



Winter Newsletter 2020

Volume 16-7



Bishop Bonner's Cottage Museum
& Archive Centre -
Dereham Heritage Trust

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Letter from the Chair ... Happy New Year *Trevor Ogden*

Some newsletters ago we mentioned that we were collecting pictures that will help future generations to know what it was like to be in Dereham during lockdown. We still are collecting, so if you have anything suitable please pass it to me or Sue Walker (suegww@icloud.com). In a way, this picture is my favourite. We knew a couple who had planned to marry in August, and as it turned out they had chosen a gap when marriages were possible. Ten days ahead, they realised that the rules would permit a reception for 30, so friends rallied round and arranged the pop-up reception, illustrated here before the guests arrived. We know another couple, who, faced with an unexpected ban, rearranged their wedding for the next day! Maybe you know similar stories from this year, unplanned eventualities that the couples will remember with happiness, we hope, as they move on in life. The point of these stories and choosing this picture is that weddings are about the future, and in that spirit I'm not going to say much about 2020. We know what it was like. 2021 will be better. Happy New Year!

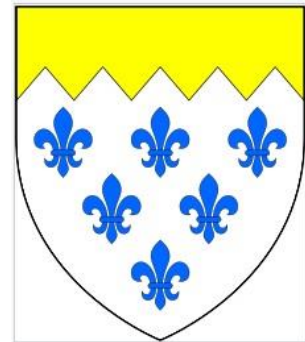


But before we move on there is one good thing to report about 2020 - our membership increased! Some of our sources of income collapsed, but subscriptions were ahead of budget. So thank you, members, and welcome if you're new. This is certainly a reason for optimism as we plan ahead.

And for 2021, first, monthly meetings. We have had four online talks so far this pandemic, and in this newsletter you will get the link for the January talk, about the restored trading wherry Maud. It is a story about the history of these vessels as the juggernaut trucks of a hundred years ago, and of Vincent and Linda Pargeter as they raised a sunken wreck, and restored it to a thing of pride and beauty as it moves through the Norfolk countryside.

We hope that by early summer we will be back to live meetings, but we are looking into also videoing them so that the talks will also be available to members on our website for a limited period. This will mean that people who cannot get to the meetings will still be able to enjoy them. Perhaps as Dereham grows some newcomers will find it easier to participate that way. For our speakers, going online has meant more work, more time, and new skills, and we are grateful for the willingness they have shown.

Second, the Museum. The pargeting has had a limewash coat which we are told will protect it until restoration and repainting in the spring. Some repair work is to be done indoors, and we hope that this will be completed before our normal opening date in May. We hope then to have a display on John and Ellenor Fenn, and their work in Dereham in the 18th century, when they lived in Hill House, in the fork of Wellington Road and Theatre Street. Ellenor was an innovative writer of children's books and educational material, with a surprisingly modern attitude to how we should treat the environment. There are plans for her to be commemorated in a "pocket park" in Wright's Walk in 2021, and we are contributing to that. Sir John's great achievement was to edit and publish the 15th century letters of the Paston family, which had come into his possession, a great cache of over 1000 documents which are of national importance in creating a picture of the life of local gentry and their aristocratic patrons at the end of the Middle Ages. More on proposals for the Fenns' display in future Newsletters.



The Paston Arms

I thought of concluding with a quote from a Paston letter about Christmas, but I couldn't find anything suitable. But going back to the Fenns, one of the local contemporaries whom they met was James Woodforde, diarist and rector of Weston Longville. This is how James recorded Christmas Day 1796 (from John Beresford's collection, *The Diary of a Country Parson 1758-1802*).



James Woodforde, feeling a bit warmer

This Day the coldest we have had yet and Frost more severe. It froze all the Day long and within Doors, the last Night intensely cold. Mr Corbould [Woodforde's curate] read Prayers & administered the H Sacrament this Morning at Weston Church. He called on us as he went and also on his return from Church. He said the cold at Church was so great as to make him tremble again. We did not go, the Weather being so severe...Dinner to day, Surloin of Beef roasted, plumb Puddings and mince Pies. My Appetite this cold Weather very bad. The Cold pierces me thro' almost on going to bed, cannot get to sleep for a long time. We however do not have our beds warmed. Gave the People that dined here to day before they went, to each of them 1 Shilling... After they had dined they had some strong Beer.

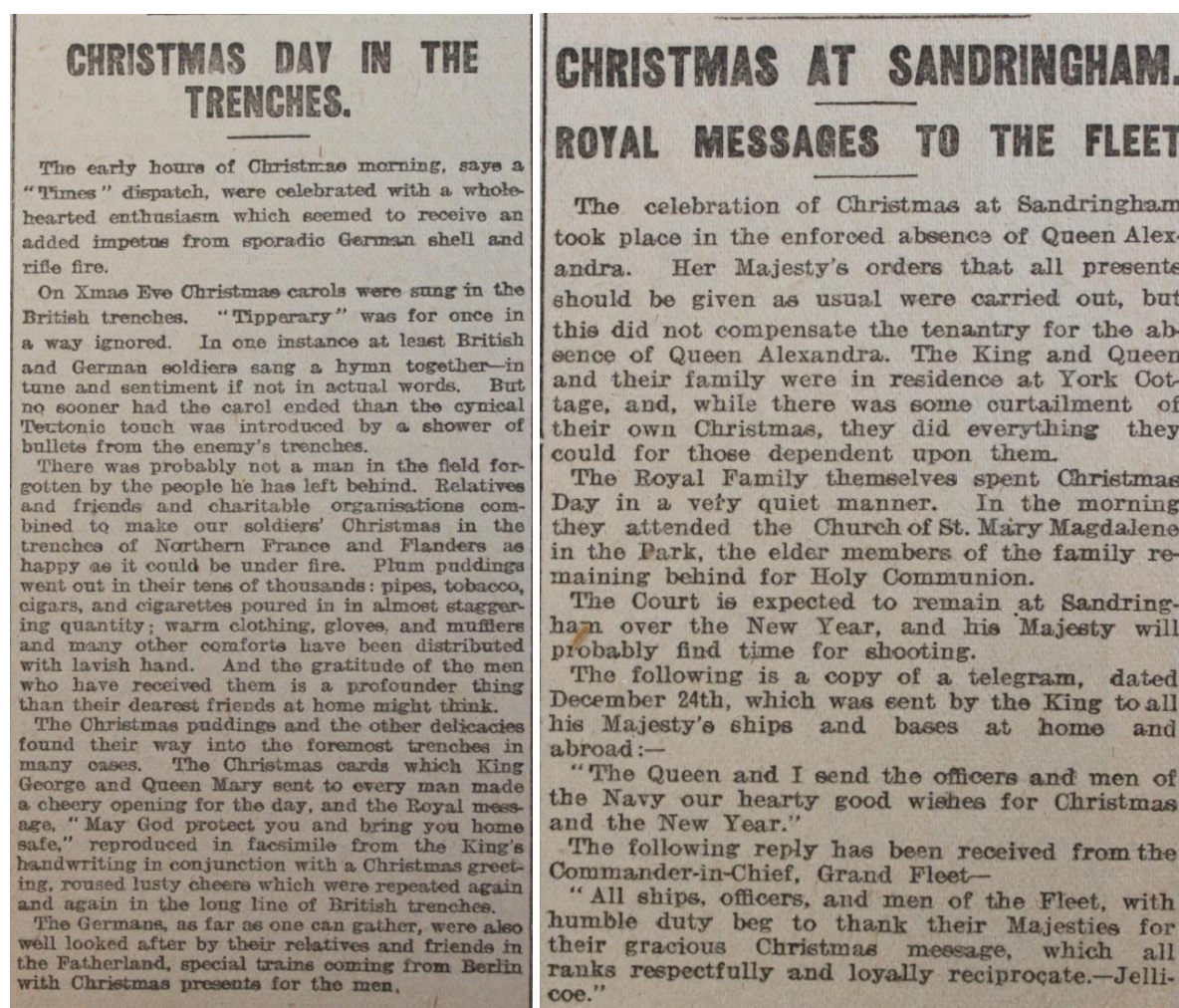
May your Christmas be warmer.

From the Archive - Christmas then and now *Robena Brown*

In these very uncertain times when we feel threatened by an unseen and unforeseen viral enemy we look back to Christmas 1914 and draw parallels to that awful period early in World War I when Britons began to realise that the war in Europe, which was expected to have ended by then, clearly was going to continue for much longer.

Families yearned for news of fathers, brothers and sons, all of whom, if they were not already in the regular army, had volunteered to fight for their loved ones, homes, country and indeed their whole way of life.

Drawing upon the excellent archive of the Dereham and Fakenham Times in our custody, spanning the years 1880 – 2017, we show here some relevant articles printed just after Christmas 1914 which we hope will be of interest:



Another article from the same newspaper reported that a rifleman of the Queen's Westminster's wrote home on Boxing Day to his family:

'Up till four o'clock on Christmas Eve our guns were shelling the German trenches, but then stopped, as a little rifle fire was kept up till about five, when it became dark. We then started singing carols and songs, the Germans doing the same. After a bit we put candles as lights on top of the trenches to cheer things up a bit, and carried on a sort of 'matey' conversation with the enemy!

'As things seemed to be going very well, we thought we might as well get out on top, so four of us got on top of the parapet and struck matches, which was received by a cheer from the others side so we all got out and held a concert and danced in the open.

'At this a few thought it would be just as well to shake hands and exchange cigarettes, etc. with them; so we called to them, and met a few half way between the trenches, and they were jolly good sorts too.

'Christmas Day we had a football out in front of the trenches, and asked the Germans to send a team to play us; but either they considered the ground too hard, as it had been freezing all night, and was a ploughed field or else their officers put the bar up.

'After, we had a chat with each other in the afternoon and one of them produced a camera, and we had a group taken, about twelve Q.W. and twelve Germans.

'I bet you think this is a bit of a yarn. In fact, Regulars who were in reserve here, would not believe, and some of them came up to see for themselves.

'I've just heard we may have to go up again tonight. If we do, it will be in different trenches, and against our Christmas Day crowd.'

We wonder if this soldier was sent 'over the top' on Boxing Day night and if he survived to write home again. No doubt, the Germans they faced were men just like the British and allies - following orders and wishing they were back with their own families.

EAST DEREHAM.
THE KING'S GIFT TO HOSPITAL.
A gift of fifteen pheasants and ten partridges from his Majesty the King was received at the Dereham Red Cross Hospital on Friday. The patients secured feathers from the birds as souvenirs and decorated their cap badges.



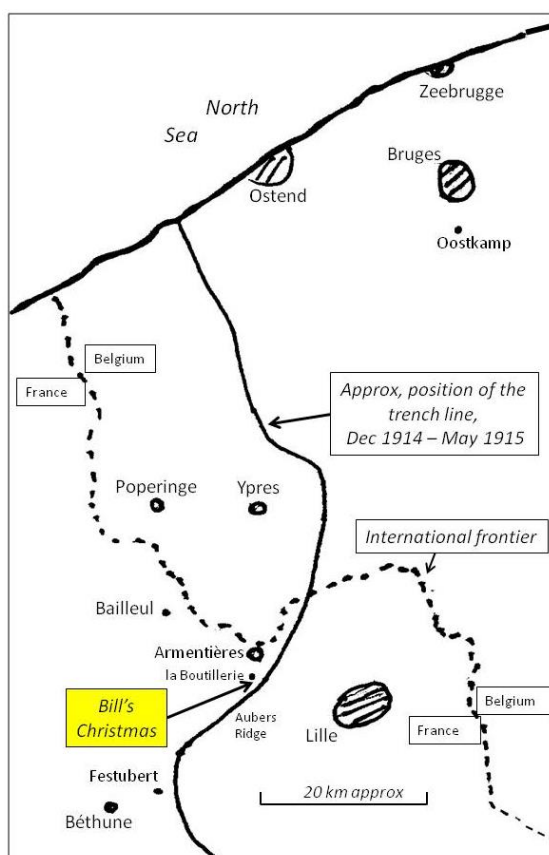
Many wounded soldiers and sailors were cared for at the Red Cross Hospital in Dereham Vicarage, made available by Dereham Reverend W H Macnaughton-Jones. The hospital catered for wounded from all regiments and theatres of war.

WWI Silk Card



This WWI silk card was sent to Mrs G Savory of Foundry Square, Dereham, almost certainly from France.

Bill's 1914 Christmas Trevor Ogden



The Western Front at Christmas 1914, showing the location of Bill's 1914 Christmas with the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment. (The 1st Battalion of the Norfolk Regiment spent its Christmas further north, near Ypres.)



Bill, but not as he was at Christmas

The way Bill spent Christmas 1914 did not appear in the papers back home.

He was used to army Christmasses - four in India, including one on the NW Frontier where they'd been battling tribesmen, then five in the hot South African summer fighting or guarding the Boers. Before the army, there were the boys' homes' Christmasses, and they were like the army in some ways. Then after South Africa came two Christmasses at Shorncliffe Barracks in Kent. It was at a local dance there that he had met Edith. What would Edith and the boys be doing now, he wondered? Better that they did not know what he was doing.

He had left the army in 1906 and married Edith three months later. Soon they had three boys, but sadly one died. Bill had become a postman, but he was still a reservist, and still under 42, so he was drafted back into the army in 1914, and with his experience he was promoted to corporal. But this army Christmas was completely unlike any of the others he had known. He had been a month in the trenches, and on this bit of the front line the trenches and breastworks were crudely built. It had been very cold, but he had avoided frostbite so far. They had attacked on the 18th, but had been repulsed, and the bodies of their comrades were still strewn across no man's land. Perhaps it was a good thing that it was so frosty.



British and German soldiers gathering bodies between the trenches where Bill's Battalion's spent Christmas 1914, at La Boutillerie. On the left is a German officer, with his fur collar and big boots. In the middle some British soldiers are preparing to bury their dead. (Surrey History Centre)

Things had quietened down late on Christmas Eve and were quiet now. No one wanted to fight on Christmas Day, and after hesitant contacts, some officers negotiated a truce from 11 o'clock, so both sides could come out of the trenches and bury their dead. So he was on a work detail for most of the day, gathering the week-old bodies and digging graves. The frost had made the ground very hard, and it was slow work. From time to time he could hear the officers from the two sides arguing together in a mixture of English and German about who was at fault for the war and what was happening on the eastern front. Progress in digging graves was so slow that by the time the truce ended at 4 they were far from finished, and the truce was renewed from 9 the next day, so then they got back to work. At 1 pm on Boxing Day they were done, and the padre read the burial service, with officers of their own battalion and 9 or 10 German officers. The truce ended at 3.30, and there was some gunfire from midnight. Within a few days the war was back to normal, but the frosts were replaced with rain, sleet, and storms. The battalion reported cases of men disappearing in the flooded trenches. Surely this must all be over by next Christmas.

But there were no more Christmasses for Bill. He went 'over the top' at Festubert in May, and like many others died in no man's land. He has no known grave. Edith, my grandmother, would have cried, and her sons too - my uncle, and my father, then aged 3.

When I was born my father gave me the same middle name, Leo, as his father, in memory of the soldier he never knew.

Source: *Bill left no letters that survive, but the movements of his unit can be traced, and the war diaries of his battalion are exceptionally detailed.*

http://www.queensroyalsurreys.org.uk/war_diaries/local/2Bn_Queens/2Bn_Queens_1914/2Bn_Queens_1914_12.shtml

Church of St Andrew, East Lexham

Have you looked at the 2nd class Christmas stamp this year? It doesn't tell you, but it's from the Church of St Andrew at East Lexham, one of Norfolk's round tower churches. The following is taken from the *Explore West Norfolk* website -

(<https://explorewestnorfolk.co.uk/venues/church-of-st-andrew-east-lexham-14/>)

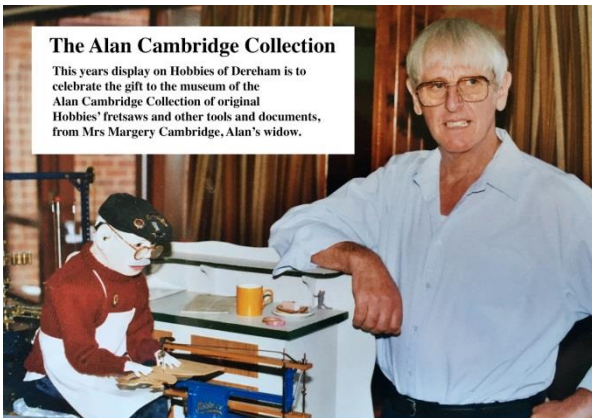
“The round tower of this church is said by some to be the oldest in England, built about 900AD. It is crudely shaped, built of flints with occasional bands of very large flints and tapered outside above 35 feet, at the belfry level. Above the belfry openings inside are traces of a ring of circular openings. The nave and chancel walls are continuous, which is a sign of an early church. The tower is now capped with an octagonal roof. The circular churchyard with the church on a slight mound suggests that this could have been a site for pagan worship, later taken over by the Christians in perhaps the 7C to prevent a continuation of pagan worship here. The original church could have been built of wood or wattle and daub.

“The east window glass is believed to have been made by Clayton & Bell in about 1859. It shows the Crucifixion in the centre, flanked by Christ carrying his Cross and the Deposition in the Tomb. Across the bottom are illustrations of the Annunciation, the Nativity and the Presentation of Christ in the Temple. In the apex are two angels announcing, ‘He is risen’, above two sleeping soldiers. These are flanked by the witnesses of the Resurrection, St Peter, St John and the three women bearing spices.”



Stained glass photo from <http://www.norfolkchurches.co.uk/eastlexham/eastlexham.htm>

Help, please! Can you store the Hobbies Trailer?



Alan Cambridge - The Model Maker

The description "model maker" in this context is taken to mean someone who makes a smaller version of something, which is absolutely true to scale and carries every detail of the original. When viewed without the benefit of a reference point which gives an indication of size, such as in a photograph, it is not possible to distinguish a model from the real thing. Over the years Hobbies supplied raw materials, tools and detailed instructions to model makers for a myriad of models - ships, aeroplanes, locomotives, steam engines - the list goes on. But never once did it occur to Hobbies to include their own fretsaw machines for miniaturization!

Alan Cambridge retired to Norfolk from his trade as a tool and gauge maker. With time on his hands, he decided to take up model making - but what subject should he choose to model? He had been given one of the original Hobbies Al treadle fret machines, which he had restored to its original condition. "That's it!", he exclaimed, "I will have a go at making a model fret machine". Obviously no plans were available, so Alan had to measure every part of his original machine accurately and scale it down to one-third full size before spending hours in his workshop making the miniature version. He had never made a model before, but his skill gauge maker gave him the necessary for detail and accuracy. Encouraged first effort, Alan Cambridge joined the North Norfolk Model Engineer Club and has had some success in exhibiting his models at various shows. He has won three silver medals at the International Model Engineer Exhibition, held each year at Olympia, London, and another silver medal at the Norwich Model Engineer Show. Every model is fully working and meticulously detailed.

By Terry Davy from his book 'The Hobbies Story', 1998

On loan for our summer exhibition, also from Mrs Cambridge, are a selection of the 1/3rd scale working models for which Alan won silver medals at the International Model Engineer Exhibition. At the back of the display case to your left you will see a fretsaw designed by Alan and made of wood, he had hoped to get his design into production in Africa to help local craftspeople. We also have 'Old Joe' with us on display, he is pictured with Alan in the photograph above, he is a working automaton model made and designed by Alan.

Since we had to move from the storage at Rash's Green, we have not had proper storage for the Hobbies Trailer. The display trailer was adapted by Alan Cambridge, whose widow donated it to us, with his collection inside it. We hope that the Town Council may eventually be able to supply a permanent home, but until then can anyone offer it somewhere to live, please? At the moment it is in an open-fronted garage, which is not ideal in the longer term - it needs somewhere dry, and to be properly under cover. It is about 2.5m (8ft) long and 1.2m (4ft) wide. Can anyone help, please? Contact Sue Rockley suerockley84@gmail.com.

Pat Skittrall *Steffi Spooner*

Pat once remarked her grandson was coming over for some advice and support: a wise young man as Pat was a thoughtful lady and her opinions were always valuable. Pat was blessed with a very kind disposition and a strong sense of humour.

Pat served not only on the committee of the then Dereham Antiquarian Society but also on those of the Mid Norfolk Family History Society and Mid Norfolk Singers. In all three Societies Pat was the treasurer for many, many years. In the case of the Mid Norfolk Family History Society she was also relied upon to translate Latin from memorials, having enthusiasm for such inscriptions.

Dereham Antiquarian Society benefited from Pat's involvement in the committee for about thirty years. She joined the original Archive Team to make the archive relevant to Dereham Town alone. This involved over a period of about three years working with three other women in freezing cold conditions in the very dusty industrial unit. Pat's drive and enthusiasm combined with a lot of local history knowledge and her ability to be a team player contributed hugely to the sorting of the artefacts. Pat had a vision, which kept the whole team going, to provide Dereham with a paper reference archive of documents, deeds, wills and the like.

Some of Pat's local history knowledge was gleaned through a WEA project producing with others, a study of Dereham's history. Pat contributed to the re-accreditation of the museum when the whole accreditation system was revised. She was also instrumental in the production of the Dereham Memorial Book. (Please see 'Memories of Pat Skittrall' from Margaret Bohn below.)

Pat was always enthusiastic in the use of modern technology devising systems of accounting to suit each society and utilising modern computer programmes to make life easier. In fact, Pat was willing to embrace any change that she felt was a benefit.

Pat was close to her family, had a long and happy marriage and bore Geoff's illness with her usual humour and courage. All those who knew her will miss her.

Memories of Pat Skittrall *Margaret Bohn*

I knew Pat initially through our enjoyment of singing with both Mid Norfolk Singers and Dereham Chamber Choir. We were also both interested in family and local history. Pat knew that I and a friend had in 1998 researched the 23 men recorded on the War Memorials in East and West Bradenham and she was very keen to do something similar about the Dereham men (in excess of 150 names) recorded on the Town Memorials. This seemed like a mammoth task but Pat was not to be deterred and after more discussion Pat and I and Marguerite, all of us members of the MNFHS made a start.

Over the next few years we went with Pat on numerous trips to the Record Office, the archive store at Rash's Green where we worked our way through the Dereham and Fakenham Times finding obituaries and references for the fallen and their families. Locating photographs of some of these men were very special moments. Marguerite and I made a trip to France and Belgium to photograph some of the graves and memorials to our men, whilst Pat with Geoff behind the wheel made several visits over those years to the battlefield cemeteries to ensure nothing was missed.

Pat through it all proved good humoured and very knowledgeable about all things WWI related. She also seemed to have a network of friends who helped where necessary. Finally by 2008 a book was completed in time for the 90th anniversary of the end of WWI and the book was dedicated at the Remembrance Service at St Nicholas' Parish Church. There were times when it seemed we would never be finished but it was thanks to Pat's quiet determination that we achieved her aim.

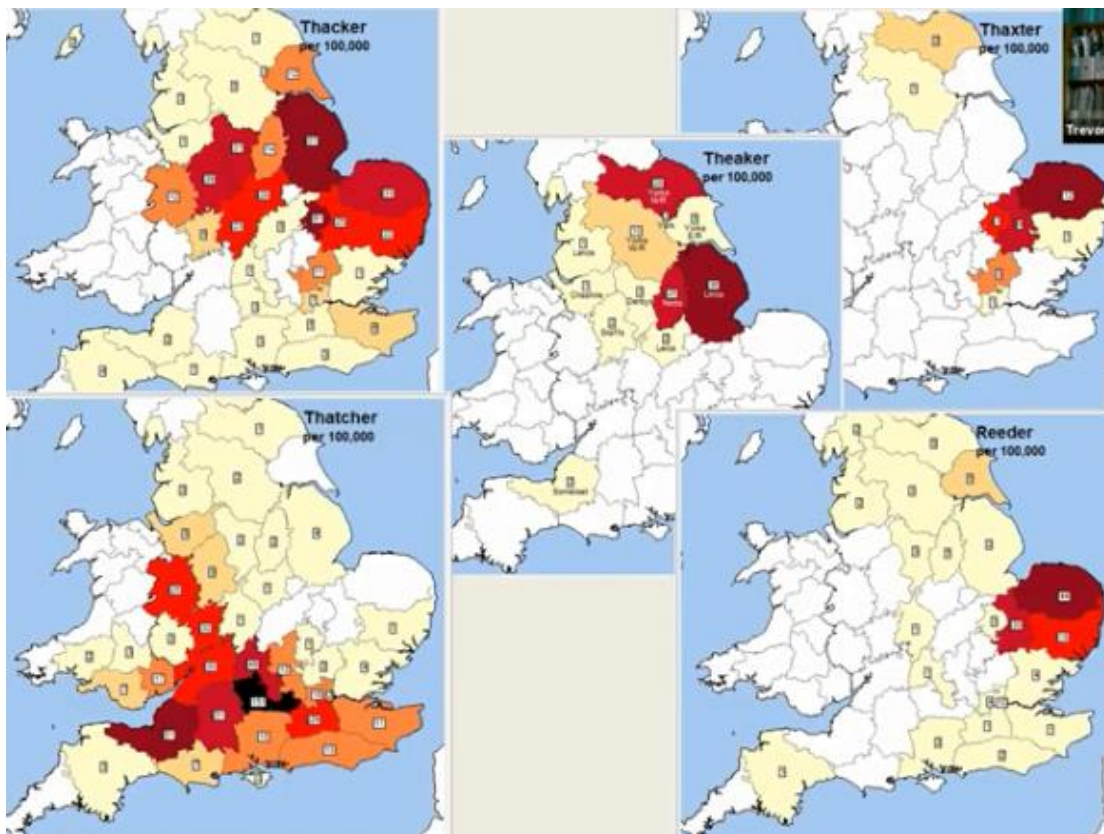
Recent talks *Ken Hawkins*

December : **Thatchers and Thackers, Larwoods and Fleggs: Surname maps as windows on the past - Trevor Ogden**

Our December talk was presented by our Chair, Trevor Ogden. He started by noting that surnames originated as bynames to distinguish people of the same given name, which, over time, became hereditary. Rarer surnames have mostly become extinct - it is generally agreed that more than 6 name holders are needed to give a good chance of survival. Names became hereditary around 1200 - 1250 for better off people (earlier for the aristocracy), and from 1300 -1350 this became universal in the south. A final piece of background information was that from the 1100s, written language moved from Old English to Middle English, and by the 1300s, people were speaking Middle English.

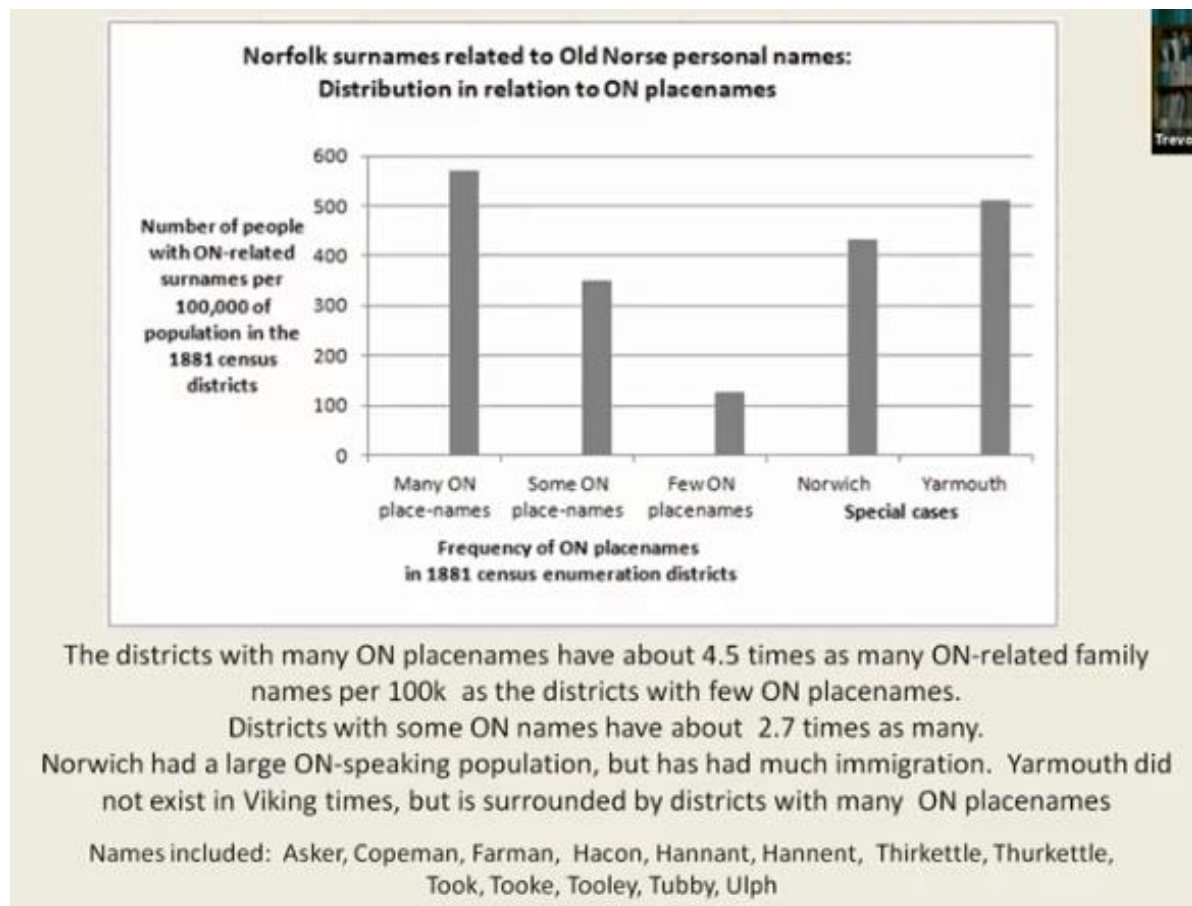
Trevor cited two sources of information he had used: the CD-ROM *The British 19th Century Surname Atlas* (£15 from <http://www.archersoftware.co.uk>) and *The Oxford Dictionary of Family Names in Britain and Ireland* (£400 - yes, really - from OUP, but freely available online on Norfolk Libraries). Before online material was available, the main source was telephone directories - manually counting names and linking them to areas. The information he presented was based on the 1881 Enumeration Districts (Mitford and Launditch for the Dereham area), and showed either absolute numbers of people with surnames, or the incidence per 100,000 population. It is assumed that high density areas are likely to indicate the origin of the name. As an illustration, he showed maps for the distribution of Ogdens in the Manchester area, revealing a concentration around Oldham in 1881, which was diluted but still evident from his phone book research in the 1980s. It seemed likely that the origin was the settlement of Ogden.

Moving to Norfolk, we saw maps showing the locations of Thatchers, Thackers and related names, all dialect words for the same occupation. East Anglia was the main area for Thackers and Reederers.



Norfolk in 1881 had 79 names found nowhere else, with 302 names where three quarters or more were in Norfolk, and 818 with half or more. There were at least 12 names to be found more often near Dereham than anywhere else: Luska, Leveredge, Wiskar, Isbill, Jarred, Milk, Monument, Warmer, Buscall, Bloy, Dack and Skipper (in order of proportion of total national numbers).

Several of these were explored further, before Trevor turned attention to Hannant, Took and Wilgress (and their variants), names of Norse origin; he speculated that their distribution might match that of Norse place names. They seemed strongly concentrated, even in 1881, along the north east coastal area. He had then been able to extend the list of names from a talk given by Peter McClure to the 2019 conference of the Society for Name Studies in Britain and Ireland. These additional names were Asker, Copeman, Farman, Hacon, Thirkettle, Tooley, Tubby and Ulph. Trevor had grouped Enumeration Districts into three categories - Districts with many (8), some (12) or few (3) Old Norse place names, and then cross checked that with the incidence of his extended list of names. The chart he produced clearly indicated that correlation - an association that had persisted for over 700 years.



Trevor ended by returning to the Tooks and asking - "Who was the most famous Took descendant of the 20th century?". He answered the question in the talk; we will give the answer in the next newsletter.

The subsequent meeting covered a lot of questions and comments about the Ogdens in the Oldham area, Reeders in Norfolk (and the materials used here for thatching), the persistence of names so long after the Vikings arrived, and how names changed over time - among others!

Buns and Lemonade

Treats and Troubles in a Victorian Village School:
Gressenhall 1875 -1902



An entertaining, and sometimes shocking, peek into the school over a hundred years ago! Masters are dismissed for incompetence, rudeness and sending a boy out to buy beer. Parents are a problem, pupil teachers are lazy and late, and the children are frequently absent gathering acorns, helping on farms or digging the garden. Mumps, measles and scarlet fever take their toll too. But through it all the children still learnt their lessons, passed the Standards, played and had fun singing together.

One of the many sad cancellations of these strange times was a performance in Gressenhall St Mary's of *Buns and Lemonade*. This is a dramatisation of some of the incidents recorded in the log books of Gressenhall National School from 1875 to 1902, devised and performed by Three's Company, with the Gressenhall Singers singing many of the songs which the children learnt for the annual inspections. It is hoped to be able to reschedule the performance for 2021, and in the meantime, as a foretaste, Bridget Yates has edited extracts from the log books, and written an introductory history of schooling in the village.

Some readers may know the attractive 'Old School' built in the Elizabethan style by John David Hay Hill of Gressenhall Hall, and opened in 1842. The school was situated close to the gates to the Hall, now demolished, and to the Rectory and the principal farm on the Estate, so that a close and controlling eye could be kept on the children and on the conduct of the Masters. It was to be run as a National School, but it was not the first such school in the village as in 1812 a National School was opened in the House of Industry. This school was open to children from the surrounding parishes as well as those in the 'House', and the local gentry were invited to attend the annual examination of the scholars, which must have been as terrifying as an 'Ofsted'! There was also a small Dame's School on Gressenhall Green, and a strong possibility that the present Methodist Church was built originally as a schoolroom.

As well as chronicling the daily and weekly activities of the school, the Log Books give an insight into the precariousness of life in the village, the illnesses such as measles, mumps and scarlet fever which took their toll, the poverty of children who missed school as they had no shoes or boots, and the need for child labour on the farms and to earn extra pennies through seasonal opportunities like gathering acorns. Children move in and out of the workhouse as family fortunes fluctuate and for some years, boys from the workhouse were sent to the village school, causing great disruption.

Well illustrated with photographs, the booklet is available from Gressenhall Shop and Post Office or direct from Bridget via email bridget.yates@tiscali.co.uk or phone 01362 860835 for £7.50 (plus postage if required). Proceeds from the sale will go to St Mary's New Facilities Fund.

Dereham Heritage Trust - 20 and 30 years ago *Ken Hawkins*

Following the note in the last Newsletter that we had no issues from 2010 in our records, our member 'Lyn Stilgoe kindly sent us her 2009 and 2010 issues to copy, so we now have a complete set, some electronic, some hard copy, some both. We are most grateful to 'Lyn.



DEVELOPMENTS AT THE MUSEUM

Ambitious plans have been approved by a special meeting of the Committee to refurbish and reorganise the Museum before the season opens in May. Not because there has been a lot wrong with the Museum in the past, but it was felt, as they say in Norfolk, a little triotulating here and there wouldn't go amiss.

Room Names: To register our appreciation of their work and support the rooms in the Museum are to be named after past and present benefactors, viz: The Noel Boston Room, The Eric Puddy Room, The Margaret Webb Room, The Christina Craske Room, The Cook Room and, finally, The One Arm Jack's Room! The latter, although not a benefactor, was a well known character and the last inhabitant of the cottage, well remembered by all who knew him. No doubt this will be a talking point when visitors see the plaque on the wall!

Storage: Our storage methods are to be improved, particularly in the alcove and attic areas of the room above the entrance room.

Gallery: The walls of the central downstairs room will be lined with hessian covered boards to create a picture gallery which will allow effective display of pictures and prints and, perhaps, various themes can be depicted from time to time.

Shop: This important feature is to be moved to the main entrance room. A counter and display area will be created in front of the rear window, incorporating the alcove. It is felt this will help to improve income through donations and sales of publications, and it is hoped to expand our range of souvenirs eventually.

Children's Room: The doll's house is to have lighting installed and the doll's furniture improved to interest our younger visitors.

Archaeology Room: The central upstairs room will receive most attention.

SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE!

Yes folks its that time around again! Your subscription is due once again kept to a bargain 53. Just about the only thing that does not keep pace with inflation! Joan Cole will be pleased to receive yours, either at the AGM or by post to: 28 Cemetery Road, Dereham, NR19 2ET.

Dereham Antiquarian Society

ISSUE No.27 **WINTER 2000/1**

Editors: Eddie Dell and Cliff Allwright

As we move into another Millennium of you're one of those who reckon your date in that mode - we hasten to wish all our readers (domestic & foreign) a very happy and bounteous New Year. Now, what can we tell you about this time?

Our first thing item is unfortunately the need to break the news, to those who haven't heard, of the death of Jonathan Boston with Vivian, on 20th November, after a long illness. Many of us may not have known her very well, but I'm certain that I speak for our members when I say that we all extend our profound sympathy to Jonathan in his great loss.

THE SECRETARY LOOKS BACK

In the last issue we were left wondering which dignitary actually opened the new Museum. Let us return to Noel Boston's record of events in the Spring of 1963.

"A meeting of the Society was held at the Guildhall on March 6th, and members stood in tribute to the memory of Mr. Gerald Cook, one of our leading members for many years. To meet the convenience of the Society at Dixie, our visit to that town was altered from July 27th to July 28th. Mr. E. R. Grainger, FAMS ARHS, S. Inspector of Weights and Measures for Norfolk, then gave a most interesting account of the origins of our weights and measures, with some lantern illustrations, and during discussions he gave some amusing incidents of his work. He was thanked by the Chairman, Mr. F.A. Dixon.

The Society met again at the Guildhall on April 3rd, and the minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved. Notice was given of the one-day conference on East Anglian Cemeteries at Norwich Castle on May 11th. Members were also reminded of the opening of the Cottage Museum and the Cooper Dinner on May 12th, and the visit to Felbrigg on May 13th.

Rev. R.C. Rutter, MA D.D., Agric., Dip.Th. Then gave a talk on the Archaeology of the Holy Land, illustrated by colour transparencies taken by himself. He was thanked by the acting Chairman, Mr. F.A. Dixon, and questions and discussions followed.

On May 4th Bishop Bonner's Cottage Museum was officially opened by Sir Albert Richardson, KVO, FRS, L.D., FSA. Members and friends were the guests of Canon and Mrs. Boston at a scrumptious tea at the Church House.

On May 10th about fifty members of the Antiquarian and Cooper Societies were shown round Felbrigg Hall by the owner, Mr. Keston Cramer. We admired and coveted his carmelias, his furniture, porcelain, Indian, tools, and copper implements and. Then he acted as guide at the Church, and showed the graves and memorials of his ancestors and of the medieval lords of Felbrigg.

On June 1st the Society visited the churches and Gainsborough House Museum at Sutterby, and looked around the Guildhall at Lavenham.

On June 19th a visit was paid to Gainsford Shell Museum and Clay Mill, and on July 3rd we looked at Kingham Church and the tower at Aliborough on our way to Diss, where Mr. E. Partridgehouse gave a talk on the tower, members of the Diss Society showed us the rights and provided refreshments. The 100th birthday of the year was a tour of the grounds of Norwich Cathedral, very ably explained by Mr. A.B. Whittingham, who showed us round the Cathedral the Carvery Chapel, and the Bishop's Gatehouse Priory."

(signed) *Neil Butler*
Aug 9 1963

THE DEREHAM ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY NEWSLETTER, Page 1, VOLUME 7, ISSUE 4, WINTER 2010.

Editorial Comment.

At this time of the year we have our programme of monthly 'Wednesday Evening Talks' which provide an opportunity for everyone to meet up and socialise. The talks cover a diverse range of historical local and East Anglia subjects, so please do come along for an enjoyable 'evening out'. The museum season finished in October and will reopen in May 2011, providing there are enough volunteers to accomplish this in the close season Ray Fraser and his small, but dedicated, team of helpers will be storing sensitive artifacts in the Archive Unit on Raih's Green, cleaning out the cottage, and planning new exhibitions for next year (interested? Both the Society and the Museum Committees have tried their utmost to satisfy Members expectations regarding the Antiquarian Society, but, without your 'feedback' they are not to know if in certain areas there is a need for alteration or improvement. All of the committee members are listed on the back of your Society Programme with contact numbers etc. or you can voice your suggestions and offer constructive criticism at the A.G.M in February 2011. Please let us have your views!

It was a pleasure to see Pat, the wife of our Secretary Tony Balles, at a recent event; we all wish her speedy return to full health. Another longtime member Barbara Matthis is being greatly missed. I have been informed by husband David that Barbara has had her operation and is now convalescing at home. Our best wishes to you Barbara!

A Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year to Everyone, and to anyone unwell at this time, or one in hospital, I wish them a full and speedy recovery!

Peter Bradley 01362 - 690096

Chairman's Observations:

This time of the year can be depressing; the autumn winds, the rain, and the shortening days - not to mention the economic plight - so I won't dwell on all this there is much to be grateful for; recent events have caused me to make a number of hospital visits to see others, all of which has made me feel how fortunate, to date, I have been.

We have had our monthly trips and the Annual Dinner. I have found these events enjoyable and hope you have too. Do please join us on these occasions if you can, and remember that non-members are also most welcome!

In the last issue of the newsletter I mentioned the need to review our Museum Finances (also includes the Archive Unit on Raih's Green). The special joint meeting of the two Committees was held as planned and proved to be an interesting and lively affair. I think it reasonable to say that the general feeling was that there was very little room for maneuver in respect of the Museum itself, but to concentrate on trying to reduce expenditure at the Archive Unit. With this in mind we are looking at the textiles room with a view to reducing the electricity bill which is due to having to provide a constant room temperature all year round! We are presently awaiting expert guidance. I should also mention that following a meeting Ray Fraser and I attended, at Dereham Town Council Offices, we were invited to apply for a Grant to help the Museum with display boards and to assist in the running costs. The application has now been submitted and Ray and I have been invited to a meeting in November - - - P.T.O.

At the end of 1990, we were planning a major refurbishment and reorganisation of the Museum, following a season with just short of 1000 visitors, 52 of them from abroad. And a stop press item noted that Dereham Town Council was to spend £8000 on exterior repairs and redecoration.

Ten years later, decoration was still on the agenda, this time of the 'storage room' then housing the Archive. That issue also itself looked back, to 1963, and the official opening on 4 May of the Museum, by Sir Albert Richardson.

Fast forward another 10 years, and 2010 saw the Society approaching the Town Council for a grant to assist meeting the running costs of the Museum, and seeking to rationalise the collections in the Archive to reduce those costs.

Lox *Trevor Ogden*

If you're offered lox at Christmas ...

"Smoked or brined salmon, typically served in thin slices with bagels." That is how the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) defines lox. Lox will be uncommon on British Christmas menus under that name, but there was a recent discussion of the word on the Anglo-Saxon History and Language Facebook group. I had never heard of it, though maybe that shows I need to get out more. Anyway, it turns out that the word has quite a history.



Lox

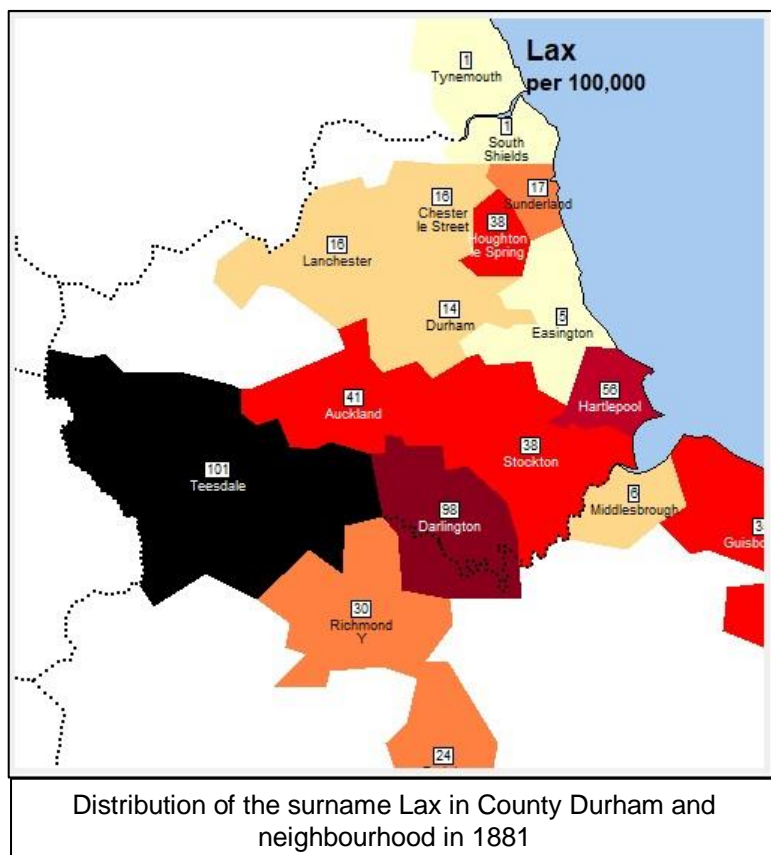


Unsmoked salmon

Most people will know about the Indo-European language family [*really? - ed*], which includes almost all of the modern European tongues, and a wider group extending through Iran to north India, as well as Greek and Latin. As traders, soldiers, and administrators spread from Europe into their colonial possessions 250 years ago, some of them realised that these strange languages showed similarities in vocabulary, structure, and grammar. The only reasonable explanation seemed to be that they all had a common ancestor, which became known as Proto-Indo-European (PIE). A couple of hundred years of study of these similarities, and of the ways in which languages evolve, has allowed scholars to reconstruct some of the grammar, vocabulary, and even pronunciation of PIE, which is now thought to have been spoken in the Neolithic, perhaps 3000 BC. And the Proto-Indo-European for salmon was *lox*.

The Old English for salmon was *leax*, and the Old Norse was *lax*, clearly related to one another and their PIE original. *Lax* made its way into Middle English as it developed in the 1100s, but was largely displaced by the influential Anglo-Norman *samoun*. This derives from the Latin *salmo*, thought to be related to the verb to leap. *Lax* was occasionally used, often when referring to a Scandinavian source, and mainly in the North of England. But 800 years later, *lox* reappeared.

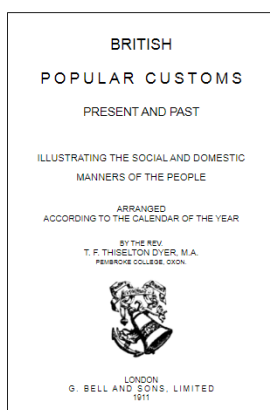
According to the OED, the first recorded use of *lox* in modern English was in an American source, in 1937, and its source was apparently the Yiddish word *laks*, used by Jewish immigrants and their families, and derived from their Middle High German *lahs*, salmon. So the Proto-Indo-European word has re-asserted itself after all this time, by a round-about route and so far mainly in American English. Apparently the English immigrant Elizabeth Taylor, trying lox, said that it tasted like smoked salmon. She was right.



If you listened to my December talk, you will remember that in the 1881 census thirteen Norfolk surnames which derived from Old Norse personal names were concentrated in parts of the county settled by Vikings. It turns out that there is an English surname Lax, unfortunately uncommon in Norfolk, but concentrated in Teesdale, another area of Norse settlement. The Oxford Dictionary of Family Names in Britain and Ireland says that this followed a similar route to the Norfolk examples: an Old Norse personal name that started perhaps as a nickname, lasting into Middle English and then becoming a surname. However, the existence of the Old English word *leax* must in this case have eased the adoption.

So if you get offered lox this Christmas, you can eat it with a sense of long history.

British Popular Customs, St Stephen's Day (26 December)



Robena Brown has sent in this reference to a 'popular custom' here in Dereham. The source within the text relates to Notes and Queries Series 3 Vol III

(<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/58809/58809-h/58809-h.htm>). It is taken here from *British Popular Customs Present and Past* by Rev T F Thistelton Dyer, 1876, p496 on Google Books. She has tried to find the original quote from N&Q online but cannot see it.

NORFOLK.

It is an old custom in the town of East Dereham, to ring a muffled peal from the church tower on the morning of St. Stephen's Day.—*N. & Q.* 3rd S. vol. iii. p. 69.

Programme of events 2021

Under normal circumstances, our AGM - the first since we became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation - would have been held in February. In the hope that things might have settled down as the New Year progresses, we have postponed it until April; the February date will be a 'normal' meeting (on line presentation and discussion).

We have a full programme of speakers and events planned through the year, though it has to remain open to change. We still hope to resume meetings when government guidelines allow and are keeping this under constant review, but until at least March 2021, we are showing on line presentations. Our recent 'meetings' enabled those who had seen the talks to take part in some very interesting and extended discussions. We hope and believe that the same will apply for our future talks too. If you get this Newsletter by email, we will send you a web link which will enable you to watch a presentation at a time of your own choosing (up to the date of the meeting). We will also send you a second web link to a Zoom meeting to take place at the scheduled meeting time of 19:30 on the planned meeting date. This will enable you to join a virtual DHT meeting, involving the presenter, to allow you and the other participants to ask questions and join the discussion. **If you get this Newsletter through the post, but would be able to get Internet access, please let Ken Hawkins know, and we will send links to your chosen email address.** Talks are generally available to members for a week after meeting date.

We are not making the usual £1 charge to members to watch the talk or join the meeting, but we will be pleased to welcome donations to offset our costs. Payment can be made by cheque or bank transfer as noted in the [Membership matters](#) section below.

The January talk is *Maud's Story – the life of a Norfolk Trading Wherry*, presented by Linda Pargeter. Hundreds of sailing wherries used to be a frequent sight on the Broads and rivers of Eastern Norfolk, between Great Yarmouth and Norwich and elsewhere, each carrying a load equivalent to the largest of modern trucks. In 1974 Linda and her husband located the sunken wreck of one of the last of these vessels. They eventually refloated it, and over 18 years restored it to its modern glory. In this talk, Linda tells the history of *Maud* and the other wherries and their part in Norfolk trade, and the great adventure of bringing *Maud* back to life and sailing the Broads. The talk, which **should be watched before the meeting** can be seen at <http://www.derehamhistory.com/video-talks.html>, Passcode BBCM. The link for the discussion at 7.30pm on Wednesday 12 January is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89163348447?pwd=VUIzcTF0RzljMmw3WFpudWxOZ2ZrUT09> with the Meeting ID: 891 6334 8447 and Passcode: 515361.

If you know any non members who might enjoy the talk, please ask them to contact ken-hawkins@tiscali.co.uk so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

<p>12 January - on line Maud's Story – the life of a Norfolk Trading Wherry Speaker: Linda Pargeter</p> <p>10 February - on line George Skipper - the Architect's life and works Speaker: Richard Barnes</p> <p>10 March - on line 25 years of archaeological research at Sedgeford Speaker: Gary Rossin</p> <p><i>Planned dates continue to be the second Wednesday of each month. As and when we can restart physical meetings, they will be at Trinity Methodist Church, 31 Trinity Close, Dereham NR19 2EP (off Theatre Street), and start at 1930. Admission to talks is £1 for members of Dereham Heritage Trust and £3 for non members. Visitors are always welcome, with the fee payable on the door, refreshments included.</i></p> <p>14 April - Annual General Meeting followed by in house talk</p>	<p>12 May Making tracks through Mid-Norfolk <i>Speaker</i> Dr Patrick Anstey 9 June John Abel, Horse-dealer of Norwich <i>Speaker</i> Judith Havens</p> <p>14 July An Introduction to Norfolk's Mills <i>Speaker</i> Alison Yardy</p> <p>11 August Narborough Bone Mill <i>Speaker</i> Graeme Brown</p> <p>8 September Five o'clock tea with Betsy <i>Speaker</i> Elizabeth Fry (Georgette Vale)</p> <p>Wednesday 13 October Annual Dinner or talk - to be decided</p> <p>10 November Hobbies <i>Speaker</i> Martin Flegg</p> <p>8 December Hexachordia <i>Venue</i> Wellspring Family Church</p>
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Membership matters

For anyone seeing this Newsletter who is not currently a member, can we invite you to consider joining? Our membership year runs annually from 1 March to the end of February; the normal subscription rate is £12 for a single member, £20 for two people at the same address, but **from now until the end of February 2021, it's half price**. The membership form is at

http://www.derehamhistory.com/uploads/1/6/2/3/16236968/dht_membership_leaflet_2020.pdf, or request a copy from Ken Hawkins. In normal circumstances, we can take payment at one of our meetings, but while these are suspended, there are two ways open for payment. The first is to send your completed form, with a cheque payable to Dereham Heritage Trust, to Ken Hawkins, DHT, 26 Hillfields, Dereham NR19 1UE. The second is to scan and email your details to ken-hawkins@tiscali.co.uk, and pay by bank transfer to Dereham Heritage Trust, sort code 20-28-20, account 10179752 - but if you use this please make sure you quote your surname as a reference so that we can recognise the payment as coming from you.

Next issue

In normal times, we plan to produce a Newsletter every quarter, in January, April, July and October, and are resuming that pattern in 2021, but with an extra issue in February. The press date for the next issue is **22 January**: if you have material for this issue, please send it in to Ken Hawkins. And please don't hesitate to get in touch with us if you have any other comments of any sort. In between Newsletters, our website www.derehamhistory.com is updated regularly so please have a look now and again.