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SUMMER 2005

Charity No. 293648

DEREHAM'S LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

# Dereham Antiquarian Society

Editors - Cliff Allwright & Kitty Lynn

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *Dereham in Flames*
- *The Paston Family - part 2*
- *Unearthed W.W.I. - 2nd of 8*
- *Cliff's down a Well investigating*
- *Kitty finds The Lost Village*
- *Churches in Norfolk Competition*
- *Programme for the next three months*
- *Also all our regular columns are inside.*



Muse News

Dereham Disasters



Food for thought

Memory



Competition

Picture Parade



W.W.I Diary

Hot



Letters

Society Snippets



Blast from the Past

The Vault



Comedy Corner



Met Idiots?

Archive Antics



Cottage Comments



Museum



Happening History



Outings



Well I Never



## Letters

Letters will be answered by the appropriate person, i.e. a member of the committee, society, archive gang, museum or muse

### Dear Readers

Have a look at the Dereham Disasters this quarter to find the second fire of Dereham, the first having been on 18th July 1581 and the third one in 1810, albeit it small in comparison. Further details can be seen (including the area shown on a map in the Museum on a new poster board.) The War Notes continue and I've written my hotspot – Kitty Clown or Catastrophe? – I've had a few. Don't forget if you have anything that could be of interest to us let us know or, even better, why not try writing an article for one of the sections or start a new one off. We're always open to suggestions.

Did you see the articles on the Antiquarian Society and Bishop Bonner Cottages Museum in the Dereham Times, dates where April 14th – in the Dereham Town Supplement showing ten photograph borrowed from us on the old town. Ian Clarke was as good as his word giving us a mention. This was then followed up the week after by Ed Nash writing about the stewards' training day.

For your information there is now a new series of in house booklets on sale in the Museum. Prices vary from £2.50 to £5. The price reflects the number of pages contained within each booklet. Topics covered are:—

- |                                                 |                                    |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Doctor's Memories of 1958 £2.50</b>          | <b>Bishop Bonner £2.50</b>         |
| <b>The Civil War in Dereham £2.50</b>           | <b>Spong Hill £2.50</b>            |
| <b>History of the Antiquarian Society £3.00</b> | <b>Under Ancient Dereham £2.50</b> |
| <b>WWI Clippings £4.00</b>                      | <b>Inebriated Dereham</b>          |
| History of B. B. Cottages & Museum              | St. Withburga                      |
| Cottage Guide Book                              | Short History of Toftwood          |
- Those in Bold are out now others will be released shortly. (& there's more to come)

### Diary Note

Museums In Norfolk Group

## MIDSUMMER BARBEQUE

Wednesday 6th July 2005

6.30pm for 7pm

At the Norfolk Shire Horse Centre  
West Runton Stables, West Runton



Food—Raffle—see horses & foals, collections, agriculture, horse drawn vehicles

All Dereham Antiquarian Society Members welcome

Tickets: £2 per person

From: Ming Secretary, Miss R. Prior, 11 Philip Place, Toftwood, NR19 1SH

## Goodbye to Jacobean Cradle

By Cliff Allwright



Handing over the Cradle on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2005  
l-r: Mrs. Hill; her daughter, Jan; Margaret Davies;  
Eddie Dell (Society Chairman); and Bob Davies.

In June 1967 Mrs. Hilda Hill, a lady living in Lowestoft, wrote to the Museum, asking whether we would like a wooden Jacobean Cradle, which had been in her family for many generations, on long-term loan for display in Bishop Bonner's Cottage Museum.

The Society's current Chairman at that time, Jane Grove, who at the time was a teacher at the High School, replied on 15/6/67, thanking her for her kind offer, which was accepted with pleasure, and arranging a date for a friend and herself to drive down to Lowestoft to collect it.

A postcard dated 30/6/67 from Jane Grove to Mrs. Hill assured her that they had brought the cradle safely to Dereham, and that it was already on display in front of the fire in One Arm Jack's Room.

Mrs. Hill had obviously written to tell Mrs. Grove that she was proposing to visit the Museum on the following Monday, and in a second postcard to Mrs. Hill, dated 18/8/67, Jane Grove suggested that she should try if possible to arrive at the Museum by 2 o'clock, which would ensure that she had a private viewing, as the Museum didn't open till 2.30.

There is no record of Mrs. Hill's visit on that occasion, but I recall Terry Davy telling me that she had brought her daughter to see the Cradle at some point in time, and I wonder whether this may have been that occasion.

Since then, the cradle has been on display almost continuously, although not always in one of our set pieces, usually occupied by one of the Museum's somewhat battered china dolls which, beneath the blankets, would probably have had a leg or an arm missing.

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## Keeping up with the Jones By Sheila & Tony



**13th July** Place - Tour of King's College Chapel, Cambridge and Madingley Cemetery.  
 Time - Cherry Tree Car Park 9.00am sharp  
 Cost - £15.00

Tour of King's College Chapel at 12pm with the rest of the day free to explore Cambridge. Visit to Madingley Cemetery on the way home.

**10th August** Place - Sutton Windmill and Museum.  
 Time - Cherry Tree Car Park 9.00am sharp.  
 Cost - £11.00  
 Please bring a packed lunch.

**14th September** Place - Ely and Denny Abbey & Farm Museum (English Heritage)  
 Time - Cherry Tree Car Park 9.00am sharp  
 Cost - £11.00

Morning to explore Ely and have lunch before leaving for Denny Abbey tour at 2pm approximately.

There are no farther details about the Cradle until 24<sup>th</sup> August 1992, when Mrs. Hill wrote asking that we return it, as she intended to arrange for it to be displayed in Lowestoft Museum. However, Terry Davy, who was the Society's Chairman at the time, asked her whether she wouldn't leave it with us for a bit longer as it was on display at the time, to which Mrs. Hill kindly agreed.

That "bit longer" finally extended until 2005, thirteen years later, when a letter dated 15<sup>th</sup> January 2005 arrived at the Museum from Mrs. Hill, once more asking for the Cradle to be returned. A date was arranged for Mrs. Hill to collect it, and Eddie Dell formally handed it back to her at the Archive on Rashes' Green on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2005, after a "temporary" loan that had lasted nearly forty years, witnessed by Bob and Margaret Davies, with myself there to record the handover of the oldest and by far most valuable item in collection.

I had always wondered how Mrs. Hill came to leave the Cradle here in Dereham when she herself lived in Lowestoft, and I took this opportunity to ask her. "Actually", she said, "I had offered it to Strangers Hall, but they said that they already had half a dozen of them, and just didn't have room for another. However, they told me that a new Museum had just been opened in Dereham, and they were sure that the Cradle would be appreciated there. And that's how it came about"

"Has it ever been employed for the use for which it was made?" I asked, and was told that it had been used in her family for generations, possibly right back to when it was made, and for her own children, including the daughter who was here with her.

When I asked whether the Cradle would be kept in the family now, she said that she herself had actually forgotten it, and that it was Janet, who preferred to be called Jan, the daughter there with her, who had asked for it, to which Jan added that it was actually *her* daughter, aged twenty-two, who wanted it now.

After a short photo session and some further chat, the Cradle was loaded into the back of Jan's car, and we bade Mrs. Hill, her daughter, and the Cradle, a safe journey home.

P.S. Does anyone know the name of Mrs. Grove's friend who went with her when they collected the Cradle in Lowestoft?

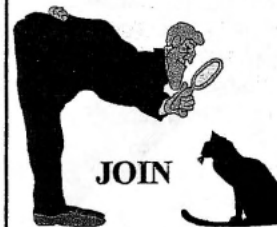
## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- *The Museum Opens – 3rd May – end of Sept.*
- *6th July – Summer BAR-B-Q. (see page 2 for details)*

## Food for thought

- 1) A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion
- 2) With her marriage she got a new name and a dress
- 3) Show me a piano falling down a mineshaft and I'll show you A-flat minor.

## Become a Detective



JOIN

## The Muse Researchers

Contact



## This issue's Planning Calendars

### July 2005

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

### August 2005

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

### September 2005

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		





## Kitty – The Clown or A Catastrophe ?

And she's not locked up?  
Not yet anyway.

*A skinny Kitty on her mini at Ringland (aged 20).*

As many of you know I cannot spell to save my life. Well yesterday my father (aged 79 recently) said after I'd been talking to him, "The one good thing about getting older is that now my brain is working the same speed as my mouth, so pet, you only have some thirty years to wait and then your mother will be able to understand what you're talking about." What he meant is my mind works 4-5 times quicker than my mouth possibly can and unless you are like minded you lose track of what I'm trying to say. Lost track already – Whoops! I must get typing faster.

Clown or Catastrophe? You decide.

1) Recently whilst apologising to Rose for not being able to make a committee meeting – I said I would be incommunicadigan – meaning incommunicado.

2) As a child I would always ask for my hotlebotle – hot water bottle.

3) Whilst playing with my cousins (mainly boys) I once went in and said that they had tried to smufficate me. Suffocate or smother I was told. My cousins told me they always suffered Kate.

### They now get worse and sometimes ruder.

(mainly because many of these come from my teenage years.)

4) Whilst at NORCAT (Kings Lynn Tech) I was walking home one night and being ribbed about how skinny I was, I walked ahead of the rest. When passing a street light I looked at my reflection on the pavement and shouted "My God, I'm randy". A little man in a dirty raincoat on his bicycle only just missed the telephone box and crashed into the hedge opposite. After the jeering of my mates, (once again nearly all male), I tried to explain that I had meant to say Bandy, referring to my knobbly knees. They didn't believe me and for the rest of the walk home I was referred to as the randy one, many passers-by being asked by them if they'd like my company for that night as I was feeling randy.

5) On graduating we had a very posh evening out and ended up at Banham Cider House – myself in long posh dress, hair up etc. Over the other side of the bar were a lot of what I can only describe as smarmy red faced posh speaking farmers – you must have come across some? Well, all night they were cracking rude jokes and with the conversation being quite boring at our table I was listening into theirs and the jokes. Suddenly I was asked my opinion on a heated discussion at our table, what did I think of people who used others' good nature to the point of abuse. I promptly replied that I hated people who masturbated others. You could have heard a pin drop. Then of course the offers of alternatives began from every room in the Pub. What I had meant to say of course was manipulate.

As for actions, well OK here's a few.

In Norwich – I have swum in C & A's pool and planted myself in the Woolpack's ornamental flower tub outside the front entrance, promptly being asked to move along by the police, rather difficult with mud up to your knee caps.

In Fakenham – one hot summer's day after a hard morning on a charity stall in the flea market, I jumped into the river fully clothed and went for a swim in front of many spectators. My friend also joined me. With others saying they wished they had the nerve. Ha, if it feels good do it – you only live once – well this time round.

I've been for a hot air balloon trip hanging upside down from below the basket – my foot got caught in the rope after they had let it go – personally I think they tied it round my booted ankle under my long skirt. I can only guess what people saw!

I however got my own back a fortnight later on the ferry to Holland when I tied all their shoe laces together under the table whilst they slept and when we docked I was well out of the way before they even got through the customs to find me.

I've been to church parade as Akela in a wheelbarrow – I'd broken my ankle and it was the idea of one of the cub sixers to get me to church. I wasn't drunk. However I have burnt the rubber sole of my shoe whilst asleep during a sermon in the said church. Everyone commenting on the smell but not knowing where it came from.

As for the thing that can make you blind, I've been floodlit in the middle of a field when the farmer decided to combine it, at well after midnight. Been caught on a fishing line on the riverbank by Pull's Ferry. Had my bra and pants flying from various flag poles and once even at half mast, and that was Swanton Morley Airfield. Been in the drum of a band called Judas Priest in the back of a large van in Cromer whilst Trine my friend went looking for me at Sherringham, God knows why, and the door opened and two of us rolled out. However I didn't cause any shipping to hit the rocks by Cromer when under the lighthouse that night of the gale – I was mentioned in the E.D.P. the next day but I wasn't named – so that's the cat out of the bag so to speak.

I have also said some things just at the right time – mainly when flashers used to accost me – on the King's Lynn Walks – one snowy evening when late for curfew – 'God, I didn't realise it was that cold, watch it doesn't freeze off'. And the time when waiting for a friend in her car and a young lad ran up and dropped his pants just as she was getting in at the other side – I said 'Ah, never minded perhaps it'll get bigger as you get older' – he turned round and ran back down Parker's Road.

Of course for the last thirty years I've had a comrade-at-arms and we have done many madcap things including my Evil Knievil Stunts – but that's another story and it'll have to keep for some other time. Do I enjoy my life – you can bet on it, with a new experience every day, it's great. Last week I nearly blew up the Telly with a candle. Am I safe? – probably not. But never mind I've survived nearly 50 years. *Kitty*

I brazenly nominate Mrs Di Lambert – or should I say Miss Prism.????

*Kitty (on the left, aged 33) at Eton Vale, Norwich—Cub Leader (Akela) Training.*





## Museum Training Day

By Cliff Allwright

With the Museum due to open in a couple of week's time, all the Stewards and Marshals met Kitty at the Museum, and because for most of them this was their first visit this year, they spent the first hour or so getting clued up on the new set-up, much of which showed Kitty's hand in the displays, which I have no hesitation in saying are spectacular. They must have taken hours and hours, and I urge everyone to make a point of calling in to see this year's presentation.

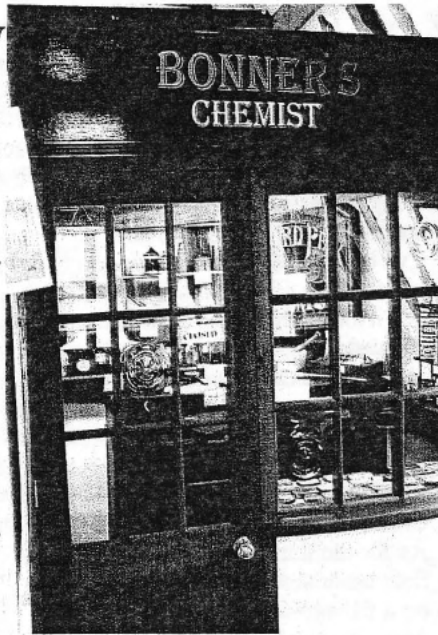
Once everyone had seen enough, Kitty ran through a steward's duties, such as the procedure for recording the number of visitors and, in case of a fire, the number that were still in the building, which led up to instruction on what action those on duty should take. Similarly, they were told what action to take and what forms needed to be used in that event, and if some other incident was to arise.

A reporter from the EDP joined us, and Kitty took him from room to room explaining the exhibits, so hopefully we'll get a boost in both the EDP and the D & FT.

Part two was at Kitty's house, where she had prepared a veritable feast to stoke everyone up ready for the afternoon session. It began with an explanation of the new Accession Record forms, followed by instruction by June Martin on what stewards on duty should do in the event of an accident in the Museum, which entailed Kitty having to lay flat (?) on the floor so that June could demonstrate how to treat anyone who was unconscious.

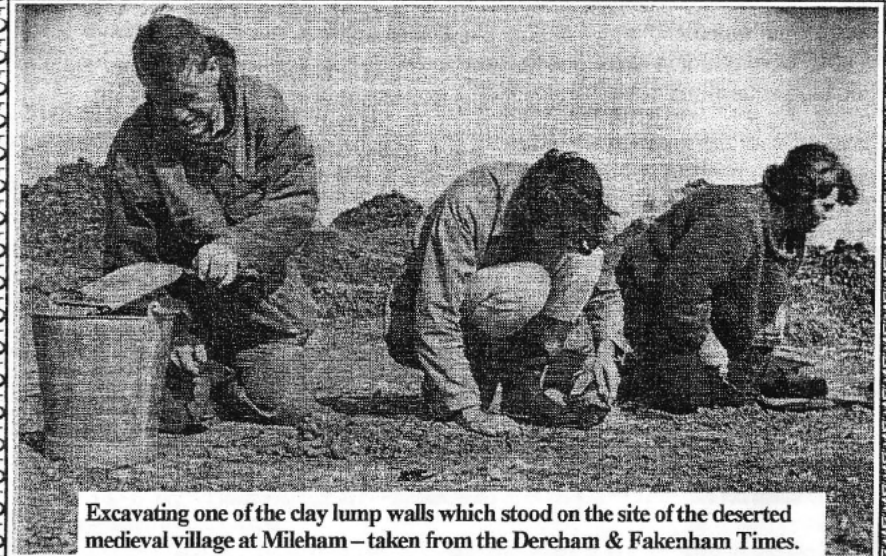
For a grand finale we were broken up into teams of three or four, and each team was given a potential difficulty to solve, one being the question of what action should be taken in the event of an eleven-year old girl falling and hurting her knee, and her mother shouting and using abusive language. That was a real test, and the team struggled with all its various difficulties, so that by the time everyone else had managed theirs, the team was still struggling to decide what to do with the victim and her mother, and whether the police, fire brigade, and maybe even the army should be summoned.

All in all, it was a very interesting and essential exercise, and if everyone else felt the same as me, there'd have been a lot of overloaded brains as a result, but I'm sure that all the stewards and marshals will be now better able to cope with the thousands of visitors that we hope will visit the Museum in the coming season.



## The Lost Village by Kitty Lynn

Whilst searching through Dereham & Fakenham Newspapers from the 1960's looking for information on Pubs of Dereham I came across this report. I've found nothing since and wonder if anyone out there knows anything more.



Excavating one of the clay lump walls which stood on the site of the deserted medieval village at Mileham – taken from the Dereham & Fakenham Times.

The report was about a lost village called Grenstein – evidently it was called this after a local street of cottages. A Birmingham University student, Peter Wade-Martins, of Mattishall aged 21 years (you may recognise the name) was the director of the dig and it was his first, although he had helped on the one at Thuxton the year before (news to me and I'll have to investigate that one). The village site was confirmed by Dr. J.K. St. Joseph from Cambridge University via aerial pictures taken by him in 1959 which showed the lines of a street with houses leading off it. Work began on August 16th 1965 and involved 30 volunteers, mainly students at the site on Mr Richard Butler Stoney's farm in Mileham. It concentrated on uncovering part of a flint cobbled street approximately one third of a mile long and one of about twenty croft buildings leading from it. From this they were able to patch together what it must have looked like 700 years earlier.

The one small building they concentrated on turned out to be a self contained croft type dwelling with its own small farm-yard and out-buildings. The plan of the building was clearly defined by lines of chalk-speckled clay and they found evidence of the clay lump walls of the building even though ploughing had destroyed some of the surface remains. Besides these finds they also found: – the jaw and part of the backbone of a horse in the yard, cockle and mussel shells, pottery, bones,

nails, horseshoes, candle stick holders, and bronze strap ends and buckles. But the most important find allowing them to date the village was an Edward I coin.

Through this the date of occupation of the village is believed to be from the Norman Conquest up to the late 13th/early 14th Century but Mr Wade-Martins would not commit himself on why the village had been deserted, saying that was for the historians to say. (Dare I say the plague or small pox.)

The dig was funded by a grant from the Public Buildings and Works with additional money coming from the Norfolk Committee.

Those were the days when history was given money when it was needed without too many questions.

Extract from the minutes of the DAS. 12th AGM held 17/2/65. – Mr T. Fanthorpe gave a report on local digs at Whissonsett, the old Vicarage and the organised excavation at Thuxton. The ring found in the well of the vicarage and a model of the medieval house at Thuxton were shown. Wish I'd been there – were any of you and can you remember – do we have any records of this anywhere?

Update—I've found a book on Thuxton and Mr T. Fanthorpe is visiting the Museum later this month so I hope to learn more from him.

## So you think you've met idiots ?



All articles featured here are true, they'd have to be – fact's always stranger than fiction.

### Idiot # 1

A true story out of San Francisco: A man, wanting to rob a downtown Bank of America walked into the branch and wrote "This iz a stikkup. Put all you munny in this bag." While standing in line, waiting to give a note to the teller, he began to worry that someone had seen him write the note and might call the police before he reached the teller window. So he left the Bank of America and crossed the street to Wells Fargo. After waiting a few minutes in line, he handed his note to the Wells Fargo teller.

The teller read the note, and surmising from his spelling errors that he wasn't the brightest light in the harbour, told him that she could not accept his stickup note because it was written on a Bank of America deposit slip. He would either have to fill out a Wells Fargo deposit slip or go back to the Bank of America.

Looking somewhat defeated, the man said "OK" and left. He was arrested a few minutes later, as he was waiting in line at the Bank of America.

### Idiot # 2

A pair of Michigan robbers entered a record shop nervously waving revolvers. The first shouted "Nobody move!" when his partner moved, the startled first bandit shot him.

## The Rise & the Fall of the Paston Family

by Peter Bradbury ©

### Part 2 - The Letters Period (1422 - 1509) Continued

At the close of the last article (Part 1) young Margery Paston was disowned by her family after marrying Richard Calle. It would have seemed inevitable that Richard Calle would have been dismissed from his post as chief steward, but the head of the family Sir John (2) insisted, in spite of the objections of his mother Margaret, that he was too valuable an employee to lose. He was never to be treated as a member of the family.

In this year 1470, Edward IV was forced to flee the country to Flanders and the Lancastrian Henry VI was restored to the throne. The Pastons immediately changed their allegiance from the Duke of Norfolk to the Lancastrian Duke of Oxford. Sir John (2) seized on the opportunity to petition the King for the return of Caister Castle, and have his revenge on the Duke of Norfolk. The petition was successful and Caister restored to the Pastons, but it was not to be for long! After one year in exile Edward IV raised an army, landed at Ravenspur, and at the Battle of Barnet in April 1471 defeated the Lancastrian forces of Henry VI. Entering London on 21st May Edward reclaimed his throne and the same night Henry VI was murdered in the Tower. In June 1471 the Duke of Norfolk once again seized Caister Castle.

Both of the Paston brothers Sir John (2) & John (3) fought at the Battle of Barnet as Lancastrians, John (3) was wounded in his arm by an arrow, they were later granted a Royal Pardon from Edward IV.

The death of Henry VI in effect ended the First English Civil War, also known as the War of the Roses.

Sir John's widowed Aunt Elizabeth Poynings was proving to be one of the wealthiest of the Paston women, and in 1471 married her second husband Sir George Brown of Betchworth Castle in Surrey. Sir John (2) living in London whilst awaiting his Royal Pardon spent Christmas in 1471 at Betchworth Castle.

Sir John (2) never accepted the second loss of Caister and while in London tried to use the influence his brother John (3) had with the Duke's wife to persuade him to return the property. He even tried the King but nothing worked, so he resorted to courtier methods of scheming he had learnt when a courtier in Edward's own court. The Chamberlain of the Household was Lord Hastings who was also Lieutenant of Calais (Governor), and Sir John (2) managed to gain his friendship and patronage. Sir John had attempted to become Knight of the Shire (MP) but the Duke of Norfolk soon put paid to that, so The Lord Chamberlain Hastings arranged for him to be MP of a borough in Cornwall. Such was the importance of having friends in high places! As always Sir John was short of money and continued mortgaging off Manors. This time it was East Beckham, which infuriated his mother Margaret whose letters to him made her feelings quite clear. In fact it was thirty years before it was recovered again.

The patronage of Lord Hastings brought Sir John fully back into favour at court, despite his activities in 1470-1471, and the King was persuaded to send one of his secretaries, William Slyfield, to the Duke and Duchess of Norfolk at Framlingham Castle with a letter supporting Sir John's claim to Caister. Still the Duke would not be swayed, not even by The King himself!

The Duke of Norfolk had no time for the Paston family, but, strangely his wife Elizabeth had a soft spot for John (3) who was placed in the household by his father John (1) to gain the young Duke's patronage some ten years ago in 1461. So secretly she let it travel back to the Paston brothers that she would continue to try and prick the Duke's conscience as to the injustice done to them. The stupid thing about all the feuding between the families was that the Duke never lived in the Castle and never intended to spend money on the maintenance of it. It was purely a case of putting and keeping the Pastons in their place.



Sir John now established at The Court of Edward IV and living in London, the responsibility of managing his estates etc. in Norfolk was left to his mother Margaret helped by John (3), she had moved from Norwich to her family home at Mauteby Manor along with the rest of her family.

Meanwhile Sir John (2), John (3) and their younger brother Edmund (2) had agreed to serve in the King's army in France at the garrison town of Calais, under the command of Lord Hastings. John (3) did not stay in Calais but returned to Norfolk to assist in running the family business.

Three years later in 1475 the King invaded France with the biggest army sent abroad for fifty years, hoping to equal the feats of Henry V. Two more of the Paston brothers Walter aged 19 and William (3) aged 16 joined Sir John (2), John (3) and Edmund (2) in France. Luckily for everyone it all proved to be an anti-climax and no one was hurt, and the King settled on a tribute of 75,000 crowns in cash, 50,000 crowns a year for life and the marriage of his eldest daughter to The Dauphin of France. **What a civilised way of preventing a war!**

All the Pastons came home, except Sir John who stayed on a few weeks before eventually returning to London, where he took up lodgings at The George by Paul's Wharf.

Sir John once again pursued the quest of Caister and finally in January 1476 he travelled to the Duke of Norfolk's seat at Framlingham Castle to personally plead his cause, and **maybe it was God's Will or something more sinister**, because as he wrote to his mother " whereas my Lord of Norfolk was yesterday in good health, this night about midnight he died". Quick as lightning to ingratiate himself with the Duchess, he offered his services and went as far as to ask his mother to send the cloth of gold that he had bought to cover his father's tomb, so it could be used for the Duke's funeral. The poor Duchess at the time was pregnant with her second child; she later lost it in childbirth.

Finally in October of 1477, seven years after the siege of Caister, Sir John became once more the master of Caister Castle!

All in all 1477 was a good year for the family.

Two years previously Sir John's sister Anne had scared her mother Margaret by showing signs of falling in love with one of the employees (shades of her sister Margery and Richard Calle) and was immediately boarded out into the household of Sir William Calthorpe, to keep them apart. In 1477 she took part in an arranged marriage to Sir William Yelverton of Caister Saint Edmund , the son of an old Paston enemy Judge Yelverton , this was much to the relief of her mother!

For a long time both Sir John and John (3) had tried unsuccessfully to find themselves a wife, Sir John was now 35 and although reputed to be a Casanova ( indeed he fathered a daughter named Constance who was named in his mother's Will) and was engaged for several years, but broke it off. He was to die a bachelor at the young age of 37. In the case of his brother John (3) however it was to be a love at first sight story and the letters between the lovers are most charming for that day and age.

John (3) probably caught sight of Margery Brews in the village of Salle, which is a small village near to Reepham. Here the Pastons had a Manor House near to the manor house of Sir Thomas Brews (which is still there, and now called Stinton Hall Farm). John fell head over heels in love with young Margery and confessed to his love in a letter to her mother Lady Elisabeth, but promised not to tell Margery until matters had been discussed between both sets of parents. But John could not keep his promise and wrote a secret letter to Margery declaring his love, which was delivered by a friend. Here is a small quote from it "and mistress I beseech you in easing of the poor heart that sometime was at my rule, which now is at yours". This would have been considered very intimate correspondence in 1476. Eventually Lady Elisabeth found them out but being a romantic kept it from her husband and the romance grew ever stronger.

This was Margery's valentine letter to John, I quote:

"Right Reverend and Worshipful, and right well beloved Valentine. I recommend me unto you, full heartily desiring to hear of your welfare, which I beseech Almighty God long for to preserve, unto his pleasure and your heart's desire.

And if it please you to hear of my welfare, I am not in good health of body or heart, nor shall be till I hear from you. For there knows no creature what pain I endure, and should rather die than dare it discover. My heart me bids evermore to love you truly over all earthly things.

No more to you at this time, but The Holy Trinity have you in keeping, and I beseech you that this bill be not seen of any earthly creature save yourself.

This letter was written at Topcroft, with a full heavy heart,

By your own,

Margery Brews

After months of discussion over John's wealth and Margery's dowry, they were happily married in the late summer of 1477.

I lived just outside the village of Topcroft for several years and often walked by Topcroft House knowing nothing of the Brews and Pastons. There is a very old oak tree in the Park with a seat surrounding it and I sometimes like to imagine Margery sitting there writing her love letters to John.

Sir John's was elected MP for Yarmouth, which reflected his influence in the area now that Caister was recovered and also his standing at court through the connection with the Lord Chamberlain (Lord Hastings). He was still battling on trying to recover his seized properties, this time Hellesdon and Drayton. Of Sir John's other brothers Edmund (2) married twice and finished up living at Mannington Hall. He died in 1510. The next eldest Walter, who was Margaret's favourite son, had returned to Norwich in 1479 to live with his mother, having graduated from Oxford. He almost immediately took ill (probably the Plague) and died aged 23; the burial was in the chancel of Saint Peters Hungate Church in Norwich, just down the road from their town house in Princes Street. ~~(I visited Saint Peter's a year or so ago and, after searching around eventually found his burial site, which is a small gray coloured ledger stone tucked away in the north-east corner of the chancel, you could barely read the inscription.)~~ The last of Sir John's brothers was William (3) who graduated from Eton and in 1478 entered the service of the Earl of Oxford He remained there for 25 years until sent home "crazed in the head" and two years later in 1505 he died. William's death gave rise to the legend of The Curse of the Pastons saying one member of each generation, until it's extinction, would always be a fool.

August of the next year 1479 was to be a sad time for the family due to the death of Agnes Paston, widow of William (1) known as The Good Judge. She was the Matriarch of the family and had set the standards for the others to follow. She died in London where she lived with her son William (2), from the Plague; she was 74, a grand old Lady! The body was brought back to Norwich and she was laid to rest next to William (1) in the Lady Chapel of the Cathedral. In November of the same year Sir John (2) whilst in London on business died of the Plague; he was only aged 37. His brother John (3), as soon as he heard, rushed down to London in order to bring the corpse back to Norfolk, but he was too late, Sir John had been buried (as quickly as possible due to dying of Plague) in The White Friars Church. He died a bachelor but left behind a love child Constance who was later mentioned in his mother Margaret's Will.

The family must have been glad to see the back of 1479!

John Paston (3) became Head of the Family supported by his loving wife Margery and their three children. They were all living at Swainsthorpe Hall at the time which is near Great Witchingham, the Hall still stands there. The volume of letters becomes sparser from now on



mainly due to the fact that John (3) was more frequently in Norfolk than his brother had been. In April 1483 Edward IV died and there followed a struggle for the throne in which Edward V along with Richard of York are murdered, and Richard the Duke of Gloucester proclaims himself King Richard III. Of course one of the first people he got rid of was Edward IV's most loyal servant (and patron to the Pastons), Lord Chamberlain Hastings who was beheaded! John Paston (3) now sought the patronage of the newly created Duke of Norfolk, John Howard. This did not last long as the Duke was killed at the Battle of Bosworth in 1485 when Richard III was killed, and Henry Tudor became King. What a worrying time for the Pastons; first they lose Lord Hastings, then Lord Howard is killed and to top it all there is a new King proclaimed.

During the ongoing struggle for the Kingdom an event occurred to cause great sadness to John Paston. On the 4th of November 1484 his mother Margaret at the age of 63 died at Norwich. In her Will she asked to be buried amongst her ancestors in Mautby Church near Caister on Sea, not as you would expect in Bromholm Priory next to her husband John (1). The south aisle was re-roofed and enlarged to contain the tomb which she designed to show all her family's heraldic shields; it must have been a magnificent sight! Unfortunately she left the construction of the aisle to her son to organise and it appears he did it on the cheap. Consequently in the next century the whole south aisle COLLAPSED and poor Margaret lays buried under a mound of earth. Perhaps one day an archaeological dig may take place to resurrect her tomb, I'd love to be there when it's revealed!

Henry Tudor was crowned as Henry VII (beginning The Tudor Period), and John by means not disclosed in the letters, became a trusted member of his Court. So we find him Sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk, and MP for Norwich in 1485. Two years later John is called upon to fight for his King to defeat an attempted attack on the Throne, and in the Battle of Stoke John distinguished himself in battle and was knighted on the field of battle by Henry VII. This was the last pitched battle of "The War of The Roses".

All was progressing peacefully for the family because of the firm hand of Henry VII putting a stop to the power of the Barons and re-establishing the rule of Law and Order. After eighteen years of marriage to Sir John (3) his loving wife Margery died in 1495. She was aged 35, and was buried in the church of the White Friars in Norwich (no trace of the church now remains) She had given Sir John two sons and two daughters. He married again but there were no further children, and he died in August 1504 when he was aged 60 and was buried next to his first wife in the White Friars church. No will or inquisition of his lands survives.

The family line continues through his son William (4) who married Bridget Heydon the daughter of Sir Henry Heydon of Baconsthorpe Castle, near to Holt.

We now enter the Golden Age for the Pastons, when during the Tudor Period their prestige and wealth knew no boundaries!

To be continued



### Winner and Answers to last issues Competition

**Winner:** - Mrs Joan Cole

Answers: - 1)Baconsthorpe Castle, 2)Burgh Castle, 3)Creake Abbey, 4)Castle Rising, 5)Thetford Prior, 6)Weeting Castle, 7)New Buckenham Castle, 8)North Elmham Chapel, 9)Castle Arce Priory, 10)Binham Priory, 11)Orford Castle, 12)Saint Benets Abbey, 13)Caister Roman Site, 14)Grimes Graves, 15)Slipper Chapel Catholic National Shrine, 16)Norwich Cathedral, 17)Shrine of our Lady of Walsingham, 18)Castle Acre Castle, 19)St Olave's Priory, 20)Blakeney Guildhall, Number 11 is in Suffolk, thus the odd one out.

## Memories of Shopping in Town by ?



**As you can't seem to be bothered why  
should WE ???? Kitty & Cliff**

**This article will be permanently lost if no one  
writes in for the next issue.**

**Any story about shopping in town in the past.  
It need only be 50 words—we'll try and find a  
photo of the shop.**

## Comedy Corner

### CAR TROUBLE



This blonde's car broke down on the M.25, so she eased over onto the hard shoulder, stepped out, walked round to the back of the car, and opened the boot.

Out of the boot jumped two men in fawn trench coats, who walked to the back of the car and stood facing the oncoming traffic. They then calmly opened their coats, exposing their nude bodies to the approaching drivers.

Not surprisingly, it resulted in one of the worst pile-ups in the history of the M25, and it wasn't long before the law came tearing up. Out jumped a cop, beside himself with rage, who ran toward the blonde, yelling, "What the heck is going on here?"

"My car broke down", replied the blonde calmly.

"Yeh! But what are those perverts doing there on the road?" bellowed the bemused officer.

And she said ... Ready?

**"Those are my emergency flashers!"**

\*\*\*\*\*

Cliff these flashers seem to be everywhere.

*Kitty*

## Dereham in Flames for a second time



*Three hundred years ago much of the town of East Dereham was destroyed by flames in a matter of a few hours. Our contributor researches have produced this record of the fateful 3rd of July 1679*

A feature commonly encountered in 17<sup>th</sup> century wills is a phrase to the effect that death comes to all men but that they know not when. The thought probably never occurred to Francis Dennis and Widow Attow or three others on the morning of Thursday, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1679, but by six o'clock that evening all had died in the "sudden and terrible fire" which engulfed the town of East Dereham in three hours. More than 170 people lost their homes, or other buildings, and a number of horses and cattle also perished. The material losses totaled about £19,573, nearly double the average loss in 47 major fires in Southern England during the half-century 1650-1699 (£11,588)

Charles and Edward L'Estrange, representing the town, successfully visited the court of Charles II to obtain a Brief (or authority) to request financial aid from all over the country – 10,000 copies were printed and circulated. It cost them £104. 9s. 4d. for accommodation, travel and "palm-greasers" (there seems to have been considerable bribery and corruption), and their expenses were met partly by John L'Estrange (£40) and Riches Browne of Scarning (£55).

The cause of the fire is not known for certain, but Sir John Fenn, the antiquary who lived in Dereham from 1765 to 1794, and whose private papers provide a firm foundation for this essay, thought it began in Edward Starling's blacksmith's forge. Edward Starling was sent to the Leet Court in 1679 for having a thatched smithy, and he was ordered to rebuild it so that it was not "to the grave fear and danger of his neighbours". Notwithstanding this, he was once again presented to the same Court in October 1679 for a similar offence, and the court records say that his shop was "recently wasted by fire". Fenn possibly had an oral tradition on which to base his opinion.

The Church Registers seem to have been lost in the flames because new ones made an immediate appearance. The first entries in the Burial Register are for Francis Dennis and Widow Attow on July 6<sup>th</sup>: the remaining three victims were possibly interred elsewhere, or were so lost in the ashes that burial was impossible.

The fire probably centered on the Market Place (then called Market Street), and the parish church, clock tower, and Bishop Bonner's Cottages are the only certain survivors. A number of buildings were repairable; Cook's present shop on the west side of Market Place was one. Recent alterations to those premises revealed a child's shoe (a "good luck" token) underneath the old staircase, and the shoe has been dated 1670-1680, which also dates the old staircase quite accurately. The shoe may be seen in Bishop Bonner's Cottage Museum.

The latter building, timber-framed and thatched, is a fair representative of Dereham's domestic architectural style of that time, though the houses of the wealthy were much larger. Thomas Moore, described as a physician, and Thomas Blyfor, a woollen draper,

both had nine rooms in their homes in addition to their shops. If we imagine the present Market Place buildings to be timber-and-thatch, huddled together, and Edward Starling's forge in close attendance, we can get a good idea of what it looked like on that dreadful day.

The house damage was assessed by a panel of three carpenters at £11,150.5s.0d, and goods and losses were estimated at £8,423.13s.6d. Some 240 persons, plus public utilities such as rails round the town well, the shambles and the pillory, were involved. The total monies received in response to the Brief and from other sources came to £3,723. 9s. 8¼d, about one-fifth of the losses. The treasurers decided first to aid those suffering personal hardship, and made four disbursements before Christmas totalling £1,462. 1s. 11d., and did not begin dealing with housing claims until January 9th following.

They made five disbursements for houses, stock and builders' bills, the last occurring on May 12<sup>th</sup> 1686. For some reasons damage claims amounting to £3,073.9s.10d., were not pressed. John Walker, for instance, stood a combined loss of £1,719.12s.0d.. a huge sum then, without apparently flinching. The average house loss was £109.5s.0d. (33 claims above that figure and 44 below), while the average loss in goods and merchandise was £55.7s.0d. (39 claims above that figure and 171 below). Sixty-nine claims for goods losses were for less than £5. These figures reveal the gulf that existed between the few rich and the many poor folk.

### After the fire?

Blome's "Britannia of 1673" refers to Dereham as "well seated ... a considerably large town having many hamlets belonging to it: and its market, which is on Fridays, is very well served with provisions...". Another source called it "one of the handsomest towns in the country". However, Chambers' "History of Norfolk" says that "before 1737 Dereham was supposed to be the dirtiest town in the country" Only the fire could have wrought such drastic change.

But Dereham acquired its first fire engine in 1749 when James Smyth, and an attorney living in the Guildhall, persuaded the town to buy one for £61.11s.0d., by which time the town seems to have been rebuilt in brick-and-tile, reducing the risk of fire damage considerably, so that when the next blaze occurred in 1810, damage was restricted to four houses and a barn or two.

*Jim Webb*

*Source cited – Newspaper article in the E.D.P. 3rd July 1979.*

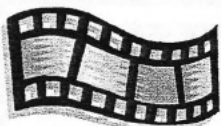
Where's the shoe?, that's what I want to know – *Kitty*

P.S. Jim Webb was a former member of the Antiquarian Society along with his wife Margaret, hence there is a room named after her in the Museum.

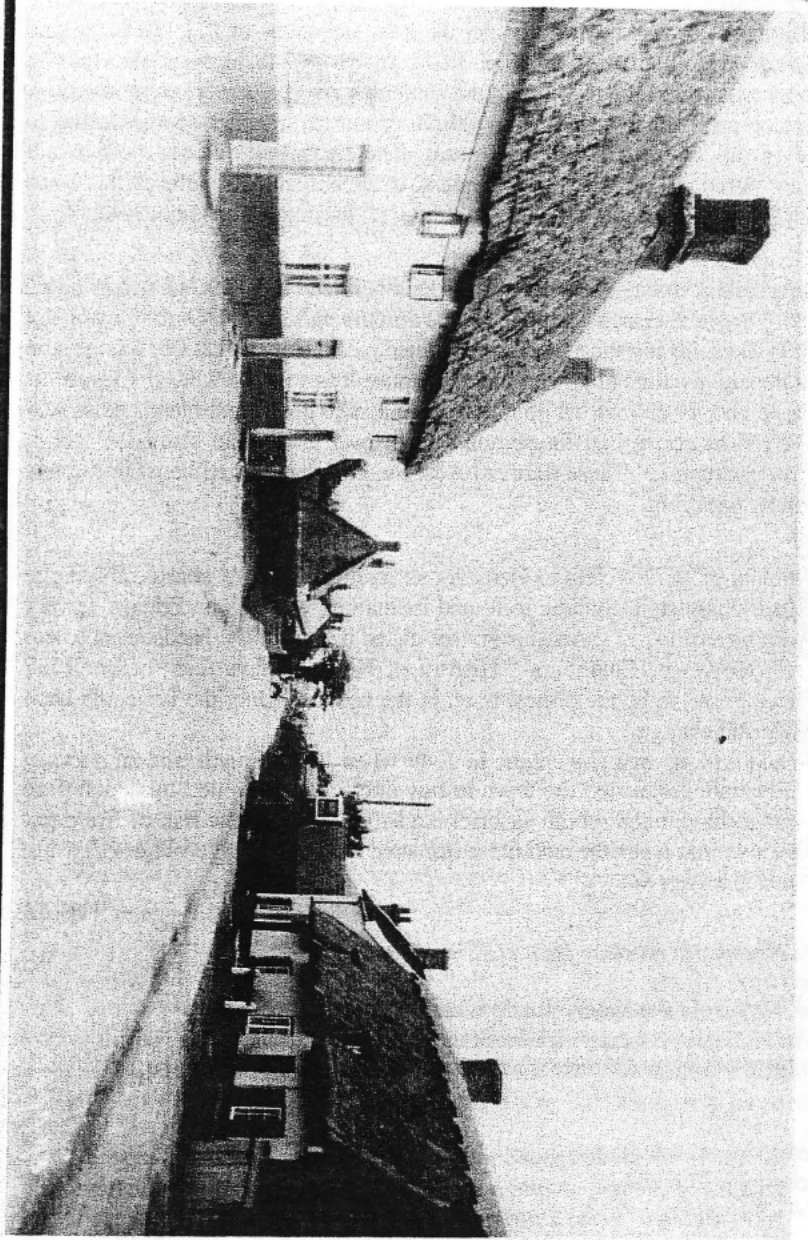
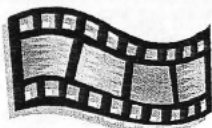
### Please Note

An earlier fire of 1581, which destroyed much of the town, is written in verse in 1582 as "An Account of the lamentable burning of East Dereham, in the county of Norfolk, July 1st 1581. Perhaps in a further issue we may have room to cover this fire also.





## Picture Parade



Can anyone tell us where this is and its date? Please remember to give the code SM2005/1, for identification. How many of you are standing with your head tilted – just like Kitty was when she was trying to type this and she'd already flipped it.

## The Vault By Cliff Allwright

## The Old Well



Another gem I've found in the files is this cutting about an old well that was found some time in 1964, presumably in the grounds of Dereham's old Vicarage (? The Old Rectory?).

The beginning of the article was missing, so I'll have to transcribe it just as it appears on the cutting.

"... the discovery of the medieval well on the site of the old Vicarage, and within the moated site of the Vicarage. This well was not only filled in when discovered: it had a 20 foot tree growing in it. But some of the younger members of the Dereham Antiquarian and Archaeological Society asked if they might excavate the site and began with the well. Under the leadership of Mr. And Mrs. Theodore Fanthorpe a team of diggers got to work. They cut deeper. Eventually a bucket on a pulley had to be rigged up, and a ladder borrowed. The diggers disappeared down the well, but if (as?) they vanished from sight the water came to life again, after goodness knows how many hundred years. Eventually a large pump had to be borrowed and gallons of water pumped out each evening previous to digging. The well, whose walls are made of flint and brick down to a distance of 9 feet or so, then rests on a beautiful timber construction and the entire depth is around 11 feet. At one time there must have been six feet of clean water in it. Truth is said to reside at the bottom of the well. What came out of the mud? Lots of bones, lot of oyster shells, fragments of medieval earthenware of dates from about the 13th to the 18th century, and a 14th century gold plated ring"

This was obviously out of some paper or magazine, printed on yellowing thin paper, and with a simple "1964" in ink on the bottom. Does anyone know anything more about it? It would be interesting to find out, and it's doubtless possible that there may even be some of our members who participated in the discovery. If so, please tell us more.

## Society Snippets By Rose Prior Dereham Town Quiz



Members will recall the Antiquarians agreed to help the Dereham Society run this year's event. The Quiz was cancelled last year due to illness of the organiser but it would be splendid for the town and the Society if we can run it successfully this year. Remember, the trophies include our own—the Terry Davy trophy.

Our member, Ann Betts, will act as the new Co-ordinator and would welcome assistance from members. Activity will begin in the autumn of this year when entry forms will be sent out to try and find 16 teams. (Originally there were 32, but the event can be run with 16 if response is lukewarm). The teams will play for the usual trophies with the Plate competition alongside for first-round losers. The teams of 4 each need a scorer and fix their own venues when the dates are issued. Cost of entry is £6. The finals will take place at Rash's Green Training Centre in the spring of 2006 as is the custom.

We will need to find 8—16 question masters, help Ann with the organisation, and publicise the event as much as possible to encourage teams to enter.

Our team—Bonner's Boffins—have an excellent record in this event but won't be able to enter this year as Ann will be setting the questions!

Members interested in helping should contact Ann on (10362) 695518.



## Under Ancient Dereham

By Mervyn Payne

(from information found in our archives)



Continuing from the last newsletter: -

### "This Mystic Place"

A large oval mound in the garden denoted the entrance, down the four stone steps of which I made my way by light of a torch, to find myself in a cavern five yards long and five feet wide. There was a foot to spare between my head and the domed brick ceiling. The walls, roof, and floor were of substantial brickwork bearing the mark of considerable age. I flashed the torch round the walls minutely, hoping to find some clue to this mystic place.

Yes, here it was. At one end the cavern suddenly decreased in height, and beyond was a small bricked-up recess. Only an unspectacular recess, in truth, but it might once have led the way down into the tunnel for which I was seeking.

Unless it takes a sharp turn, this tunnel runs under a little cluster of time-mellowed cottages, and on toward the Guildhall, which is about three hundred yards away. My informant told me that over sixty years ago her father first cultivated the garden in which this subterranean entrance is to be seen, and the place has remained absolutely unchanged since that time. There were rumours, I was told, that a tunnel from Little Fields anciently ran to the old Guildhall, and some would have it that it zigzagged from the Guildhall to the Parish Church.

### House of Remembrance

My enquiries now took me to a large house in a part of Becclesgate known as Gravesend Terrace. Its dormer windows look out fugitively upon the lone, empty tomb of St. Withburga, and the beautiful west end of the Parish Church. This is a house of romance and mystery. One cannot pass its threshold and fail to be stirred by the centuries of vivid history it has known. Long ago it may have been the home of Dereham's priests. Others say it was the site of a monastic building, but of records there are none.

"Yes, there was actually a tunnel leading to Dereham Guildhall from here, some 250 yards" said the owner, and she led me down into the unusually large cellars beneath the house. After many twists and turns we at last reached what I believed to be the bricked-up entrance of a tunnel. Again, there was a similar recess to what I had seen in the Little Fields cavern. The owner took a stick and knocked vigorously on the bricked-up recess, and through the cellars rolled long echoes.

My companion went on to tell me an interesting story about her grandfather. "He was a Dereham builder" she said "and it was he who bricked up this tunnel, they say. His men made their way a little distance into it, but their candle went out, and they hurried out quicker than they went in. No doubt they were scared"

I have never seen more curious cellars than these, and they probably date back 400 or 500 years. Large oval earthenware pots are let into the walls, and there were ancient doorways and arches through which must have passed many men on strange errands.

*to be continued*



## Competition

These are all places that you can or could have visited over the last 30 years – some may now be shut.

This time it's Churches of Norfolk. Write the name of the church and where it is (if possible) by the number on the form and send it back to me. The prize is as usual a voucher for £5.00 which can either be used as money off the 2005 outings or deducted from a year's subscription for the Dereham Antiquarian Society. All correct entries will be put into a draw and the winner notified. Their voucher will be given to them in their next newsletter. Correct answers will be shown in our next issue along with the winners name.

- 1) This is the largest parish church in England, and it is huge, dwarfing some cathedrals. It has a floor area of over 2000 square metres. It was built in 1101 by Bishop Herbert de Losinga, and used to have 20 small chapels attached. Name the church & the place.
- 2) It is unusual to have two churches with the same name in the small village. But this village does – leyline believers put the oldest church (1090) at one end of the longest known leyline in Britain, St. Michael's leyline – this stretches 400 miles from St. Michael's Mount to here.
- 3) This church tower is significantly wider at the bottom than the top. – consists of four brick cubes, stacked on top of each other – built in 1793 on the base of the original 16thC tower.
- 4) This village has three churches in a row.
- 5) This churchyard has two tombstones which are very unusual – they are carved to show pictures of the deceased's occupations. One man and one woman. Name the village & church.
- 6) It holds a grim secret – inside the church on the choir stalls – the first one is on the near end of the left stall, and there is a small sign beneath it "Jaws of Hell (14th Century)". It depicts a fearsome scene of the devil pushing a sinner into a dragon's mouth and there are more.
- 7) This church was saved from the beach – when it fell off the cliff – the villagers gathered

## D.A.S.

## Norfolk's Unusual Churches

Competition Volume 2, Issue 2



(Block capitals)

Name .....

Address .....

Post Code ..... Tel: (.....)

**Closing date**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Sept, 2005.**

Please return the competition answer slip form to: -  
 Summer Competition, c/o Kitty Lynn, Well House, Paper  
 Street, Clint Green, Yaxham, Dereham, Norfolk, NR19 1RY.

- it up from the shore, transported it and built it again on the cliff, still with its eight sided tower.
- 8) This one has a Grade II reservoir right outside it's entrance gate.
  - 9) A innocuous looking church contains a most weird and gruesome pew – a carved wooden skeleton, with hour glass and scythe perched on one corner.
  - 10) Amazing parish church would look more at home in a cathedral city – but stands in a country lane. Dedicated to an Archangel, with twin tower, pinnacles, the works designed by Whitewell Elwin
  - 11) This coastal church is the only one to have a separate lighthouse tower.
  - 12) This houses the finest wineglass pulpit in England – no longer.
  - 13) This has a gardening font, depicting 12 carvings, 4 per side showing seasonal labours.
  - 14) This is one of the oldest forms of places of worship ever found in wood – the other is in stone
  - 15) This church has a rocket on the side – it's built in – in stone.
  - 16) This is an example of Norman re-building of a Saxon church, although it is not known why the Norman's erected their new church a small distance from and out of alignment with the old round tower.
  - 17) In this place the churchyard has three churches in it.
  - 18) The tower was too weak for its bells so another was built and then used as a gaol for Napoleonic war prisoners.
  - 19) Many historians believe this to be the oldest Saxon round towered church.
  - 20) A Fancy cupola and clock look out of place on this plain 13thC tower
  - 21) An abbey with two towers one for the monks and one for the town.
  - 22) This really is a hybrid church tower – a right mix up – three styles – three periods. Is it Saxon, gothic (1857) or recent (1989)? It doesn't know. All have put their mark.

**Answers** (Block Capitals Please)

- |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1) .....  | 2) .....  |
| 3) .....  | 4) .....  |
| 5) .....  | 6) .....  |
| 7) .....  | 8) .....  |
| 9) .....  | 10) ..... |
| 11) ..... | 12) ..... |
| 13) ..... | 14) ..... |
| 15) ..... | 16) ..... |
| 17) ..... | 18) ..... |
| 19) ..... | 20) ..... |
| 21) ..... | 22) ..... |

**Unearthed W.W.I. Notes** part 2



Continuing from the last newsletter that was given to us by Shirley Davy from Terry's collec-

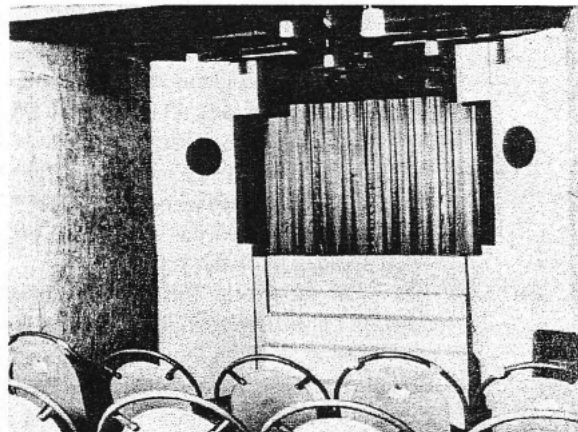
11. Edward Peck, head of committee concerned with soldiers' recreation was collecting games, puzzles and magazines for the use of the soldiers.
12. **31/10/14** The Vicar, Rev. and Mrs. W.H. Macnaughton-Jones, offered to vacate the Vicarage for use as a hospital. This was made possible by the kindness of Mrs. Coke who, on behalf of her husband, Captain Coke, who was fighting with the Scots Guards, placed St. Nicholas House (Norwich Street?) at the disposal of Rev. and Mrs. W.H. Macnaughton-Jones. A committee was formed consisting of the Vicar, Chairman of the U.D.C.; Medical Officer of Health; Officer Commanding Depot; Messrs. H.H. Aldiss; J.P. Bradley; G.H. Goodchild; and E. Peck
13. **2/11/14** A Penny Fund was started by the Vicar for maintenance at the hospital. £48/12/6d per year was guaranteed by weekly contributions of 1d at a collection on Saturday.
14. U.D.C. recommended that Back Lane be named Queen's Road. Mention of 'Neatishead Lane' in this paper.
15. **14/11/14** The Vicar vacated the Vicarage without waiting for the formalities of official sanction by the Diocesan Register. The hospital is expected to be ready 'next week'. Work is being done by 25 ladies of the congregation of the Parish Church, and 25 ladies connected to the Free Churches in the town.
15. Despite there being no trouble in the town, as elsewhere, the pubs were ordered to close at 9.30 pm from **7/11/1914**.
16. The first case admitted to Dereham Military Hospital was a Sergeant of the 5th Essex, who broke his leg while roller-skating at the rink on Sunday morning. A Company was quartered at the rink and they had great fun when off duty.
17. The 5th Essex Regiment had just settled at Dereham when they received the order on Monday to leave, and within four hours they were on the train.
18. **28/11/14** A 'cheap Jack' set up a stall in the Market Place. The glib salesman soon attracted a crowd. Some Territorials purchased boxes and waited for the expected gifts. The auctioneer was so verbose that the bugles blew the Fall-in before they received their presents. When the parade was dismissed the salesman was still on his stall with business in full swing. He was interrupted by the insistent demands by the Terriers for the return of their money. The salesman would not submit to force, and, despite the presence of officers of the law, the soldiers overturned his stall. Money and watches were scattered everywhere, and the man took refuge in a shop. The soldiers became so threatening that the salesman, who had been bold, bolted. The Terriers were in full cry after him and, turning from the High Street into Norwich Street, were barred by Military Police. The men made a strategic move into Cowper Road and waited for the man to pass. They held a tradesman who had to prove his identity before being released. Then they discovered the 'cheap jack' making for the station. He managed to make the safety of the refreshment bar, where he barricaded himself in, and there he remained under guard of the MPs, until his train steamed in, when he smiled with relief.

# Well I Never by Cliff Allwright



## The World's Smallest Cinema

Starling's Cinema – advertised as “The Smallest Cinema in the World” - in the 1930s. Situated in the High Street, on the spot now occupied by the hairdressers/antique shop next to the Press Office.



I discovered this photo in a heap of old photographs, and put it aside to copy for the Newsletter. Just two days later I came across the following:

### The Small Screen

Britain's smallest cinema – a twelve-seater – has been built by Mr. John Briggs, 68, in his garden at East Dereham, Norfolk.

Unfortunately, it doesn't say exactly where in Dereham. Does anyone know? I know that there was a similar small cinema in the garden of a house on Shipdham Road, in Toftwood, so might that have been it?



Next Issue  
14th September  
2005