

BLYTHBURGH PARISH NEWS



Issue 47

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Would you believe it – the A12 is a Clearway!

Parish Clerk Jim Boggis told an incredulous Parish Council at its last meeting that the proposal to build a bus shelter on the south side of the A12 had been put on hold – because the A12 had been declared a clearway in 1967 and it was illegal for any traffic to stop on it despite the indisputable fact that buses were already stopping at fairly frequent intervals.

The county council is now investigating whether, given the 1967 order, it is legal for buses to stop on the road.

On a more positive note, local resident Sam Burrows offered to paint the wooden bus shelter at Highfield if the council agreed to pay for the materials. The council was happy to accept Mr Burrows' generous offer.

PLAYSITE: The playsite is now used more and the grass is being cut regularly. The council agreed it should investigate how the site could be improved and modernised. Responses to the village survey in 2007 showed that of those responding to the youth questionnaire, 40 per cent used the site. Whilst 46 per cent of that group felt the facilities were reasonable, 31 per cent felt they were poor. Forty-three per cent said they would like equipment such as a roundabout, monkey bars and a climbing frame for older children. The parish clerk is to contact the users of the site to see what else they would like and to ask suppliers for estimates of costs. Grants could be available.

2012 OLYMPICS: Parish Councillor Ro Williams attended a county-wide meeting to discuss the possibilities offered by the London 2012 Olympics. Being less than two hours from the main site, Blythburgh could benefit. The council agreed to support a village event to

mark the 2012 Olympics. The clerk is writing to the High Lodge shooting centre to ask what its involvement will be and if there is anyway the council could support the Lodge.

CRIME: There were two recorded crimes in the Parish between May 25 and July 6, 2009: a common assault and battery which was detected, and the theft of a bicycle which was undetected.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING: Some councillors were concerned that the Annual Parish Meeting and Parish Annual General Meeting were poorly attended. The council agreed that the meetings should be held on different days. It was also agreed that annual parish meeting should be a more informal occasion with refreshments. Whilst keeping within legal requirements, village associations would be asked to mount simple visual displays of their year's work with a written report as part of the display. The reports will be published in the Blythburgh Parish News. The council also agreed that a suggestion box for villagers should be provided.

MOTOCROSS: In response to a letter from a parishioner, the Parish Council discussed the impact the track has on parts of the village. It was agreed that the parish clerk contact the track owner/manager to ask if it would be possible to lower the track level along the A12 and to take noise measurements in an effected garden. He will also ask whether it would be possible to have some weekend track closures during the summer.

The environmental health officer says that putting bunds around Toby's Walk, as requested, would have no impact on noise levels as they would be too far away from the track. To be effective, high bunds would have to be erected on the trackside of the A12 but these would almost certainly lead to planning objections.

David Tytler

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ERNEST READ COOPER (1865-1948)

The Coopers were a prominent farming family for 70 years at Westwood Lodge. Ernest was born in 1865 at Hinton Lodge, and he was buried in Blythburgh. But he gave his working life to Southwold.

A solicitor, he bought a Southwold law practice in the 1890s. Many local offices flowed from that. When war broke out in 1914 he had been Southwold's Town Clerk for 19 years. He was also Clerk to the Magistrates, Manager of the Harbour, Secretary of the Ferry Company, Secretary of the Lifeboats, Captain of the Fire Brigade, and Secretary of the Waterworks. Soon he had more appointments: Commandant of the Volunteers, Clerk to the Tribunal, Secretary of the Canadians' Fund, Sub-Commander of Pilotage, and Deputy Lloyds' Agent, besides other smaller jobs.

In Cooper's wartime diary an early reminder of what war could mean was the arrival in 1914 in Southwold of a fishing smack from Ostend packed with refugees. They had fled with only the bundles and boxes that they could carry. Southwold people wondered if it could be their fate later. Other grim reminders were the appearance on the beaches of wreckage and bodies. But Cooper's journal has its humorous side. During one Zeppelin raid a fisherman

looked out of his bedroom window and saw the airship so close that he determined to knock it out of the sky with his stick. 'For God's sake don't do that' said his wife, 'think of the children.'

Cooper was not a desk-bound bureaucrat. In February 1918 he wrote: 'Sitting in the office this morning, I heard the lifeboat gun, hurried home for my bicycle and Burberry and arrived at the Harbour just as the boat shoved off. I jumped into her as she passed the next landing stage and the signalman chucked my belt in after me, it happened they were a hand short so I made up the crew.' They joined in the rescue of a seaplane pilot. 'We sailed home and within 1½ hours I was back in my office.' Man of action Ernest Read Cooper was then 53 years old.

Cooper retired around 1920 but his passion for the sea was unabated and articles and books flowed from his pen. He had published *A Brief History of Southwold Haven* as far back as 1907 and now came a series of books including a tribute to the lifeboat service, *Storm Warriors of the Suffolk Coast*, published in 1937. He left Southwold in that year for Woodbridge, where he lived out his life in a house called 'Blybro'.

Alan Mackley

**An open invitation to the next
meeting of the Parish Council
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Helicopter lands Blythburgh in the news

What had been a dispute between Blythburgh neighbours suddenly burst into the news in July. The *Daily Mail* set the tone with its headline *My helicopter hell*, quoting Pamela Pringle, who lives in Angel Lane, next door to Peter Nash. The argument over the helicopter that lands in Mr Nash's garden was also reported in the *Sun* and *Daily Telegraph*, featured on Radio's *2 Jeremy Vine Show* and on Anglia Television. Mr Nash has declined to make any comment to anybody, including the *Blythburgh Parish News*. Blythburgh Parish Council has been aware of the issue for some time and has made inquiries of the relevant authorities. There is no evidence to suggest that the village at large is up in arms. The matter has never been raised in the open forum when parishioners can have their say and as far as I know there has never been a request to put it on the council agenda. Nothing illegal is taking place. That it is legal does not make it desirable for everybody, but the Parish Council can do nothing to stop it. It is doubtful whether the Parish Council is responsible for resolving disputes between neighbours. I have always

hoped that Mrs Pringle and Mr Nash would be able to resolve the problem amicably, perhaps with the assistance of a mediator. Mrs Pringle told the *Mail* that she had tried to have an Asbo (Antisocial Behaviour Order) served on Mr Nash, a former BA steward. It appears that the noise the helicopter creates, 76.8 decibels, would probably not be high enough for a court to award an Asbo. Mrs Pringle told the *Blythburgh Parish News*: "Noise has never been my main objection. My main reasons against the use of 4 Angel Lane are my very real fear of accident and the loss of privacy." Typically, the helicopter has been landing in Mr Nash's garden once a week since December 2007, when he gave his friend Bo Maggs permission to use his garden. Mrs Maggs, who has been flying helicopters for nearly 20 years, told the *Mail*: "I could fly in and out of Peter's garden all day if I want but I try to be reasonable. I have fitted an extra silencer and avoid flying over houses."

David Tytler

YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS

Chair

David Tytler
01502 478521

david@dytler.freemove.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

Music, comedy, poetry and dancing and

THURSDAY

I wake up to the knowledge that by Monday I'll be in a zombie state induced by three sleepless nights camping at the Latitude Festival. A weekend of big and small-name bands, comedy, poetry, dancing etc in the company of 30,000 or so fellow revelers generally leaves me with a hazy feeling that I've had a great time, but can't quite remember why.

As the festival opens its flower be-decked gates for the fourth year at Henham Park, I and Mr Clapham have a trick up our sleeves.

A caravan. Joy of joys.

Thanks to the generosity of some good chums, we will be able to make a cup of tea, sleep without hearing every grunt from the next tent and do our ablutions in private.



Flunked towing the caravan myself, and dragged a kind neighbour along to give a quick hand - this took three hours, as I saw it as essential to erect the enormous awning (with no instructions)

to give more space. Thank you, John.

The Festival staff were brilliant, giving in to the fragile princess (me) who couldn't possibly sleep by a humming generator, manually dragging the caravan to a more salubrious spot.

By 10 o'clock when Mr C had finished work and I'd unpacked the eight bags vital for a weekend festival, we took a stroll towards the main arena to catch acts who were performing on the first night.

Paused for a quick drink at the bar on the way and - bang! - the most almighty storm hit. For three hours the lightening flashed and speared at the woods, thunder roared and torrential rain lashed the marquee.

Sloshed back, stepping over streaming tents, half blown out of the ground by the storm, to our

caravan. Went to sleep, smug and warm. And yes, I do mean smug.

FRIDAY

Woke at ten o'clock! Heard nothing all night. No raves in the woods in the small hours, no screaming babies. The ear plugs and eye-mask from previous Latitude camping now redundant.

Fridays at Latitude have a pleasant way of warming you up for the mayhem to come when the hordes flood in.

It's possible to stroll gently, without fear of being stampeded, through the woods and the main arena.

No rain today, although festival goers are obliged to wear wellies at all times, it appears. This year, the serious trendies donned a new uniform consisting of miniscule shorts over thick black tights, tiny vest tops, coloured socks and wellies in startling shades or - for the posh poser - Hunters.

Flower garlands, ostrich feathers or luminous make-up topped off this garb which seemed obligatory for all shapes and sizes - quirky when you're sixteen and a size eight, terrifying for any female older and more developed.



Can't help wondering which joker persuades these sheep-like creatures to wear outfits which would get them laughed off any high street.

As usual, the blokes did their own thing, some fetching flowery dresses were on display - along with the ubiquitous footwear - and there were a few stripped to the buff, apart from a small tutu to cover the essentials.

Lovely ballet today from Sadler's Wells on The Waterfront stage, great comedy from Lee Mack, and cracking stuff from The Pretenders and Pet Shop Boys for the old dears, with Bat for Lashes and Regina Spektor doing their bit for anybody who found Neil Tennant doing a kind of karaoke

wonderful, blissful sleep. It was fab.

surrounded by dancers with coloured boxes over their heads a bit old hat.

Long - but dry - day, bed by eleven. Saddo!

SATURDAY

Undisturbed sleep again. YES!

Cooked sausage, egg and bacon in borrowed saucepan - not bad - brought eight changes of clothes but forgot pans and washing up liquid.

Watched the kiddies from the beaten-up travelling van next door, owned by a couple of serious hippies, one with no nappy playing sweetly with his big brother. Somewhat surprised



to hear a plummy voice call: "Theo, Barnaby - breakfast!"

Give it a couple of years and they'll probably be off to Eton.

Saturday is when the kids arrive - you can hardly move for

toddlers being carted in wheelbarrows and a rainbow of little people in tutus, sprouting wings and wearing Paddington Bear wellies.

Latitude pulls out all the stops for children: there is a delightful play area, complete with mini-ferris wheels and trampolines, although the straw keeping the ground dry seemed to provide the best fun.

Wasn't impressed with the woman who had taken her kids, including a few-weeks-old screaming baby strapped to her bosom, in to the heart of the scary Uncut Arena to see Mika perform. Scary because, once in, you can't move or breathe properly, and anyone less than six foot can't see a thing due to parents lumping children as old as ten on to their shoulders.

Mr C and me had trouble finding each other due to the usual problems with texting ie. "Meet me behind the ice-cream van" and "I'm now in the guest bar" would appear on your mobiles two hours after being sent, causing confusion and

accusations. Had some falafel in a box and watched Grace Jones, who was stunning but not stunning enough to keep us all there when the skies opened in earnest.

Skidded caravan-wards, stopping to steam dry in the poetry tent on the way. Brilliant.

SUNDAY

Slept like a baby.

No rain so head out early, and find ourselves in a little sanctuary in the woods, overlooking the lake. Watched a silent movie projected on to a horse box, listened to blues and drank Pimms, then strolled across the bridge, past the string quartet and read some of the hundreds of messages attached to the "lost tree".

Latitude is at its most packed on a Sunday afternoon and, being determined to catch Gurrumel - an aborigine, blind from birth, who's left-handed and plays a right-handed guitar upside down - we fought our way to the arena early.

So few people had heard of him, we found a place at the front. By the time he had finished, the rain was chucking it down, the arena was packed, and this amazing singer had gained hundreds of new fans, mouths open, bewitched by his voice.

Headed to the comedy tent, ate something claiming to be a steak sandwich, and settled down in the mud to watch some comics. Despite the lollipop ladies outside holding up "15" signs, a lot of little ones had slipped in to the tent and were looking quite as baffled as we were stony-faced.

Why comedians think female parts, childbirth and swearing are a source of such amusement beats most women, young and old. Gave it up, sun now shining, so strolled back to the caravan, only pausing to buy some festival tat, which we desperately needed.

Very sorry to leave. I'm usually pining for my bed at the end of Latitude. But then I've never had more than three hours sleep there before.

Thank you caravan. And thank you Latitude

The Blythburgh Latitude Trust is now making grants

The Blythburgh Latitude Trust has made several grants to applicants living in the parish. The grants, worth several hundred pounds, have contributed to the cost of educational and leisure equipment

But the trust would like to do more. Does your child need a musical instrument; do you need significant work done on your garden or your home that you cannot do without help? The trust may be able to step in and provide support. It is here to benefit full-time residents who can show a need which cannot be met from other sources.

Grants will also be made to local organisations where a majority of members are full-time residents of the parish, and to support initiatives to build community life in Blythburgh. Funds are provided by the sale of tickets to the Latitude Festival, thanks to the organisers.

Normally, grants will not exceed £200. But exceptional circumstances could result in a higher award. Applications for children under 16 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.

All applications are treated in absolute confidence

Applications should be sent to the honorary administrator, Jim Boggis, Marsh End, Church Road, (478 687) He will offer advice on how best to complete the application forms.

Court blocks local government plans

Plans to reorganise local government have been thrown into chaos by the High Court, which ruled that in considering plans to re-organise local government in Suffolk, the Boundary Committee had unfairly ignored proposals to split the county into three.

Suffolk Coastal, Waveney, St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath mounted a combined legal challenge to the committee's decision not to consider their plan for three unitary authorities to run the county: a Greater Ipswich, East and West Suffolk, the proposal supported by Blythburgh Parish Council.

The review was ordered by the Government two years' ago. The Boundary Committee was due to submit its final report to the Secretary of State in mid July, which would have indicated which option should be given the go-ahead to replace the county and seven districts - One Suffolk or an Ipswich-Felixstowe and Greater Suffolk councils.

Mr Justice Foskett ruled that as the councils represented 57 per cent of the county's population, the councils had "the right to have

their proposals fully and properly considered and evaluated at the pre-consultation stage". He said that the committee had broken rules of "straightforward fairness" and "simple good administration" in rejecting the proposals from Suffolk Coastal, St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath.

Responding to the judgement in the High Court, the leaders of the four councils said: "We challenged the Boundary Committee on the grounds that their process was unfair. The Court has decisively ruled in our favour, quashing the draft proposals that the Boundary Committee issued on 19 March.

"The Court has also awarded costs against the Boundary Committee and the Secretary of State. We are very pleased with the result. Our only concern was to ensure a fair consultation process and a proper representation of the views of the people of Suffolk. We will continue to fight to ensure that people's views are taken into account."

The committee has been given leave to appeal.

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A12 traffic nearly doubles for Latitude

Blythburgh Speedwatch carried out counts on two Fridays in July, at the request of the organisers of Latitude, the music and arts festival held in Henham Park, to assess the festival's impact on the A12.

The first was on Friday July 10, the week before the festival, between 10am and 2pm. The traffic count into the village going north was an average of **513 vehicles an hour**. The total count over the four hours was **2,051**.

On the following Friday, the first main day of the festival, the hourly count over the same period was an average of 994 vehicles: the total count over the four hours was 3,976. The general impression was that the traffic flowed more easily than last year.

The data will be useful to the village as well as Latitude, in respect of any safety issues with traffic flow on the A12, not just over the festival days but throughout the year. It will provide evidence of the enormous amount of traffic that uses the A12 daily.

The original "gang of five" Blythburgh Speedwatch volunteers has been increased by one more, as Claire Lyth joins the team. She has completed her first monitoring session, which, coupled with the rest of the June sessions enabled the team to complete 18 hours community speedwatch in the village.

In May, despite holidays, 19 hours were completed. The registration details of 18 vehicles exceeding 37mph in the 30mph limit were passed to the police in June: 11 registrations were passed in May.

Would you like to join us and become a Speedwatch volunteer? It takes just one hour a week. The more volunteers, the more monitoring can be completed, which in turn reduces the speed of vehicles coming through Blythburgh. Stop any volunteer and ask for an application form, or ring me for an informal chat on 01502 478624. **Binny Lewis**

Blythburgh Speed Watch Co-ordinator

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New look, new aims for county hall

Suffolk County Council has a new look and new priorities as a result of the June elections, County Councillor Rae Leighton told the July meeting of Blythburgh Parish Council. The council is now made up of 55 Conservatives, 11 Liberal Democrats, four Labour, two Green Party, two Independents and one UKIP.

The council's main priorities will now be to help, guide and advise, local businesses through the recession, looking especially at small and rural businesses. The council is also embarking on a campaign to make Suffolk the greenest county in the country.

Councillor Leighton has been elected onto the council cabinet with the Public Protection portfolio, covering the police, fire, drug enforcement and emergency planning. Parish Councillor Ro Williams asked how parish councils fitted into emergency planning. Councillor Leighton said that there were no formal arrangements but some parish councils have put together lists of skilled people and available resources, and of vulnerable people likely to need help an emergency.

BY-ELECTION: Peter Austin held the Blythburgh, Walberswick and Wenhasston seat on Suffolk Coastal District Council for the Conservatives in the July by-election caused by the resignation of Kevin Keable. He polled 316 votes, whilst his only opponent John Barrett, for The Green Party, polled 163 votes. Four ballot papers were spoiled.

ROAD NAMES: In response to a request from Suffolk Coastal District Council, the July meeting of the Blythburgh Parish Council agreed that it should stick by its original proposal that the A12 running through the village should be known as London Road. SCDC is also to be asked to provide a road name for Dunwich Road to the south of the village.

Councillor Alan Mackley pointed out that in the past many roads had more than one name. For example, travellers on the A12 going towards Lowestoft would refer to it as the Lowestoft Road. Travellers on the same stretch but going towards Ipswich might well refer to it as the Ipswich Road.

David Tytler

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Remembering a good and much respected man

Richard Malvern Allen, better known to us all as Dick, was born in Bedford on St George's Day 1933. Following his education at the local primary school, he won a scholarship at the age of 10 to Bedford School. He left nine years later as Head Boy, with a place at Cambridge. Before going up, he did his two years National Service in the RAF, where he was commissioned as a Pilot Officer.

Cambridge beckoned in 1954 and he started to read maths but switched to economics. He explained that it offered a more rounded overall result with less effort.

I spent my first year at the same college in Cambridge, sharing rooms with him during his last year. As far as I could see, his degree was achieved lying full length on the sofa reading the *Economist*.

The reason I shared rooms with Dick during my first year demonstrated a certain deviousness on his part. He told me before I joined him that he had managed to arrange for us to share rooms in college. I was delighted at his help, as most students wanted to live in. What I hadn't realised and only found out on my arrival, was that all first year students had rooms in college. I was entitled to the rooms and he had wangled his way in to share with *me*. I suppose he was just displaying an elder brother's skill in manipulating younger siblings.

After graduating, Dick was recruited to the Colonial Service and spent another year at Cambridge learning the language and customs of the Bemba tribe in Northern Rhodesia, where a year later he started his career as district officer.

He spent nine happy years in Northern Rhodesia which, while he was there, gained independence as Zambia. As a district officer in rural and isolated parts of the country, life was never dull, particularly in the run-up to independence, with major outbreaks of tribal unrest.

After independence, Dick worked for the newly-established Zambian Government in the Game and Fisheries Department for three years. Leaving Zambia in 1967, he transferred to the Overseas Development Administration in the UK Civil Service. A few years later, the family were on the

move again back to Africa, this time to Botswana, where he spent a couple of years as Director of Central Statistics. After this, he returned to the UK and remained for the rest of his career with the Overseas Development Administration finishing up as Chief Statistician.

My main memory of Dick is not only of a man with a record of considerable achievement, but also of someone always ready to help others. His advice was always valuable, but he rarely tried to force his opinions on others, rather suggesting, in his view, the best approach to an issue. One of his great strengths was that he cared for people. The recognition of his caring nature is a common thread through the many messages Jenny has received from his friends.

The courage with which Dick faced the last few months of his life was amazing and a reflection of the way he lived – quiet acceptance of what he knew lay ahead, buoyed by his strong Christian faith and determined to continue to experience as far as possible the many things he loved in life – his family, his church, his friends, his music, his books and his pleasure in his adopted county of Suffolk.

Despite severe physical difficulties, he managed to get to church occasionally for evensong and indeed, on the Sunday before he died, to morning service, followed later in the day to the Snape Maltings to hear the St Matthew Passion. His initial disappointment at not being able to make an helicopter trip, planned as a birthday treat last April, was fortunately short-lived, when it was successfully rearranged. In his condition, all these activities required determination and courage, but brought him tremendous pleasure worth the effort involved.

While our thoughts are clearly with Jenny, whose dedication made it possible for Dick to remain at home during the final stage of his life, we will all have our personal memories of a good and greatly-respected man.

Richard Malvern (Dick) Allen, born April 23 1933, died at home on July 3 2009. This is an abridged version of Terry Allen's tribute to his bother.