Wettest summer on record? - there is (almost) always sunshine where the NHBG visits!

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Welcome to issue 24 of the NHBG Newsletter.

Following such a successful Olympic Games this summer, the NHBG has cause to celebrate too. Twelve years after its inception, the group membership remains strong; our research continues to gain recognition as a model for other groups, and goes from strength to strength following on from the award-winning journals on New Buckenham and Tacolneston with the work on the buildings of Walsingham, in the early stages on the houses of Hempnall and the continued investigations of aspects of church architecture. Members are also continuing documentary research, particularly into the history of Walsingham, as this adds to the information that the buildings impart; more help is always welcome. Please, do get involved in our researches if you can, to continue the group’s good work.

Training also continues to be important, with Susan & Michael’s ‘Measuring Day’ at Church Farm in October (see page 16) ensuring that valuable skills are passed on and honed, enabling others to participate actively, so that our researches can continue to expand.

As we come to the end of another fully-subscribed Summer Programme of events covering a wide range of subjects and locations, we look forward to a varied Winter Programme which will discuss topics such as Canterbury as a pilgrimage centre which may help to explain some of the current findings at Walsingham; two studies of very different nineteenth-century architecture - Parsonage Houses in the county and the work of the Cockrills of Yarmouth; and two lectures on different aspects of architecture of the twentieth century. It is important that while we continue to study the past carefully, that we also look forward, in this case at buildings which will become the historic buildings of the future.

I look forward to seeing members at the winter lectures at UEA.

Adam Longcroft
Chair, Norfolk Historic Buildings Group
September 2012
a.longcroft@uea.ac.uk

A.G.M. 2012 Report (Lynne Hodge)

After the interesting tour of Hingham (see page 14), and an extensive collection of member-made cakes and scones, the 2012 AGM was held at the Lincoln Hall, Hingham on Saturday 16th June. In the absence of Adam Longcroft, Ian Hinton was in the chair.

After apologies were received from members who were unable to attend, the minutes of the 2011 AGM were agreed as a true record and signed. Our Treasurer, Sue Shand, reported a quiet year during which the Group received about £5000 in income, but had spent £6500. There were no questions.

It was reported that as at March 31st 2012, the Group had 252 members.

There were no other nominations for the post of Chairman, so Adam Longcroft was unanimously re-elected. As there was only one nomination for committee-member posts - Anne Woollett - it was proposed and seconded that the eight current members of the committee who were eligible and prepared to stand again were re-elected, along with Anne, to fill nine of the ten places, one vacancy remains.

Rising postage costs were discussed. There was general agreement that ordinary letters could now be sent out electronically but that the Newsletters will still be posted. Members were asked to keep the Membership Secretary aware of their up-to-date email address. All those who wish to receive paper communication will continue to do so. One member urged the committee to reconsider their decision not to charge those who did not have, or wish to receive, email, a higher membership subscription to cover the extra postage charges.

There was no other AGM business, so after thanks to the members for attending, the meeting was closed at 5.15pm.

Email addresses

It was agreed at the AGM that future communication, other than newsletters, will be via email to those that have email addresses, in order to save some of the Group’s huge postage costs.

There are 9 members that do not have an email account, they will continue to receive AGM papers, subs renewal reminders and other letters by post. Everyone else will receive a test email from me in the next week or so to the address that is shown in the membership records. If you have changed your email address and have not let me know, could you do so a.s.a.p. please.

Add me to your Contacts List so that any future changes are automatically notified. (Ian Hinton)
Summer outing report

Stiffkey Hall (12th May 2012)

Alayne Fenner

It was a lovely day for it. The NHBG assembled by the church above the Hall at 10.30 a.m. Then followed a slight hiatus as it appeared that our host was expecting us at 2 p.m. However all was soon sorted and we trooped down the drive to a beautiful lofty room against the little gatehouse where coffee, cake and our host, John Bell, awaited us.

Before the tour started Mr. Bell gave a short talk about the house. The building of Stiffkey Hall had begun in 1576 but was never completed. It was designed by Sir Nicholas Bacon for his second son Nathaniel. The Bacon Papers of that time are full of his letters fired off from London, requesting measurements and issuing instructions for the building of a grandiose house, set in gardens of Italianate style and proportions that the impecunious Nathaniel was unable to fulfil.

The plan was for a great courtyard house with four towers at the external corners and four in the internal. The west range was the kitchen and domestic side, the north range was the Great Hall and the east was to contain the state apartments. To the south was the Gatehouse with a long gallery above. Apart from a very small gatehouse this range was never built and the gallery ended up in the attic.

Sir Nicholas died in 1579, the year that Nathaniel and his family moved into the incomplete west range, the south-east corner of which still has toothed brickwork to provide bonding for an extension which never happened (figure 4). Furthermore, he only got round to building the east range in 1589, completed by the time of his daughter’s wedding in 1592.

Nathaniel Bacon died in 1622 and the estate passed to the Townsends of Raynham. Stiffkey Hall was let but neglected. An engraving by Repton (figure 2) shows it much as today with the east wing and the hall gone and looking like a farmyard. Five towers remain standing today, three of which are in use in the west range, two are ruinous.

Our tour began by viewing the house from down by the river to give an overview of Sir Nicholas’ plan for the relationship of the building to its landscape. (Figure 1)

Mr. Bell’s restoration work was impressive. Lining up the vista back to the house, two long, low, matching farm buildings (one Victorian and the other new) run north to south towards the river, with a double row of pleached limes marching downhill between them. Symmetry indeed – Sir Nicholas would have been gratified.

The house itself has been beautifully restored, with care and taste. The lost east wing has been excavated to show the footings, neatly gravelled, the terraces are freshly planted and the gutted Great Hall is grassed. We congratulate Mr. Bell for his vision and flair and thank him for his hospitality.

I was particularly interested in this visit as the last time I had been there was thirty years ago in 1982, when the house had just been bought by friends of Hassell Smith of UEA, who were restoring it. Hassell, the onlie begetter of the Bacon Research Project had seized the chance while the house was in a raw state and had asked a group of us to go for a few weekends to make measurements and poke around to try and answer some of his questions about it. Vic Nierop Reading did a lot of drawings and we did a small excavation in the roofless Great Hall, then a walled garden, to see if there was a cellar beneath (there was) and whether the infill showed any signs that it had been gutted by fire (it didn’t).

My first impression this visit, after 30 years, was how beautifully trig and trim everything looked. About two acres of scruffy field was now an immaculate lawn. The lost east wing had been excavated to show the footings, surrounded by neat gravel, and the terraces were freshly planted.
J W Evans Silver Factory

Nick Hill (October 7th 2011)

Birmingham’s Jewellery Quarter is world famous as an urban industrial centre of jewellery and metal-ware production. It began as a late-eighteenth-century development in a relatively rural area and gradually became a hub of jewellery and silverware manufacturing, partly due to the establishment of the Birmingham Assay Office.

The unique character of this factory, founded by Jenkin Evans in 1881, was recognised during English Heritage’s survey of the buildings of the Quarter in 1998-2000, which concluded that it was ‘probably the best-preserved example of a manufactory based in what were initially domestic premises.’

The buildings themselves are not unusual, but the whole entity, densely packed with its original machinery - steel dies, drop stamps and fly presses, tools and business archive is an exceptionally complete survival. The Evans building is listed Grade II*.

The buildings were originally constructed in 1836 as a row of four rather elegant terraced houses, 54-57 Albion Street, with open yards to the rear. In a development pattern typical of the Quarter, the yards were built over with workshops during the late 19th century (figs 2-3). Jenkin Evans set up business here at no. 54 as a die-sinker, designing and cutting patterns from steel blocks for the manufacture of jewellery and silverware. A talented artist, he also proved to be a highly successful business man, who in due course purchased the whole of nos. 54-57. Initially the family lived on the premises at Albion street, but moved out to the suburbs in 1901. Jenkin passed on the business to his two sons and his grandson Tony joined the firm in 1955 retiring in 2008. In its heyday the factory employed up to 60 people, but the silverware market declined in the late twentieth century, and by the twenty-first century only occasional production runs were undertaken, though the machinery was kept in operation. English Heritage stepped in and bought the property in March 2008.

Throughout its life the JW Evans company remained wholesale only, supplying other manufacturers or retailers, an integral part of the local network of specialist trades, each providing vital services to the others – such as engraving, electro-plating or polishing. Jenkins’ own specialist craft, die-sinking, was the heart of the business. This involved cutting, by hand, a three-dimensional pattern into a block of solid steel, though a ‘pantograph’ machine was specially imported from the
USA in 1905, a very high-tech innovation in its day. In the early decades of the business new designs were constantly being added to the range so large numbers of dies were produced. The eventual number, crammed into every corner of the factory, is about 15,000.

The die was passed into a drop stamp in one of the three stamp shops, where the heavy hammer head came down on the piece of flat metal (whether silver or base metal) placed in it, thus forming the required pattern. The business was particularly known for its high quality hollow-ware such as candlesticks and condiment sets, which needed deep pressings and a series of stamping operations which was highly skilled work. The pressings then went upstairs to the three fly-press shops for cutting out and piercing. (Figure 5).

Much of the earlier factory production involved the supply of sets of component parts to other manufacturers, but later Evans employed his own silversmiths who worked in the silversmiths’ shop on the first floor, assembling the various components into finished pieces. A large piece such as a candelabra could involve up to 100 components.

The buildings were in extremely poor condition throughout, so Phase 1 of the project, undertaken in 2009-10, involved major repairs to the external envelope, with complete re-roofing and complex structural repairs. Phase 2 of the project, to conserve the interior, restore some of the machinery and create facilities for visitors, commenced on site in August 2010 and was completed in April 2011.

A radical approach to conservation

To preserve the extraordinary atmosphere of JW Evans, the contents have been retained untouched in situ during the whole of the repair works, instead of being removed – a radical approach, never before undertaken in this country. The interiors were also carefully conserved in an ‘as found’ condition, using a variety of specially developed techniques.

The site is now managed by English Heritage and is open for pre-booked guided tours between April & September.

For more information, see the English Heritage website:

To book a tour, call English Heritage Visitor Services on 0870 333 1181.
Winter lecture synopsis

How to take a house down

Richard Harris  (March 13th 2012)

Buildings archaeology is now a fairly well-established discipline, but when I started working for the Weald & Downland Open Air Museum (WDOAM) in 1975 it had hardly been heard of. I was fortunate in having already had some years of experience in working for FWB Charles on dismantling buildings in Coventry, and on projects for Avoncroft Museum of buildings, so I was keen to develop my skills working for the WDOAM.

I learned early on that “post-excavation” was as important as the dismantling process itself. Examination of the timbers of a gable frame from Monkspath Hill Farm in Warwickshire, dismantled to make way for the M42, totally changed my original interpretation from being the surviving end frame of a cross wing to being one half of a double pile range with an “M” roof.

My first project for the WDOAM in 1975 was the “upper hall” from Crawley, one frame of which revealed that there had been a complex arrangement of two overlapping ranges in a slightly cranked alignment. Both buildings had been examined and recorded in situ by numerous experts, but it was the dismantled timbers that gave the game away.

It sometimes happens that timbers that have been re-used within a building can tell a story of their own. In dismantling Elland Old Hall in West Yorkshire, to make way for the Elland bypass, the timbers of an extremely rare “tenterframe” for tentering cloth were found re-used as the floor joists of a Victorian parlour.

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The conversion of timber is a topic of abiding interest to timber framers, and dismantled timbers have given us the opportunity to gain numerous detailed insights into the ways in which traditional carpenters used timber. For instance I examined a set of floor joists from a mid-C17 building called Poplar Cottage from Washington, West Sussex, and by matching tool marks and timber features was able to determine the exact sequence of operations by which eight joists were sawn from a log, as shown in the diagram below.
How to take a house down
(continued)

My first major project for WDOAM was the house from Walderton in 1980, on which I worked with the West Sussex County Archaeologist Fred Aldsworth. Our work was published in Sussex Archaeological Collections 120 (1982), and the story of the dismantling is told in Building History, published in 2010 to celebrate the Museum’s first forty years. This was total archaeology from the top of the chimney to the lowest strata in the ground, and the final record was assembled as a combination of site drawings and post-excavation.

In taking down the chimney I made a detailed brick-by-brick record of every course, which proved to be absolutely essential in understanding the complex twists and turns of the flues and openings, and one of the many interesting and satisfying insights was the discovery of a sequence of four re-builds of the oven.

The Museum has in the last few years strengthened its resources in documentary research, and our historian Dr Danae Tankard recently discovered some documents relating to the family which owned the house from Walderton, suggesting that it may possibly have been refurbished as a licensed victualling house in the C17 – a reminder that research can never truly be said to be finished.

In another exhibit, the mid-C19 Whittakers Cottages from Ashtead in Surrey, I was able to show both the source and conversion of all the timbers – the secondary timbers being from small local trees of many different species, each tree giving three 4”x2” timbers, and the primary timbers were from imported Baltic softwood balks. The weatherboarding was particularly interesting as they came from mill-sawn 7” x 2½” softwood boards which were pit-sawn in Surrey into four feather-edged boards.

continued overleaf
My final case study was Longport Farmhouse, which was dismantled during the creation of the Channel Tunnel terminus at Folkestone. This is a complex building of numerous phases that the Museum dismantled in partnership with the Canterbury Archaeological Trust. Our aim was to reconstruct the building in almost exactly the form in which we found it, with all its successive alterations, and in order to do that we numbered all the facing bricks and stones – about 8,500 in all.

Numbering the bricks of Longport Farmhouse. The brick positions were also recorded on a wooden battens…

...as well as on hand-drawn elevations.

Every one of these 8,500 bricks went back into its proper position, the result being that the building in its reconstructed state is almost indistinguishable from its appearance in situ, as shown in the photos on the right.

Richard Harris has retired as the Director of the Weald & Downland Open Air Musem, but is still active as a Research Associate.
‘1066 and all that’ Land Law (Part II - estates)

Chris Ash (Members’ Night - 12th January 2012)

Part I of Chris’s Talk last winter on Land Law covered Tenure and the different ways that the law has allowed people to hold land. It was printed in Newsletter 23. This second part covers Estates, which in legal terms governs the length of time that the Tenure could be enjoyed.

How long Oh Lord, how long!?

It is all very well having an interest in land (tenure) but not very helpful unless the tenant knows for how long he can enjoy that interest. It might be granted for life (for so long as the tenant lived), in tail (for so long as the tenant or any of his descendants lived) or in fee simple (for so long as the tenant or any of his heirs, whether descendants or not, were alive). Fee simple and the life estate have always existed in English law; the fee tail estate was introduced by statute in 1285 but can no longer be created.

Fee Simple

Nowadays, fee simple is the only estate (apart from leasehold) that can be created. “Fee” simply means that it can be inherited. Thus when land is granted to A and his heirs it was inherited by his heir on A’s death. From the fifteenth century it became possible to leave the land to a stranger by will and later inter vivos (during lifetime). A person’s heir could be found amongst his issue (children and grandchildren); if no issue his collaterals (brothers and sisters) with the male taking before the female. After the Inheritance Act 1833 ancestors were included (parents and grandparents etc) with, again, male taking before female. It is the nearest thing to absolute ownership that can exist in English law.

The Fee Tail

There are few fee tails still in existence now and none can be created. However, it is a very important development historically; social historians would perhaps be well advised to have a reasonable understanding of its workings. The hallmark of the fee tail was a limitation to a person and the heirs of his body; restricting inheritance to his lineal descendants, as opposed to the collateral relations who could inherit the fee simple if there was no issue. It was the consequence of the Statute De Donis Conditionalibus 1285. On the failure of the original donee’s linear issue the land would revert to the donor in fee simple unless he had granted the fee simple to a remainder man in the event of the issue terminating. Thus the statute gave to landowners what the common law had always denied them: the power to create a virtually inalienable estate. Fortunately in the fifteenth century the courts, with their traditional hostility to restraints upon alienation, began to countenance devices to frustrate the effects of the statute. Such devices became known as ‘barring the entail’

An interesting footnote and an illustration of the perceived consequences of the fee entail and its effect on the actions and attitudes of the gentry is to be found in Jane Austen’s novel ‘Pride and Prejudice’. In that fictional case the Bennet estate was subject to a “fee male entail” i.e. not only entailed but further restricted to male heirs only. Unfortunately the Bennet family lawyer did not seem to be aware of barring actions. Austen wrote Pride and Prejudice partly as an illustration of the awful circumstances forced on genteel ladies by the system of entail. She needed the hopelessness of the Bennett daughters’ situation for dramatic effect. Perhaps for this reason she ignored the legal solution to the plight of their protagonists? Alternatively, was she unaware in real life of the possible legal options? Either way, the lawyer should have been shot!

The Life Estate

As the name suggests, this lasts for life only; the fee simple reverts to the grantor on the death of the tenant. If the tenant alienates the estate to another, that other only has an interest for the life of the tenant. Thus if A is granted Blackacre for life and sells his interest on to B the latter only holds for the life of A. The fee simple reverts to the grantor or his estate on A’s death. C is said to have a life interest ‘pur autre vie’ (for the life of another)

Leases

These are familiar to everyone. However, it is perhaps worth noting that historically they were regarded as mere contractual rights to occupy land. The leaseholder was not fully protected against other persons until the end of the fifteenth century. By the end of the thirteenth century he could sue for damages and by 1499 he could recover the land itself by writ. Thus two of the characteristics of an estate in land were established: the duration of the leasehold interest, and the right to recover the land from anyone who dispossessed him.

Conclusion

Tenure means the holding of land on certain terms and conditions. It refers to the manner in which the law allows a person to hold land. Historically tenure was the fundamental doctrine of land law. Estates are now of much greater importance both in theory and practice. The term “estate” refers to the duration of the landowner’s interest: fee simple, in tail, for life, or under a lease for a period of years.

Once the distinctions between tenures and estates are grasped in their historical context, a subject which has traditionally been regarded as both complex and arcane becomes much easier to assimilate. An outline knowledge of English land law can only enhance our understanding of the documentary record and the evolution of what is called, colloquially at least, ‘a property-owning democracy’. 

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Summer outing report

Coggleshall (9th June 2012)

Big joists, long nicks and a burnmark

John Dean

‘… there was hardly a cottage which did not hum with the spinning wheel, and hardly a street where you might not have counted weavers’ workshops, kitchens where the rough loom stood by the wall to occupy the goodman’s working hours. Hardly a week but the clatter of the pack-horse would be heard in the straggling streets, bringing in new stores of wool to be worked and taking away the pieces of cloth to the clothiers …’

from Eileen Power, Medieval People

Coggleshall was, from the fourteenth century, an important centre in the wool trade. From the fifteenth century it was second only to Norwich, Sudbury and Colchester, in the cloth trade. Expect to find this celebrated in field and place-names, building plan-form, structure, detail and so on. It is a collection of buildings for ‘functionalists’ rather than ‘structuralists’. Massive joists supporting first floor storage space, ornamented service ends, evidence of warp frames on stud-work …

We were guests of ‘Discovering Coggeshall’, a Coggeshall Heritage Society project (http://www.discoveringcoggeshall.co.uk/). The project includes cartographic and documentary research, and building recording. Twenty buildings have been investigated by dendrochronology, sixteen successfully. Two date ranges emerged from this, 1353-1454, and 1545-1636. The second is interesting because the extensive abbey estate was not broken up until 1541. However, as Ian Tyers has explained, there are many possible reasons for this statistical clustering. Ian’s full, 74-page, dendrochronology report can be downloaded as a PDF from:- http://www.discoveringcoggeshall.co.uk/professional/research/

We began in Grange Barn, a National Trust property (http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/coggeshall-grange-barn/). It has been repaired and rebuilt many times since 1240, but retains the appeal of a medieval aisled barn. It has burn marks on most of the aisle posts close to entrances. These are typically around one metre above ground level, which is a bit inconvenient if you believe they were accidental (a subtle reference to an on-going dialogue in the Vernacular Architecture Group Newsletter).

Cavendish House and the White Hart

With a dendro-date range of 1422-48, they are thought to represent the three-storied service cross-wing, and single-storey hall of a single structure (figure 1).

Cavendish House has very big joists in the cross-wing - 9” deep, 8”-11” wide - equal to the space between them! (figure 2) and there are long nicks in the wall posts for sliding-in the horizontal staves of a partition (figure 3).

Precise room use is difficult to establish, especially at second floor level to the rear of the building, where structural evidence suggests a large open space in the middle of the floor, effectively creating a gallery (figure 4).

The single storey open hall that is now the White Hart, has an exceptional queen-post roof, with octagonal queen posts, possibly the work of a non-local carpenter (figure 5 overleaf).
18-20 Stoneham Street

18-20 is the four-bay, high-end cross-wing of a late medieval open hall. The open hall range has not survived, but the cross-wing is fascinating. Perfect for a bit of frame-bay analysis because all four bays are equal in length. Most unusual in a domestic building and surely a reflection of the local cloth making industry. Ok, so the asymmetrical bay system of the typical tripartite house may not necessarily be manifest in a cross-wing. The owner, Mike Meadows (cartographer of the Discovering Coggeshall project), produced a model to indicate the basic form of the building. Just the closed frames are shown although removing the first floor reveals the complete bay system.

21-23 East Street

A long-wall (under-built) jetty house of 1599. Memorable chiefly for a perfect example of a burn mark made in moving air.

See how the hot gasses of the flame have risen vertically from the central point of contact, and then increasingly they are carried to the left by a cross draught. Rare, and beautiful!

14 East Street

No 14 is the service cross-wing of a late medieval tripartite house, but has several high-end features. It is currently thought to have been a ‘high class shop’.

The original cross passage for the building, through the hall, is now an open alleyway providing access to the rear. The original spandrelled service doors into the crosswing can be seen here; they are almost eight feet tall.

Not on our itinerary but worth visiting :-

Paycocke’s is a National Trust property (http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/paycockes/). Before you visit, do read the Thomas Paycocke chapter in Eileen Power’s Medieval People. Still in print. or available as a free download from the Gutenberg Project:-
http://www.gutenberg.org/files/13144/13144-h/13144-h.htm

The exceptional maps, illustrations, research and analysis, that are going into the Discovering Coggeshall project continue the good practice that was started by the publication in 1969 of Cecil Hewett’s, The Development of Carpentry 1200-1700: an Essex study. We wait impatiently for publication of their reports.
Three Broadland Churches (14th July 2012)

Richard Ball

The weather forecast was reasonable (no rain) but in approaching our first destination, All Saints Church, Catfield, many of us found the road blocked by a large flood. Some ventured through, others parked in the school car park and were ferried through the flood by Bill Jones, but we all eventually assembled and our day began. Our mentors were Dominic Summers and Ian Hinton.

All Saints Church, Catfield.

There is very little documentation surviving on which to base dating. The tower appears to be the oldest part, everything about it being consistent with a date of probably 1300 to 1310. An interesting feature is the putlog holes with brick surround. Not an ambitious tower but representative of its time.

The south porch seems originally to have been of just one storey (the line of original roof is visible on the front façade) with a second storey added later. The staircase and door to the second floor still exist inside the nave and also suggest a subsequent build by not being built into the wall of the porch.

The nave windows of the south and north aisles are of two designs, with window tracery patterns alternating, one rather more in the Decorated style, the other verging on the Perpendicular. Dominic considers both designs to be part of the original build of the nave and suggests a tentative dating in the third quarter of the 14th century. The doorframe is in the Perpendicular style.

Inside the church the octagonal piers of the arcades have simple capitals which alternate, one plain, the other with small flower bosses or rosettes. They are thought to be part of the original build of the late fourteenth century nave, which has side aisles but no clerestory. Although the rosettes are unusual, they match the rosettes on the doorframe. The chancel dates probably from the early 1300s and is divided from the nave by the surviving medieval rood screen. It has painted panels of fifteen kings and a queen. This assemblage, exclusively kings and queens, is unusual for this sort of screen and probably unique.

Until the 1980s this screen was painted over in black. This layer was painstakingly removed at that period by Pauline Plummer, revealing the remarkable paintings. The wooden tracery also has remains of decoration on the side facing the nave.

A note in the 17th century parish register century suggests the chancel was rebuilt in 1471 by John Walter rector. Dominic, however, feels that the window tracery, though slightly different, from that in the aisles, is too similar to be as late as 1471 so perhaps it was not totally rebuilt.

Ingham, Holy Trinity

Here the tower has become more important and we have a very grand tower of the 15th century with a magnificent West Window. This dating is confirmed as 1470 to 1480 by wills.

The church has a three-storied porch, built around 1440; one of only six in the country, the extra storey probably intended to house the sacrist.

There is a very large three-bay chancel of the early 1300s, in all likelihood built by Oliver de Ingham, at one time Seneschal of Gascony, who died in 1343.

The church was refounded in 1360 as a Trinitarian Priory and there are, on the north side of the church, the remains of a number of very small-scale conventual buildings. There were six monks, and priors are known up to the beginning of the sixteenth century although, at the time of the suppression of the monasteries, it no longer existed.

The main object of the Trinitarian Order was to pay the ransom of hostages taken on crusade. This seems a strange date to found an order concerned with the crusades since by that date they had all but come to an end. Sir Miles Stapleton, who was from Bedale in Yorkshire and married Sir Oliver Ingham’s daughter, Joan, was the refounder of the church. He was a great soldier, a founding knight of Order of the Garter and a companion of the Black Prince, and went on one of those strange late crusades to Prussia in 1363, so perhaps this was an insurance policy.

The four-bay nave is probably from around 1360, very likely rebuilt by Sir Miles Stapleton when he founded the priory. It is a very open airy nave, more like that of a preaching order than that of a priory. The arch opening half way up side aisle wall probably represents the location of a night stair to the priory.

Depending on its origin, the cost of transporting stone was up to five times more than the stone itself. The arcade piers in this
church, although more elaborate than the plain octagonal piers in Catfield and Ludham, would have been able to have been cut from a smaller octagon, and therefore represent a ten per cent cost saving over the simpler, but larger octagonal piers.

The moulding and dimensions of the piers in the westernmost bay of the nave are slightly different from the rest and therefore raise questions about Masons’ working practices, which were, unfortunately, not resolved upon this occasion.

The high side chancel windows were probably for ventilation. The lower ones were shuttered, not glazed.

As they exist, all of the nave and chancel side windows are different in their tracery and the clerestory has roundel windows, but Dominic is doubtful that much of the window tracery design is original, and suspects it is mainly part of the Victorian restoration. Whether of medieval or Victorian design, the tracery in the east window is very beautiful.

There are also the bases of two masonry columns, all that remains of a stone rood screen, an unusual feature to survive in Norfolk churches.

In the nave is a monument to Sir Roger Boys, who died in 1300 and his wife, Margaret, who died in 1315. The figures of the Boys’ tomb may date to the beginning of the 14th century but the chest tomb upon which they lie cannot be earlier than 1375, so presumably the tomb was rebuilt. Sir Roger Boys is resting on the head and upper torso of a Turk, consistent with the crusading idea of the church.

On the north side of chancel, in classic founder position, is the monument to Sir Oliver de Ingham who died in 1344. It can be seen from what remains that it must have been canopied and there are reports of the background being painted in stars. Sir Oliver is lying on what appears to be a bed of pebbles, an unusual feature, and only one other tomb in the country with this motif being known. The torso is in a twisted style which went out of fashion about 1340.

Ludham, St. Catherine

A very grand church, with finely built masonry but, once again, little in the way of documentation has been found to help with the dating of the fabric. There are a couple of wills from the late 15th century but they are clearly dealing with small scale repairs.

The tracery of the aisle windows is not dissimilar to the Catfield panel window tracery, but all the windows are of the same design here and probably dating from the latter part of the fourteenth century. The grand clerestory is later, the shape of the window suggesting a tentative date of sometime in the 15th century. The porch has much flush work but it is not certain if any of it goes back to the Middle Ages or whether it has all been repointed. Whatever the case, the original build was probably faced in the same way, probably around the middle of the 15th century.

The tower is early, described by Dominic as a real mess of masonry, bits and pieces, quoins at crazy angles, bits or re-used material, apparently of several different building campaigns with different ways of laying flint. The tracery in the west window suggests 1300 or so.

The chancel appears to be earlier than the nave. The east window is an excellent example of reticulated style, a sub-set of the late Decorated style, say around 1330. The Decorated style lasted much longer in East Anglia than it did in London and even in the Perpendicular period you get traces of it.

The nave has plain octagonal piers with similar capitals and moulding to Catfield. Dominic feels it is stylistically consistent with the window tracery, so the same sort of date as Catfield, say towards the end of the 14th century. Ian felt these piers had been raised at some point, judging from the bases which appear to have had an addition at the bases. The roof has been heavily restored but rests on fine medieval corbels.

There is a remarkable font with the sole representation of a wild woman in existence, it is believed! This font dates to around the beginning of the 15th century, almost certainly before 1450. The wild man with lion alternation in the support is a common one of this period.

Like Catfield, the chancel is divided from the nave by a surviving decorated wooden rood screen with really well preserved panel paintings of a high quality. In addition, high above in the arch, a representation of the crucifixion is painted on boards. This is probably a replacement rood, erected during the reign of Queen Mary, judging from the style of the clothing. The woodwork is fine, the gilding very good. The panels are painted with images of saints. Working inwards from both sides in pairs, St Appolonia with a tooth and St Sebastian, St Lawrence with a grill pan and St Edmund, Edward the Confessor and Henry VI with a nimbus, in the centre the four Latin doctors. Along the top is an inscription in English – pray for the soul of John and his wife Cicely and the other donors.
Hingham Town Walk (June 16th 2012)

Town houses through the centuries

Maggy Chatterley

Hingham is a market town located in the Tiffey Valley in the heart of rural Norfolk, five miles west of Wymondham. A walk around the town (led by Carol Harris and Ron Leveret from the Hingham History Centre) on 16th June 2012, before the NHBG AGM, quickly confirmed that Hingham has had a prosperous history and is not too shabby today. Hingham is recorded as being the property of King Athelstan in 925AD. A market charter was granted in 1264 and a fair license granted in 1265 to be held on the Fairstead to the west of the church.

The enormous church of St Andrew was built in the early fourteenth century and had aristocratic rectors in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. As Dominic Summers said ‘it was large because of its patronage rather than for its congregation’.

The Manor House next to the church was one of five manors mentioned in a 1595 survey and has an early nineteenth-century stuccoed front with wide pilasters, central wide porch with Ionic columns. The right hand end is curved, behind which is a steep roof, probably of the seventeenth century. This is one of the numerous Grade II listed buildings in Hingham and there are even several Grade II garden walls, evidence of former grand estates and gardens.

18 Bond Street (NHER 14264) is a late-medieval thatched timber-framed house; probably originally two dwellings. It is one of only two buildings of the period to have survived. Mansion House, Blair House and Walnut Tree House (all in Bond Street) date from the seventeenth century.

Grade II* listed houses, Little London (fig 3), Quorn House, Admiral’s House and Beaconsfield House are found on the east side of the market square, and date from the eighteenth century when Hingham itself became known as ‘Little London’, although Admiral’s House may have an earlier core. Residents unable to build new houses in the eighteenth century upgraded their properties with brick fronts, parapets and new doorways with semicircular fanlights; some had columned porches, such as the White Hart Hotel.

The Congregational Chapel opened in 1836 and numbers four, six and eight Chapel Street are a terrace of Grade II listed early nineteenth-century houses built of gault bricks with a low-pitched, hipped, slate roof with overhanging eaves in the Regency style, built to look like one grand house. Numbers seven and nine Chapel Street are also early nineteenth century and Grade II listed but are built of flint cobbles with painted brick quoins and with a statue in a recess in the front wall.

Hingham has also had several schools. Normandy House, originally built in 1690 as a farmhouse with 600 acres of land, was endowed in 1727 to become a school and finally closed in 1908. A National School for Boys was established in 1841, a National School for Girls in 1857 and a Board School in 1875. The National Schools are now private houses, but the Board School is used today as Hingham Primary School.

Finally, a big thank you to the guides from the Hingham History Centre for the mammoth task of conducting a tour for 50+ people, and for arranging such excellent weather.

More about Hingham will be found at the website for the History Centre - http://www.hinghamhistorycentre.org but it is currently still under construction

Further details of the these houses and others can be found at http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/SimpleSearch.aspx Or at http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/england/norfolk/hingham
Summer outing report

Hindringham Hall (19th July 2012)

Sandie Jones

Forty-eight members met for a guided tour of the hall and grounds by the owners Charles and Lynda Tucker who bought Hindringham Hall in 1993.

Surrounding the manor house is a magnificent complete thirteenth-century moat and adjacent fish ponds which are a listed ancient monument. We were shown the sluice gates that can be opened to top up the water level from the river Stiffkey which runs through the grounds and was diverted to form the moat. Mr Tucker explained that the moat covers one acre and the platform that the house sits on covers another acre. In the moat are eels, perch, tench and carp. We were taken on a tour of the outside of the moat and then visited the splendid walled kitchen garden before crossing an old suspension bridge two at a time to the rear of the house.

The grade II* Tudor Manor House, which was referred to in a lease of 1562 as ‘now being builded and edifyied’ has an exterior of flint and red brick with a two storey porch, the ground floor being dressed stone.

In 1900, Gerald Gosselin (1858-1942) a silversmith, purchased the estate, the house by now in a state of near dereliction, and there are photographs taken at the time which we were shown by Mrs Tucker. The house was completely restored by Gosselin and has many arts and crafts features, he even had a manual lift installed as he was wheelchair bound.

After our tour of the house and garden, we all had tea and cake in the courtyard and not a rain drop in sight!

A big thank you must go to Lynne Hodge who organised a splendid afternoon out and also co-ordinated lunch at two very good pubs for many of the group.

Owned by the Binham Priory estate and later by the Dean and Chapter of Norwich until the 1890s, the estate had always been leased to tenants on low rents. Through the centuries the house fell into a bad state of repair and was subdivided, housing several families and at one point cattle were housed on the ground floor.

There are many fine stepped gables of about 1560 but the finials date from the restoration. Mrs. Tucker gave us a tour of the ground floor rooms. The Hall had a new ceiling but it was still possible to see the position of three doors in the service wall.

After discussions with the Hall’s owners, Maggie and William Vaughan-Lewis are investigating documentary sources in the Record Office and elsewhere and are preparing a more detailed report of the Hall’s dating and phasing, which should appear in the next Newsletter.
More than 30 members of the group took up Bill & Sandie Jones’ offer to share their house for an evening, parse the architecture and have a good time.

The current interpretation is that Church Farm is probably a sixteenth-century house that consisted of a hall (part of the crown post survives) crosspassage and two-celled service end. There are questions about the stack and its original form, possibly a smoke bay or timber-framed chimney. Beyond the stack, the “parlour” may not be contemporary with the rest of the building - there are some discontinuities with this frame. Further resolution should be possible with a full recording of the house. To this end, Sue & Michael Brown will be holding a training day for recorders (see panel below) on Saturday October 6th, for which booking is essential.

Many thanks to Bill & Sandie for making the evening so enjoyable, allowing us free rein throughout their home and for the excellent spread.

Investigating the doorway for the stair to the service chamber (left)
The possible smoke bay/timber-framed chimney (right) photo Bill Jones

Recording Training Day
Suitable for all skill levels
at Church Farm, Alburgh on Sat 6th October, 10:00 to 4:00
Phone Sue Brown on 01362 688362 to book a place
Sue promises “No homework - unless you want some”
The elegant surroundings of the Music Room at Norwich’s Assembly Rooms were the unlikely setting for a full day of talks on the Norfolk Rural Schools Project. Georgian elegance against tin huts and offices. The range of speakers was broad: from academics, volunteer recorders, to representatives of national bodies who provided a wider context for the Norfolk Schools.

The path of the history of education was laid down and linked to the foundation, form, function, and siting of school buildings. It became apparent that schools initially needed only a single room, frequently divided into an open space with benches and a gallery at one end, but thereafter could accommodate the desires of a religious or secular patron, political or religious influences until the state became involved. Then rules and standards removed some of the idiosyncrasies of school buildings and health and safety loomed. Individual case studies of regions or parishes in Norfolk highlighted these changes. In their analyses of 450-plus schools Susanna Wade-Martins and Adam Longcroft, the Project leaders, summarised building materials, architectural styles and landscape contexts. It was found that the main building period was between 1830 and 1870 but change came only slowly often in the mid-twentieth century.

The individual records of all schools visited will be held at Gressenhall on the Historic Environment Record and a report sent to English Heritage who funded the Project.

It was an excellent day which highlighted the disappearance and changing use of rural schools thereby confirming the growing need for similar surveys to be undertaken around the country. It threw up more questions and methods which would fuel further research.

Thank you to all those involved with the project; the Conference showed how worthwhile the effort has been.

Norfolk Schools Project Conference (23rd June 2012)

Building an Education: A History of Rural Schools

Rosemary Forrest

The final Question and Answer session at the conference - for Adrian Parker, Alan Rogers, Adam Longcroft, Mary Ash, Janet Ede, Iona Folliard, Susanna Wade-Martins and Robin Forrest - it looks rather like the Spanish Inquisition!

(photograph Anne-Margaret Barber)
A Digest of Buildings Visited Since April 2012

This is a digest of all the Norfolk houses which the NHBG has been invited to look at and to prepare brief reports on. These are ALL private houses and NO contact may be made with the owners in any way except through the Committee. This list is to inform members of the work undertaken on behalf of the Group.

Sue Brown.

Elmham House, Friday Market, Walsingham
Eighteenth-century, red-brick, single-pile house with stair to the rear. It is of five bays with a slight projection to the central three.

Laundry, Friday Market, Walsingham
Mid-seventeenth-century, single cell with a large fireplace, probably associated with market use. Passage to the rear.

The Pilgrim Bureau, Friday Mkt, Walsingham
Formerly the National School. A Jacobean-style building of 1845 in red brick with yellow dressings. Girls were on the first floor, boys on the ground floor.

St Anne’s, Friday Market, Walsingham
Formerly the stables and associated buildings to the rear of The Black Lion. Nineteenth-century buildings that may have an earlier plinth.

St Columba, 24 Knight Street, Walsingham
It is likely that this house formed part of a larger building. It has a nineteenth-century ground floor front in brick with a former jetty above.

Chequers, Mill Road, Hempnall
Two timber-framed buildings at rightangles to each other, possibly contemporary and of the late sixteenth/early seventeenth century, although the more northerly range has possible earlier features. The south gable is adjacent to the street and was rebuilt in red brick with yellow brick and stone dressings, demonstrating blocked shop windows.

The Chestnuts, Lundy Green, Hempnall
One-and-a-half storey, thatched, lobby-entry house of the late sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries. Later wrap-round brick gable with stack added to the south end.

Tye Cottage, Bungay Road, Hempnall
A brick-clad, timber-framed house of three cells with a hipped roof of pantiles. What remains of the timber frame points to the first half of the seventeenth century.

Poacher’s Cottage, Silver Green, Hempnall
A one-and-a-half storey, timber-framed house of six bays and of the late sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries. It is currently laid out with a lobby entry, but may have had a cross passage originally.

St David’s, Friday Market, Walsingham
St David’s is the southern part of a large building of the seventeenth century. The building has a lofty ground floor and an original ceiled attic, the three floors accessed via an elaborate stair of the same period, housed in an extension between the main body of the house on the High Street and the south wing which fronts on to the entrance to Friday Market. Both the south and east façades are of elaborate eighteenth-century brickwork.

Hempnall House, Lundy Green, Hempnall
A late-sixteenth or early seventeenth-century timber-framed lobby-entry house of six bays; the service bay replaced with a later small crosswing, all now brick clad. A taller front range of gault bricks and crow-stepped gables was added in 1871.

12 Friday Market, Walsingham
Number 12 forms the northern edge of Friday Market. Of two storeys and attic, in eighteenth-century red brick, it has a moulded-brick string course and modillion cornice with a parapet and black glazed pantile roof with dormer windows. The eighteenth century stair has turned balusters and moulded rail with turned newels and scrolled tread ends. This stair closely resembles those seen at 47 High Street and 6 Knight Street.

Photos: Hempnall - Ian Hinton
Walsingham - Michael Brown
61-63 High Street, Walsingham
A jettied upper floor, underbuilt in red brick in the nineteenth century. The roof contains a crown post with features indicating a fifteenth-century date, possibly very early. Like others in Walsingham, the first floor of the building appears to have been set out as a hostel for pilgrims.

20 & 20a High Street, Walsingham
Remains of a service-end hall. The service partition had doorways at either end; the one next to the street possibly a shop entrance and the one next to the cross-passage possibly for a stair. Part of a plank and muntin screen survives with a wide central entrance. The crown posts survive at attic level. A rear wing and cellar were added in the eighteenth century.

The Old Vicarage, The Street, Hempnall
Formed by four distinct ranges of different periods dating from the sixteenth/seventeenth to eighteenth/nineteenth centuries. The original structures for the earliest three ranges were timber framed but are now brick faced. Internally the different building periods are united by a grand open-well staircase of oak in a central hall.

Home Farm, Alburgh Road, Hempnall
A three-celled, timber-framed, house of around 1600; one-and-a-half storeys with five-bays. It is located close to the common-edge ditch of Silver Green. The stack appears to have been rebuilt in a different position, perhaps after the loss of one bay at the southern end.

48 & 50 High Street, Walsingham
Number 48 abuts the Priory Gatehouse. It has a flint ground floor with a timber-framed jettied upper floor. The braces form decorative chevrons. No. 50 has an early eighteenth-century brick facade and sash windows. To the rear is the remains of a very large window, suggesting an open hall.

Yew Tree Farm, Silver Green, Hempnall
Lying on the common edge, Yew Tree Farmhouse is a two-storeyed, three-celled, timber-framed house, with an original lobby entry adjacent to the axial stack, probably of around 1600.

32 High Street, Walsingham
The ground floor of an early-to-mid-seventeenth-century house. A four-light ovolo mullioned window in the rear wall.

51 High Street, Walsingham
Number 51 comprises the two bays to the north of the stack of an original building stretching from 47-51, eighty-eight feet long and of six bays. There is evidence of former jetties to the front and rear and of a prestige crown-post roof.

Beckford House, Bungay Road, Hempnall
Eighteenth-century, brick-built cottage with gable-end stacks, extended at the side and rear in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The Old Forge, The Street, Hempnall
Late-sixteenth/early-seventeenth century, timber-framed house of three cells of two stories plus attic, with a later in-line extension with a brick end stack. Outbuildings include a forge operating until the 1950s.

6 Knight Street, Walsingham
Late sixteenth-century core with a seventeenth-century roof raise. A rear wing was added in the eighteenth century.

27 High Street, Walsingham
Eighteenth-century brick facade with grand shop front
All meetings will be held in the INTO Building at UEA at 7.00 for 7.30pm. INTO is located at the Bluebell Road end of University Drive (see map at foot of page). Parking (limited) is available in front of the building, otherwise in the main carpark (for which there is normally a charge).

The winter programme is free to members, but non-members are welcome - £3 at the door.

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**Friday, 12th October 2012**
David Summers  
The Cockrills of Great Yarmouth

A father and two sons, who, as architects and surveyors, were responsible for such buildings as the Hippodrome, the Pavilion Theatre and the Art School. Had the ‘Building Cockrills’ never existed then neither would large parts of Gorleston as we know them today.

**Wednesday, 7th November 2012**
Frank Woodman  
Pilgrimage Centres in the Middle Ages

Canterbury is known worldwide as a pilgrimage centre. Medieval pilgrims flocked to Canterbury in their thousands to the shrine of Becket. The population, never greater than 6,000, had to house and feed them. In the late fourteenth century, pilgrim inns came to dominate Canterbury’s centre and suburbs. The current NHBG studies of Walsingham are showing similar arrangements there, with many pilgrim inns.

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**Wednesday, 5th December 2012**
Tim Brittain-Catlin  
Norfolk Parsonages

Architect and historian Timothy Brittain-Catlin’s research uncovers the history of the parsonage during the critical years of the early nineteenth century - a time when the design of the small English house changed dramatically from that of the typically elegant but restrained Georgian villa to create the lively, original residences of the gothic revival. Behind every stage of this transition was A.W.N. Pugin, whose work in the 1840s meant that such houses would never be the same again.

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**Thursday, 17th January 2013**
Members’ Evening

- Adam Longcroft - Timber-framed buildings of northern Germany  
- Ian Hinton - The houses of Hempnall  
- John Dean - Apotropaic taper burns  
- Sue Brown - Walsingham survey progress

If any other members wish to share their research - please let Mary Ash know (mary.ash@ntlworld.com).

**Wednesday, 13th February 2013**
Vic Nierop-Reading  
Twentieth-Century Norwich Buildings

The twentieth century started and finished with revivals: moving from new buildings copying historic styles to the ardent conservation of the past. In between was the rise and decline of Modernism; exciting times.

**Tuesday, 12th March 2013**
John Minnis  
Carscapes: the English Heritage Motoring Project

The twentieth century saw a transformation that has affected the infrastructure, and even the natural environment of the country; the car’s impact on the physical environment of England also extends to its architectural influence. Apart from structures designed specifically to accommodate cars, such as garages, filling stations, car parks, factories, and showrooms, motoring has had an impact on almost every building.

John Minnis is the co-author of a book on the subject to be published in late 2012.