

Norfolk Historic Buildings Group


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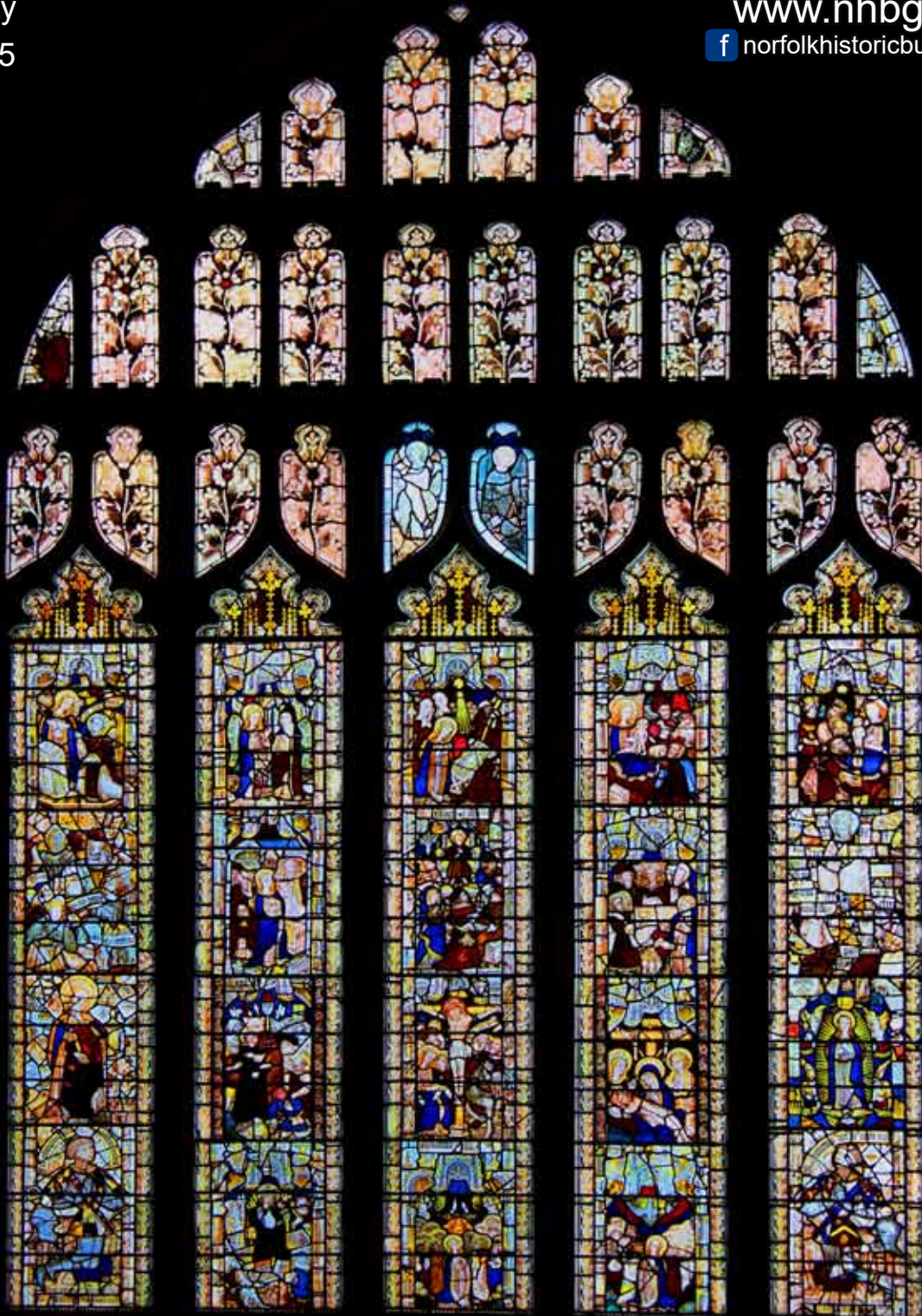
Newsletter



Number thirty
Autumn 2015

www.nhbg.org.uk

 [norfolkhistoricbuildingsgroup](https://www.facebook.com/norfolkhistoricbuildingsgroup)



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CHAIR

The latter half of our fifteenth year of existence sees the publication of Journal no. 6 on the Buildings of Walsingham (see elsewhere in this newsletter for details). This follows the award-winning efforts of research published in previous journals about the buildings of New Buckenham and Tacolnестon. Both of these have uncovered important details about aspects of their buildings that were unknown before the research started, and the buildings of Walsingham have revealed similar details that have continued this trend.

One of the Group's main aims is to ensure that its members and others are kept up to date with current information and techniques about the buildings of Norfolk. Whilst visiting buildings in the County and listening to prominent lecturers on relevant topics is important, the best way for a group like ours to expand, prosper and develop is by publishing ground-breaking research and by using innovative techniques to support our members' research on the ground. Unusually for our larger research subjects, dendrochronology failed to produce building dates this time, but the use of Carbon-14 dating in Walsingham has managed to confirm the dates assessed on stylistic evidence by Susan and Michael Brown for key buildings in the town.

Susan and Michael stepped down from the committee at the AGM after 15 years, leaving a gap in our resources. Whilst other members of the committee have surveying and building analysis skills, we would be happy to welcome anyone who already has these skills or is prepared to learn. You would be joining a committed band who intend to continue the good work of the Group into the future. It would also be an advantage to be able to make scones for the AGM.

Adam Longcroft
Chair, Norfolk Historic Buildings Group
August 2015
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2 Vacancies

Administration

Due to the high cost of printing in colour, the printed version of the Newsletter can only present monochrome images on its inside pages. Hence the reason for the stained- glass pictures taking up both covers of this issue. The version of the Newsletter on the website is in full colour, but currently is not put up for public use for a year after its publication, to give members a year's advantage on current news.

The committee considered applying for an additional grant for printing the whole Walsingham Journal in colour, rather than just the cover, which would have cost an additional £4000 - almost £7 per copy extra, but was unable to secure one that was anywhere near our publication timetable.

Binding for NHBG Newsletters

Two members have so far taken up Roger Crouch's offer to bind NHBG Newsletters 16-30.

Hardcover cloth binding should be £10, with gold lettering on the spine an extra.

His volume of Newsletters 1-15 is shown on the right. Contact him at Burebank Books -

roger.crouch@burebank.com



Shaped-gable photo plea

The editor has received a plea from an out-of-county researcher for assistance with photos of shaped gables in Norfolk, especially any that have already been lost.

Gordon Taylor, a retired estate agent, has written a book about shaped gables, "Thanet's Dutch and Flemish-Style Houses" and the continental influences that brought them about. He is planning a field trip to Norfolk early next year to extend his research and would appreciate any photos that NHBG members might hold of these wide-spread features to help focus his visit.

Contact him at - gordonsgables@hotmail.co.uk

Front cover photo: The east window at SS Peter & Paul, East Harling by Ian Hinton. See pp 10 & 11 for report and the rear cover for more photos.

Winter Programme 2015/16

All meetings will be held in the INTO Building at UEA at 7.00 for 7.30pm.

Last year's trial of charging a small fee at the door for winter lectures of £2 per member is to be continued. The rate for non-members will continue to be £4. The charges do not apply to members' night in January or the Journal Launch.

Wed 30th Sept 2015

Walsingham Journal launch at
INTO, UEA at **6:30**

see page 13 for full details



Thursday 14th January 2016

Members' evening

A chance for members to introduce their own research or projects. If you would like to do so, please contact Mary Ash - mary.ash@ntlworld.com

The rebuilding of Blackfriars, Norwich - Dominic Summers

The renovation of The Britons Arms - Sue Skipper

A third speaker to be confirmed

Tuesday 13th October 2015

Nicholas Groves

Beacons in the Dark: non-conformist chapels and meeting houses in Norwich

It has been said that "Perhaps the biggest single contribution to the spread of democracy in England has been its Nonconformist tradition".

Nicholas undertook an MA in local and regional history in 1994 at UEA, with a dissertation on the phenomenon of shared churchyards in East Anglia. This was followed by doctoral studies on the topic of Anglican Ritualism in Victorian Norwich. He has published guides to many of Norwich's churches, culminating in his book, *The Medieval Churches of the City of Norwich* in 2010.

Wednesday 10th February 2016

Brendan Chester-Kadwell

The Wealden parish of Rolvenden

Brendan holds a PhD from UEA and his research includes the origin and development of rural settlement in East Anglia and the Weald. His MA at UEA covered land tenure in the parish of Rolvenden in the Weald and he has subsequently published work on medieval settlement of the High Weald and the changing patterns of Wealden routeways.

Tuesday 17th November 2015

Roland Harris

New College (Oxford) hall, buttery and kitchens

New College occupies a site near the centre of Oxford. The front quadrangle, dining hall, chapel and cloisters were built within a few years of the College's foundation in 1379; this was the first time that an entire scheme had been built in this way, and it formed a model for later colleges. The hall is the dining room of the college. The panelling was added when Archbishop Warham was bursar of the college. The open oak roof had been replaced by a ceiling at the end of the eighteenth century and it was not until 1865 under the architect Sir George Gilbert Scott that the roof was restored.

Friday 11th March 2016

Jonathan Hooton

The Glaven Ports

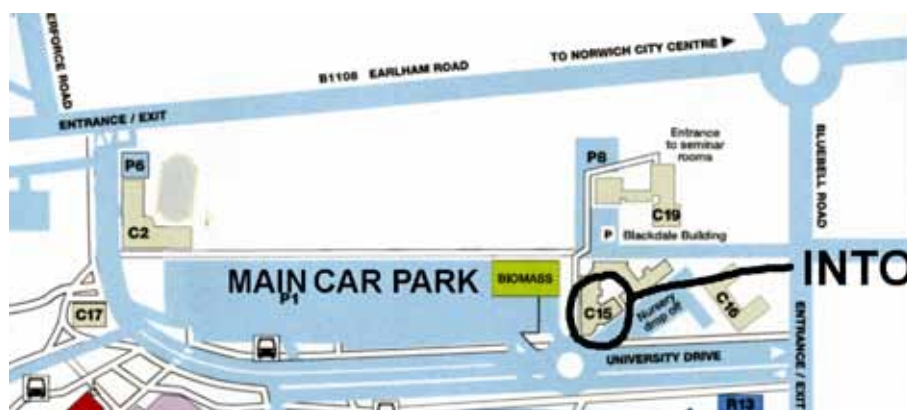
Jonathan is head of Geography at Notre Dame High School. Originally published in 1996, Jonathan's book on the Glaven Ports of the north Norfolk coast is now a collectors item. It covered the change from the fine natural harbour for the three ports of Blakeney, Cley and Wiveton, through its Elizabethan heyday, when Glaven's ships ranged from Iceland to Crete, the extensive coastal trading of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries until their decline caused by embanking, silting up and competition from the railways.

Thursday 10th December 2015

Richard Darrah

Dragon Hall: A medieval trading hall in Norwich on the River Wensum

Dragon Hall is a unique, Grade-1-listed medieval trading hall dating from around 1430, renowned for its spectacular timber crown-post roof and intricately carved and painted dragon. It was at the heart of Robert Toppes' international trading empire. For centuries the original timber roof and vast Great Hall were lost, concealed within an everyday terrace of houses and shops. Today, the Great Hall has been restored to its original splendour, telling the remarkable story of Robert Toppes, medieval trade and the civic life in fifteenth-century Norwich.



INTO is located at the Bluebell Road end of University Drive

Parking (limited) is available in front of the building, otherwise park in the main carpark (for which there is normally a charge).

SATNAV - NR4 7TJ

History of Swimming Pools (12th March 2015) - Simon Inglis

report by Alayne Fenner

One tends to think that the Romans were the first to build baths, but c.3000 B.C. ancient civilizations in Egypt and India were using man-made pools in the open air, fed by rivers and streams. The Greeks and Romans were the first to build artificially enclosed bodies of water under cover large and deep enough for swimming, as at Bath – Aqua Sulis – which is fed by a hot spring and originally had a vaulted roof.

Roman baths tended to be for ablutions after exercise and being quite small and shallow were not, on the whole, suitable for swimming. Of all the Roman bath remains in Britain only eight are really big enough. However they were popular enough to provide inspiration for bathhouses in Britain from the seventeenth century onwards. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries baths were usually built for health or medicinal reasons.

Before this time Christian doctrine was hostile to any activity that might promote licentiousness or sloth, which persisted until well into the early nineteenth century. And it is said that beneath their opulent costumes Elizabethan courtiers (and even the Queen) were decidedly grubby, relying on clean linen and dabs of scent rather than taking a bath. However swimming still went on as an outdoor sport, indeed so many Cambridge students were drowning that the Vice Chancellor banned it.

In Restoration London another kind of bathing establishment emerged – the Bagno plunge pool, which was rather like a Turkish bath. Men and women were admitted on different days but it soon acquired a dubious reputation, being regarded as synonymous with brothels. The first indoor plunge pool advertised as a place to swim even provided a teacher. Others followed including subscription baths which were exclusive ‘leisure centres’ providing post-swim facilities such as wine, newspapers, libraries, and bowling greens.

The first public-funded pool (for the middle and upper classes) was built in Liverpool in 1829. It was a large building in classical style but with the benefit of modern engineering, with two heated baths (for men and women) and operated by a manager. It cost 1s per swim or a six-month subscription of £1.10s. Three years later a cholera epidemic in the working class port area of Liverpool killed 1500 people and pressure grew on the Corporation for the building of public baths and washhouses with low prices.

The Baths and Washhouses Act of 1846 gave government sanction for the provision of public baths and washhouses on the Local Authority rates – a progressive Act to help families. Swimming was not mentioned. The design was firstly a washhouse with barriers between the sinks, creating socialised laundries – a real necessity before water was laid on in houses. Secondly was the slipper bath for family ablutions – half an hour allowed per person. There was usually a very efficient throughput.

People continued to swim in canals, rivers and lakes. A popular spot was by the Tate & Lyle factory where the effluent was warm, if not healthy. This heralded the beginning of the building of swimming pools as local authorities recognised the public demand for them. They were of many different styles – Ashton under Lyme had a Romanesque one, there was a Moorish

one in Tottenham Court Road, Chester had a Tudor one but they all had one thing in common. The building was in two parts – the administration took place at the front, with basically what was a large shed behind containing the baths and their water supply, the boilers etc. The fancy architecture was at the front on the façade.

By 1886 there were 86 public baths, by 1918 there were 318. They were beginning to be built without the washhouse in middle class areas, as water was being laid on in houses from the Edwardian period. The need for slipper baths also declined though the last one actually closed in 2004.

Swimming clubs became popular. When water polo was invented by a Scots club it became Big Business. The design of baths accommodated the changes in post-swim activities such as cricket, gym, social assemblies like lectures, concerts and dances – for which a floor could be laid over the pool. The design of the pool area became important, often lavish. Behind the scenes, huge tanks and water towers were built and storage space for the coal for the boilers. Water treatment was also important. Before filters, it was a case of fill on Friday, cheaper by Wednesday as the water clouded, empty on Thursday and scrub out overnight. It was a huge job and people got ill.

Around 1904/5 filtration began and was compulsory by the 1920s. Adverts promised ‘Every day is clear water day’ and ‘Swimming bath water is fit to drink’. All of this had an effect on the architecture: parabolic roofs and clerestory lights and in 1934 rose the Empire Pool Wembley, a vast multifunctional building which had seating and even a wave machine. Then came the war.

Everything changed in the period of post-war austerity. There was no money for the construction of new swimming baths and the rise of Butlins made local pools seem dowdy. Only two new pools were built in the UK in the 1945-1960 period. However swimming remained popular as a cheap form of relaxation; mixed bathing had become the norm by the 1950s and shorter working hours meant more leisure time, so despite the lack of new facilities demand remained high.

At the 1948 Olympic Games the aquatic events were held at the Empire Pool next door to Wembley Stadium. Sixty-four years later 17,500 spectators watched the swimmers and divers competing in the 2012 Olympics amid the splendours of Zaha Hadid’s magnificent London Aquatic Centre.

Civic pride has been displayed throughout the last two centuries in the architecture of these prominent public buildings as they reflected the design vogue of the times, ranging from Victorian Gothick, Art Nouveau, Modernism, Art Deco, Brutalism and finally Post Modernism.

Simon Inglis is the co-author of
Gordon, I. & Inglis, S., *Great Lengths: The historic
indoor swimming pools of Britain*,
published by English Heritage, 2009.

It is part of a series - *Played in Britain*,
edited by Simon Inglis.

Winter lecture synopsis

A selection of bath buildings of various architectural periods



*Starbeck baths near Harrowgate - 1870
The oldest still operating*



Western baths, Glasgow - 1878



Fore Street baths, Ipswich - 1893



*St Pancras baths,
Kentish Town - 1901*



Victoria baths, Manchester - 1906



Bristol south baths - 1931



Empire Pool, Wembley - 1934



Chadderton baths, Wakefield - 1937



Wrexham baths - 1970



Cardiff International baths - 2007



London Aquatic Centre - 2012

Images from Simon's presentation and from Great Lengths: The historic indoor swimming pools of Britain

From Ware to Wells: beam by beam (30th May 2015)

Ruth Pearson

It has to be one of the most extraordinary stories ever told as well as of one of the most fascinating and absorbing summer outings with the NHBG.

Who would believe that tucked away in a corner of the quaint town of Wells there is something so special? Christine Adams told us with love, pride and great admiration the “moving” story of her Auntie May Savidge who transported her 1450’s “monk’s house” from Ware in Hertfordshire to Wells and then, almost single-handedly, restored it.

Threatened with its demolition to “make way for a new relief road” and having done battle with the powers that be for 20 years to save her house, she wasn’t prepared to give it up to anyone. She engaged the boy scouts on Bob-a-Job week to help her label the tiles and beams etc. one by one. Having hoped to use a helicopter to transport it following the rivers, eventually eleven lorry-loads carried Ware Hall-House (as she later called it) to Wells “to be by the sea” where she had spent happy holidays. From the age of 59 to 82 when she died, May Savidge dedicated her life to its rebuilding (see page 4 NHBG Newsletter 29). Doing it on a pension was “both wonderful and dreadful at the same time”.

Equally remarkable is the story of Christine herself, who battled against all kinds of odds to continue the work begun in 1969. When her dying Aunt-in-law whispered “Sorry!” she knew then it was to become her project: left to them in May’s will, she promised to do whatever was needed to carry out her wishes, for her own children too. She had visited the amazing lady – designer, technical draughtswoman and preserver of historic buildings - with her husband Tony every year and asked many times as others did, how anyone could live in such isolation and chaos, refusing almost all offers of help: May answered because she wanted to do it herself in her own way.

She had built it north to south (as were all medieval buildings, she said) but on her own admission “the wrong way round” for this situation - on top of a hill, sideways on to the prevailing wind. No problem: she had lived on boats where everything moved and creaked. She had a dog and cat for company, a paraffin stove to cook on and an old caravan to sleep in. Who needed more? The garden grew wild up to the first floor filled with boxes of memorabilia and rotting oak beams but why chop down the nettles and brambles which were home to insects?

She never threw anything away so lived surrounded by all she hoarded - from bus tickets (a pink one for the dog) and every letter received - to all her 400 precious diaries. Later this “treasure trove” enabled Christine to re-live the story many times over and raise enough funds to add her own special stamp to the extraordinary house, which has become her much-loved and visited B&B home. A retired building inspector staying as a guest was horrified to find she had sawn in half some original oak banisters to strengthen a paddle staircase to the upper part of the house: but later a young visitor was delighted to see a “Harry Potter staircase” he hoped would move.

Everyone agreed Christine had found a way to match her Aunt’s eccentricity and ability to “do it her way” while making

May’s home her own – even though she hears her aunt “tutting” in dismay.

Want to find out more? Read “Miss Savidge Moved her House” and watch remarkable footage of her adventures – possibly to become a full-length film for all to share: look out for the marbles! With special thanks to Christine Adams for organising an amazing afternoon.



*The visitors to Ware Hall meet on The Buttlands at Wells
photo: Anne Woollett*



Photographs were not allowed inside the house, and the site was very restricted for external photographs.

Photos of the southern gable and eastern facade by Richard Ball



NHBG Summer party (24th June 2015) Elizabeth Rutledge



Susan and Michael discuss the house with the owners and an early arrival (photo: Ian Hinton)

This year the summer party was a return visit to St Mary's Farmhouse, Tacolneston (as featured on the cover of Journal 4), the home of NHBG members Owen and Rosie Warnock.

Whoever chose the date did exceptionally well, and we enjoyed one of the first warm and sunny evenings of this highly variable summer. After an initial drink, the evening continued with tours of the house for around 30 members by Sue and Michael Brown. This gave members another chance to admire the fine decoration in the 1628 wing, while Susan and Michael were keen to show us the newly uncovered woodwork (as described elsewhere in this newsletter) that suggests a possible mid-fifteenth century date for the main house.

Susan's group finished first, which gave us two advantages. One was that we had first go at the refreshments. We had been promised nibbles, but in true NHBG style got much more than that. The spread that Lynne Hodge had prepared, much of it cooked by herself, meant that I for one needed no supper afterwards. The other was that we could commandeer the chairs. When Michael's group appeared a certain amount of non-musical chairs went on, but no one minded as there was plenty of room to wander in the Warnocks' lovely garden. As a virtual non-gardener I am not going to try to describe it, but there were enough people wandering round asking what plants were to show how much it was appreciated, including some taking cuttings!

Altogether, this was a thoroughly enjoyable evening and we owe our thanks to Owen and Rosie, Lynne, Susan and Michael, and all those involved in the arrangements.

Editor's note:

Everyone enjoyed themselves so much, that no-one had time to take photographs of the assembled crowds and jollity, so illustration is missing, but we did receive a letter of thanks from Alan and Inger Eade - reproduced below with their permission.

Dear Lynne,

Just a line to say how much we enjoyed yesterday's visit to St Mary's Farmhouse. It was our first run up the newly-dualled A11 - so fast that we were the first to arrive and were welcomed with a surprise cup of tea and a chat with the owners.

The house was most interesting - every one of these C16 timber ex-open-hall houses demonstrates some unique features - how interesting to see the vertical shutter slides, the half two-centred crosspassage door heading and the two fine surviving scarf joints that led Michael to deduce that the first range could have been from the C14!

The house, buildings and garden were so beautifully presented, the wine and food was exemplary and Owen and Rosie made us all so welcome. Our sincere thanks to you and the Committee for such a memorable visit!

With best wishes, Alan and Inger Eade

See overleaf for a technical report of the house, with an update on the recent discoveries.

St Mary's Farmhouse, Tacolneston

Building report by Karen Mackie, 2008 (updated 2015)



St Mary's farmhouse is a one-and-a-half-storey property with a two-storey crosswing. It is set a short way back from the road with agricultural buildings to the west side. The house is rendered externally and has a part thatched and part pin-tiled roof.

The west service end includes an inserted brick chimney. To the north side of this chimney is what appears to be ladder access to the upper floor. The rest of this cell is divided in the centre by a transverse principal joist with simple shield chamfer stops. There are flat-laid common joists visible to the east side of the principal. These rest on top of a clamp, which has a large chamfer, and is held in place with large pegs. On the north wall there is a possible door head with peg holes, but the peg hole locations seem to make it rather narrow. On the south side however there is clear evidence of a diamond-mullion window with mortices for five mullions. Mortices for large arched braces in the storey posts suggest that this part of the building was originally unfloored. There is a nineteenth-century cold shelf for dairying to the east side of the room. The hall has an inserted axial principal joist with bar-shield-and-notch chamfer stop. The stairs are contained in the chimney bay. There is a doorframe with bar-shield-and-notch chamfer-stops top and bottom. This leads to the parlour wing which comprises two cells, with a partition wall pegged into the axial joist showing that the wing has always been divided here. The smaller cell on the north side stands proud of the line of the main house. There is peg hole evidence of a window and carpenter's assembly marks (VII, VIII, VIII) visible on the gable wall. The larger cell is the parlour. The transverse principal joist in this room has sunk quadrant chamfers with a chamfer stop

of a bar, flat with raised diamond, a truncated pyramid and notch. The fireplace is plastered and has spandrels inset with a long leaf or feather design with daisy wheel motifs on each side above the Tudor arch. There is a bar and shield stop at the base on either side. A relieving timber above the fireplace continues for some distance to the north and may once have continued further to the south.

At the top of the stairs there is a long jowled post on the east side. The parlour chamber has a three-panel door with a reeded edge. The door is hung on pintles and the hinges are held on with forged nails. There is also a cupboard door of two panels also with reeded edge. This is held on with butterfly hinges and has an upright door handle. The fireplace has a sunk quadrant moulding



*Sunk-quadrant chamfer with bar-diamond-and-pyramid chamfer-stop
photos this page: Michael brown*

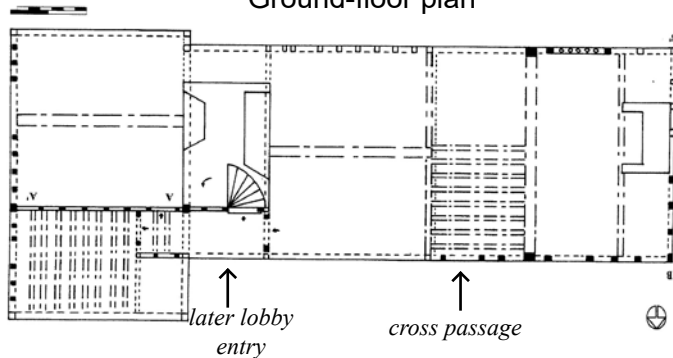
with a bar-and-notch chamfer-stop at the base as seen down stairs. There are wide floorboards. The early nineteenth-century windows are three panel casement windows, split horizontally above the halfway point. In the smaller

chamber the common joists are housed or possibly tenoned and laid on top of the tie beam. The partition wall between the two rooms has only alternate studs pegged. In the one-and-a-half storey range a Georgian door has cut through the tie beam leading from the stairs to the bedroom. On the south wall there are rebates on two studs that continue down below the existing floor. These are for a vertical sliding window shutter. This suggests the hall was floored after the initial build. There is a shutter rebate for a window blocked by the chimney on the west gable wall.



Doorframe detail showing the bar-shield-and-notch chamfer-stops

Ground-floor plan



The roof above the hall and west end is a later replacement with two tiers of in-line purlins and a collar pegged halfway between the two. The principal rafters visible in the bedrooms are of birdsmouth design. The rafters are halved at the top with no ridge piece. The roof in the crosswing has staggered tenoned purlins pegged to the common rafters. There are carpenter's assembly marks scribed on the principal rafters, I and II on east side, V and VI coming back on west side. The collar is pegged to the principal rafter. There is one inch thick wind bracing.

Conclusions

The main one-and-a-half storey range contains the first phase of the building and may be early-sixteenth century in date (see update). The hall was unfloored and there is evidence of diamond-mullion windows in the service bay. The service bay also contains flat-laid joists and shield chamfer stops. The storey posts have gunstock jowls. The hall was ceiled in the early seventeenth century and this range may have been re-roofed around this time. Shortly after, the crosswing was added. The 1628 date on the chimney is consistent with the staggered purlin roof and decoration to the principal joists and fireplaces.

This crosswing is one of the group of experimental designs shown up by our survey of properties in Tacolneston. We see here how the builder is trying to form spaces for developing ways of living still within the framework of an overall traditional

form, with the stair and the two principal rooms of parlour and parlour chamber being combined with subsidiary rooms on each floor, the whole being finished with a fully usable attic accessed by the same stair.

Dendro analysis of timber from the crosswing indicated a date of 1617 plus approximately 10 years of lost sapwood, confirming the 1628 date on the chimney as authentic.

Update after the Summer Party visit

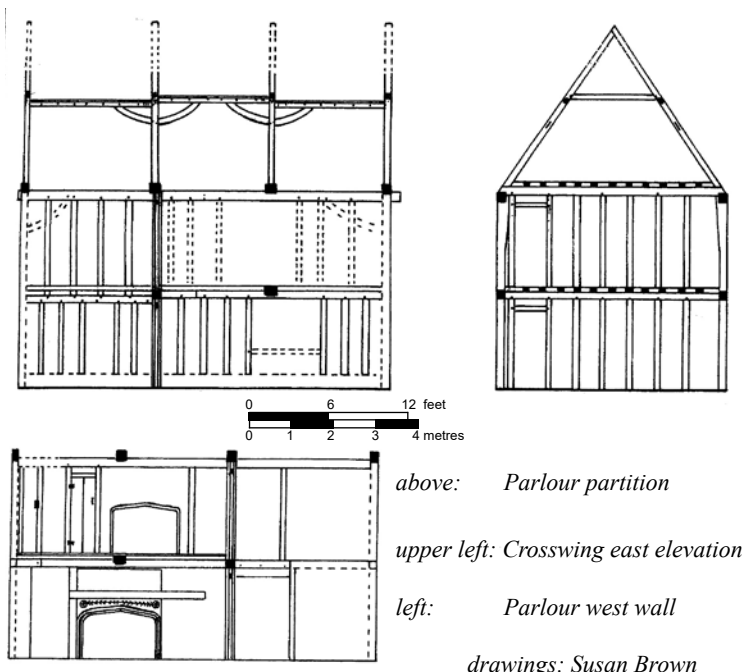
The current owners have worked on parts of the building which were difficult to access in 2008 and have also uncovered other features as part of restoration and redecoration. These have enabled a re-assessment of the age of the original east-west range.

Firstly, part of the cross-passage door has been uncovered in the front wall (see photo below). Its two-centred-arch form would seem to indicate a much earlier date for the main range, as by the sixteenth century doorhead arches were much flatter and usually four or three centred. Secondly, above this door in both wallplates at roof level are undersquinted, splayed scarf joints (see photo below), each almost 3-feet long (90cm). Taken together, these two new features indicate a possible date for this range about 100 years earlier - in the early fifteenth century and possibly even earlier.

Also visible in the scarf-joint photo below, is a square notch at the bottom of the wallplate at the left-hand end of the scarf, next to a pegged mortice for a wall stud. There is a matching notch in the north wallplate. In other buildings, this has been seen as part of a timber-framed chimney or a smoke bay. Although it is not now possible to determine whether that was the case here, it must be remembered that timber-framed chimneys were found in many of the other houses in the Tacolneston survey.

Susan & Michael Brown

Parlour cross-wing



left:
part of the steeply-arched, cross-passage doorhead in the north wall. A rebate allows a door to be closed against it

below:
The undersquinted, splayed scarf joint in the southern wall plate with open square notch

photos: Ian Hinton



Norfolk Stained Glass with David King (20th June 2015)

Richard Ball

NOTE:

As the printed version of the Newsletter has only monochrome photographs inside, the pictures of the wonderful stained glass that we saw on the day are printed on the front and back cover in full colour.

David King, Honorary Research Fellow in the School of History at UEA and expert in Norfolk stained glass led the group on visits to three churches in South Norfolk: East Harling, Attleborough and Besthorpe.

St Peter and St Paul, East Harling

This church was largely rebuilt during the fifteenth century. Of the earlier work that was retained, the tower below the parapet looks to be of c.1300, with cusped intersecting tracery in the west window and cusped Y-tracery in the bell openings. The tower is recorded as having been finished in 1450, and the south aisle must have been substantially complete by 1457, when the first chantry priest to the Harling chantry was appointed; its east window was made some time after February 1461.

The chapel of St Anne, in the east end of the north aisle, can be dated to c.1467–81, the clerestory to after 1481, and the east chancel window was glazed and probably built c.1491–98. The south porch was completed by Sir Thomas Lovell (d. 1524), according to a bede roll. Most of the rebuilding of the church and its glazing can be associated with the figure of Anne Harling (c.1426-1498), the wealthy heiress who inherited the advowson in 1435 and her three husbands, Sir William Chamberlain, Sir Robert Wingfield and John, 5th Lord Scrope of Bolton.

This church contains the most important collection of fifteenth-century glass by Norwich glass-painters outside that city. Most of it has been gathered into the east chancel window, which now contains the remains of a number of windows, but fourteen other windows also contain lesser remains of medieval glass. The most important and earliest dateable glass given by Anne Harling is that now in the east chancel window depicting fifteen scenes from the life of Christ and the Virgin Mary from the Annunciation to the Assumption (SEE REAR COVER). It is not certain whether any of the medieval glass was destroyed at the time of the Reformation, and it is clear that much remained. Most of what survives is from the two chapels glazed by Anne Harling, whose successors to the advowson and manor of East Harling, the Lovell family, were still Catholics in the seventeenth century and may have protected the glass in these more private areas associated with the patron. Nelson says that in about 1642 the glass was removed from the church and stored in the Old Hall.

In 1707, the Lovell family sold their East Harling estate, and in 1716 a new rector was appointed by Thomas Wright, who had moved into the hall. Blomefield and Parkin mention in 1736 that Charles Wright had lately discovered the glass now in the east chancel window in the hall, and had restored it to its original place. As will be seen, Blomefield and Parkin were mistaken,

in that the restored glass was mainly from the south-aisle east window. At some stage in the twentieth century, the east window glazing was provided with rod-and-leaf borders and the tracery filled with foliage. It was removed for safe keeping during the Second World War by G. King & Son (SEE FRONT COVER and REAR COVER).

David King outlined his theory, with evidence, of the original arrangement of 14 of these panels in their original setting of the east window of the Harling Chantry Chapel in the south aisle. Twelve of these panels are extant, only the two donor panels, described by antiquarian sources dated before the glass was removed from the church in the seventeenth century, are missing. David stated that four different painters or workshops appear to have been employed on the extant glass made for the church over five decades. The most important is that which made the original glazing of the chantry windows, which has long been associated with the workshop responsible for much of the glass at St Peter Mancroft, Norwich, and which has been identified as the workshop of John Wighton. He himself played no direct part in the East Harling glass, as he died in 1458, although some of his designs may have been used posthumously. The main painter was probably John Mundeford, to whom the Toppes Window and other glass at Mancroft have been assigned.

*right:
The chantry
chapel for
Robert, Anne
Harling's father,
the east window
of which was
the original
location of
much of the
glass shown on
the front cover*



*left:
The monument to
Robert Harling,
d. 1435 in France*

*photos:
Richard Ball (above)
Ian Hinton (left)*

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The Assumption of St Mary, Attleborough

Only the central tower remains of the Norman church, the eastern arm, by then converted into a college of priests, was destroyed at the Reformation, so that the tower now stands at the east end of the largely fourteenth-century building. The arcades of the nave are tall, the aisles wide and at the east end is the immense and intricate 1475 rood screen, nearly 6 metres high and approximately 16 metres from wall to wall. Tall figures on panels show where the side altars stood. Above are the emblems of all the English and Welsh dioceses and two improving texts. Above again, on the west face of the Norman tower, are large amounts of a high quality wall-painting of the Passion of Jesus, with an Annunciation above.

Although in 1815 the Reverend David Powell stated that all the glazing was then entire, David thinks he must have meant the glazing of the heads of the windows. In 1845 parts of the original glazing from the side lights were gathered together and installed in the tracery heads of the west window by James King of J. & J. King of Norwich and this is what survives today (SEE REAR COVER). King painted many replacement pieces for missing bits and also the borders although they are faithful copies of medieval glass. David described each piece and grouped them according to style, suggesting their designs and differences between painters.

David emphasised how important the antiquarian records of lost glass are and that the information these supply about heraldic records has been much underused. There are some Norfolk churches with hundreds of heraldic shields recorded in this way from the late-sixteenth century onwards: using these would go a long way to solving some of the dating problems with these buildings.

We also had an interesting demonstration of how the glass that was no longer in the windows could usefully be analysed and used as a guide to the dating of the church fabric. David has based his study on the records made by antiquarians of the past, mainly of the heraldic emblems, and particularly those of Constantine Mortimer and his four sons, still surviving in the windows as late possibly as the early-nineteenth century.

Precise dating of the nave has been problematic. Pevsner & Wilson have seen the aisles and transepts as 1340 but the main nave arcades as later, perhaps 1405-1436. Sandy Heslop, following Richard Fawcett, has shown that the windows and arcade are contemporary. Later work was the north porch of circa 1441, and the heightening of aisles finished around 1505/6. Sandy Heslop estimates the main building campaign at circa 1370 but evidence from the lost heraldic glass, which David has studied and written up, together with the style of the extant glass,

suggests that it was earlier, the glass being installed circa 1350-1360 after Constantine Mortimer had assumed the patronage of the lesser part in 1349.

All Saints, Besthorpe

All Saints is a handsome building of the fourteenth century, the east window dates, however, from 1876. In the chancel is an enormous monument in alabaster to Sir William Drury who died in 1636, and there is a very fine sedilia and piscina.

In the window of the south transept are four panels of what David believes to be German stained glass of the fifteenth century (SEE REAR COVER). This illustrated another part of the history of stained glass which was played out in the first half of the nineteenth century. Due to the suppression of the German monasteries as they fell under the domination of the French empire in the early nineteenth century and the widespread restoration of English churches, there was a good market in medieval stained glass. Norfolk glass, too, seems to have been collected and sold at this period.



All Saints, Besthorpe:

*above:
monument to
William Dury d.1639*

*right:
The fine sedilia and
piscina*

*photos:
Richard Ball (above)
Ian Hinton (right)*



*St Mary's,
Attleborough:*

*A unicorn and lion
adorning the misericords*

*far right:
the Elizabethan alms box -
as much iron as wood!*

*photos:
Maggie Chatterley*



Strangers' Hall (9th July 2015) Karen Mackie

In medieval times Strangers' Hall was the residence of men of some influence including mayors and aldermen of the city. It consists of a rambling series of buildings, of several phases, which makes a clear chronology difficult to establish. Open today as a museum of domestic life, the main entrance is off a courtyard - a feature characteristic of this area.

Norwich's textile trade

On arrival we were greeted with refreshments in the beautiful walled gardens which were filled with the scent of roses and lavender. NHBG member Jan Bensley, who works for Norfolk Museum Service, was our guide. It was evident that considerable research of documentary sources had been undertaken to establish its past owners and the alterations they had made. Jan began by putting the building into context, explaining that this area had been at the centre of the city's textile trade. Hence the name of the road it is on, Charing Cross, is thought to come from Sheargate. Many of the owners who lived there are thought to have been involved in the textile trade. This includes Thomas Sotherton who, in his capacity as mayor, invited Low-Country weavers referred to as "Strangers" over in 1565. The name of the building may come from this period, when some of these families may have lodged with him at Strangers' Hall.

How has the front facade changed?

We began at the front of the building looking at the row on the east side of the courtyard. It was clear that these predated the 16th century steps and first floor porch, since the wall had been cut back to accommodate them. On the west corner of the main south facade a stone quoin high enough for a single storey building has been retained. Was this once the height of the building, with additional floors added later or a stone and flint ground floor with timbering above, as commonly seen at Walsingham? Jan stated there was a painting showing that there had been a fourth storey in the past. Photographs show the ground floor windows on the south facade and east crosswing were changed in the 1920s just after the building was given to the city by local solicitor Leonard Bolingbroke.



Susan and Michael head up to the gallery to take a closer look at the roof structure of the Great Hall. (photos: Karen Mackie)

How does the undercroft relate to the rest of the building?

When we entered the building we went in through the ground floor door and through into the stone undercroft. This is the earliest surviving evidence for a building on the site. The octagonal piers and simple capital mouldings are believed to be of early 14th century date when Ralph de Middleton was the owner. The sections of stone between the springing of the vaulting looked rather awkward as they did not entirely match up with the line of the octagonal piers. Above the undercroft is the Great Hall. It is clear the two are not contemporary however since the alignment of the hall is east-west, whereas that of the undercroft runs north-south. Dominic Summers commented that Wensum Lodge had changed its alignment in the same way. The second stage of both buildings was parallel with the street, yet their undercrofts were at right angles to the road.

When was the Great Hall built?

There was some debate as to when the Great Hall had been built - Jan suggested a mid 15th century date by Barley or Caus, with Nicholas Sotherton's initials and merchant mark in the spandrels supporting the tie beam indicating a 16th century alteration. Sue and Michael agreed that the crown post and brattishing on the wall plate was consistent with the middle of the 15th century. The raising could have occurred to allow the Sothertons to add the stone oriel window at the upper end of the hall. The stone porch is also thought to be the work of Nicholas and his wife Agnes. The cross passage screen is recent and utilises wainscoting that was never in a screen. This was most likely added when the building became a museum. In the parlour the



Is the moulding on the capitals in the undercroft contemporary with the occupation of Ralph de Middleton around 1320?

fireplace contains the initials of Joseph Paine who lived there in the middle of the 17th century but the wing clearly existed before then and the earlier inglenook is still evident in a cupboard to the side. The original doorways from the Great Hall to this room have arched heads, there is little else visible inside the room to indicate when it was built. The old stair turret in this corner is now gone. The furnishings in the room commemorate Strangers' Hall residents, the Boseleys, who had several babies in the

Summer outing report

1690s that died only a month after being baptised.

We continued round until we reached the ground floor room represented as a kitchen today, but Jan suggested this was probably an area used for business transactions and that the kitchen had been in a separate building. We ended the tour in the Georgian dining room, having first looked at the brick vaulting below. We were told that this room had an Elizabethan ceiling, did this mean a late 16th century date? The knapped and galleted flint wall could be consistent with this. This ceiling was concealed above the later plaster decoration of the Georgian ceiling by William Wicks.

After the tour we had time to continue looking round the upper floor of the Museum and returned to the garden to enjoy the sun and a cold drink. At the end of the visit we went away realising that much of the history of this building remains elusive. Despite the efforts of the Museum staff to research it we may never know which features of the building were undertaken by a particular owner.

A list of past owners:

Early 14thC. Ralph de Middleton

15thC. William Barley, Mercer or cloth merchant

1525-1610 The Sothertons

Nicholas Sotherton, Grocer (Mayor 1539) and his wife Agnes followed by their son Thomas (Mayor 1565) and then John and Mary Sotherton.

1610-29 Francis Cock, Grocer (Mayor 1627)

From 1659-68 Joseph Paine, a hosier (and Mayor 1660) with wife Emma (nee Bensly)

In the 1690s John and Abigail Boseley, a dancing master lived there.

18thC. John Boseley's daughter Abigail and her husband before 1739, when his granddaughter Abigail and her husband, William Wicks acquire the house.

18thC. Assize judges lodgings

1794-1880 Roman Catholic Committee of Priests Presbytery

1896 -1922 Leonard Bolingbroke, Solicitor.

NHBG Research



Walsingham Journal launch

At INTO, UEA, Norwich (see map on page 3)

Wednesday, September 30th @ 6:30

NHBG Journal 6 (2015), 270+viii pages,
Colour cover, 750 b&w images throughout.

Volume 6 of the Journal of the Norfolk Historic Buildings Group (NHBG) is the result of several years of surveys and analysis of the buildings in Little Walsingham as well as research into their available documentary history, all by members of the Group. This work is placed in context by an examination of the landscape archaeology of the town, an analysis of medieval pilgrimage generally and the role that the Priory and Friary in Walsingham played as a pilgrimage centre in a National and Regional setting.

It provides a unique description of the buildings of the town and their remaining medieval elements, and describes how their specific construction and adaptations provide evidence of their uses in the centuries prior to the Dissolution of the Priory and Friary in the sixteenth century. Analysis of how the town was developed by the monasteries and how it has subsequently changed, results in an interesting commentary on urban development generally and particularly on the role of the Church. It concludes with a fully illustrated gazetteer of the details of the 70 buildings

Scientific dating of the building materials of four buildings was undertaken in an attempt to establish the exact building date and compare this with stylistic evidence. For the first time in the NHBG's studies, dendrochronological analysis was unable to produce an exact date for the timber used, although dating sequences were established which will allow a date to be established in the future when more data for timber in this area exist. Consequently, radio-carbon dating was used for the first time by the NHBG to date timbers, and a calibrated felling date of 1470-1495 was obtained from one series of samples, matching the date assessed from the building style. Generous grants were obtained from the Vernacular Architecture Group towards dendrochronology costs and from the Norfolk & Norwich Archaeological Society towards printing costs.

The volume is available for £8 to members (which helps towards our production costs)
and £12 to non-members. (but £8 to members of VAG and NNAS)

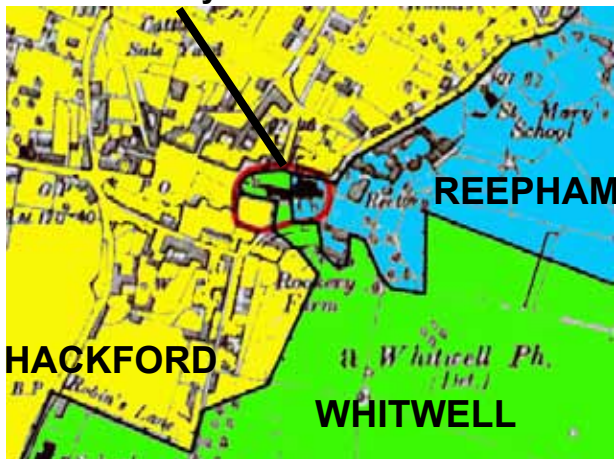
It will also be available to be purchased at winter lectures at UEA in Norwich (see page 3 for dates),
or from your local committee member (listed on page 2), or it can be posted at a cost of £4 (it weighs over 1kg) -
send a cheque for £12 (member) or £16 (non-member) to:
NHBG, c/o The Old Rectory, Barnby, Beccles NR34 7QN

Reepham walkabout (11th July 2015) Maggy Chatterley

Before the AGM, almost 50 people gathered in Reepham churchyard for a tour round this fascinating mid-Norfolk market town which stands on a branch of the river Wensum, some 12 miles north-west of Norwich.

The trip began with an explanation of the strange churchyard, originally containing three churches. The junction of the three parishes occurs in the churchyard so that each church was in its own parish - Reepham with Kerdiston, Whitwell and Hackford. Hackford church mostly burned down in the 1540s during the Great Fire of Reepham and the tower demolished in the 1790s, Whitwell church was declared redundant in the 1970s but remains as the village hall and Reepham church remains as the town church.

churchyard



above: map showing the relationship between the parishes in the churchyard (Ian Hinton)

below: Whitwell and Reepham churches in line a stern (Richard Ball)



Even the name Reepham is an oddity, since at Domesday, Reepham was mentioned only as an afterthought, attached to Kerdiston, with Hackford and Whitwell as separate

entries. Even Reepham marketplace was in Hackford and Parson Woodforde mentions going to the market in Hackford. All the four parishes were united as Reepham in the 1930s.

The tour started with Anne Woollett guiding us down Church Street to Back Street and past the entrance to a narrow straight loke leading to Whitwell village and the direction of the River Wensum from the churches (see photo).



Anne explains about the loke to Whitwell village leading from Back Street (Adam Longcroft)

We stopped at The Oaks (Grade II listed) originally a farmhouse (19th century facade but 17th century inside) and at The Cardinal's Hat (also Grade II listed), possibly a former Inn, which has hewn timber jetty posts (one visible), the fully timber framed section having no door. We were told there was a 17th century brick range at the back.

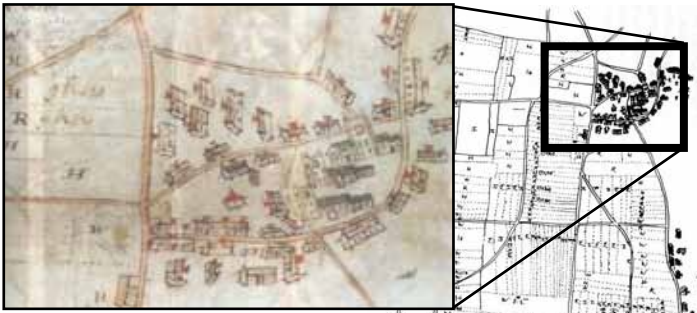


The Cardinal's Hat in Back Street with its hewn jetty posts (Richard Ball)

Further west on Back Street are former Maltings and Tanneries on the edge of town. Then it was back to the Market Place *via* the wonderfully-named Pudding Pie Alley and we were given an extract from an old map showing three churches in the churchyard, the Market Place with a Market Cross building and showing most buildings with chimneys. It was thought that the map was probably made in the 17th century and perhaps three churches were drawn because there were still substantial remains

Summer outing report

of Hackford church. The rest of the map showed the medieval strip fields that surrounded the town - we were told and this was probably the reason the map was made.



above:
An extract from the 17th C map of Reepham, shows that agricultural strips (on the left) abutted the market place (NRO: Aylsham 414(b))

right:
the tracing of the whole map showing the extent of the open field strips. The strips are labelled R, W or H showing to which parish they belonged. Whitwell village is on the road at the right edge of the tracing.
copy by Lynne Hodge of the tracing



Many of the listed buildings in Reepham allude to previous agricultural connections: Dairy Farm Barn, Malthouse Farm, Valley Farm Barn, Valley Farm House, Oaks Farm House and Oaks Farm Barns. In the 18th century, the Brewery brought great wealth to the town and the owners, the Bircham family, lived on the Olland Estate - the gatehouse is still there and a row of cottages built by the estate runs from there up Olland Road.

There is now infill between the churches and the market place and the architecture is apparently 18th century rather than medieval, although some of the houses may have had a make-over rather than being rebuilt. Dial House has a listed Georgian front with a date-plaque of 1729. It was the residence of a family that ran a brewery and one of the principal rooms used to be the brewery. Opposite, the King's Arms was a coaching Inn and has internal timber-framing dating from at least the 16th century.

St Mary's School, now a private house called The Old School, was built by the rector in 1847 in red brick with black diaper work.



St Mary's school - 1847 diaper work (Richard Ball)

Church Hill Cottage and Oakdene, opposite the churches have blind and *trompe l'oeil* windows. Next door but one, nos 7 and 9 are part of a thatched building opposite the church whose brickwork has random bonding. It was thought that York House, set back from the south-east corner of the churchyard, is not like an ordinary domestic building and could have been a guild hall or another hostelry.



In the north-east corner of the churchyard stand Church Hill cottage (on the extreme left) with trompe l'oeil windows and the thatched number 7 with its random brickwork (Richard Ball)

Hollyhock closeup (John Metcalf)

We returned to the churchyard for a brief look at the church of St Mary Reepham. It contains spectacular 14th century monuments to the Kerdiston family. A larger than life-size monument of Sir Roger (or possibly Sir William - according to Blomefield) in full chainmail armour lies on carved cobbles in the chancel, and a rare survival of a 14th century brass to Sir William and his wife Cecily lies on the chancel floor.

By this time, most minds were turning to tea and scones! Thanks to Anne and Lynne for the tour.



The Kerdiston memorials in St Mary's, Reepham.

above: Sir Roger on his bed of cobbles (Richard Ball)

right: the brass of Sir William and Cecily (Ian Hinton)



West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village (5th August 2015) Ian Hinton

I have to say that I had been looking forward to this visit since it was announced. The last time I visited West Stow was in the late 1980s, whilst it was still in an early phase. This was well before I started my thesis on church location, part of which considered the importance of the middle-Saxon period for Christian burial after The Conversion and when Saxon settlements had fixed their locations, although, as it turned out, this version of West Stow had already moved by then.

A brief introductory film and a short talk from Suffolk County Council's Saxon Archaeology specialist (Richard Hoggett) convinced everyone that almost everything we learnt in school about "The Dark Ages" was in fact wrong. Many finds of exquisite metalwork and jewellery in the past have done much to undermine what was taught then, but West Stow has revealed that the Saxons did not "forget" how to make pottery after the Romans left, with kilns on site datable to the early 5th century, following on from the local Roman kilns, and the sunken-floored buildings common on early Saxon sites were floored over and provided a degree of sophistication that did not seem possible in the 1950s-1970s. This site also seems to have fixed its location as early as the fifth century, compared with earlier presumptions that this did not happen until as late as the seventh century.

The village is located on a knoll above the River Lark (presumably its source of water as no wells were found) and there are many other Saxon settlements in the Lark valley. This site was abandoned towards the end of the seventh century and moved to the current site of West Stow village, a mile or so away. A fen-blow in the thirteenth century buried the site in yellow sand up to a metre deep, which has preserved the archaeology from the plough in the ensuing centuries. Gravel digging in the 1930s revealed part of the site; some excavation followed in the 1950s and the Government sponsored excavation from 1965, as a site was sought for Bury St. Edmund's rubbish.

Digging, led by Stanley West, uncovered several sunken-featured buildings (SFB). Until then they had been thought to be sunken-floored buildings, but West re-interpreted them as having suspended wooden floors. Apart from the pit over which they were built, these houses had 2, 6 or 8 post holes to support the roof structure and this constitutes all the evidence of their existence. Alongside these were several larger communal halls, not SFBs; the largest of which is shown on the next page.

The 1970s saw the rise of experimental archaeology and Cambridge University encouraged the setting out of the first building on the site on its original "footings" in 1973 as a way of discovering how the houses were constructed, so that lessons could be learnt from their structural integrity and decay (PHOTO 1). This was built with an internal floor. The second, without a floor, was constructed in 1974 (PHOTO 2). It soon became obvious that the reinterpreted version of SFBs was the correct one as the sunken floor of the second building soon filled with sand if used without a timber floor.

In all, evidence was discovered of 70 buildings over a period of 200-250 years, which is thought to represent a group of six



above:
*The first reconstructed building (on the right), with
internal floor (and two large props)
(photos: Ian Hinton)*

below:
*The second reconstructed building (on the left) without
an internal floor and only one prop*

*Both of these buildings will be excavated after recording and
dismantling, to establish whether their below-ground records
match those of the original buildings*



buildings or so, housing perhaps two extended family groups, regularly rebuilt to overcome problems of the rotting of earth-fast-post construction. Although the bottom of posts did rot away regularly, evidence also suggests that the buildings were dismantled at the end of their lives, rather than rotting away completely, presumably to reuse any valuable timber that could be re-purposed. Amongst the 70 buildings were two that had burnt down, revealing additional information about farming and eating habits - grain, nuts etc, which added to the 1 million animal bones found during the excavations.

Experimental archaeology has triumphed here, as it became obvious that both buildings have required propping up with struts as they racked, or leant, down the hill; rot set in in the post feet after about 25 years, and the life of these two buildings is about 40 years (i.e. now). The experiment continues in that they

will both be recorded in detail, dismantled and then excavated to modern standards to establish whether the record in the ground of these reconstructions matches the original excavated patterns of their predecessors.

In the second photo is a recent version of the 1974 SFB without a floor, built using methods that have been learnt during the 40 years that its neighbour has existed. This is being done to test whether different, and hopefully more effective, building methods will have an effect on the life of the building - it will take another 40 years to find out, but in its first year it is confirming again that sand fills the sunken space quickly if used as a floor!

Most of the timber used in these buildings must have come from managed woodland, grown close together to achieve tall, straight-grained timber which could be cleaved easily with wooden or iron wedges, rather than sawn. Different methods of walling have been used in the buildings in the village - half-round logs butted up against one another and sealed with clay as well as neatly-riven versions of segments of tree that have been fitted together to seal out the weather.



feathered riven boards fitted into grooves in their neighbour to keep out the weather

The other main area of experimentation in these buildings is their thatching. A professional thatcher from Wales acts as a consultant to the Village and is trying different methods of thatching to test longevity and effectiveness, both of materials and techniques. Some of these methods are still used in parts of this country as well as the examples, highlighted in Denmark by Alan Eade in *Newsletter 22*, with crows beaks of wood anchoring the thatch on the ridge. On other roofs, turf is used at the ridge. Heather, reed and straw are all used as thatch; and willow and straw ropes used to help fix the thatch to the roof. The willow is held on with small V-shaped branch joints as anchors, rather than twisted hazel spars, for which no archaeological record was found on site. The thatch on the new SFB has no anchors at all; it has been stuff-thatched, poking the straw into the heather undercoat.

Our thanks to West Stow for a worthwhile collection of buildings, for a very informative museum and for an excellent cream tea; to the weather for failing to rain as forecast; and particularly to Richard Hoggett for a most enlightening tour.



Timber beaks along the ridge to anchor the thatch, as seen in Denmark



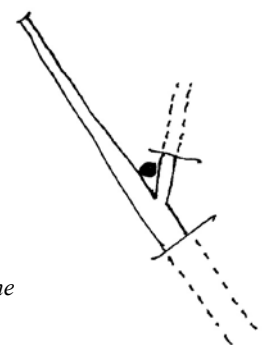
Turf along the ridge as a retainer, above thatch made of heather



One of the hall-type buildings with thatch anchored along its length with a combination of willow withies and straw rope

*left:
willow withies
anchored by
branch-joint clamps*

*right:
A branch-joint clamp
hammered in from the fat
end to clamp the withy in the
V (shown as the circle)*



Notre Dame school (22nd July 2015)

Naomi Milne

It came as a surprise to enter through an unobtrusive entrance on Finkelgate and find oneself in the extensive grounds of Notre Dame School, a co-educational school of 1400 students which has recently celebrated its 150th anniversary.

We were given a welcome introduction by the current headmaster, Brian Conway, who greeted us in one of the public rooms in the St Julie's building, a former Georgian residence. St Julie's (also known as St Catherine's Hill) is a late eighteenth-century house with a pretty Adam style porch and a two-bay pediment. The doorway and side windows have Ionic pilasters.

Our guide for the afternoon was Jonathan Hooton, Head of Geography and current Chairman of the Norwich Society. Like many schools, Notre Dame has evolved over time, increasing in size with new buildings and land purchase. We learned that the school site developed over four centuries. We were given a plan of the site and various maps of differing periods, 1789, 1830, 1873, 1928, 1969 and current. The eighteenth century house known as St Catherine's Hill, became grade II listed in 1954 and Jonathan has worked closely with the Norwich Society to maintain the historic nature of the building.

The map of 1789 shows the house on St Catherine's Hill, at that time it was a market garden area of the City. It is rumoured that the house was built by Thomas Ivory or his son in 1779 and certainly Thomas Ivory had built Ivory House on All Saints Green, former Militia Barracks, and St. Catherine House - now Clapham & Collinge Solicitors in All Saints Green, both nearby. The House was built for John Chambers, Recorder of Norwich but subsequently owned by Robert Plumptre, Captain James Burroughes, Jeremiah Ives and his son, Captain Ferdinand Ives. Until 1860, it had been used as judges' lodgings. In 1864, it was auctioned to the Sisters of Notre Dame with finance provided by Laura Stafford-Jerningham, daughter of Lord and Lady Stafford of Costessey Hall who entered the Notre Dame order after the death of her husband in 1848. It has remained in the possession of the order and then the Catholic Diocese ever since and in 1994, was incorporated into Notre Dame High School. The last nun schoolmistress only left the School in 1999.

*The lantern above the staircase
(photo: Rosemary Forrest)*



*The front of the St Catherine's Hill, with the later chapel on the right
(photo: Richard Ball)*

were the kingfisher-blue tiles which are, apparently, a feature of other Notre Dame Schools throughout the country. The former library is currently the Headmaster's study. Despite the current non-domestic usage, it had clearly been an 18th century domestic residence which has retained many elegant features of the period. The original formal staircase remains and also the back stairs. On the first floor, there are some grand arches and lanterns and many original fireplaces. We were able to go up to the servants' quarters on the top floor where the ceilings are noticeably lower and the rooms smaller but most again with their original fireplaces. In the courtyard next to the house, we saw the stable block from 1864, largely unchanged on the exterior and now used as a classroom and again retaining original window shutters.

Facing St Catherine's House, which would have been symmetrical in the 18th century, the chapel looks a slightly strange addition from 1896. It was designed by Frederick Banham from Beccles in early-English Gothic style based on Sainte Chapelle in Paris. Important features are the rose window, the fleur-de-Lys mosaic floor, and the altar canopy adorned with five-pointed stars on a blue background. It is thought that perhaps the marble and alabaster altar may have come from a small sample of the Italian and Greek marbles used to decorate the Marble Hall of Norwich Union also in Surrey Street. The Chapel has had a chequered history with the roof burning down in 1911 and a refurbishment in the 1930s. It was restored again in 2004.

The School has a fascinating history 1864-2014 which has been written up in a booklet by John Eady, company secretary of the academy, to commemorate its first 150 years.

Many thanks to Mary Ash for organising this visit.



AGM Report (11th July 2015) - Lynne Hodge

The AGM started after most of the extensive spread of committee-made scones and the 10 cakes made by members were eaten, washed down by copious cups of tea after a warm tour of Reepham.

In all there were 49 members present and apologies were recorded from another 27 members.

Chairman, Adam Longcroft thanked everyone who has helped run the group so successfully for the last year with a full programme of winter lectures, summer visits, newsletters, website improvements, our new Facebook page and the database of buildings surveyed by members of the group which is now available for all members to use as a research tool. He also announced that Volume 6 of the Group's Journal on the buildings of Walsingham is just about to go to the printers and will be available to buy at the start of the winter programme in September (at £8 for members and £12 for non-members).

The treasurer reported that the group's finances are in a healthy state with income exceeding expenditure for the second year in a row, partly as a result of reduced expenses, but helped by the small charge levied for attendance at winter lectures. The result will contribute towards the expenses of producing the next journal. Although the group received generous grants from the VAG and NNAS towards the journal costs, it is still likely to cost the NHBG around £3000 (a full years membership income).

Membership was reported to be 251 at the end of March, a remarkably consistent figure in line with most of the previous 10 years.

Alayne Fenner was unanimously re-elected to the post of Vice-Chair and Hilary Newby-Grant was elected to fill one of the three committee vacancies, there being no other nominations. Two of these vacancies were caused by the resignation after 15 years on the committee of Susan & Michael Brown. The committee clubbed together to have Susan and Michael's vintners assemble a case of wine to suit their palates as a thank-you for all their survey work and reports that have formed the backbone of much of the Group's publications. Adam thanked them on behalf of everyone.

A thank-you should also be added for all those who made the day at Reepham such a success.



Susan and Michael reply after being presented with a token bottle from their thank-you present from the committee. (Ian Hinton)

Conferences, Exhibitions, Courses and Websites

Norwich Historic Churches Trust Conference Sat October 24th, 10-4:30 King's Centre, Norwich

Tickets £40 inc lunch. Papers include: The use of closed churches, Voluntary action, The future of historic parish churches. To book: send a cheque for £40 to: Stella Eglinton, NHCT, St Peter Parmentergate, 76 King Street, Norwich NR1 1PG or email: stella.eglington@norwich-churches.org

Courses at Cambridge Continuing Education Certificate, Diploma and Advanced Diploma in Local History

Start in October or November 2015 at Madingly Hall. Course duration 1 or 2 years. Fee - £1800 per year
You can find out more and apply online at:
www.ice.cam.ac.uk/courses/certificates-and-diplomas
The deadline for applications is 7 September 2015.

Hungate Medieval Art - Exhibition St Peter Hungate, Elm Hill, Norwich

'Ministries of Defense; Breckland's Hidden Churches and Landscapes' Until October 4th, Saturdays 10:00-4:00, Sundays 2:00-4:00

The Medieval Churches of Norwich: City, Community & Architecture

Project by researchers at UEA inviting participation by interested parties. See <http://norwichmedievalchurches.org/>

Websites of possible interest

ChurchDays (<http://churchdays.co.uk/>)

is a new online resource for people who are new to visiting Church of England churches. There is some helpful introductory material. The core data about individual churches is being taken from the recently created Church Heritage Record (<https://facultyonline.churchofengland.org/churches>). Type in a church, and a useful map appears. The amount of information available should be increased over time.

Leicester University - Small towns project

Architecture: the Classical Style in small Norfolk towns
<http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/urbanhistory/research/small-towns/architecture>

Post Reformation wall paintings <https://postreformationwallpaintingproject.wordpress.com/>

- a site of current research involving later paintings in churches across the country.



Above:

The top of the west window from
St Mary's, Attleborough

(photo: Ian Hinton)

Left and Right:

Two of the panels of German glass from
the south transept window in All Saints',
Besthorpe

(photos: Ian Hinton)

Below:

Two of the panels from the east window of
SS Peter & Paul, East Harling

left: Mary's Assumption into Heaven

right: Deposition from the Cross
(The Pieta)

(photos: Richard Ball)

