



Dereham Antiquarian Society

Curators of Bishop Bonner's Cottage Museum
& Dereham Town Archive

Winter Newsletter 2014 Vol 11 - 3

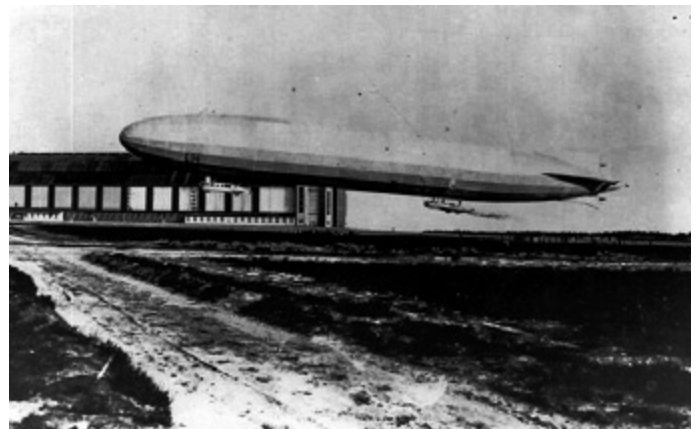


M & B Thompson Thatchers at work on the roof of the museum on 28th October, The craftsmen from left to right Marcus Thompson, Tom Lloyd and Miles Gray.

Thank you to all the volunteers who have kept the museum open this season, we have had an increase in visitor numbers. The museum was closed at the end of August so it could be emptied in preparation for the rethatching of the building. Work started on the roof in early October and continued until mid November. This gave DAS the opportunity to record the roof structure. The cottage is now looking splendid with its new crowning glory. This work was made possible by funding from the Dereham Town Council, who have set a fine example of how to care for the town's historic buildings. We are still waiting for Wetherspoons to start work on repairing their listed cottage next to the Romany Rye in Church Street. Another blow was dealt to Dereham's built heritage with the demolition of the old TSB building in Norwich Street. Preparations for the moving of the DAS archive is still ongoing and research is underway for next season's museum exhibitions. We are pleased to welcome five new members since the last newsletter. Sue Walker White Chairwoman.

8th September 1915 - The 100th Anniversary of the Zeppelin Raid on Dereham

Next year 2015 we will be producing an exhibition on the 100th anniversary of the Bombing of Dereham by Zeppelin L14 on 8th September 1915. We are working on a time line of the day's events. If your family have any stories, information or images about that fateful day please let us know. We would love to include them in our museum displays. Please contact Sue Walker White at sue@suewhite.demon.co.uk.



Zeppelin L14 was the most successful German naval airship of WW1.

DAS Winter Events 2014-15

**Merry Christmas
to all our
Members
and
Volunteers**



Wednesday December 10th 2014 Anti-Clockwise Around the Island

This slide presentation follows a 1700 mile cruise around Britain, with several ports of call. We were seeking the slightly unusual/different. Be prepared to learn about Rocket Post, the Dublin Mummies, and the King who became a sewer pipe and much more!..... Including Mince Pies.

Speaker: Geoff Worton

Wednesday January 14th 2015 Norfolk in the First World War

Speaker: Neil Storey

Wednesday February 11th 2015 The Dereham Antiquarian Society A.G.M.

Wednesday March 11th 2015 The Remarkable Mr Fenn of Hill House Dereham (1739–1794)

He is best remembered for collecting, editing, and publishing the Paston Letters. He was also a Justice of the Peace who served as High Sheriff of Norfolk.

Speaker: Lucy Care.

At Trinity Methodist Church Hall, Theatre Street,
Dereham, NR19 2EP at 7.30pm.
Admission £1 for members and £3 for non-members.



Dereham History-Online & New Dereham Book List

Visit our website for information on the town's history and event updates etc. www.derehamhistory.com

There is a members area with an archive of past DAS newsletters and a downloadable copy of the society's constitution. A new addition is a Dereham book list that has been compiled by Phillip Duigan, other books will be added as they come to light. Please have a look and see if you know of any books that should be included. To get the password to the members area please email sue@suewhite.demon.co.uk The content of the website will be added to regularly.

We also post and exchange daily updates on local history and national heritage news on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/DerehamHistory> where we have 280 followers, and on Twitter <https://twitter.com/BonnorsMuseum> where we have 551 followers to date.

We Need Your Help Next Year

The Society and Museum are entering a very exciting stage of development over the next few years. We need more people on the DAS committee to help us preserve and display the town's history.

Some long standing committee members want a change of role and it is always healthy to have new people with new ideas. The more people that are willing to join in and spread the load of essential work the more enjoyable it will be. It is a very good way to learn about your local history and help preserve it. There is always something new to discover!

All places on the committee are up for re-election annually. This year we are in particular need of people for the following roles:- (if you need more information on a post please email the address relating to it below)

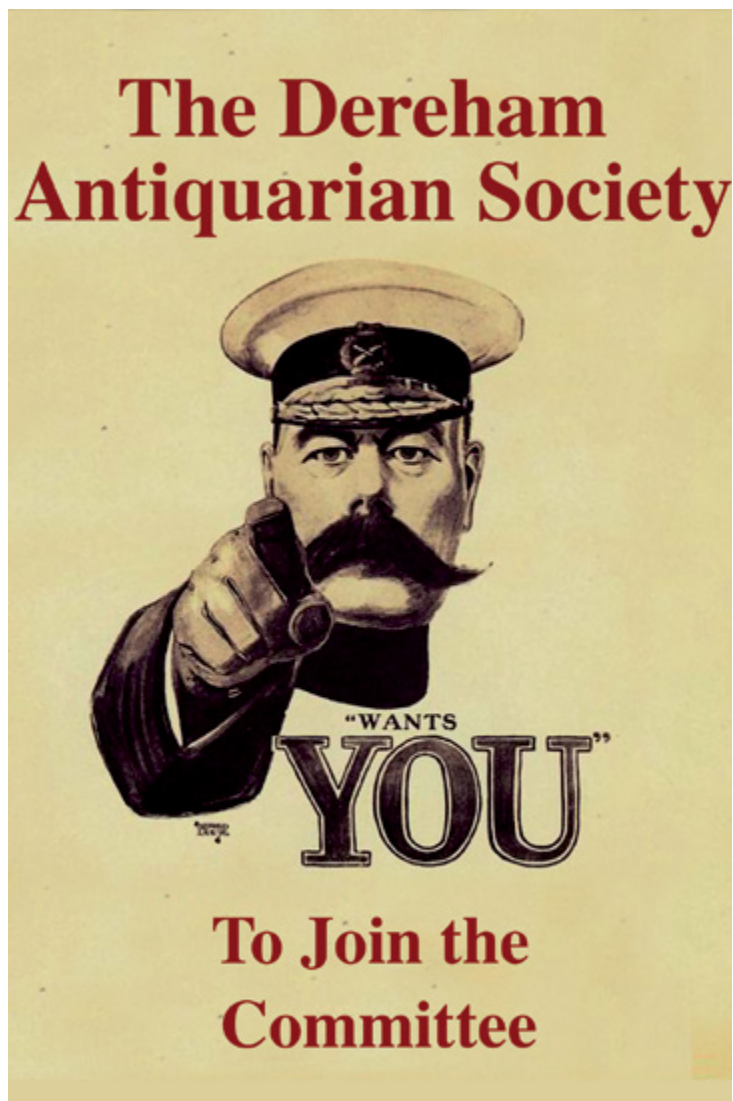
- **Secretary** stefangus@talktalk.net

- **Treasurer** p.skittrall@btinternet.com

- **Volunteer coordinator** rosemary_fraser@tiscali.co.uk

The current post-holders will help the new members to learn the ropes. Unless we have more help your Society and the town Museum will be **AT RISK**.

If you are interested in joining us and would like to know about other roles on the committee please email the chairwoman at sue@suewhite.demon.co.uk by 28th January 2015 and come to the AGM on 11th February 2015 at Trinity Methodist Church Hall, Theatre Street, Dereham, NR19 2EP at 7.30pm.



1 TITLE AND OBJECTS

The name of the association shall be "Dereham Antiquarian Society"

2 THE OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY SHALL BE:

- 2a to encourage the interest of the public in the archaeology and history of Dereham and its environs.
- 2b to be supportive of groups and others in the preservation of ancient buildings and monuments in the area for the benefit of the public.

3 IN FURTHERANCE OF THE ABOVE OBJECTS THE SOCIETY SHALL HAVE POWER:

- 3a to maintain Bishop Bonner's Cottages as a Museum for exhibition to the public of items of local archaeological and historic interest;
- 3b to organise lectures, meetings, visits and exhibitions;
- 3c to publish leaflets, books and other literature;
- 3d to raise funds and invite and receive contributions from any person or persons whatsoever by way of subscriptions and otherwise provided that the Society shall not undertake any permanent trading activities in raising funds for its primary charitable objects;
- 3e to maintain, conserve and protect and record any artefacts, documents, records, textiles, or other materials held by the Archive section.
- 3f to do all such other lawful things as shall further the above objects.

Dereham 100 Years Ago in 1914 - WW1

Dereham photographer Herbert T Cave had a shop and studio in Church Street. When war was declared in August 1914 he was well placed to record the scenes in the town. He photographed the parade of the local territorial reservists as they gathered in the Market Place. The sad sight of the army commandeering local horses for war service was also captured by his lens.



Local History Volunteers Needed

Without our group of dedicated volunteers, that act as guides and man the reception desk, our museum would not be able to open. If you would like to join this group and help us keep the museum open you will be made very welcome. A volunteer is never on their own in the museum we always work in pairs, so if you and a friend would like to work together that would be fine. Training is given and we will put an experienced guide with you to start with. Please get in touch with Rosemary Fraser rosemary_fraser@tiscali.co.uk if you would like to volunteer and we will be intouch in the spring.

There is also a group that meet to help organise the archive and look after the objects in the collection. Soon the archive will be moving and this will take a lot of time and patience to check the records, repack and list the new location of the objects. The next stage will be to digitise the collection on to a data base so it will be searchable. All these activities are just as vital as keeping the museum open. The museum is our public face but to keep our hard won Museum Accreditation we have to maintain our archive and collection to a high standard. Help is also needed to research and produce the museum displays each year. If you would like to get to know our local history and help with these activities please get in touch with sue@suewhite.demon.co.uk

The New Newsletter Format

This is the first DAS newsletter following a new layout. We now have a small team working to produce the newsletter for the society, reflecting our activities and the wide range of local history we have on our doorstep. To make this a success we need to have input from you our membership. If you have snippets of interesting news, research or photographs we would like you to send them into us. Don't worry about your literary skills. We have two editors who can help brush up your text. If you have images but no way to copy them we can help as DAS has a portable laptop and scanner, so one of us can copy them for you.

Many of you will not need these services but they are here if you want to use them. **Please send in material for the next newsletter in by the end of February** to Peter Bradbury at peter_brad@talktalk.net if you want images scanned contact sue@suewhite.demon.co.uk or 01363 695652.

We are offering a coloured newsletter to those of you who want to receive them in emails as PDF files. If you would like to take up this option please email sue@suewhite.demon.co.uk . We are very sorry but it is not possible for us to supply printed copies in colour as they just too expensive to produce. S.W.W.

Archaeological terms explained: Antiquarian. Someone who studies the past as a hobby rather than as a profession.

Do you know someone who would like to be a member of the Dereham Antiquarian Society? Why not give them membership as a Christmas Gift.

You can download a membership form or join on-line with PayPal at <http://www.derehamhistory.com/membership-form.html>

Single Member £10

Couple at same address £17

Family at same address £23

Wetherspoons Cottage, Church Street

There has been some hopeful news from Wetherspoons about their plans to start repair work on their cottage in Church Street, next to the Romany Rye.

Wetherspoons Estates Coordinator stated on 25th November that:

"I can confirm that we will be undertaking the following works within the next few weeks

- 1 Clear all the pigeons from the property.
 - 2 Board up the high level window to prevent access
 - 3 Replace any missing roof tiles to make the property wind & watertight."
- SWW



This small watercolour painting of c1900 from the Duigan Family Collection shows the cottage gable end on to the road. The building to the right was demolished when the Phoenix Hotel was built in the 1960s.

Rethatching Reveals Roof's History

The rethatching of the museum has given DAS the first chance in some 60 years to investigate the roof's underlying structure. Thanks to the good will of the Town Council and the wonderful team of M & B Thompson thatchers Sue W. W. has been able to make a detailed photographic survey, and take samples, of what was revealed. This will be the base of an exhibition in the museum next year.

Several different phases of construction and repair can be seen from the photographs on the next four pages. These images are all of the East face of the roof progressing from South to North. This area was the best preserved section of early timber work and earlier thatching materials. The timbers are of light construction, poor quality tree trunks some split to make two rafters. These have been shaped with an adz (see page 6), and are peg jointed. A run of four of these timbers have cut carpenter's construction marks numbered VIII, >, X and XI. The carpenter has used his own arrow-like symbol for the number 9. The joints on these rafters are pegged with distinctive cut pegs.

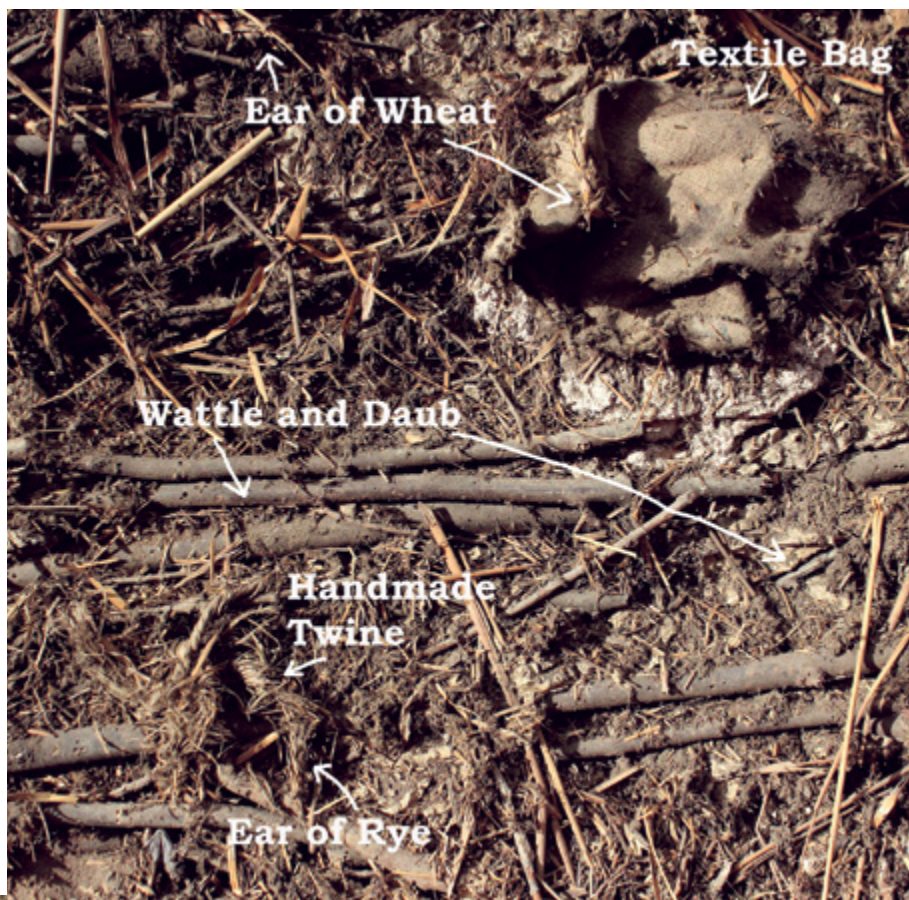
The interior of the roof was plastered from the inside with a daub mix that stuck to the roof timbers and the thatch. This acted like glue holding and preserving the organic material used for the thatch. There are at least three different phases of work, using different materials and methods of working. The earliest thatch found on the cottage was of rye straw. This would have been a cheap and readily available local resource. Straw is a light weight roofing material that allows a lighter roof structure as found on the cottage. The fine pargeting added to the front of the cottages hides their very humble origins.

The dips and hollows of the roof also revealed evidence of the environment surrounding the cottage in the past. An elm tree seed and a hoard of hazel nuts, gathered and gnawed by mice, show these trees once stood close by. There is a lot more to be discovered by further study of the archeological evidence gathered from the roof.

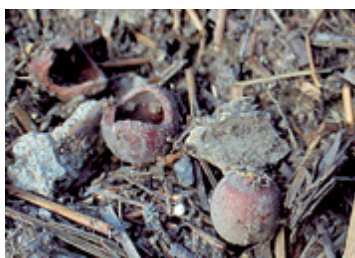
All the photographs taken of the roof can be viewed online at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/suewhite/sets/7215764809074630>



Above - The carpenter's arrow-like mark used as a symbol for the number 9. Two halves of a timber joint would be marked with the same symbol in the workshop, so they could be match up in pairs again on site.

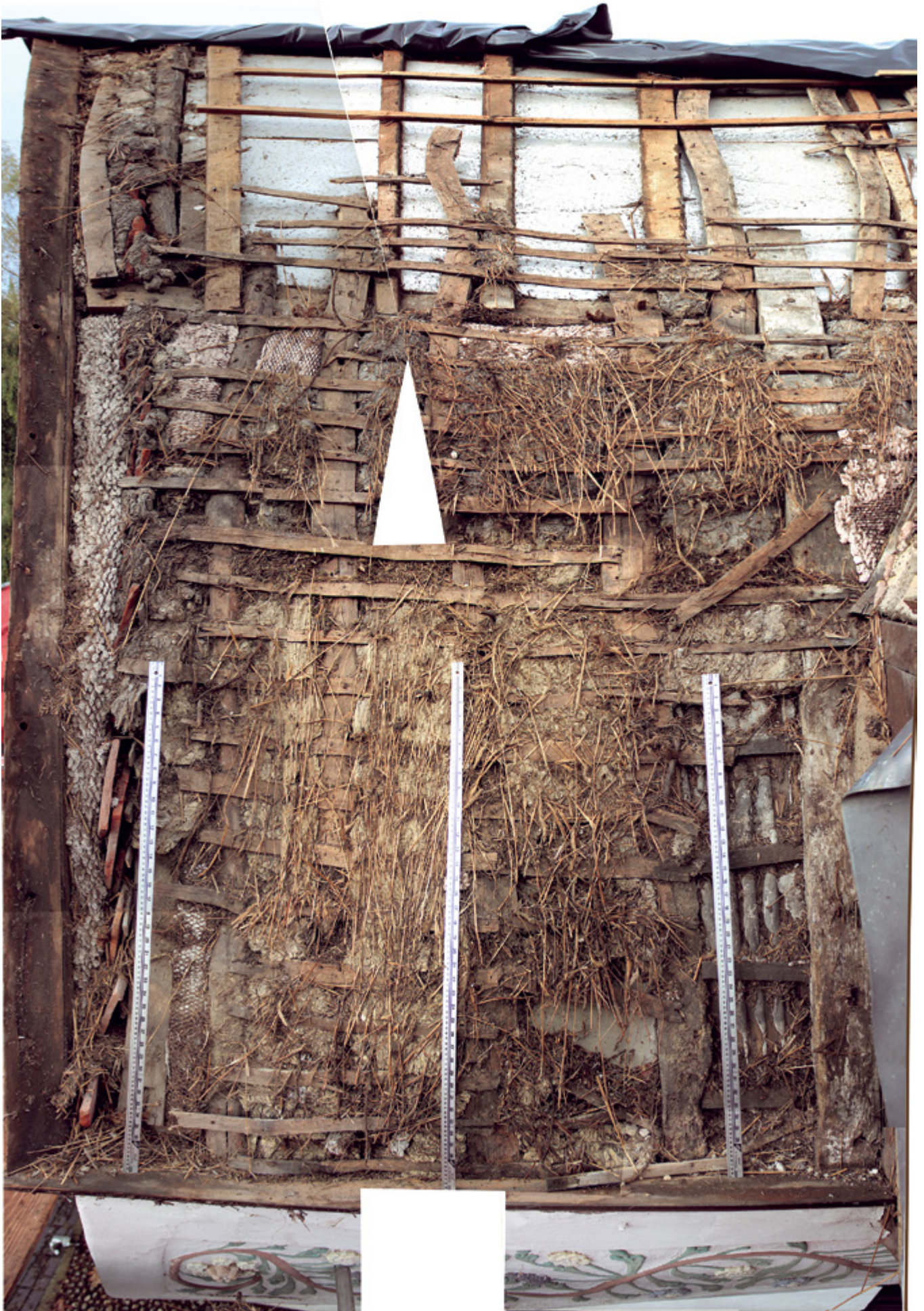


Above - Collection of interesting features on the East face of roof, South of the central dormer window. **Below** - An ear of rye straw from the East face of the roof.



Above and right - A hoard of hazel nuts found under the thatch, gathered and gnawed by wood mice.





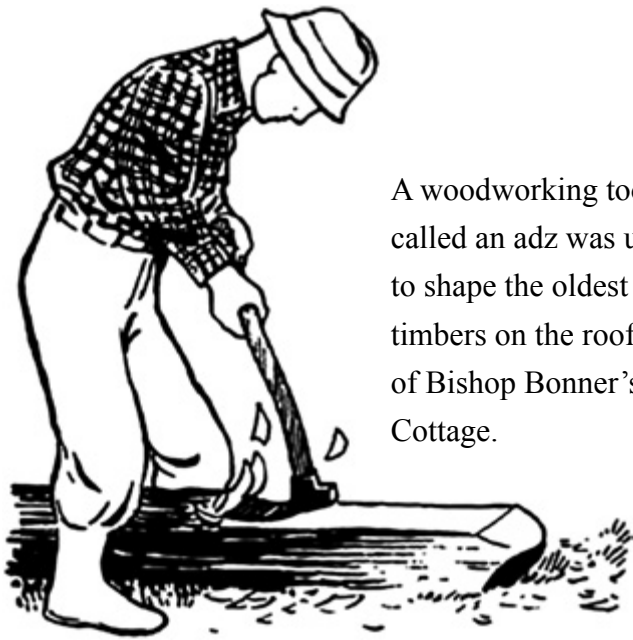
East face of roof, South section. On this area of the roof you can see horizontal laths, skilfully made by splitting oak into thin riven strips, nailed to the rafters. This method is typical of the 18th century. The daub plaster, that been applied from the inside of the roof, can be seen between the laths. The rye straw is partly embedded in the daub.



East face of roof, section north of pitched dormer window. The vertical rafters from left to right are the run of four with carpenters marks at base. The first timber is VIII the 2nd has the arrow mark representing 9, then X and XI. The building alignment changes after timber XI and the method of thatching changes at the same point, indicating a different phase in the building's development. The base layer of thatch on the left, running horizontally, is water reed, this is the only surviving area where reed was found embedded in daub; however here the daub was applied from the outside. No split (riven) wood laths or nails were used in this section of the roof.



East face of roof, South of the central dormer window (overlaps with photo on previous page). The vertical timber on the left is timber XI. The two sections of horizontal timber wall plate (bottom of photo) butt together at the point the building alignment changes. The thatch on this section of the roof is Rye straw on hazel rods and daub base.



A woodworking tool called an adz was used to shape the oldest timbers on the roof of Bishop Bonner's Cottage.



The photograph below shows three timbers from the East face of the roof. The central timber is a modern replacement roof timber cut with a machine saw. The timber on the left and right have both been hand shaped with an adz.

The timber on the left has the carpenters mark of X and the one on the right is XI. At the base of X you can see one of the wooden pegs that held the timber in place, the peg is missing on XI. SWW



14-16 18 Norwich Street - Old TSB

You will probably have seen in the local press that DAS commented on the sad loss of the frontage of the old TSB bank in Norwich Street. It was originally built as a Lacon's Bank in the 1800s. It was demolished on Thursday 20th November as part of the construction of a new 2 million pound development by Basil Todd. It had always been stated in the planning documents that the building would be refurbished and only partly demolished. The design of the new development on Norwich Street will mimic the (then existing) frontage of the old bank which was to be retained. However Breckland Officers were called in when the frontage 'became unsafe' after demolition work and it was agreed on public safety grounds it should be demolished. There is to be an archaeological investigation of the site as a condition of planning approval.

It is a loss to the town's built heritage as under the peeling corporate paint of the old TSB was a very high quality frontage of red sandstone with red brick infill. The stone mouldings and decoration were of fine craftsmanship and well worth saving. The photo below shows what was under the paint. This is what we have all lost! Do you have any memories of the bank? SWW



Above - Lacon's Bank 1890s Below - TSB in 2005



Savings Bank in 1940s





CHURCH STREET, DEREHAM, CHRISTMAS, 1906.

Christmas Cards from 1906 to 1916



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