

BLYTHBURGH

FOCUS

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Issue No. 4

<http://blythburgh.onesuffolk.net>

July/August 2012

It's party time in Blythburgh again

Celebrating Blythburgh is back on Sunday July 22. The day will start with a service in Holy Trinity Blythburgh at 10.00 am, led by the Rev. Malcolm Doney with a little help from his friends.

Events are free and will be held throughout the day from 11.00 am to 5.00 pm in the Priory Gardens, the Village Hall, and with a very rare opportunity to take a boat trip on the River Blyth.

The BBQ is free to parishioners on presentation of the voucher, which can be found on Page 10. It should be cut out and handed over at the BBQ. Seconds have to be paid for.

The Priory Garden (entry by village hall)

Music: Jive Bunnies disco and live music from *Handle with Care*; BBQ; Licensed bar from 11.00 am, ice creams, soft drinks, tea and coffee.

Priory Car Park

Bouncy Castle; Blythburgh Speed Watch; bee display; Blythburgh Horticultural Society display; Natural England wild life art and crafts stall; RNLI, and village stalls.

Information Desk (outside village hall)

Meeting point for Natural England boat trips every half hour from 12.50pm to 4.20pm. Booking essential on 07584 475482 or on the day at the Natural England stall.

New landlord at the White Hart

The Adnams' website is advertising the tenancy of the White Hart, which will be available from October this year, following the resignation of Sean Lofty.

Adnams estimate the incoming tenant would have to find around £58,625 to secure an initial two-year probationary tenancy agreement. Full information on <http://adnams.co.uk/pub-tenancies/>

Meeting point for for guided walk along the river bank at 11.00am; tour of the Priory ruins at 2.00pm.

The Village Hall

Carpet bowls 11am to 1pm, table tennis, pool and air hockey 1.30 pm to 5.00 pm.

Celebrating Blythburgh is supported by the Blythburgh Latitude Trust and Blythburgh with Bulcamp and Hinton Parish Council. Everybody is welcome, so please be there.

Collecting your Latitude 2012 tickets

. Tickets to be collected from Blythburgh Village Hall on Wednesday 11 July and Thursday 12 July between 6.00 pm and 7.00 pm. Identification and signature will be required when collecting tickets. Last minute details: Page 3.

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Getting to Latitude by bus, car and bike

Residents with weekend tickets arriving by car should enter through either Green Gate on the A145, Red Gate 2 on the A12 or Red Gate 3 on Middle Barn Lane. They should park where directed by marshals and then make their way by foot to Stables Gate.

Residents arriving by shuttle or minibus will arrive at Orange Gate to the onsite bus station then walk to Stables Gate. Residents with weekend tickets arriving by taxi will arrive via Red Gate 1 on the A12 opposite the entry to the landfill site, then walk to Stables Gate.

The Festival advises residents not to arrive on foot as the roads are not safe for pedestrians.

Residents arriving by bike with weekend or family camping tickets should enter via Orange Gate on the A145 and go to the bike park inside the walled garden. This is also used by buses and coaches so cyclists should be extremely cautious, then walk to Stables Gate.

Once inside Stables Gate, tickets will be swapped for wristbands, after ID is checked. Residents can pitch their tents if they are staying all weekend in either family or normal camping and make their way into the arena via either the main arena entrance or the family arena entrance in the family campsite.

There is a walk of 10 to 15 minutes from Stables Gate through the campsites to the arena entrances.

Once residents have their wristbands they can come and go as they please via Stables Gate or any of the other campsite gates from the car parks.

They can also use the day gate on the B1123 to

park or be dropped off in the day ticket holders car park and follow the pedestrian route to enter via the day arena entrance with a weekend/family wristband during the times this is open (around 9am to around midnight Friday to Sunday). This will be more convenient as the walk to and from their car will be shorter but no camping equipment is allowed through the day arena entrance.

Residents with day tickets arriving by car should go to the day ticket car park via the Day Gate on the B1123. They should park and follow the pedestrian route into the site through the day arena entrance. The day gate on the B1123 is subject to change depending on the weather and residents should follow the signs on the day.

Residents arriving by minibus or shuttle bus will arrive via Orange Gate at the bus station near the Stables or if arriving by taxi will arrive via Red Gate 1, on the A12, to the drop off point near the Stables. From the Stables bus station they must pick up the internal minibus shuttle round to the day ticket holder entrance, which runs from 9.00am to 1.00am Friday to Sunday.

Residents arriving with day tickets by bike will need to access the day ticket holder car park via the Day Gate on the B1123. There is no bike rack inside the day ticket holder car park but they should be able to affix their bikes to fencing and then follow the pedestrian route on the A145 into the site at the day arena entrance.

Once inside the day arena entrance, tickets should be swapped for day wristbands once ID is checked. Residents can come and go via the day arena entrance during the day their wristband is valid.

Take the bus from Blythburgh to the festival

Friday July 13 to Sunday July 15 2012

Latitude Bus Station	0900	1000	1100	1200	1300	1400	1500	1600	1700	1800	1900	2000	2310	2350	0030
Blythburgh, Angel Lane	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
Blythburgh, Angel Lane	0935	1035	1135	1235	1335	1435	1535	1635	1735	1835	1935	2035	R	R	R
Latitude Bus Station	0945	1045	1145	1245	1345	1445	1545	1645	1745	1845	1945	2045			

Single: £2.50/Return £4. R = Request driver to stop



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BLYTHBURGH CHARACTERS

Prior William Kent (In office from 1431)

To be honest, I can tell you nothing about William Kent as a man. However, from documentary and archaeological evidence, a picture of his life and times can be constructed. He was appointed prior of Blythburgh by the abbot of Blythburgh's mother house St Osyth priory.

Being a dependant institution could be a disadvantage, in securing benefactions for example. Competition from other religious orders in the surrounding area such as the Cistercians at Sibton and the Cluniacs at Wangford, was another factor limiting Blythburgh's wealth. William Kent presided over a house in decline.

Its income was much lower than it had been before the Black Death of the mid-fourteenth century. The number of resident brothers had once been in double figures but in the first seventy years of the 1400s fell from seven to only four. Nevertheless, Blythburgh canons were sometimes elevated to higher office. For example, John Valence was appointed to the sinecure bishopric of Tenos in 1459.

The priory followed the precepts of St Augustine of Hippo (354-430) whose legacy includes the concept of original sin. The brothers were not an enclosed order but combined religious contemplation with working in the community, serving Blythburgh and the parish churches granted to them, generally by paying others to minister to the parishes.

The priory's own church reached its greatest extent by enlargement in a grand manner in the

thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. As rector, William Kent led the rebuilding of Blythburgh parish church. This was consistent with a known shift of attitude on the part of benefactors from supporting religious houses to supporting their own parish institutions.

There is evidence that dependent houses such as Blythburgh were sometimes used as penal institutions for the exile of troublesome brothers. Could such canons have been among the three arraigned in the manorial court in 1442 for poaching the lord of the manor's rabbits? With the express knowledge of the prior himself it was alleged.

They continued a tradition established by the poaching canon Thomas Sherman in 1425, or probably even before that. Rabbit was certainly part of the brothers' diet. Veal, pork and chicken were also on the menu. Fish could be expected but the rubbish dump that may contain the evidence has still to be found. Some of the excavated bones had been gnawed by dogs. The poachers' greyhounds perhaps?

The community probably lived quite comfortably. How long its members lived is not known. The male skeletons excavated so far are of individuals who were at least thirty years old and mostly over forty at the time of death. If the name William Kent deserves to be remembered, it is for the grand parish church he left for the benefit of future generations.

Alan Mackley

YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS

Chair: David Tytler
01502 478521

Vice Chair/Chair planning
advisory group: Alan Mackley

Chair finance advisory group
John Blakesley

Councillors

Roderick Orr-Ewing,

Lucy Clapham,

Alan De Thabrew

Clerk: Jim Boggis 01502 478687

BLYTHBURGH ASSOCIATIONS

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Beryl Stringer

Horticultural Society

Jenny Allen 01502 478314

Neighbourhood Watch

Rob Benson 01502 478047

Speed Watch

Binny Lewis 01502 478624

Village Hall

Olive Forsythe 01502 478521

ROBINSON'S RAMBLINGS

Hunting down that Flaming Torch...

Well, wasn't that exciting? The Olympic Torch, I mean. It came through Blythburgh last week, with much pre-publicity and fanfare about rolling road-blocks and such.

As we Brits love to wave a patriotic flag or two, the village turned out to cheer and wave. Excited children had been given time off school to celebrate this historic event, residents bagged good viewing spots on the A12 and a happy crowd waited outside the pub (some even going so far as to buy a drink – a rare occurrence these days amongst our locals).

After much craning of necks and checking of watches, the leaders of the pack arrived – a small army of police on motorbikes roaring through the village at a dubious 30mph.

These were followed by a glorious array of smarty-pants vehicles, advertising Coca-Cola, McDonalds and Lloyds Bank. One had a friendly rolling message across its windscreen saying "...thank you for your su" but, as it was going too fast to read, we never discovered what they were so grateful for.

There was a nice open truck all set up for a band and singers (bereft of both), a few mysterious coaches taking our corner on two wheels and, bizarrely, two sweet little Morris Minors with French number plates who'd presumably, got lost and found themselves swept up by this commercial cavalcade.

But what about the torch, I hear you cry! Well, what about it? Not a sign. Could have been stuck in somebody's pocket, powered by a couple of HP batteries for all we could see.

Of course, we should have gone to Southwold.

There, the torch was paraded through the streets, accompanied by live music, handshakes with local dignitaries before everyone indulged in a luncheon at St Felix School.

A little odd, when you consider Southwold's dislike of anything corporate such as Costa Coffee, WH Smith and Tesco.

Naturally, after so much fun and frolics, the torch had to be whisked

through Blythburgh with indecent haste in order to reach the next well-heeled town for cocktails and canapés with another mayor. Cynical – moi?

It may sound as if I care. Quite frankly, I find The Olympics (apart from tennis – more Wimbledon, yes!) about as interesting as a smack in the face with a wet haddock – rather less, as it goes.

But if we are going to chuck millions at a sporting event and the organisers and sponsors want to whip up patriotic fervour, perhaps they should make a little more effort to include us all.

Oh, and while they're at it, maybe employ some ticket touts – at least they can sell a few tickets without making a complete hash of it.



HOLY TRINITY DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday 28 July at 7,30pm: Concert of Sacred and Secular music by the Luxembourg based choral octet, *Intermedii*. Refreshments; donations for Wangford Church funds.

Open afternoons: In conjunction with Blythburgh M@tters, each Friday during August; cream teas 2.30pm to 4.30pm, activities for children; church tours at 3.00pm (except Aug 3).

Sunday 19 August 11am: Blessing of Animals Service: All creatures great and small are welcome, together with their two-legged companions. Service led by the Rev Malcolm Doney, aided by Neville.

BLYTHBURGH

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The Priory ...from a ruin to a monument

By John Ette, East Anglian Inspector of Monuments and Team Leader for English Heritage

Whilst a search on the internet will turn up many passing references to Blythburgh Priory, there is little concise or cohesive detail about what was undoubtedly one of the most important religious sites in East Anglia, which has been hidden away under a tangled mass of ivy and bramble for the last 100 years.

Nick and Susan Haward bought and moved into The Priory in December 2005, unaware of the importance of the overgrown garden to the north of the property. During their first year, they commissioned an historical report to help them decide how to tackle the necessary repairs.

It became clear that their responsibilities extended into the scrub, bramble and ivy at the bottom of the garden, not only had they a substantial Grade II Listed property needing much TLC, they also owned a large part of a scheduled site complete with a dilapidated ruin in the English Heritage At Risk Register.

Then came TV's *Time Team*, who concentrated their efforts on finding King Anna's tomb – without much success. Whilst they dug a lot of trenches in their desire to find all the answers, it ended up posing more questions. On the plus side, it provided some valuable archaeological data to build from, and raised a lot of interest in this lost site.

During 2011, English Heritage assisted with a grant-sponsored Phase I, which dealt, in the main, with conservation works to deal with the immediate risk problem. This phase of the work included some limited archaeology, which uncovered an unknown doorway and some curious looking blocking masonry.

With Phase I at a close financially, an important meeting was held with Nick and Susan, English Heritage and key specialists to decide what to do next.

English Heritage agreed grant assistance with Phase 2: the bias being towards the removal of topsoil and site spoil only to uncover what lay below. The contract was given to Suffolk County Council Archaeology. The team was led by their top ecclesiastical field archaeologist, Stuart Boulter, who said: "In 20 years in this profession, this is the most exciting dig in my career."

So what has been found and what's next? Mr Boulter said: "We have found the extent of the south transept of the Priory church (the size of the scale surprised even the experts) we have found architectural features, which are helping us understand the phasing of the Priory's development and decline."

As usual with archaeology there are always more questions.

Phase 2, which includes some further conservation work, will be completed later this year. Is that it?

Nick and Susan hope not and are now working with English Heritage and SCC to put together a Phase 3 Heritage Lottery Fund grant application.

If that bid is successful it will be in the form of a *Your Community* project, where people in the village get a chance to be involved in a hands-on dig under the supervision of Stuart and his team.

Primary targets: the full extent of the north cloister and the east wall of what is now expected to be a substantial chancel. The project will also involve geo-physics and possible exploration to the south of the Saxo/Norman nave, which may uncover a further range of buildings and who knows...

The project will include the provision of public information boards in the village, formal publication of the findings and a dedicated web site. Public access to the site will be allowed on a limited and controlled basis once the work is done.

What is for sure is that Blythburgh Priory is an extremely important religious site dating back to Saxon times and is on course to become a true monument. Blythburgh Priory is firmly back as a key part of the village and its history after centuries of obscurity.

Planning: The Parish Council objected to the planning application for a two storey and single storey extension to 1, School Cottage, Dunwich Road, at its July meeting on the grounds that the application was misleading and failed to provide information relating to the key aspect of vehicular access from the road.

The next meeting of Blythburgh with Bulcamp and Hinton Parish Council will be on September 10 at 7.30pm. Open Forum at 7.15pm. You will be very welcome.

Playsite opening up to speed

Speedway stars, past and present were the guests of honour at the weekend opening of the new Blythburgh playsite. Rohan Tungate, of the Ipswich Sacker Witches and team promoter, speedway legend John “Tiger” Louis, were kept busy letting children – and adults – sit on Rohan’s racing bike.

Australian-born Rohan holds five Australian and eight New South Wales State Titles (long track and dirt track) and came to the UK in 2011 to build a career in speedway, signing for the Witches earlier this year.

John Louis started his speedway career in Ipswich in 1969 leading the Witches through the golden years of the seventies, going on to represent his country.

Suffolk Coastal MP Therese Coffey, County Councillor Rae Leighton and Suffolk Coastal Councillor Michael Gower joined local residents and children to celebrate the opening of the new playsite, tucking into a picnic tea with cakes and ice cream provide by Blythburgh Parish Council, which owns the site.

The £16,000 project was financed by a £10,000 award from the BIG Lottery Fund, Suffolk, together with grants from the Blythburgh



Latitude Trust, Suffolk Coastal District Council and Councillor Leighton’s locality budget.

David Tytler, chair of Blythburgh with Bulcamp and Hinton Parish Council, said: “Thankfully the rain held off and there was a good turnout of children, their parents and grandparents. We are grateful to the Ipswich Witches who brought a touch of excitement to the afternoon and, of course, to all those who supported the project financially.

“The playsite is already proving popular with children in the village and those who visit us on their holidays. If the opening was any guide, adults are also keen to get on the new equipment. The council is now looking at the possibility of introducing adult equipment.”

Picture by Alan Mackley: Rohan Tungate and John Louis at the opening.



Celebrating Blythburgh Family BBQ

This voucher, which is available only in the *Blythburgh Focus*, entitles two adults and up to four children under 16 to either a sausage in a roll, a hamburger or veggie burger at Celebrating Blythburgh’s BBQ in the gardens of The Priory on July 22 from noon until four. Entrance beside the village hall.

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Notes from Daisy Bank L I I

A few weeks ago I noticed a bee buzzing in our kitchen. Opening the window to let it out, the noise quiet suddenly stopped. Thinking that it had gone out of the door I soon forgot it.

However, a few minutes later B happened to come into the kitchen and there was the bee floundering helplessly in the kitchen sink bowl. Picking it out of the water with a small piece of paper, she lifted it and apart from accidentally dropping it on the concrete path outside the door, eventually took it to the garden table and placed it on a piece of newspaper.

Me: That bee is dead. Thoroughly drowned and definitely dead!

B: Give it time – its eyes look so bright.

She breathes on it in a sort of kiss of life way. You can see the water has soaked from the bee onto the newspaper. It even has its legs in the air in a well known position of death.

Me: I'm sorry, that is a very dead bee.

Minutes pass and suddenly a leg twitches. Must have imagined it. No, it twitches again and then again. Now it goes into a period of cleaning itself and then resting with no movement at all.

Me: The effort of doing all that has finally killed it.

B: Just wait.

It's cleaning again and now it has rolled over onto its feet and is cleaning its wings. Suddenly it's a Lancaster bomber with engines on full power as it passes my head so close, that I have to duck.

Optimism 2 - Pessimism 1. The day can only get better and on that day it does!

A couple of weeks later, I notice a nest at the back of the gallery and attached to the building. There are chicks in the nest and they seem to be thriving. I also notice that a stepladder is lying on the ground nearby. So for the next few days I

avoid going anywhere near it apart from a couple of occasions to see that all is well.

Being avid watchers of *Spring Watch* on BBC2, we hear Chris Packham say that when baby birds fledge, they need a perch or shelf to make their exit that bit easier. Remembering the ladder on the ground, I wonder if that same ladder had been in place when the adult birds decided on that location and started to build their nest. After a lot of thought and worry, that night I replace the ladder near to the nest but not touching it. A few days later I visit the nest again to see how things are going. The nest had been destroyed and the baby birds are lying dead on the ground.

Now, I can cope with the order of life and death and, as they say, these things happen, but the thought that I had been responsible for possibly a cat doing the destroying was almost too much to bear. In a temper all that day, I attempted to carry several very heavy firebricks from one side of the garden to the other in a sort of manic frenzy.

As a result of that day's doings and as I write this now, an old neck injury has come back to haunt me and looks as though its going to be with me for some time. I still haven't got over my stupidity at putting that ladder near the nest and am in my eyes, suffering the consequences.

On a lighter note, I have never seen Daisy Bank looking so verdant. Bushes such as the *Duke of Argyll's Tea Plant*, *Queen Ann's Lace*, *Angelica*, *Periwinkle* and *Meadowsweet* seem to vie with each other for prominence. (What wonderful names they are).

And for the first time I have seen a bunch of forget-me-nots growing on the other side of the lane. I look forward in future years to the whole lane being covered with them. I suppose it's better to remember the bee and not beat myself up too much over the nest. But I do!

Paul Bennett



David Tytler, chair of Blythburgh Parish Council, presents a delighted Margaret Nichols with her award as Blythburgh Villager of the Year at the annual village meeting in June. Mrs Nichols says that she is very grateful to all those who supported her nomination.