the village plan steering committee and parishioners, were able to have their say.

Working parties were set up to tackle the priority actions set out in the plan. Members of each group were taken from those who had volunteered at the Village Plan Event held in the White Hart.

It was decided to group together the three high priority actions concerning traffic management: dealing with speeding traffic through the village; the volume of traffic in Angel Lane; and more generally the speed of traffic throughout the parish. Following some discussion the meeting agreed to set up the Traffic Management Working Party. Parish Councillor Alan Mackley agreed to act as a convenor for the working group.

An Environmental Working Party was set up to consider the lack of cycle paths linked to surrounding parishes and amenities; the poor maintenance of footpaths; and more generally, the conservation of the existing environment. Parish Councillor Cliff Waller agreed to act as convenor for the group and will be contacting those who volunteered to work on environmental concerns.

Jenni McElroy, secretary of the Blythburgh Village Hall Committee, agreed to set up a Social Working Party to improve the number of social activities and to find ways of making better use of the village hall. It was agreed that the information collected from the parishioners on the Fit Village project would be passed on to the group for consideration.

The Parish Council Chairman agreed to draft documents to address concerns about the lack of information about the purpose of the annual parish meeting and to write an information leaflet for young people in the village. These would be considered by the Parish Council before publication. The council agreed to investigate the feasibility of setting up a Parish Youth Council.

The Parish Plan also proposes that the council should provide better facilities at the play site in Highfield. The meeting was told that the play site had been a matter of concern for the Parish Council for some time. The Parish Clerk is currently trying to get quotes for the necessary repairs but needs to know what the children of the village would like installed. Paul Cook agreed to talk to the residents of Highfield and pass their views on to the clerk. The Blythburgh Latitude Trust has already agreed to provide a grant of £2,000 and other grants are likely to be available.

**Other actions agreed were:** A Church Working Party led by Thomas Lond-Caulk is to seek ways of encouraging parishioners to make more use of Holy Trinity Church. Forty-nine households had expressed interest in a mains gas supply to the village. The clerk is to write to British Gas to see if a supply could be made available and, if so, what it would cost. The meeting accepted that there was a lack of information for visitors to the area. Councillor Mackley agreed to find out how much a professionally produced information board would cost. Its content would be decided at a later date. It was also agreed that local bus timetables should be made more available. All working parties will report back to the Parish Council.

**David Tytler**

## Lunchtime advice on funding

Advice on funding availability and training opportunities will be provided to voluntary group representatives at a lunchtime meeting in Felixstowe on Friday January 22. Speakers in attendance come from The Big Lottery Fund, Suffolk Foundation, Suffolk Climate Change Partnership and Suffolk Coastal District Council. Call 01473 275195 to book a place and free lunch.

# Steve Manning

14 December 1950–14 December 2009

Steve Manning was born 59 nine years ago in Luton. He grew up with his parents Richard and Phillippa and his brother, Andrew. His young life, as was his adulthood, was dominated by his love of sport, particularly football and cricket. Steve played for a local team in Luton and spent many Saturdays watching Luton Town.

He had a very full and active childhood. He was very musical, playing folk guitar in many of the folk clubs and pubs around Luton, continuing to play guitar throughout his life. Living so close to London he was able to travel to many concerts and saw many iconic groups live: *The Who*, *The Stones* and many more.

In the late 1960s Steve's parents moved to Southwold, to take over Manning's, the family newsagents. Steve made the move to Southwold in 1972. He quickly settled in the area and this part of East Anglia was very much home for Steve ever since.

Steve worked for a while with the ministry of Agriculture in Norwich and then at Howard's Rotovators in Harlesden and Halesworth. He started work for Adnams in 1978, staying with them for 28 years. For much of that time Steve was Tied Estate Manager, looking after Adnams' pubs across the region, supporting managers and their families. It was a job with a lot of travelling but a job that Steve greatly enjoyed, making many friends. He started his own licence trade training company in 2006.

In Southwold, Steve quickly became involved in both the football and cricket clubs. He played football for Southwold for many years and continued to support the club as manager and chairman. He also kept wicket for Southwold cricket club for several years and when his children were young most Saturdays were spent either at football or cricket matches. Steve remained a life long Luton Town supporter but also became a supporter of a local East Anglian team. Being the connoisseur of football that he was, he of course chose to support Ipswich Town.

In Southwold Steve became famous for his stand up comedy acts, particularly his Dame Edna Everage impression. As well as at local pubs, he performed at parties and other functions, much to the hilarity of his audience and the embarrassment of his children.

Steve's family has grown over the years. He was proud to be father to Damien, Saffron, Felicity, Simon and Jack, as well as step-father to Alex and Toby. There are also very nearly five grand children: Caleb, Latasha, Xanthi and Masie, who are soon to be joined by the as yet unborn Imogene.

Steve enjoyed sailing and went for trips with Jonathon Adnams across to Holland and other places. In more recent years he had fallen in love with Spain and, having bought an apartment on the Costa Blanca, had set about learning the language, something he had got to grips with pretty well. Steve's plan was to retire with Tina to Spain and enjoy the sun and a slower pace of life, in the not too distant future.

For the past four years Steve and Tina have shared their lives. They were married just a few months ago in August and Steve had been very settled in Beccles. Steve has helped out at Beccles Cricket Club, done some football coaching, with many Saturdays spent watching the boys play football and cricket. There were many trips to Spain and holidays in the UK as well, some fun and happy family times together.

Steve was an outgoing person, who had many hundreds of acquaintances, but in some ways he was also a very private person, having just a few really close friends and enjoying the closeness of being with his family.

***This obituary is based on the address given by the Rev John Beauchamp at Steve's funeral in St Michael's Church, Beccles, in December.***

***A long-time resident of Blythburgh, Steve Manning was a former chairman of Blythburgh Parish Council***

## Notes from Daisy Bank XXXVIII

The phrase being homesick has figured quite a lot in my life. I don't mean the addictive reality show's homesick where celebrity contestants break down after two days without their family. And this all said with so-called heartbreaking and tearful statements to the cameras.

The fact that they are being paid thousands with untold spin off wealth if they win doesn't seem to lessen their grief. And this in the full knowledge that, brave young men in Afghanistan are also homesick and are not being paid a fortune and could well be killed the following day. Sick-making but of course we still watch it.

There was a time when I would come back from foreign parts and, with most of my family having died far too young, even though my house was in Suffolk I always had that feeling that I wasn't quite sure which direction to go when I reach central London: north to Enfield where I had been born, west to Henley-on-Thames where I spent my teenage years or south to Surrey where my family lived for ten years or more.

And then one day I knew that home was here and have never looked back since. I still get homesick when I walk out of the front gate and am always glad when I get back. A week in a celebrity jungle or a celebrity big brother house would not be a problem for me. It wouldn't reduce me to tears either, because I truly remember what being homesick was like.

It's years ago and my mother is seeing me off at Dorking Bus station in Surrey. I have already said good-bye to Dad who has gone off to work and my brother who has gone to school. The bus arrives and I put my cases in the luggage hold and say goodbye to mother waving to her

as the bus crawls out of the station. We are on our way to another bus station in Cromwell Road London where I will get yet another bus to Heathrow.

Feeling a bit miserable I strike up a conversation with an older lady who, it turns out is going to her sister's in Marseilles and is already feeling you know what. After a while my sympathetic ear promotes a few tears and some embarrassing silences. I assure her that six weeks isn't a lifetime and the weather will be wonderful and *'you'll be back in Dorking before you know it.'* *'Are you going to London for the day'*, she asks when she's calmed down? *'No, I'm going to Singapore,'* I reply.

Shocked, she admits she feels a bit foolish boring me with six weeks in Marseilles when I'm going nearly to the other side of the world. *'How long are you going for?'* she asks. *'Two years'*, I reply and then she feels really bad and agrees that Marseilles for six weeks is better than Singapore for two years. I suggest a swop but she's not keen. It turned out to be two-and-a-half years followed after a few months at home by another two-and-a-half years. She's probably writing about it in her version of the parish news somewhere in rural England.

Whilst discussing lottery wins and their implication, we have agreed that homes wouldn't be exchanged for bigger and grander ones. What would we do with more rooms? And if we did move to Heveningham Hall then we would both be homesick in minutes. So the only outward way that Daisy Bank will notice any win will be the Porsche 911 in the church car park. I may have mentioned the Porsche before?

**Paul Bennett**

## Caravan site plans turned down

Suffolk Coastal District Council has turned down a retrospective planning application for the change of use of agricultural buildings to a caravan site on the plot at Red House Farm Units, Hazel Lane, Blythburgh. Blythburgh Parish Council had already objected to the application because it believed that it would lead to a significant increased risk of accidents occurring at access points.

**Contributions to the March/April Blythburgh Parish News should be sent to David Tytler by March 10, [david@dytler.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:david@dytler.freeserve.co.uk)**