

# BLYTHBURGH PARISH NEWS



Issue 51

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

March/April 2010

## Apply for Latitude tickets now

One-hundred cut-price weekend tickets to this year's Latitude Festival in Henham Park from July 16 to 18 will be available to people living in the parish of Blythburgh with Bulcamp and Hinton, thanks to the continued generosity of Festival Republic, the producers.

The Blythburgh Latitude Trust has held the prices at last year's level: £35 for the weekend and £12.50 for day tickets. Each resident is entitled to two weekend tickets or two day tickets every day. Details of this year's Latitude line-up are available on [www.latitudefestival.co.uk](http://www.latitudefestival.co.uk).

The list is now open and applications should be made to Jim Boggis, the trust's administrator, Marsh End, Church Road, 01502 478687, or by email on [blythburgh.trust@btinternet.com](mailto:blythburgh.trust@btinternet.com). The list will close on June 30 and tickets should be ready for collection around July 12.

A range of improvements have been discussed between the trust and the festival organisers. The entrance gate may be printed on the ticket and staff will be better prepared to give advice. Site facilities, such as the taxi rank, are to be better signposted.

A park and ride service for Blythburgh will also be organised and efforts are to be made to

improve transport for the elderly or infirm from the site bus stop to the entrance. The organisers warn that everybody using residents' tickets will be expected to show a photo-identity, such as a driving licence or passport. Failure to do so could result in entry being denied.

Blythburgh Community Speed Watch has agreed to carry out a traffic count on the A 12 going north through the village on Thursday July 15 and Friday July 16.

The money raised from the sale of tickets is used to meet the individual needs of parishioners or to support local organisations and projects, which promote the community or improve facilities.

Since it began making grants at the beginning of 2009, the trust has provided IT and sports equipment, £2,000 for the refurbishment of the village play site, and provided the refreshments for the village Christmas tea party and the village hall quiz.

Normally, grants will not exceed £200, although exceptional circumstances could result in a higher award. Applications for children under 16 should be endorsed by parents or carers. Please make all applications to Jim Boggis.

**David Tyle**

### Police crack down on unacceptable behaviour at Toby's Walks

Only one crime has been reported in the parish since November 2009: a drink driving offence near

Toby's Walks. Coincidentally, Toby's Walks are a priority for Suffolk police, who have increased day and evening patrols to reduce anti-social behaviour. Signs remind visitors that such behaviour could lead to prosecution. The police appear surprised that complaints about the misuse of the site come from visitors outside the parish. The council said parishioners did not use the site because of the behaviour. Nicholas Dickson, Suffolk County Council's Countryside Officer, asked the parish council to consider involvement in the management of the site. The council agreed to become involved in site management but could not assist regular events such as conservation but hopes villagers will do so.

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## NEWS FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

# New look for annual village meeting

Parish councillors have been unhappy for some time about the unwieldy arrangements for having the council annual general meeting and the annual village meeting on the same day and have decided to hold two separate events to make them both more palatable.

The annual general meeting will be held at 7.45pm on Monday May 10 to be followed by the normal council meeting; the annual village meeting will be on Wednesday May 19 at 7.30.

The annual general meeting will appoint officers and committees and receive reports on the work of the council 2009 to 2010. An entirely new format is planned for the annual village meeting, not least because the parish survey revealed a lack of understanding about its purpose.

The purpose is simple: to ensure parishioners are fully aware of what is going on and what is being done in their name. In the past, representatives of all the parish groups, the district and county councillors and the police have presented annual reports. Inevitably, however, this led to a long evening.

This year, all the groups have been invited to mount a small display of their year's work. If this is not possible, written reports will be available and groups will be invited to offer reports for publication in the Blythburgh Parish News. There will be plenty of opportunity for informal discussions over refreshments provided by the parish council. It is hoped that this will ensure that everybody in the parish has an opportunity to see and discuss just what is available to them in the year when regular events are to be held in the village hall. The 2010 Villager of the Year will be announced at this meeting. Nominations should be sent to Jim Boggis, the clerk to the council, by April 10.

**Play site.** Two of the four proposals have now been received. Once the remaining two have been received they will be considered at a village meeting before consideration by the Parish Council. Potential users, particularly those living in Highfield will be particularly welcome. Grants are available to the parish council for up to £10,000 from Awards for All. Applications to community-

spaces.org.uk for grants between £10,000 and £50,000 are not available to parish councils but are to community groups. The council already has £2,000 from the Blythburgh Latitude Trust and £2,368 is available from Suffolk Coastal's Outdoor Playing Space Funding Scheme.

**Bus Shelter.** Funding has now been agreed for a new bus shelter on the south side of the A2. The work will be completed when the new shelter is delivered.

**Finances:** £1,911.01 is in the Community Account, although cheques to the value of £895.83 have yet to be cleared, with £7,665.60 in the Saver Account, leaving the council with available funds of £9,576.61.

## Suffolk Police Safer Neighbourhood Team

has agreed to purchase the long-sleeved hi-visibility lightweight jackets for Blythburgh's Speedwatch Group as required by new regulations. The group is grateful for that. Volunteers who can spend one hour a week to monitor traffic through the village should contact Binny Lewis on 01502 478624.

**Young people** in Suffolk Coastal can now get to evening and weekend events by using the Going Somewhere transport service. It will be introduced in two phases. The first offers any youth club or organisation access to travel so young people can go to after school activities, weekend and holiday clubs.

The service began on February 22. Clubs and organisations can register for the service or volunteer their vehicles by contacting the Coastal Accessible Transport Service (CATS) based in Leiston.

The second phase is a demand led service where individuals or small groups can book transport in advance for a small fee. This service starts on April 2, on a limited basis as volunteer drivers and vehicles are available.

For information about the service or to volunteer, contact the CATS team, on 01728 30516 or email [lynn.butler@cats-paws.co.uk](mailto:lynn.butler@cats-paws.co.uk) or [andrew.down@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.down@suffolk.gov.uk).



## Blythburgh Suffolk

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#### Chantry Lamb Night Friday 26 March

Reared on Walberswick Marshes the lambs are bred from Suffolk rams and Hampshire Down ewes.

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## BLYTHBURGH CHARACTERS

**Eric Merriman (1924 - 2003)**

The threat of inundation from the river Blyth has never prevented the residents of Church Lane from providing a good share of this newsletter's humour. There must be something in the water down there. One of the earliest of such contributors was Eric Merriman with *Bits and Pieces*, a series of wry comments and mini-competitions emanating from his Church Lane cottage. In his last offering in 2001 he wrote of scouring the Yellow Pages for carpenters who specialise in building arks.

Eric was born in Golders Green, London. His father was involved in show-business, leading a seaside concert party called *The Roosters*. While still at school Eric wrote for Boy Scout magazines and children's annuals and later created sketches for the Scouts' Gang Show. Caption writing for *Picture Post* in the early 1940s was followed by service in the RAF which provided an opportunity to sing and play drums in the station dance band. After demobilisation a decidedly unglamorous spell selling advertising space for the *Financial Times* was soon replaced by full-time comedy writing.

In the mid 1950s, Eric joined Associated London Scripts, one of the first agencies created for comedy writers, which included Spike Milligan, Eric Sykes, Ray Galton and Alan Simpson. Kenneth Horne approached Eric for material for his radio series *Variety Playhouse*, which led to Merriman creating humour until personal differences ended the writing partnership. Eric wrote a further five series (more than 90 episodes) of *BOK* on his own when the cathode ray came calling and he was in much demand to

work in television. The BBC was reluctant to agree to the cessation of such a cult show as *Beyond Our Ken* and so *Round The Horne*, was born, based on a very similar format but written by Barry Took and Marty Feldman.

Eric Merriman went on to a hugely successful television career, providing material for a roll-call of the light entertainment greats of the period including *Sunday Night at the London Palladium*, compered by Norman Vaughan, writing comedy series for Frankie Howerd, Tommy Cooper and Dick Emery, and TV specials for Beryl Reid and Tommy Steele. He contributed to films and stage shows and appeared on various panel games. He wrote and appeared with Bill Pertwee in *Call It What You Like* and *Mild and Bitter*, two series in the first months of BBC 2.

Eric Merriman's most enduring legacy is perhaps *Beyond Our Ken*. In 2000, he wrote in the *Blythburgh Parish News* that he had been in love with Blythburgh for 35 years. The village may, therefore, relax with the thought that its people could not have inspired any of the characters he created between 1958 and 1964 for that classic radio show. But his later work, including several Mike Yarwood series, the sitcom *Happy Ever After* and *Russ Abbott's Madhouse* overlapped his Blythburgh period. Writers get their inspiration from somewhere. So, living in a media-personality-rich area, be aware of the risk that one day you may see your idiosyncrasies represented on the TV screen.

**Alan Mackley**

**YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS**

Chair

David Tytler  
01502 478521

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

Vice Chair/Chair finance sub-committee

Ro Williams

Chair planning sub-committee

Rob Benson

Councillors

Binny Lewis, Lucy Clapham

Alan Mackley, Cliff Waller

Parish Clerk

Jim Boggis. 01502 478687

**BLYTHBURGH ASSOCIATIONS**

Carpet Bowls

Beryl Stringer

Horticultural Society

Jenny Allen 01502 478314

Neighbourhood Watch

Rob Benson 01502 478047

Village Hall

Henrietta Maslen 01502 478551

Bookings 07850 140581

# A tale of two kitties...

One of the many joys of living in the country is the constant stream of wildlife bustling past your doorstep. Moles, voles, hedgehogs, wild birds all going about their daily - or nightly - business.

And then there are the dare-devil rats. I can't say I welcome them but the acrobatics a rat will carry out in order to claim a nut would put that smart, tight-rope walking squirrel on the washing line to shame. Besides, hey, we've all got to live somewhere.

But we don't take lodgers.

We've tried telling this to the mice who move in to their winter quarters under our floorboards every year but they just laugh at us and carry on snacking on wires and popping out at night for a light meal of avocado, chocolate or carrot. Their favourite game is winding up the dog. This is easily done by making scuffling sounds in one corner then racing to another and repeating the process.

Having tried everything to rid ourselves of these squatters, Mr C came up with an excellent solution - cats.

So here we are, three weeks later with Samson and Delilah safely installed, running from one corner to another, making scuffling sounds and winding up the dog. Actually, Toby has been enormously patient with these tiny kittens.

We found them in a house so bulging with children and animals that the first thing these little balls of fluff did when they arrived was sleep soundly for hours - probably the first time in their short lives they'd had a moment's peace. But what a pair of characters.

Samson, long-haired black, struts around full of self-importance (all 8-inches of him) patting the dog's nose on his way past, very vocally demanding attention. He especially likes sitting on Mr C's shoulder, a feat which, if I could achieve it, would give me vertigo.

Tortoiseshell Delilah has far more dignity. She will deign to be cuddled when she's in the mood but prefers to spend her time chewing her brother's ears and eating as much as possible. Consequently, she is nearly twice his size. The vet said they were very healthy and when I expressed concern about Samson's weight he said he would catch up with his sister.

I was a little surprised to be presented with a bill for £48 for a few eardrops and half a worm tablet but naturally I hadn't taken account of the £22 for the consultation. This, apparently, was the bit where the vet said:

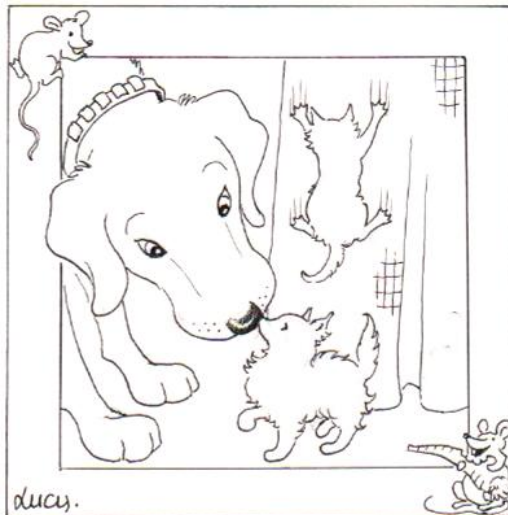
"Samson will catch up." Silly me. Mr C pointed out that I really should think before I open my mouth. Fair point - on this occasion.

It's many years since I lived with cats. There used to be eight at home when I was a child (much to my mother's disgust) as I could never resist taking in strays and felt it was only fair that the females should be allowed just one litter of kittens before being marched off to the vets. So I

knew what I was letting myself in for. But you forget how inventive a kitten can be in its search for entertainment. Of course I'm not surprised to find Samson and Delilah at the top of the curtains or asleep in a hat but why a piece of coal has to be attacked on a nice light carpet or my glasses removed by a small paw when I'm reading, beats me.

Taking chances is also fun: trying to get in to the bowl while a huge Labrador enjoys his breakfast or pulling his tail when he's asleep are good ones. And getting him to lick them until they're reduced to bedraggled, purring heaps. As for those mice? Well, there are no longer sounds from under the floorboards.

But I'd like to know what self-respecting kitten would sneak in to the kitchen at night and have a nibble on a parsnip.



## NEWS FROM HOLY TRINITY

# Let every flower bloom...

Spring has very nearly sprung, and the eight churches of the Sole Bay Team (Blythburgh, Reydon, Sotherton, South Cove, Southwold, Walberswick, Wangford, Uggeshall,) are set to celebrate it in style with a major flower festival in Holy Trinity. Flower display teams from all the churches will be decorating the church inspired by the theme of the Suffolk Coastal Region.

There will also be information available from various local interest groups including the Suffolk Coast and Heaths, the RSPB and the Lifeboat groups. It should be an enjoyable team enterprise as we celebrate doing something creative together, *and*, we will be raising funds for Wangford church which has major fabric problems at the moment, and is not blessed with the large number of visitors that come to Holy Trinity.

The Flower Festival opens on Friday 27 May 2010 at 10am and will continue until Monday 31 May at 6pm. Refreshments will be served 10am – 4pm apart from the Sunday morning when there will be a Team All-age Service with Archdeacon Judy at 10.30am. On the Sunday evening at 7.30pm there will be a concert with the singers Amici, there are no tickets but instead there will be a retiring collection for Wangford church. For full details see the publicity which will soon appear. If you would like to help with Holy Trinity's contribution please get in touch with

**There will be no** Aldeburgh Music concerts in the church this Easter, but there will be a performance of Stainer's Crucifixion by the Blythburgh Singers on Wednesday 31 March at 8pm. Children are invited to the church on Saturday 3 April at 5pm to create the Easter Garden, hear the Easter story and then look for eggs in the churchyard. The Easter Day service will be a family Eucharist for Easter at 11am.

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting takes place on Wednesday 14 April at 7pm in the village hall. This is our opportunity to take stock of the year just past, and to think forward to the future. Everybody on the church electoral roll is warmly invited to come along, and if you're not on the electoral roll but come to church even only occasionally then do think about joining the roll. It means that you can come along and make your views known and help us to develop for the future. (You can be on the electoral roll of more than one church, so if you don't live in Blythburgh all the time and are on the electoral roll of another church you can still join us.) Just get in touch with Jenny Allen (478314).

Gillian Lond-Caulk (flowers), Brenda Motley (stewarding – our turn will probably be Friday 27 May) or Margaret (if you can bake a cake for the refreshments). Most of all, come along and see the church transformed.

**Jenny Allen**

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## AROUND THE VILLAGE



## It's a musical life in Blythburgh

The glory days of Blythburgh Village Hall are back. The first of a series of 1940s Blyth Spirit Tea Dances on Sunday March 7 saw around 60 people mostly dressed in clothes of the day, some in British or American military uniform. The hall was decorated inside and out with red, white and blue bunting, the Stars and Stripes and the Union Flag. Passers by could not miss it and many questions were asked in the White Hart that evening.

The next dance is planned for March 25 by organisers Gill and Nigel Oates, who moved from Surrey to Lowestoft four years ago. The couple give lessons in mysteriously named dance styles, balboa and bal-swing, in the hall every Wednesday from 7.30pm at £6 a session. Nigel can be contacted on 07986 011863 or at [www.jivebunnies.com](http://www.jivebunnies.com).

Nigel, also known as The Muffin Man can also be heard on Blyth Valley Community Radio every Tuesday from 2pm to 3pm. In the period just before and after the Second World War, the hall was alive with children and adults. There were weekly or fortnightly dances with local bands and villagers mixing with local troops and the Americans stationed nearby. The wonderfully sprung maple floor was, and still is, a major attraction for dancers. So, thanks to Nigel and Gill it's just like old times again.

**The highly talented** Blythburgh singers have been joined by one of Blythburgh's own. Charles Morris made his public debut in the choir's

March sung evensong at Holy Trinity after a suitable period of rehearsal. At the Christmas carol service in December he was consigned to the congregation.

Members of the choir usually pop into the White Hart for a half pint after the service. This month Charlie, as one of his new friends called him, was with them. Sporting a very smart new haircut, he looked every inch the country squire as he sipped his cream sherry.

**Parishioners** can improve their fitness and have fun at the same time at African Dance workshops in the village hall on Sunday March 14 and Sunday April 18 from 10.30 to 12.30. The workshops reverberate with live drummers as the organisers report that dead ones are useless. Call Abigail on 01728638708.

**Blythburgh** gets many visitors but how easy is it for them to get information about the village and its surroundings? The Parish Plan concluded that access to information should be improved. One way of doing this is to provide information boards, which are now planned for locations near the Church and the White Hart. The displays will be based upon a map of the village, identify key resources including the White Hart, the shop and village hall, and say something about Blythburgh's rich history. Blythburgh as a recreational hub will also be represented, with links to local footpaths and the nature reserve.

Suffolk Coast and Heaths is reviewing its own information boards. There is a board at Toby's Walks but nothing in the village itself. The parish council is working on a joint project with Suffolk Coasts and Heaths to provide the new boards and grants are available.

Spending by visitors is enormously important to the church and of course the pub and shop. Without it the village might not even have a pub and shop for ourselves. So if visitors can be interested and informed, they may be encouraged to linger, and return, to the advantage of Blythburgh.

**It's difficult** to believe that a beetle drive could engender such merriment but Blythburgh social group's inaugural event in the village hall in February certainly did, with some continuing their enjoyment in the White Hart into the small hours.

**The Blythburgh Parish News** is delighted to welcome a new and distinguished contributor. Professor John Allen has, with his customary enthusiasm embarked on Visions a new series highlighting the individuals and ideas that have changed our world. The first appears on Page 10.

**Bystander**



# Sea eagles have no landing rights

Libby Purves of *The Times* says the project is a costly gimmick

A new sight puzzles ramblers in East Suffolk: above the fields that sweep down to the River Blyth, there stands a bold sign declaring **SAY NO TO SEA EAGLES HERE**. Baffling, at first: not much point in saying no to that flying fortress of a bird, the white-tailed sea eagle. It wouldn't listen. It would just hang up there, 8ft wingspan spread on a thermal, taking your breath away.

I have seen them over the Hebrides and they are wonderful: the reintroduction of the species in those rocky fastnesses has been a triumph. On the Continent: in the Netherlands, a reserve of 14,000 acres (seven times the size of Minsmere) provides a congenial home. Sometimes a young Dutch-born eagle ventures over East Anglia, has a look, shakes its noble head and flies away again. But saying no would have little effect.

That, however, is not what the no suggests. It is a cry raised by farmers, landowners and level-headed bird-lovers horrified at a plan hatched by Natural England and the RSPB. They want to spend more than £600,000 to introduce the birds to Suffolk. They claim popular support: though you could doubt the validity of 500 people asked some saccharine question about whether they fancy seeing one. Enthusiasts insist that it is a reintroduction on the ground that sea eagles once lived here.

Nobody has actually proved that Suffolk is their ancestral homeland. There are some uncertain 18th-century bones and Andy Evans, of the RSPB, was last quoted saying feebly that "sea eagles must have been here in Roman times". In Roman times, however, East Anglia was a wild, boggy, scantily occupied place; and if a passing eagle threatened to starve your family by nicking a piglet or cleaning out your fishpond, you were allowed to chuck things at it and chase it off.

Things have changed. East Anglia supports as many people as the whole of England in 55 BC. They farm land, raise stock, drive vehicles, gather, and generally get on with their lives. East Suffolk is remarkably well looked-after, not only by quangos and conservation charities but by public-spirited land owners. Some fear for livestock, especially lambs and endangered birds such as

terns. Others talk more wildly of the threat to dogs and cats. But even discounting that, there are snags. Sea eagles have the highest category of legal protection. Exclusion zones may be declared around any nest, so that in a radius of 100m or more nobody can do anything at all. Not drive a tractor and trailer, not maintain a fence, not hold a long-advertised event or festival. It's a daft idea.

They know that, really. They're just showing off. An e-mail from Natural England, hails a "major opportunity for Natural England to lead a high-profile flagship species project that will highlight the organisation at the forefront of a major biodiversity delivery initiative . . . There is a small risk of conflict with both socioeconomic and nature conservation interests, but these would be effectively managed by risk assessment and contingency planning . . . A thoroughly planned and well-executed public relations strategy will maximise potential positive publicity . . ."

See? It's a greater white-tailed gimmick. Expensive, vainglorious and typical of a growing trend in the conservation industry. Many of the bodies that claim that title are not preserving at all: they are fiddling, initiating, interfering. That is not conservation: it is gardening, on a large scale. Put a woodland here...oops, no, make it a heath...tell you what, let's bring some classy creatures. Punters will like that, pay more subs.

And that's fine. There are many artfully designed wilderness reserves that nourish the spirit and provide grand walks on signposted paths. Good luck to them. Many fine birds owe it all to the RSPB. But in a largely man-made rural environment, conservation is a euphemism for landscape gardening.

To save something that has always been there justifies a certain defiance of human priorities. Whereas gardeners, however large their patch, must consider the neighbours. I long to see a sea eagle again: but not as a symbol of a quango's PR exercise. No decent eagle, symbol of freedom and grace, would collaborate in any such thing.

*This article is reprinted by kind permission of The Times and Libby Purves*

John Allen introduces *Visions*, a series about people who changed the world

## Keeping an eye on climate change

President Lyndon Johnson of the USA had a vision in 1966. He deplored the money spent on wars and wished to create an international agency that could spend its time and money studying 'the common problems of advanced societies'. It took six years to collect partner nations, decide what the organisation should be called and where it should be located.

It became IIASA (The International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis) and is based in the Austrian town of Laxenburg, where there is a splendid former Austro-Hungarian Palace with candelabras, marble staircases, ceramic central heating and white doors with gilded decorations. It was in fact the Imperial Summer Palace, south of Vienna. When an Imperial Princess went to France to marry she took her national crescent-shaped confections with her where they became croissants. These had originated to celebrate the successful rout of the Turks, who had been heard digging beneath the walls of Vienna by an alert baker.

Seventeen nations joined IIASA, including Russia and the USA but the UK opted out. This was a unique moment in history. IIASA had a smaller remit than either the League of Nations or the United Nations but there were enough worries about exhaustion of energy sources, new sources of power and their possible long-term effects on the environment.

Fourteen nations participated in a major planning conference in 1973 to explore major global problems of future energy systems. Professor H. H. Lamb of the Climatic Research Unit of the University of East Anglia in Norwich attended as an independent scientist. He spoke of 'The Problems of Embedding Energy into the Atmosphere and the present ability of (the science of) Climatology to Advise on it'.

He drew attention to the sheer complexity of the matter such as evidence of the periodic nature of atmospheric behaviour with time scales of 2 to 3 years, 5, 10-12, 18-19, 22-23, 80-100, 170-200 and 400 years.

Although means were available to improve the understanding of this complexity it depended also on obtaining long enough past observation records. Although the growth of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere was known at the time the now popular terms such as Climate Change, Global Warming, Carbon Footprints and Trading were not then in use.

Apart from such scientific matters he reported a strange divergence between research efforts going into weather forecasting (short term, of a few days) and climatology (up to centuries). In spite of the great progress in atmospheric measurements obtained from rocket sondes and orbiting earth satellites, together with the availability of large electronic computers, interest had increased on the former and decreased on the latter. In fact the World Meteorological Organisation abolished its Commission for Climatology in 1969. Thereafter, IIASA scientists took part in the formation of the IPCC (International Panel on Climate Change) which is a major source of evidence today.

Perhaps the East Anglian representative at this conference in 1973 correctly warned of the incredible complexity of atmospheric dynamics but could hardly have imagined the troubles encountered at the recent Copenhagen Conference on Climate Change: nor could he have anticipated that nearly 40 years later the subject could be so controversial and that the Norwich Unit would be at the centre of it.

# Getting the parish together

The parish social events working group has drawn up a calendar for get-togethers usually on the last Friday evening in the month and look forward to support from residents.

Many thanks to all who supported the successful Beetle Drive on the 26 February. A cinema night planned for March 26 has been cancelled as it clashes with the Chantry lamb night at the White Hart.

**The annual** litter pick is on Saturday, March 27 will start from the village hall at 11.00am. A light lunch will be provided at a cost of £1.00 per person with a free Easter Egg for everybody under 16. Please contact Jenni on 01502 478883 to let her know if you plan to take part.

The group is looking for somebody to run a weekly fitness class i.e. yoga, pilates etc at the village hall. If you are interested, or know anyone who might be, please give Jenni a call. Obviously choosing a film to suit everybody's taste will be challenging, so the group would be grateful to hear of any specific films or genres that would be of interest.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 30 April** Games night at the village hall starting at 7.30 pm. Play Scrabble, Cribbage, Mahjong, Yahtzee and Snakes & Ladders. Admission £2.00 including light refreshments
- 28 May** Parish Treasure Hunt (In and around Blythburgh Village)
- 25 June** Nature walk around Blythburgh with the Horticultural Society
- 25 July** Blythburgh Parish Summer Party
- 27 August** Outdoor games/BBQ at The White Hart public house.
- 4 September** Quiz
- 29 October** Halloween themed night
- 26 November** Cinema night
- December** Parish Christmas tea

Please contact Jenni on 01502 478883 if you have any queries or would like to make a booking.

**Jenni McElroy**

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## Notes from Daisy Bank XXXIX

Since our last beloved Siamese decided to leave us, we have had a new entry. Several years ago a cat appeared at the bottom of the garden and eventually decided to join us. She appeared to be prepared for regular chastisement from the Siamese in exchange for three square meals. She became the upstairs cat and we called her *Molly*. We have a large king size bed and, possibly the availability of being under it when under attack, was her attachment to the upper floor.

In the summer *Alfie* joined us in much the same way as *Molly* and after a fight with another visitor and a three hundred pound vet bill, turned into *Alice*. As *Molly* hasn't been to the vets yet and doesn't take kindly to intimate inspections she could well be the opposite gender herself.

We've decided that if that happens we'll call her or sorry, him, *Moliere* after the French dramatist. Oh yes and *Alice* is now the downstairs cat; they both loathe each other so it's a practical solution! Alas, as charming as they both are, they will never replace the Siamese.

Since writing the above yet another stranger has arrived, gone through the routine of being allocated the office to sleep and eat in before either being allowed into the cottage or being re-homed. Sadly with *Alice* and *Molly* we have a full house so *Smithy* has been re-homed and is extremely happy with the arrangement. When I spoke to the Cat Protection lady in Saxmundham, she said I should take the sign down at the bottom of the garden saying 'this way to the cat sanctuary'.

This last year has been a particularly bad one for loss and change. Beside the loss of *Murphy* our last Siamese, the 2cv breathed its last, *Barnaby* the visiting cockerel died, the resident chickens

*Clara* and *Babs* were consumed by the fox and now *Jonesy*, a visiting ginger tom from the other side of the car park has died prematurely. It was he who almost definitely caused us the big vet bill but we forgave him and would rather have him knocking at the door and causing more mayhem than not being here at all. It's now 20 years since I decided what I wanted to be when I grew up and became a painter. Amazingly from the start people seemed to like what I did and after a few years I realised that I could actually make a meagre living out of it. About five years ago I decided that I had had enough traipsing around East Anglia putting on various exhibitions and placing some pictures in galleries and would just have one exhibition courtesy of the church and rely on people coming down to Fern Gallery. My turnover of course went down substantially but my quality of life went up and all was well.

Over the last few years I have noticed that the world and his wife have come to these here parts and decided they want to paint for a living. This has meant that those of us who have been here longest have had to share the cake with the mainly amateur incomers. As they say these days, that's cool, but it would have been better if they'd stayed where they were. This state of affairs hasn't been restricted to painters. The single self-employed in all trades has had to share the cake. For instant, Paul Cook who does a couple of hours for me every week and is invaluable has had to share as well. The difference between Paul and me is that I don't rely on the good people of Blythburgh to give me a living. Anyway 'Tory Boy' will be taking over in May and then all our problems will be solved, won't they?

Paul Bennett

**Everybody is welcome to the next meeting of the Parish Council on Monday May 10 at 7.45pm in the village hall. Raise your concerns and questions at the Open Forum from 7.30pm. The annual village meeting is on May 19 at 7.30pm. Contributions to the May/June Blythburgh Parish News should be sent to [david@dytler.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:david@dytler.freeserve.co.uk) by May 10.**