

BLYTHBURGH

Focus

SERVING BLYTHBURGH,
BULCAMP AND HINTON

Issue No.33

<http://blythburgh.onesuffolk.net>

May/June 2017



A must summer date for your diary

Celebrating Blythburgh is in the Priory garden on Sunday July 9, thanks to Chiara and Matthew Saunders. The day will start with an open air service in the historic Priory Ruins at 11.00am led by the Rev. Malcolm Doney.

Events, including the opportunity to take a boat trip on the River Blyth, are free and will be held throughout the day following the service until 5.00 pm. The Village Hall lavatories will be open throughout the day.

The BBQ is free to parishioners on presentation of the voucher, below. It should be cut out and handed over at the BBQ. Seconds have to be paid for!

The Priory Garden (entry by Village Hall)

Throughout the afternoon there will be live music from *Handle with Care* and *The Little Red Kings*, a BBQ, licenced bar, soft drinks, tea and coffee. There are also guided tours of the ruins by local historian Alan Mackley and Sarah Wickham will lead a village treasure hunt.

There will also be a display of the Cambridge Archaeology dig and village life in pictures with

games, including table tennis in the bottom garden.

Raffle tickets will be on sale in the garden throughout the afternoon. All monies will be used to defray the cost of the day.

Priory Car Park

Natural England wild life art and crafts stall; village stalls. If you would like to have a stall please contact Chiara Saunders on 07906844945. Local naturalist Cliff Waller will lead a river bank walk leaving from the village hall.

Free River Trips

These leave from the landing stage behind the White Hart every half an hour from 11.30am to 1.30pm. Booking is essential on 07970 463826 or on the day at the Natural England stall in The Priory car park.

Celebrating Blythburgh is supported by the Blythburgh Latitude Trust. Everybody is welcome, so please be there.

Celebrating Blythburgh Family BBQ Voucher

This voucher, available only to parishioners in the *Blythburgh Focus*, entitles two adults and up to four children under 16 to either a sausage in a roll, a hamburger or veggie burger at Celebrating Blythburgh's BBQ in the gardens of The Priory on July 9 from noon. Entrance beside the village hall. This voucher can be used only once. Second helpings have to be paid for!

Number of adults.....

Number of children.....

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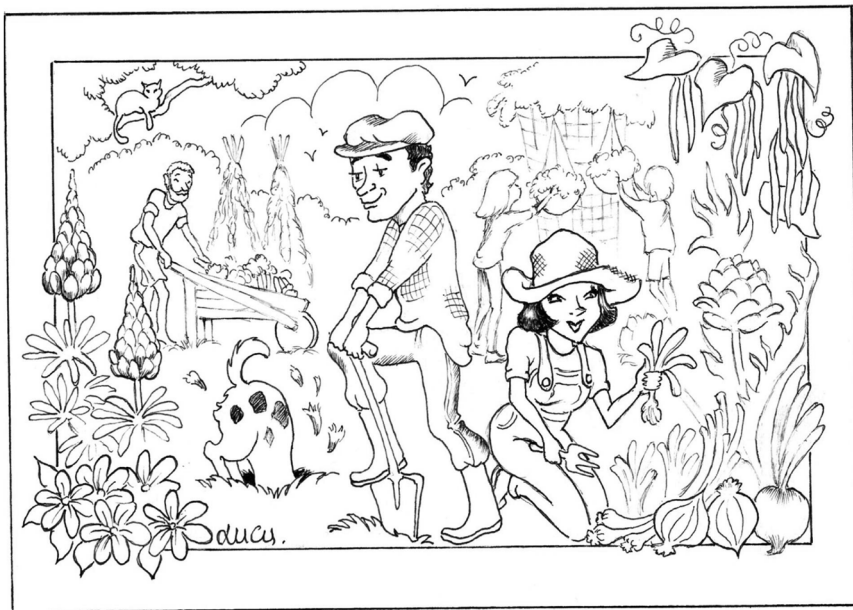


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Home thoughts from a broad...



TRAFFIC WATCH

The speeds are in three categories: Acceptable (0 to 35mph), Illegal (35 to 55mph) and Highly Illegal (55 to 80mph). In addition to the whole 24hours of each day figures are also given for day (07:00 to 19:00); night (19:00 to 22:00) and late night (22:00 to 05:00)

A12 Southbound March 5 to April 1: 70% (3,794 a day) were driving at an acceptable speed, 29% (1572 a day) were at illegal speeds and 1% (46 a day) were driving at highly illegal speeds. Daytime, the figures are slightly better at 74% acceptable; 26% illegal; and only 0.26% (12 vehicles) highly illegal.

The pattern changes quite dramatically at night. The volume is much lower with only 800 vehicles a night compared with 4,500 each day. The percentages change significantly with only 48% acceptable; 48% illegal; and 4% (34 vehicles) highly illegal. Late at night the change is even more stark with only 35% driving at or below 35mph; 55% between 35 and 55mph; and 10% between 55 and 80mph. The volume is very low with an average of 155 vehicles each late night.

A12 Northbound April 2 to 30: 88% (4057 vehicles a day) were driving at an acceptable speed, 12% (545 a day) at illegal speeds and 0.25% (12 a day) at highly illegal speeds. Daytime figures are again better than the whole day with 90% acceptable, 10% illegal and only 0.07% highly illegal. At night the ratios change for the worse with 69% acceptable, 29% illegal and 2%, highly illegal and late night it is down to 58% acceptable, 39% illegal and 3% highly illegal. Average traffic numbers are 184 a night.

The obvious conclusion is that although there are fewer vehicles in the evening and night those that are around are travelling much faster and residents should take greater care when crossing the A12. Because of the long straight run towards the 30mph limit from the north inevitably the southbound traffic is faster with a much higher ratio of offenders to law abiding drivers.

Roderick Orr-Ewing



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BLYTHBURGH REFLECTIONS

Memories through the letter box

1945 marked the end of World War II and the birth of Dick Clarke whose Grandfather, Fred Clarke, lived down Church Lane in Blythburgh.

Fred lived in the middle cottage of the three which are now combined and known as Cavell Cottage. Lesley Reynolds and Mrs. Burton resided on either side. Uncle Alfie Cook and the Elmy family lived close by and all the families shared just one well (now filled in) for all their water needs.

Dick, who went on to become the village postman, remembers lots of children in the village at that time and local farmer, Jack Stannard, allowing the youngsters to play on his tractors. Grandfather, Fred Clarke, died when Dick was just 6 years old and is buried in the churchyard.

Dick continued his association with Blythburgh and for the 10 years between 1983 and 1993 was village postman, a role which gave him a unique insight into the residents and characters of Blythburgh.

Coming up Priory Road, Dick could always rely on Mrs. Bird (Travers Cottage) for a cuppa. At The Green, Audrey Malin was gracious and generous, opening her garden for fetes and other village events. Sadly, Mrs. Malin was never the same after the burglary; even the postman saw nothing untoward that could help find the perpetrators.

Crossing the A12, Dick always paused to admire the large garden at Lion House, which was kept in immaculate order by Bob Aldred.

Everybody knew Bob Stringer, and his house on The Street was one of Dick's regular stops with conversation often returning to the cricket matches against Ipswich Caribbean Club.

Heading up Dunwich Road, Marjorie and Mr. Muttitt lived in a converted railway carriage. Marjorie delivered the papers for many years and

Mr. Muttitt used to look after the churchyard. Some still remember that, when he died, the request for a black headstone was refused.

Tom Cooney, a character if ever there was one, lived in one of the old school rooms, and Mr. Austin, the church warden, lived next door. The post was collected at 4:15pm and the postmen needed to sort the long letters from the short; this was something Dick did sitting in his van.

Almost without fail, Mr. Austin would appear at 4:14pm, letters in hand, to catch that day's post. Woe betide Dick if he tried to collect the post early. They say postmen see it all and where Jack

Pritchard, designer and resident of Isokon, was concerned, Dick saw more of him than most.

Across the road at Mill End, Lady Mallaby had a leak. Please Mr. Postman can you go up into my loft and turn the water off... not an easy task but allegedly a

bottle changed hands a few days later.

Postmen have to contend with all eventualities. These included avoidance of the postman-chasing pheasant that lay in wait on Westward Lodge lane, and safeguarding the money secured in steel boxes in the back of the post van ready for delivery to the local post offices. The latter was made more problematic because the security keys were kept in the front of the van.

The biggest changes Dick sees are people, many of whom are no longer with us, and housing. He sees small terraces converted into single dwellings, developments at Highfields and along Angel Lane and, most recently, the demolition of Amberley to make way for the Amberley Close.



**Words: Sonia Boggis
Illustration: Spike Gerrell**

Young archaeologists dig up Blythburgh

Using archaeology to trace the development of the community was the aim of a two-day project in April, led by archaeologists from Cambridge University. Teams of local schoolchildren dug 12 one-metre square pits in the village, braving the weather and iron-hard soil, to excavate to an undisturbed level, documenting their finds as they went.

Their discoveries ranged from fragments of Anglo-Saxon pottery to modern plastic. It is too early to reach firm conclusions but the richness of the medieval layers and later gaps are consistent with the view that Blythburgh declined from as early as the 14th century, only to revive in Victorian times.

The underlying purpose of the Access Cambridge Archaeology scheme is to stimulate young people from state schools to engage in a new disciplined activity, teamed with others they do not know, encouraging them to think of going to university. With archaeology as the activity, the benefit extends well beyond the participants.

Blythburgh is already rich in archaeological finds, but most are from the surface with a less well-defined context than from an organized dig. So Blythburgh will learn much and the residents hosting the digs this year will testify to the immediate interest that resulted. The ACA scheme is likely to run for several more years, refining knowledge of the development of the village.

The Year 8 and 9 pupils, from Ormiston Denes Academy, Benjamin Britten Music Academy, Bungay High School, Sir John Leman High School and Hobart High School, made the following discoveries:

Border Ware: AD1550-1700. Everyday pottery made from white clay with a green, yellow or brown glaze. **Chinese Porcelain:** Very hard, thin and light white pottery, usually with blue painted decoration. First imported from China around AD1650, and still is nowadays. **Delft ware:** First made in Britain in Norwich around AD1600, and continued in use until the 19th century. **Early Medieval Sandy Ware:** AD1100-1400. Hard fabric with plentiful quartz



sand mixed with the clay. Manufactured all over eastern England. **English Stoneware.** Very hard, grey fabric with white and/or brown surfaces, first made in Britain at the end of the 17th century.

Glazed Red Earthenware: Fine sandy earthenware, usually with a brown or green glaze, first made around the middle of the 16th century, continued in use until the 19th century. **German Stoneware:** First made around AD1450 and still made today. Millions of pots were brought in by boat from Germany from around AD1500.

Ipswich Ware: Made in Ipswich, dated AD720–850, the first industrially-produced pottery to be made after the Roman period. **Late Medieval Ware:** AD1400–1550. Very hard red pottery with lots of sand visible. **Midland**

Blackware: AD1550–1700. Similar to Glazed Red Earthenware but with a black glaze. **Staffordshire Slipware:** Made between about AD1640 and 1750, the first pottery to be made in moulds in Britain since Roman times.

Staffordshire White Salt-Glazed Stoneware: Made between 1720 and 1780, hard, white pottery with a white glaze with a texture like orange peel. **Thetford ware:** first found in Thetford, but first made in Ipswich, around AD850. **Victoria:** Wide range of pottery, with blue decoration still used today. First made around AD1800. **Cologne**

Stoneware: Hard, grey pottery made in Germany from 1600 onwards. Still made today.



How to collect your Latitude tickets

Residents will now know whether or not their application has been successful. Payment must be made by June 1. Cheques should be made payable to Blythburgh Latitude Trust, and sent to Olive Forsythe, Abbey Cottage (the pink cottage opposite the White Hart and beside the Village Hall). If confirmation of names or payment is not supplied by then the tickets WILL BE re-allocated.

Tickets to be collected from Blythburgh Village Hall on Tuesday 11 and Wednesday 12 July between 6.00pm and 7.00pm. Identification and signature will be required when collecting tickets.

When residents first arrive at Henham, they must swap their tickets for wristbands before they can enter the site. Once they have the wristband they can come and go freely. Residents are likely to be asked for photo ID or proof of address. Festival details are on www.latitudefestival.co.uk.

The proceeds from the ticket sales go to the Blythburgh Latitude Trust, which has so far given away more than £72,000 in grants, helping parishioners with many needs; supporting local projects; school and youth trips, Christmas tea, and the annual pantomime visit.

If you have a particular need, please contact Jim Boggis, the honorary administrator, Marsh End, Church Lane. All applications will be treated in complete confidence. Normally grants will not exceed £200 although exceptional circumstances could result in higher awards. Parents or carers must endorse applications for children under 16.

Parish Council Officers for 2017-18

The following were appointed at the annual meeting of the Parish Council on May 16:

Chair: David Tytler; Vice Chair: Alan Mackley; Responsible Finance Officer: Jim Boggis, Clerk; Chair of Finance advisory group: Roderick Orr-Ewing; Members of the Finance advisory group: Jeff Sutton and the RFO; Chair of Planning advisory group: Alan Mackley; Members of the planning advisory group: Cliff Waller and Sonia Boggis; Village Hall Trustees: Alan Mackley and Jo Waller; Blythburgh Latitude Trust Trustees: Jeff Sutton and David Tytler; SALC representative: David Tytler; SPLG representative: Alan Mackley; Blyth Estuary Group Representative: Cliff Waller; Dog Warden: Cliff Waller; Tree Warden: Jeff Sutton.

YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS

Chair: David Tytler
01502 478521

Planning advisory group: Alan Mackley

Cliff Waller and Sonia Boggis

Finance advisory group

Roderick Orr-Ewing

Jeff Sutton and Jim Boggis

Councillor

Jo Waller

Clerk: Jim Boggis 01502 478687

BLYTHBURGH ASSOCIATIONS

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Village Hall and Film Club

Olive Forsythe 01502 478521

Horticultural Society

Jenny Allen 01502 478314

Blythburgh Matters

Ro Williams 01502 478484

Blyth Belles

Sarah Wickham 070810632987

The inside track on the battle

A new book tells the story of the fierce battle to save Holy Trinity Blythburgh. Trevor Heaton reports.

It's hard to imagine East Suffolk without Blythburgh church. The spacious and gloriously-lit building is full of interest, from the angels in the nave rood to the curious 'Jack o' the clock'.

No wonder this 15th-century masterpiece is Grade I listed, a building of national importance. But only 140 years ago this wonderful church was on the brink of ruin. Rain poured in through the roof; much of the ancient glass had fallen out; shrubs were growing inside. In 1881 it was closed as unsafe.

This huge church was simply too much for the village to support. We know that it was saved. But what you might not know is just how controversial the process was.

A new book, by Dr Alan Mackley, an honorary research fellow at the University of East Anglia, lifts the lid on the 25-year battle. It was a dispute fought at the national as well as local level, involving royalty as well as celebrated arts and crafts

guru William Morris.

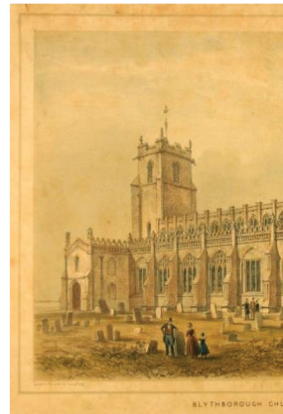
His book, *The Restoration of Blythburgh Church, 1881-1906*, tells the full story of the bitter dispute for the first time.

The battle was between the Restorationists – who wanted to take a church back to its supposed medieval look

– and the Conservationists, such as Morris, who wanted to preserve a building to show all its historical periods.

People cared about the issue; really cared. Dr Mackley has seen the documents on both sides that prove it - 250 letters, and 400 other items.

Somehow Holy Trinity survived. By the middle of the 19th century, with the spread of the railways and the beginnings of mass tourism, it had become well known but it was in a terrible state by the 1880s. The church was closed in 1881. A survey revealed the shocking news that



e to save Blythburgh church

£5,000 – equal to more than half a million pounds in today's money – would be needed. The parish had £40.

A restoration committee was formed, which managed to get the building wind-and weather-tight within three years. But the real work had still to be done. There was

controversy. The vicar was already scandalised that the Lord of the Manor, Sir John Blois, had a habit of reading his morning newspaper during the



service. As patrons, the family were responsible for the chancel but had – so the vicar claimed - allowed it to decay. When Sir John put £100 into the restoration pot, he was berated (in print) for being too 'miserly'.

"The vicar said he should have put in £500," says Dr Mackley.

Then the debate on the building's future became a national issue, with Morris wading in.

Restoration sounds a very genteel

and careful matter. The Victorian reality was very different. People believed in taking a building back to its original state. And if that original state was not known, they went back to an imagined state – what they thought the builders 'should have' done. Had this happened at Blythburgh then all its late medieval glories would have been stripped away. Morris said it would have been a "building of sheer fakery". By the time the second restoration committee was formed in 1905, things had become rather more high-powered. When your committee includes the likes of Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyle – and a daughter of Queen Victoria – then there isn't really much higher you can go.

Eventually, SPAB walked away from the project, but the happy outcome of all that controversy can be seen and enjoyed by us today.

This article is based on one originally printed in The Eastern Daily Press. The Restoration of Blythburgh Church, 1881-1906, published by Suffolk Records Society Boydell and Brewer, £25, with a special introductory offer price of £18.75 (25% saving) plus £3.70 P&P.

In praise of the dependable few ...

Holy Trinity had a busy Easter as ever, with good attendances at all the services and events. Many thanks to the happy crowd of villagers who helped decorate the church marvellously for the Festival.

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting revealed the remarkable amount of work relatively few people do to keep 'The Cathedral of the Marshes' alive, as a building, as a centre for spirituality and a community hub. We welcomed Professor Susan Powell on to the PCC for the first time. We have 32 on the Electoral Roll, 25 of them resident in the parish. We also have 83 Friends of Holy Trinity Blythburgh who contribute to the church's upkeep. (25 of them from the village, up from just two in 2013.)

Holy Trinity acted as HQ for the Access Cambridge Archaeology dig in the village (see Alan Mackley's report on Page 6). And Alan launched his book (reviewed on Pages 8 and 9) to a packed crowd about the restoration of the building on 11 May.

Blythburgh Church's patronal day, 11 June, Trinity Sunday, will be celebrated with a service at 11am, followed by refreshments. More details will be available at the church website: www.holytrinityblythburgh.org.uk.

The perennially popular, village-run, monthly café and mini-market take place in the church on the last Friday of every month from 10.30-12.00.



June sees the Aldeburgh Festival, and, given our long association with Benjamin Britten and the festival, Holy Trinity will be the venue for a number of concerts. On Thursday 15 June at 7.30 Sitar master Nishat Khan and Saint Ephraim Male Choir explore the special affinity between Indian classical music and the plainchant tradition.

On Friday 16 June at 3pm the Budapest-based Saint Ephraim male choir return to perform 20 and 21st century choral music. On Sunday 18 June at 8pm, the Belgian early music ensemble, Vox Luminis I, perform Bach and Schütz. Tickets and details from snapemaltings.co.uk.

On Saturday 1 July at 7.30pm, the Suffolk Singers are holding a Summer Serenade. Details: www.suffolksingers.co.uk.

Holy Trinity's much-appreciated service for the blessing of animals, featuring Neville the horse, takes place on Sunday 13 August at 11pm. Bring your pets!

Malcolm Doney

POST BOX

I have noticed the alarming amount of dog poo on the walks, greens, and in front of the bench at the river bank. I have recently moved to The Street and some inconsiderate person keeps letting their dog poo on my front garden. The garden does not look much at the moment admittedly, as we have had lots to do on the house. The garden is the next project. I have three dogs which I pick up after on our daily walks. I wish everybody would be as responsible.

Best regards

Michaela Kent



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New notice board in the bus stop



At the Parish Council meeting in March during the open forum parishioner Peggy Meredith raised the issue of an open notice board in Blythburgh. Peggy had prepared her argument and came armed with a costed blueprint. The Parish council discussed her proposal and during the formal section of the Parish Council meeting agreed the budget proposed. Cllr Roderick Orr-Ewing volunteered to work with Peggy to install the notice board in the bus shelter at the Highfield, Dunwich Road junction. The notice board is now in place and available for use. Peggy Meredith has volunteered to monitor its use.

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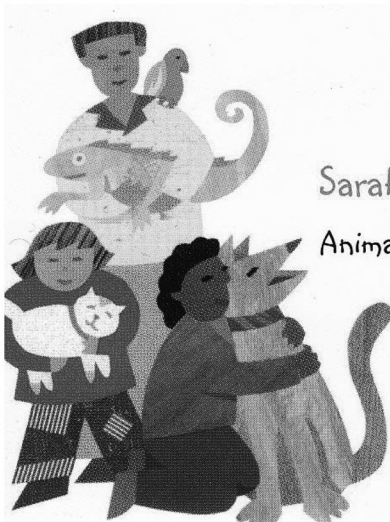
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Notes from Daisy Bank LXXIX

Over the years I have found that life is strange, peculiar, funny, sad and all of those things rolled into a wonderful ball of uncertainty. For instance, just because my mother decided that she and my father and brother should holiday at the Waveney House Hotel in Beccles, here I am writing this and living in wonderful Blythburgh.

Then a resident of Singapore, she decided that it was time for me to buy a house and using some money of mine that she had access to while I was away, she saw an interesting cottage and started the ball rolling towards its purchase. Luckily in those days, property was relatively cheap so it wasn't the impossibility that young people find it is today in order to do the same.

In case you are beginning to get worried, I promise not to get political. With the election looming there doesn't seem much point in moaning about the inequality of it all.

Anyway, eventually places such as Blythburgh, Walberswick and Southwold will all be holiday or second homes. The also-rans will have to retreat to rural Suffolk and live in self constructed wooden huts or caravans with limited sanitation.

The other day while standing in our garden I felt *Milo* our Siamese rubbing himself against my leg. Looking down to stroke him, shock, horror.

There looking up at me was a very benign and smiling white and black cat whose name it turned out to be, by being allowed to examine his identity medallion, *Raphael* who lives in

The *Priory* in Priory Road. A few minutes later *Milo* arrived and taking exception to *Raphael's*

over familiarity with myself, a strategic withdrawal followed and *Raphael* toddled off next doors' garden. But it was nice to see him and since then, walking along Priory Road, we have successfully renewed our acquaintanceship.

Tomato plants potted up and in the greenhouse, roses starting to look healthy and full of possible flowering abundance. The magnificent hellebores

having come to their end, summer in Daisy Bank is beginning to beckon and I am smiling a lot more. The pall of winter's gloom is retreating over the horizon and the wood burning stove is looking forward to a damn good rest.

By way of a change and just to keep you guessing, I give you the following which I wrote a million years ago.

Achievements

Three years after my fortieth birthday,
Which was seven years before my fiftieth,
I looked around at what I had achieved since thirty.
But before I could work it out, I was sixty.
On my seventieth birthday, I thought I'd achieved enough,
By getting there.
When I reached eighty,
I couldn't even remember being seventy.
And at ninety?
Well – achievements come hard at ninety.

Still some to go before reaching the last few lines but I'm getting there and no, I still haven't achieved much!

Paul Bennett



A date for your diary: The next meeting of Blythburgh with Bulcamp and Hinton Parish Council will be in the village hall on Tuesday July 16 at 7.30pm with the public forum at 7.15. Everybody is welcome to have their say.