

# BLYTHBURGH

## FOCUS

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<http://blythburgh.onesuffolk.net>

Aug/Sept 2020

## From Pub to Church: A Tale of Two Houses



Some say our village is divided by the A12, so in June, suitably socially distanced, I sat down with Julia Rutter to find out about her experiences of living next to the pub and, more recently, her move across the A12 to Bay Tree Cottage.

Julia had always lived in the area, but it wasn't until 1988, between getting married and heading off on honeymoon, that Julia first became a Blythburgh resident.

As so often, the opportunity arose almost by accident. A friend, working on I Station Road, mentioned the house would be up for sale following the death of Miss Fountain. Ken Hubbard (the Priory), Miss Fountain's executor, agreed to a viewing. Julia popped round at lunchtime and, even before her fiancé had taken a look, their offer was accepted.

The house was in a poor state of repair, but the views were stunning, and more than made up for the inconvenience of the absolutely freezing (and surprisingly noisy) north easterly winds.

From studying old photographs, some picturing the Blythburgh station master and his family, Julia realised her house had remained essentially unchanged since the early 1900s, and she also discovered it was previously called White Hart Cottage, so initiated the legal process to reinstate its former name.



Many things changed during the 27 years Julia lived at White Hart Cottage. Her three children were born and grew up. The cottage almost doubled in size with the addition of a two-story extension, a lounge with an unrivalled view and an access driveway purchased, along with additional land, from the Blois estate. Pub landlords came and went. Baxter (a westie with character) barked at everyone. The river burst its banks and closed the A12 several times, and Lion House ceased use as a Doctors surgery. And what of the A12 traffic? It undoubtedly got busier and noisier because when Julia moved it was the silence she noticed.

For the past five years Julia has lived near the church. She still hears the hum of traffic on the A12 but it's not intrusive. She and her husband Alan walk the dogs every day. They enjoy the changing seasons and stunning views that are on the doorstep for all Blythburgh residents.

Julia notes: "It's not better or worse, it's just different. So much changes and yet in some ways nothing changes. I can't imagine living anywhere else."

**Sonia Boggis**

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## Sizewell C: the Latest

Following four rounds of Public Consultation, the planning process for Sizewell C has moved to the Pre-examination phase.

The application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) was submitted by EDF to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) on 27 May 2020. The first part of the pre-examination phase was for PINS to decide whether the application was suitable for Examination, and part of this process was to confirm that EDF had conducted adequate pre-application consultation. The conclusion was that EDF had satisfied its legal responsibility and PINS formally accepted the DCO on 24 June 2020.

### *What Happens Next?*

The formal pre-examination stage of the process began on 8 July and will run until 30 September 2020.

This is not another public consultation.

The DCO application detailing the proposals is available to read online or by arranging an appointment to view the documentation at one of a number of locations – details have been posted in the village notice board, on the Parish Council website or by following links on the Sizewell C website ([www.sizewellcdco.co.uk](http://www.sizewellcdco.co.uk)).

Once you have reviewed the documentation, you can then register on the PINS website to become an “interested party” by providing a written summary of your views on the DCO application (note: you can comment on any aspect of the DCO you do not have to comment on the whole document). This is called a “Relevant Representation”. As a registered “Interested Party”, you will be kept updated on the process and also about opportunities to put your case forward at the next stage (which is called The Examination phase).

Blythburgh Parish Council responded to the four stages of Public Consultation and their responses can be accessed through the Parish Council website. The Parish Council will be registering as an “Interested Party” and over the next few weeks will be drafting and agreeing their response to the DCO.

At the same time as the DCO was submitted to PINS, EDF also submitted three environmental permit applications to the Environment Agency (EA). Once the EA has confirmed the applications are complete there will be a 12 week public consultation on these applications. This consultation will be advertised.



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## Remembering Rafael

To be a 'people cat' is usually a contradiction in terms – but not for Rafael\*. Very soon after he moved into the Priory, with the Saunders family in tow, he found his way to Holy Trinity church and discovered, to his delight, that he had a ready-made fan club in all the many visitors who come each summer. He threw himself into all the happenings at the church with gusto – he was fussed over by Aldeburgh Festival ushers and performers, he liked to become an additional page boy at weddings, and he would sit sentry at the top of the steps from the car park, ready to greet one and all.

Inside the church he had his favourite spots for a snooze – which always had to be checked when I locked up at night. When he felt the need for some exercise, he treated the church as a sort of giant adventure playground, climbing up onto the vestry screen and, one occasion, into the organ.

So it was with huge sadness that we learnt that Raphael had ventured across the A12 once too often on Saturday 11 July and had gone to his happy hunting ground. RIP Raphael, everyone misses you greatly.



*\*Although he spelt his name the Spanish way (as in Rafael Nadal), in Blythburgh church he became 'Raphael' after his archangel namesake: he only had to look up at the roof to know he was among friends.*

## Jenny Allen

### Lucy Robinson writes . . .

I can't remember if I met Chiara or Rafael first but I know who would wander several miles to visit my friends in Hinton. I've lost count of the number of times I would chauffeur the Spanish street cat back to his new home at the Priory, this was before, of course, he became chief meeter and greeter at the church.

So, I was terribly upset at hearing the lovely Rafael had finally used up his nine lives on the A12. And heartbreaking having to tell Chiara, knowing only too well how it feels.

Being the mad cat lady (although I only have eight at the moment), if anyone finds a poor furry body at the side of the road, people, very kindly, contact me straight away. That awful sick feeling walking along the A12, traffic speeding past, praying selfishly it's not one of my beloved cats this time.

I have lost at least ten of my dear friends this way and no, I don't live on the main road. The last – Moppet, my little tortoiseshell – at the beginning of lockdown, on a bright spring day when the only traffic around seemed to feel the need to travel at 90mph through our little village. This was when I put the sign up begging people to slow down. But it didn't help poor Rafael.

I realise that if a cat jumps out straight in front of a vehicle doing 30 on an unlit road then it doesn't stand a chance of avoiding being hit. But I have picked up so many poor broken bodies on the A12 over the years – mine and other people's pets - that I know this was down to speeding in broad daylight. Perhaps the police will eventually give in and give us a speed camera before we lose any more precious lives.





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## How did your garden grow?

Unfortunately, the Blythburgh Horticultural Society Summer Show can't take place this year. However, we'd love to see photographs of your garden: flowers, vegetables, anything you'd like to send. Members have already been asked to submit theirs and here's a small selection from the many we have so far. The Hort Soc will put them all together for a film show later in the year.

If you'd like to submit any receive any photographs of your garden or garden produce, please send them to Val Carse: [valc@btinternet.com](mailto:valc@btinternet.com). No more than five per person please.

**Val Carse**





## The Church

### The animal service is still on (virtually)

For very many years Holy Trinity, Blythburgh has held a Service for the Blessing of Animals. But this year, we can't give the run of the church to horses, dogs, cats, chickens, praying mantises, ferrets, tortoises, snails, woodlice, guinea pigs and the like. They just don't understand social distancing!

But we still believe that it's important to give thanks for our animals – for all animals – because they are a valued gift. Given the success of Zoom services during the lockdown, we thought it would be an exciting experiment, this year, to hold a Zoom animal service. This will be held on **Sunday 16 August at 11.15am.**

You're warmly invited to join your pets on the sofa, or wherever, in front of a screen – along with a virtual congregation of all creatures, great and small. All you need is the Zoom invitation details which you can receive by emailing me at [malcolmdoney@me.com](mailto:malcolmdoney@me.com).

Because animals have a tendency to wriggle, and occasionally refuse to co-operate, we want to include, as part of the service, a 'rogues gallery' of people's animals, so we can all admire each other's furry and feathered friends (current or departed). If you'd like your animal to be featured, **please send a photograph** (preferably as a jpeg) to me at the email address above. Please do join me, this could be a delightful celebration of animal life.



### The Church is open

The church is now open daily for private prayer, and meditation from 9am to 6pm. We've designated the Hopton Chapel (at the front on the left) as the best place for prayer. Please abide by the health precautions on the notice boards, and respect social distancing while in the church.

Since mid-July we have also started holding actual services in the church. We will be holding a service of Holy Communion on the following dates in August: **9 Aug – 11.15am; 23 Aug – 11.15am; 30 Aug – 11.15am.** All are welcome.

### Good night service

Holy Trinity is also hosting a weekly Zoom service of 'Compline'. This is a short (20 minutes or so) service of night prayer. It's held every Thursday at 8.30pm. Joining details are available from Jenny Allen: [jennyanddick@aol.com](mailto:jennyanddick@aol.com)

### Malcolm Doney

## Ahoy there!



Last month our coast saw this grander than normal seaborne visitor. It was visible from the village and dominated the skyline. It was the Queen Victoria, a Vista-class cruise ship operated by the Cunard line. It is the smallest of Cunard's ships in operation and its facilities include seven restaurants, thirteen bars, three swimming pools, a ballroom, and a theatre. Cunard are reported as saying: "Queen Victoria moved to Lowestoft over the weekend owing to the weather conditions in the Poole anchorage."

## Daisy Bank XCVI

Thank the Lord that FI is back and I am at the wheel again, in my armchair in Fern Cottage willing the Brits to succeed and beat the rest of them. Unfortunately, one of my less sporting interests is also back. Football. Thank goodness I always went to schools where they played rugby, and I inherited the interest from all of that.

I think the only time I think I ever kicked a football was when, as a salesman for Heinz 57 varieties, my area supervisor forced me to dribble a football down the aisle of all the supermarkets in all of my portfolio of shops, and present it as a bonus present for the manager. We, the rest of the sales team, were often made to do crazy things like that. In my mid-20s, I was naïve and stupid enough to go along with it all until in the end, I 'kicked' the whole thing into touch and found something else to do for a living.

On the garden front, the roses are mostly fantastic this year. I have had to move half a dozen to new locations because of them being in an inappropriate site. I have an aerial photograph of the garden when I first came here. If a current one was taken, I am sure you would see nothing but trees.

I remember a few years ago a journalist came down to interview me about my paintings. In her piece she remarked that Fern Cottage looked like a wood, and I looked like a vicar. Strangely, I've never seen myself as the latter but hey ho. I have created a new round border in the centre of the main lawn and filled it with dahlias and a few other things and I have a new more formal pond at the end of lawn. Also, I've gone big on hardy geraniums which are a great ground cover. So, the enforced stay at home policy has had benefits.

Forget the interior and exterior house decoration, and God knows that needs doing. Our policy is to let the inheritors do all that and hopefully, in the meantime, the ivy will keep things together; at least one of the windows is only in place because the ivy is holding it there. Do we care? No. Much more interesting things to occupy ourselves with than that. We've been out three times in the car for a trip around the wonderful Suffolk countryside without getting out. And that, more or less, that has been our only contact with the outside world. From the beginning of July, we have "magnanimously" decided to allow friends to visit in the garden in the sunny weather with them sitting at a separate table and chair. Only one so far so they are not exactly queuing up outside the gate. But we can live with that.

I'm opening the church again in the morning, which can I suppose be regarded as an "outing". As Her Majesty, and my spiritual leader Francis the Pope have said, "things will get better". Daisy Bank will get back to normal life. Maybe not the same as it was before but hopefully nearly as good.

**Paul Bennett**

## Don't hold your breath



Comets are balls of ice and dust. They have a very elliptical orbit around the sun. The tail always points away from the sun no matter what its direction of travel. This one is called Neowise as it was discovered in late March by one of NASA's space telescopes launched in 2009. It stands for Near Earth Object Wide — field Infrared Survey Explorer.

It passed within 27 million miles of the sun on 3 July, which is very close by astronomical standards. Now it's heading back to the depths of our solar system. It was around 80 million miles from earth when these photos were taken from the churchyard on 11/12 July. It was just about visible to the naked eye once your vision had adjusted to the darkness, but you really needed binoculars to find it. If you missed it this time around, then you'll only need to wait 6,800 years for it will return around 8820.

**Colin Huggins**

## Moth menace



On the night of the 22 July this year I caught a moth in my garden moth-trap that local gardeners should be aware of. The Box Tree Moth is an attractive pearly white and chocolate coloured moth, about 40 mm (1½') wingspan. with a caterpillar that feeds almost exclusively on Box trees and bushes. The caterpillar is about the same size and colouring as a cabbage white butterfly larva.

If this moth gets established in the area it will devastate garden Box hedges, trees and bushes. It was imported a few years ago into southern Europe and arrived in this country in Kent in 2007. It is spreading steadily. This is the second moth I have caught in Blythburgh, the first was in last September. The caterpillar spins a web in which it feeds and causes heavy damage to the foliage and will eventually kill the plant. The gardeners among you would do well to look at Google for control methods.

**David Wilson**



## Your primary school needs you!

I have just stepped down as a governor at Wenhaston Primary School after six very rewarding years. That means that there is now no-one on the Governing Body from our village, and since it is our catchment primary school it would be really good if someone from Blythburgh could take my place. Could this be you? Do give it some serious consideration.

Wenhaston Primary is a relatively small school – there are likely to be 85 children on the school roll next year, divided into four classes. Earlier this year, an Ofsted inspection gave the school a 'Good' rating.

There are no qualifications laid down for becoming a school governor – my only experience of primary schooling was my own, over 50 years ago, which is hardly relevant these days! The main things are to have an interest in the education of our young folk, and a wish to make sure that they have the best possible experiences in their formative years.

Governors usually take a special interest in a particular area of school activity – for me, this was special educational needs and finance, but governors can choose whatever interests them. There are two formal meetings of the Governing Body each term, but governors are also encouraged to visit the school informally to observe it in action.

If you are interested, I would be happy to have a chat to let you know more, and then to put you in touch with the Chair of Governors. I look forward to hearing from you! Call me on 478 314.

**Jenny Allen**

## Wild Watch

By late summer, most birds, especially the migrants, have finished breeding. No longer having a territory to defend or a mate to attract, they fall silent and concentrate on fattening up and undergoing a moult. This is essential preparation for the long flight back to southern Europe or Sub-Saharan Africa.



Around this time, many birdwatchers switch their allegiance to pursuing another order of animals that now reach their peak numbers. These creatures' evolutionary history predates birds by a large margin. In fact, they appeared on Earth before the dinosaurs, their ancestors having conquered the skies of the Carboniferous Period, some 300 million years ago.

Dragonflies are still among the largest insects on our planet, but fossil evidence proves that some early specimens grew to nearly 30cms with a wingspan more than double that. They are impressive creatures both in repose on a leaf or on the wing, able to catch other winged insects in flight.

This carnivorous diet begins with the development of the larva. The parents choose exactly the right type of aquatic habitat their developing young will need. This varies between species and is an important factor as dragonfly larvae are highly territorial and aggressive

predators. Some species' larvae develop an extendable 'mask', an adaptation of their mouthparts, with which they can catch relatively large prey including small fish.

After a period of two or three years, the larva transforms into a nymph and leaves its watery home. It climbs an emerging plant stem and, usually early in the morning, the adult insect breaks free of its horny case. After an hour or two for the two pairs of wings to reach full size, and another short period to exercise the large muscles which drive them, the dragonfly will spend another day or two acquiring their final body colour.

Good quality clean water is vital for dragonflies' development and they are excellent 'bio-indicators'. For this reason, many of the birders who look for them in the 'quiet' season send their sightings to the British Dragonfly Society or their county recorder.

The records provide valuable data for monitoring the health of British rivers and lakes.

Dragonflies have survived several natural mass-extinctions. If they survive the extinction that human beings now appear to be causing, it's likely they'll be witness to that of our own species, whenever that may be.

**Paul Lacey**



*Dragonfly larva pictures shows a collecting jar with 1mm and 10mm grid (for size reference)*



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Sonia Boggis, Jeff Sutton, Val Carse

### **Financial Advisory Committee:**

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**Councillor:** Malcolm Doney, Martha  
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## ***BLYTHBURGH ASSOCIATIONS***

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**Blythburgh Matters**  
Ro Williams 01502 478484

**Blyth Belles**  
Sarah Wickham  
[blythbelles@gmail.com](mailto:blythbelles@gmail.com)

***A message for all newcomers to Blythburgh: if you have come to the village in the  
last three years and not received a welcome pack please contact Roderick Orr-Ewing  
on [roderick@millend6.plus.com](mailto:roderick@millend6.plus.com)***

## **Village Hall - Interested in becoming a trustee?**

In our April/May edition of The Focus we asked anyone interested in becoming a trustee of the Village Hall to let us know. We had some positive responses but would need more interest if the Village Hall is to carry on with its current management structure. We have looked into other options (namely the Parish Council becoming the trustee and the Village Hall being run by a management committee under the auspices of the Parish Council) but before we proceed with implementing these changes we are just checking a final time to see if there are any people in the village who would be interested in becoming trustees of the Village Hall. If you have any queries please contact Chiara on [chiarasaunders@mac.com](mailto:chiarasaunders@mac.com) or Malcolm on [malcolmdoney@me.com](mailto:malcolmdoney@me.com)