

# BLYTHBURGH

## FOCUS

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BULCAMP AND HINTON



Issue No 74

<http://blythburgh.onesuffolk.net>

Apr/May 2024

## Recollections of a True Life: Part 2



The working day at Henham Estate started early for Leonard Everson and continued until 6pm, almost a 12-hour day. William Spencer, the man he was replacing, only worked 9am to 3pm but he was over 70. According to Leonard, Spencer was tall, strong as an ox and chewed tobacco all day long pausing only to pop it in his hat for safe keeping while he ate his lunch. Spencer also had failing eyesight and needed to mark the wood with a piece of white chalk, but he certainly knew where to cut and when he put things together they fitted like a glove. They were only together for six months, but Spencer was a good teacher who “learnt me a lot” about making wheels.

There were two blacksmiths on site to (among other tasks) shoe the hunters’ horses from the stables as they had hounds on the Estate.

2

Leonard would make the wheels and then the blacksmiths would weld the iron rims. They put wood all-round the iron tyres, and set it alight. When the tyres were hot, they used long tongs to lift the tyres out to put on the wheels. It was a hot job and often burned their arms with the heat. The wheels had to be made about seven-eighths of an inch, joint room, or seven-eighths of an inch bigger than the tyres, so they would pull the wheels up tight.

The Earl of Stradbroke was president for the Royal Show at Ipswich and Leonard spent a week at the show demonstrating how to make a tumbril wheel. He remembers, his Lordship and her Ladyship brought the Prince of Wales (then Prince Edward), to see their work and introduce them. The Prince shook Leonard’s hand and said “very nice”. On the Friday it was back to work on the Estate.

During WW2, Leonard was in an exempt profession, but he joined the fire service and the home guard. He (and others) patrolled the Park and local beaches. They learnt to fire guns and throw hand grenades. The timber yard on the Estate was taken over by the army as a military police sergeants’ station and there were soldiers in half the Hall and the stables. Bombs were dropped most nights and there were several close shaves. A story for another time is Leonard’s eyewitness account of the two American planes that collided and came down on the Estate.

When the war ended, the first job was to rebuild: cowshed, cow boxes, milk houses, bull places and granary. New staff were taken on: two carpenters, a bricklayer, a painter and labourers. The estate was large and included several tenant farmers. With all the maintenance and building managed centrally, Leonard and his team were kept busy.

In 1947, his Lordship was taken ill, and died on 20 December. No more would he ride his grey horse around the estate. Leonard takes up the story “I then had three days to get everything ready for the funeral. I know I was going from early morning until midnight. The first thing was to get the grave ready as it was a concrete place, very wet.” Then it was off to Ipswich with coffin boards from the timber yard for the undertakers. Back at Henham, he helped the undertaker put His Lordship in the coffin. The painters had been set to work painting two waggons and trimming them with evergreen. A rehearsal ensured all the timings to get to the Church were right. The Earl of Stradbroke was buried on Christmas Eve with 100s of people in attendance. Soon after, Mr Fleming (the agent) came to Leonard and shook hands. Mr Fleming was very pleased everything had gone so well. The two-day Christmas break was welcome.

**Sonia Boggis**

*My thanks go to SL for access to the original document and to Alan Mackley for the photograph.*

## LATITUDE TICKET APPLICATIONS

If you're a resident of the parish of Blythburgh with Bulcamp and Hinton you'll shortly be receiving ticket application forms for this year's Latitude Festival which takes place 25-28 July. These will be delivered to you individually by the Blythburgh Latitude Trust. If you have not received your application material by Sunday 14 April, please email the Trust at: resident.tickets.2024@btinternet.com. Completed forms will need to be received by Sunday 5 May.

The criteria for who is eligible for tickets have been adjusted in recent years to bring these in line with the regulations set out by Festival Republic, Latitude's organiser. And these need to be strictly applied because – for the first time last year – ticket demand has exceeded the number of tickets available, as our parish has grown. We have asked Festival Republic for more tickets but – at the time of writing – the request has not been successful.

Essentially there are two ballots: Ballot 1 is for permanent residents who want tickets for their own use; Ballot 2 is for non-permanent residents and for permanent residents who wish to pass on tickets to family members. Last year, a few residents expressed some confusion about precisely who could apply for what. So, here are a number of scenarios (FAQs if you like) which might help clarify the terms and conditions for the Latitude ticket application process. Thank you, and good luck!

**I am a full-time resident in the village, living on my own. I don't want to go to Latitude but my grandson and his girlfriend would like to go. Can I apply for tickets for them?**

You can apply for one ticket only in Ballot 2, because there is only one person living in your house. The second person would need to buy a ticket from Festival Republic in the usual way.

**We are a family of four, owning a house in the parish which is our second home – ie we don't live there all the time. We would like to apply for tickets for all of us, plus our children's friends, so 6 tickets altogether.**

You can apply for 4 tickets in ballot 2, but no more than that since there are only four people in your household.

**We are permanent residents living in a privately rented house in the parish. May we apply for Latitude tickets?**

Yes, if you are permanent residents then you can apply for tickets in Ballot 1. However, the maximum number of tickets you can apply for cannot exceed the number of permanent residents in your dwelling.

**I am currently a permanent resident of the village but I am selling my house and I may have moved by the time of the Festival. What happens if I have been successful in getting tickets?**

You must be a resident of the village at the time of the deadline for making ticket applications. If you are successful in Ballot 1 then you can keep your tickets even if you have moved by the time the Festival takes place, but you won't be able to apply again next year.

**I own a house in the village which I rent out, but I live outside the parish. Can I apply for tickets?**

No. Being the landlord of a property in the village does not entitle you to apply for tickets. In this case it is your tenants who can apply because they are permanent residents.

**My friend and I are both permanent residents. She wants to go to Latitude, I don't, so she has asked me if I will apply for a ticket and then pass it to a friend of hers so that she has someone to go with. Is this ok?**

No, I am afraid it isn't. At one time, when there were more than enough tickets for everyone who wanted them, this was allowed, but since the number of people wanting to go now exceeds our ticket allocation, we are not offering this option.

**I was successful in getting tickets, but other commitments now prevents me and my family from going to Latitude. Can our tickets be reallocated and we be reimbursed?**

This is only possible if there is time for the Blythburgh Latitude Trust to reallocate the tickets before it has to submit names to go on them – 9 June in 2023.

**Why can't I pay for my tickets by bank transfer?**

The Blythburgh Latitude Trust only has a building society account, and it is impossible to tie up payments into such an account with the person making the payment. We are trying to set up a standard bank account but the unusual legal status of the Trust is making this very difficult. We are happy to take payment in cash or by cheque.

**Blythburgh Latitude Trustees**

**ART IN PRACTICE**

The Blyth Belles were treated to a wonderful display of painting with watercolour at their February meeting. After telling us he is a painter rather than an artist, Andrew Pitt gave us a description of how he would use only three primary colours, blue, red and yellow and demonstrated how he paints a landscape. He also explained his preferences for different paintbrushes and why he enjoys painting with a sable one. Over the course of only an hour and a half, we watched a masterpiece unfold – as Andrew mixed the colours with water and



expertly applied these with a sable paintbrush. For those of us who know nothing about painting it was magnificent to watch and left us thinking if only it were as easy as he made it look.

Further information is available on

Andrew’s web site: [www.andrewpitt.co.uk](http://www.andrewpitt.co.uk). Many thanks to Mary Gundry for arranging the demonstration.

**Val Carse**



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## HOLY TRINITY, BLYTHBURGH

### Czech Choir returns

We're pleased to welcome back the Bohemian Choir from the University of Liberec in the Czech Republic, who are regular visitors to these parts. They'll be performing stories and music from the ancient kings of Bohemia in Holy Trinity at **1pm on Monday 22 April**.

### Coffee & Cake

The ever-popular **Blythburgh café and minimarket** – the village hub – is back in full swing on **Friday 26 April: 10.30-12**.

### Running the Church

We're holding our **Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)** on **Tuesday 21 May at 7pm in the church**. Meryl Doney is standing down as Church Warden so we're looking for a new recruit. If you're on the Church Electoral Roll you can vote on matters at the APCM. If you're not and would like to join, please contact our Electoral Roll Officer, John Crane ([hawthorn.farmhouse@me.com](mailto:hawthorn.farmhouse@me.com)) before 2 May.

### Musical delight

On **Saturday 25 May at 7.30pm**, enjoy an evening of uplifting choral music entitled 'Where'er You Walk' with Voxcetera Chamber Choir. The concert will open with a celebration of sacred music spanning 400 years. The second half features secular songs on a theme of journeys and travel, including arrangements of folk and pop as well as the beautifully haunting "The Long Road" by Latvian composer Ēriks Ešvalds. Book tickets at [www.voxcetera.co.uk](http://www.voxcetera.co.uk)

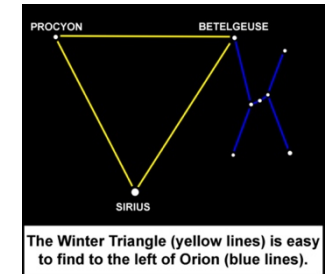
### Friends of Holy Trinity Open Afternoon

This is due to take place **Sunday 26 May at 2.30 -4pm**. The afternoon will focus on the life and work of Ronald Blythe, author of the best-selling *Akenfield*. Blythburgh resident Malcolm Doney – who met "Ronnie" and wrote his obituary for the *Church Times*– will talk about this remarkable man and his links with Blythburgh, Benjamin Britten, Peter Pears and other Suffolk luminaries. This will be followed by tea and cake and a showing of the film *Akenfield*, Sir Peter Hall's elegiac portrait of Suffolk life, based on Blythe's masterwork.

## STARRY, STARRY NIGHT

Although we have left winter behind, among the brightest and easiest stars to find in the evening sky are those of the Winter Triangle. Two of the stars forming the triangle are Betelgeuse and Sirius which we have looked at before. The third star is Procyon.

The Winter Triangle is easy to find, to the east (left) of the constellation of Orion. Procyon is the top left star of the triangle and will be to the south and about half way up from the horizon once it gets dark each evening.



Procyon is a close neighbour in stellar terms being only 11.46 light years away. Its name is ancient Greek for 'before the dog' referring to the fact it rises before Sirius (which is known as the Dog Star).

As is so often the case, Procyon is not what it seems to the naked eye. It is actually two stars orbiting each other every 41 years. The larger star, known as Procyon (A) is a main sequence star, of a similar type to our own Sun, although it is about twice the size and shines seven times brighter. The smaller star is a white dwarf and is imaginatively named Procyon (B).

Although Procyon (B) is not much larger than Earth, make no mistake, it is a star, not a planet. White dwarfs are stars that have reached the end of their life cycle and have expelled their outer layers into space, leaving a hot remnant core. Procyon (B) is actually hotter than Procyon (A) but very much dimmer. It has been in this state for more than a billion years.

The orbit of the two stars is quite eccentric. They can get about as close to each other as we are to Saturn, but at their most distant they are more than twice as far apart.

The existence of Procyon (B) was suspected as far back as 1844 but telescopes powerful enough to actually see it did not exist until 1896. It is only the larger (A) star that is visible to the naked eye.

In medieval astrology Procyon was considered a very fortunate star, portending fame and wealth. It is one of the 27 stars on the Brazilian flag, representing the state Amazonas. Throughout history and across different cultures, Procyon has been known by various names, one of which (my personal favourite), translates as the bleary-eyed (woman).

**Colin Huggins**

## BLYTHBURGH FIELD NOTES

Apart from a few days, the exceptionally mild wet winter weather has produced a remarkably early flora, with an abundance of Snowdrops, planted Crocuses and Lesser Celandine – a favourite of mine. Although looking like a buttercup, this species has seven or eight shiny petals, but its roots look like a cluster of piles; hence it's synonym the Pilewort. At one time it was thought that if a plant looked like a health problem it may be a cure, so the root was made into a paste for treatment. Primroses have also come into flower and even more amazing is that some of the Hawthorn is coming into leaf. When we get late cold North Easterly winds in March and April it's occasionally been as late as May before this happens.

Winter birds, especially on the estuary, have been in low numbers although many of the more regular species such as Wigeon, Pintail, Avocet, Black-tailed Godwit and Knot have been present. Very few rarer species have occurred, although Red Kites have frequented both the Blyth and Hinton, while a White Stork occurred in the parish on at least three days.

One very pleasant aspect has been a mixed finch flock on game cover at Hinton, as well as expected good numbers of Chaffinch and other common species, Twenty-one Yellowhammer, a Brambling and several Reed Bunting were present.

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**The trustees are Sarah Wickham, Val Carse, Malcolm Doney,  
Roderick Orr-Ewing, Paul Lacey, Sue Ireland-Cutting, Harry  
Waller and Tom Smith**

### Your Parish Councillors

**Chair:** Roderick Orr-Ewing

**Planning Advisory Committee:**  
Paul Lacey

**Finance Advisory Committee:**  
Roderick Orr-Ewing,  
Al Besly

**Councillors:** Matthew Saunders,  
Ashleigh Sendin, Jude Blois, Claire  
Orr-Ewing, Harriet Strachan

**Clerk:** Al Besly

### Blythburgh Associations

**Blythburgh Latitude Trust**  
Jim Boggis 01502 478687

**Film Club**  
Olive Forsythe 01502 478521

**Village Hall Management C'tee**  
bookings@blythburghvillagehall.org.uk

**Horticultural Society**  
Val Carse 07973 389898

**Blythburgh Matters**  
Ro Williams 01502 478484

**Blyth Belles**  
Sarah Wickham blythbelles@gmail.com

'www.blythburgh.onesuffolk.net

## SPRING IS SPRUNG

It's definitely time to start the sowing process in readiness for a (hopefully) successful growing season and we kicked off our gardening year with just this in mind when Bob Coutts joined us for an entertaining and informative talk in early February.

Bob, who has been our Summer Show veggie judge for a number of years, came along to share his wisdom and provide some tips on "Getting Veg Show Ready". I have to confess to being amazed at just how much planning, preparation and sheer hard work is needed to produce the very best show ready vegetables and then to display them to best effect. That said, Bob was also keen to point out that it is just as important to have lots of people entering and how impressed he had been over the years by the number of entries we get in some categories. This gave me hope although I will probably still wander round the garden on the morning of the show to see which categories I can enter!

The Annual Summer Show is open to all and will take place on Saturday 20 July, so please save the date and start your planning and planting for this event. We hope to see you there.

We currently have a healthy 76 members, but there's always room for more, so please do get in touch with me if you would like to join us; membership is £5 a year.

Full committee for 2024: Val Carse (Chair), Jenny Allen (Treasurer), Sonia Boggis (Secretary), Sue Ireland-Cutting, Terry Goss, Claire Lyth, Rachel Morris, Carol Nichols, Sarah Wickham, Cilla Wilson,

**Sonia Boggis, Secretary**

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SOLICITORS & NOTARIES

## DAISYBANK CXVI

Sorry I missed the last edition or maybe some of you are glad: "There he goes again with his mixture of cynicism and caustic comments. Frankly, it's a relief to have a break. . ."

Unfortunately, for the last few months this part of Daisy Bank has been an area of gloom and doom, and there has been much wailing and gnashing of teeth. Too boring to talk about and anyway, nobody gets away with life going smoothly, least of all us.

What I will say is that whatever you do, try to avoid a hospital stay unless it's absolutely necessary. My poor B spent three months in the NHS's so called care and all I can say is that it was the worse period of our lives. If we had our time over again we would never have gone anywhere near hospitals and – had I made the right decision at the time – it would never have happened.

When recently, I contracted my regular dose of malaria which hits me every five or ten years, I was told that I would have to go to hospital. I refused, preferring if necessary, to die in my own home rather than go back to all of that. Don't get me wrong. My hero was Nye Bevan and Mr Beveridge, and their NHS looked after me and my many maladies when I was young. They must be rolling in their respective graves at what we have now. As a member of the Labour Party some people would say I was biased. Not so, comrades. And will my party do better when they ascend to the throne in November? Don't hold your breath. But anything would be better than what we have got now. I know that I am blowing in the wind in this part of the world but hey ho. Nothing political about *moi!*

Unfortunately, since I last spoke, our dear friend Derek died. He and Lily have been good neighbours for the last 36 years, and the lane won't be the same without him. Every fortnight for the last few years I would go in armed with a bottle of whisky on a Monday morning, and Derek would tell me his history of Blythburgh, which was always fascinating. Having made my home here and having lived in Suffolk for most of my life, his stories of Blythburgh during the war and after, were to me an invaluable record of the village that I decided to make my home in.

To me, Derek was the last of the 'good old boys' who represented Suffolk in the best of times. Farmer Arthur Grey of Hinton; Percy Muttit , the gamekeeper of Five Finger Post; Tuzzy who lived in Hillfields and his wonderful vegetable plot by the side of the A12; Mr Pretty on the Halesworth Road and his wonderful lettuces. They are all history now and Suffolk is the worst for it.

I remember when I first came up here, I went to the Butley Oyster pub

which was one of the few pubs that didn't have a bar. All there was, were benches around the periphery of the room with a large elderly lady in an apron serving beer from the barrel. It was like going into a time warp: mostly farm labourers, it was like listening to a foreign language. Now, the only pub serving beer without a bar is the Lower House at Laxfield and how long will that last? With Derek gone, somehow this part of the world will never be the same again.

**Paul Bennett**

### **(SUFFOLK) SHOWTIME!**

How do you fancy a day out at the Suffolk Show this year? Blythburgh Latitude Trust is offering the opportunity for anyone living in the parish of Blythburgh with Bulcamp and Hinton to go to the Suffolk Show on **Wednesday 29 May** entirely free!

Please apply to Jenny Allen by sending a note by email ([jennyanddick@aol.com](mailto:jennyanddick@aol.com)), or by post, or by hand (to Wolsey House, Chapel Road, Blythburgh IP19 9LV) **by 17 April** with the following information:

- Name of contact
- Number of adult tickets (aged 19-64)
- Number of Senior Citizen tickets (aged 65+)
- Number of Young Person tickets (aged 15-18)
- Number of Child tickets (aged 0-14)
- Postal address of contact
- Email address of contact

**Please note that all persons 15 and over for whom tickets are requested must be residents of the parish of Blythburgh with Bulcamp and Hinton.**

If there is sufficient demand, a coach will be hired to provide transport to and from the Show.

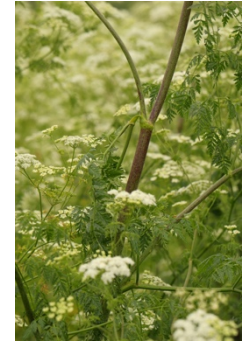
This takes the place of the pantomime trip, which had become less popular in recent years.

### **WILDWATCH**

Apart from the no-man's land that is the A12, Blythburgh is a relatively peaceful place. Between the Battle of Bulcamp, that took place around 650 AD, and the present day, the village has seen little active conflict compared to other towns or villages of the world.

Yet, since time immemorial, non-human battles of all kind have taken place around Blythburgh. They continue to this day. In the hedgerows, along the river banks and in the fields and woods, acts of aggression and defence take place on a daily basis. Nature, to use Tennyson's famous phrase, is "red in tooth and claw". The need to survive, feed and reproduce has led to the evolution of many different ways that plants, fungi and animals defend themselves or procure food.

Plants use both primitive and sophisticated forms of defence. They are vulnerable to attack from animals and, indeed, other plants. Trees and shrubs, like blackthorn (spikes) and bramble and thistles (prickles), use these basic defensives to deter browsers. Others, like hemlock, foxglove and deadly nightshade use toxins that can cause serious health problems and even death. Animals are quickly put off eating these plants by their foul taste, and even a young rabbit soon learns that nettles can fight back.



Fungi are well-known for their poisonous fruiting bodies and many are avoided by humans as well as most animals. Toads have skin glands that produce nasty-tasting secretions and moles taste bad to many predators. Many insects carry a sting in the tail and unarmed ones pretend to be dangerous by resembling those that are.

What of the attackers? Plants invade the territories of others and overwhelm them by shading out their competitors – rhododendron, for instance, poisons the ground beneath it so no other plant can grow there. Fungi attack living plants, killing their host using mycotoxins.

Animals have an impressive armoury of weapons with which to both defend and attack. Teeth, claws and venom are those we're most familiar with, but mostly to procure food or defend territories.



However, some species of ant invade the colonies of other ants and enslave them.

Governments, with imperialistic tendencies, have adopted many of nature's tactics. For political or ideological reasons, we humans have wrought havoc on each other in ways equally red in tooth and claw.

But while defence remains a necessity throughout the living world, we alone have developed sheer barbarity into a deadly art.

**Paul Lacey**



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**Tessa Newcombe at Halesworth Library**

Lifelong painter, Suffolk-born Tessa Newcomb will be giving a talk on the pleasures and difficulties of life as an artist at Halesworth Library on **Thursday 18 April** at 2.30pm. A painter of the everyday, Tessa’s work is rooted in the experience of living in the Suffolk landscape. The event and the refreshments are free, but donations to the Friends of Halesworth Library are welcome. Please book in advance, by calling 01986 875095 or emailing [friendsofhalesworthlibrary@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofhalesworthlibrary@gmail.com).

**Jeff Fisher and Malcom Doney joint show**

Blythburgh resident artists Jeff Fisher and Malcolm Doney are holding a joint exhibition of their work, entitled *In the Neighbourhood* in Aldeburgh from **15-21 May** at the Courtyard Gallery, 152A High Street, Aldeburgh, Suffolk IP15 5AQ.

**More resident artists to look out for**

Blythburgh’s **Mary Gundry, Alan Rutter** and **Malcolm Doney** will also be showing work in an exhibition called *Summer ’24 Showcase*, from **1-9 June**, featuring 17 Suffolk artists and artisans at Holton Lodge Barn Gallery, The Street, Holton IP19 8PN.

**PUMPKINS FOR THE FOOD BANK**



Last autumn Blythburgh resident Bruno (who also helps distribute *Blythburgh Focus* round the village) sold his home-grown pumpkins, with his pal Edgar. He’s pictured here selling his wares at the Scouts’ Fair. Overall, they raised £78, which they have since spent on much-needed

provisions for local food banks, which they have now donated via the box in Blythburgh church. Big thanks to Bruno and Edgar.