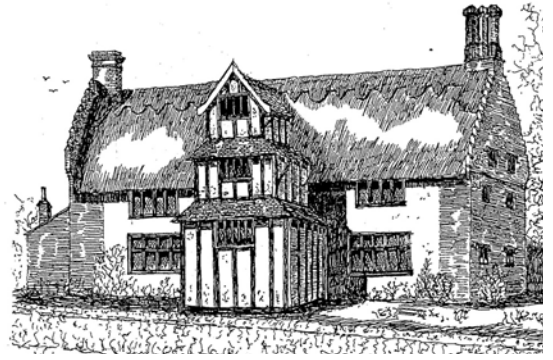


# NHBG Newsletter



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Norfolk Historic Buildings Group



*The Rookery, Fundenhall. We were very grateful for the generosity of the owner who allowed us free rein over her house both for recording and for a summer evening meeting (see report page 10).*

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# CHAIR

Welcome to the fifteenth edition of the NHBG's Newsletter. Since the publication of the September newsletter the Group has hosted another series of well-attended winter lectures (organised deftly by Mary Ash) which focused on a typically wide range of topics from an analysis of prehistoric houses to historic wall paper! The members evening was particularly well supported this year and gave members a chance to air and share their research – I particularly enjoyed the Browns' expert update on research into the houses of Tacolneston, the focus of the Group's long-term project. The Tacolneston project is now well advanced thanks to Karen Mackie's efforts as the project co-ordinator and the valiant work of our volunteer building recorders. The Group aims to publish the results of all this hard work in 2009, but if you can't wait until then, come along to our special evening event in Tacolneston (Village Hall) on Friday 6 June to learn more.

Dominic Summers has kindly taken on the co-ordination of the summer 2008 programme of events and as you can see on pages 19-20 it promises to be one of the best ever. Past summer events have been very popular indeed, so remember to book early to avoid disappointment! The NHBG Churches and Chapels sub-group (led by Dominic Summers, Ian Hinton and Robin Forrest) continue their marathon-like study of Norfolk church arcades (which should be published in the next 2-3 years) and teams of NHBG recorders are probably busily measuring-up a building somewhere in Norfolk as you are reading this newsletter! The Group will be working with a company called Internet Geeks to re-vamp its website over the next few months and we would welcome any suggestions or ideas you may have for how to enhance the value of the site to members and the wider public (send ideas to Jackie Simpson, [Jackie\\_simpson@beeb.net](mailto:Jackie_simpson@beeb.net)). This year's AGM will be held at Binham Priory on Saturday 11 June. I suspect there will once again be enormous quantities of scones, jam and fresh cream available and look forward to meeting you there.

*Adam Longcroft*  
*Chair, Norfolk Historic Buildings Group*  
*March 2008*

Friday 6 June 2008

Tacolneston Project with Ian Tyers, Dendrochronologist

Tacolneston Village Hall

7.00 pm for 7.30 pm



Learn about dendrochronology and find out what has been going on in relation to the Tacolneston Project.

Meet the householders whose houses have been surveyed; meet the researchers.

As always: drinks and nibbles  
All Welcome! No Charge



*The Rookery, Fundenhall—part of the Tacolneston Project (see Report p 10). NHBG members 'getting to grips' with a well-preserved timber-framed house on one of the NHBG's training sessions for volunteer recorders.*

## House and Home in Prehistoric Norfolk

### Trevor Ashwin

The first farming communities were established in Norfolk about 6000 years ago. Norfolk is very rich in prehistoric remains dating to the four millennia from this time until the advent of the Romans – pottery, flint and stone implements, burial mounds and evidence for bronzeworking. It is clear that prehistoric peoples had a very significant impact on the natural environment of East Anglia and would have exploited the region's light, fertile soils and the massive reservoirs of natural resources represented by the Wash, fenlands, the coast and the great valleys of the Wensum, Bure and Waveney. Despite all of this, however, it is remarkably difficult to find archaeological evidence for 'homes' in the Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age eras. Why is this, and how can archaeologists try to redress this problem?

The lecture introduced some of the arguments that are set out more fully in a paper by the writer in the *Journal of the Norfolk Historic Buildings Group* (2007). One important problem in East Anglia (and indeed much of lowland England) is the extent to which many centuries of intensive agriculture have eroded, flattened and hidden prehistoric sites. For the Neolithic and Bronze Age, a further consideration is that settlement was probably mobile and may have featured dwellings with light 'footprints' which leave few traces for archaeologists. However, it is clear that localised areas of thick soil build-up on agricultural land – typically in natural hollows and the lower slopes of valleys – have sometimes shielded remains of ephemeral post- and stake-hole structures from the plough. With regard to the later prehistoric period, several examples of Iron Age roundhouses have been recorded during recent excavations, albeit usually in plough-damaged form. The lecture presented the evidence for one group of these structures, recorded on the

Norwich Southern Bypass in 1990, summarising the architectural possibilities raised by the recorded pits and post-holes, presenting the arguments around the possible longevity (or otherwise!) of post structures, and considering, with reference to experimental archaeology and to better preserved examples of structures excavated elsewhere, how internal space might have been used.

The evidence for Norfolk's prehistoric homes may be hard to find and interpret, but is well worth pursuing, especially in locations where agricultural damage might be minimal. Interpreting prehistoric homes cannot be divorced from a wider consideration of prehistoric lives and world views, and this is one of the reasons why this subject is so interesting and important. Prehistoric peoples' beliefs, ideologies and spiritual values probably permeated the architecture and disposition of their homes and ritual and religious factors may have played a significant role in shaping the evidence as 'mundane' considerations of subsistence and practicality. Indeed, there is a growing realisation that prehistoric societies would not necessarily have confined spiritual and religious activities to a discrete realm. One distinguished prehistorian has argued that it is no longer appropriate to view the prehistoric house (when we can identify it!) simply as 'a machine for living, or as the shell for one or other social unit inhabiting it'. Instead, we must consider the wider opportunities that it offers the prehistorian, both as a 'living' entity full of significance and meaning and as an active agent in the emergence of developing human concepts of the home, and of domesticity itself. Perhaps this can offer inspiration to archaeologists and prehistorians in East Anglia and beyond.

*(See the Journal of the NHBG Vol. 3 (2007), 5–28 for more detailed information.)*

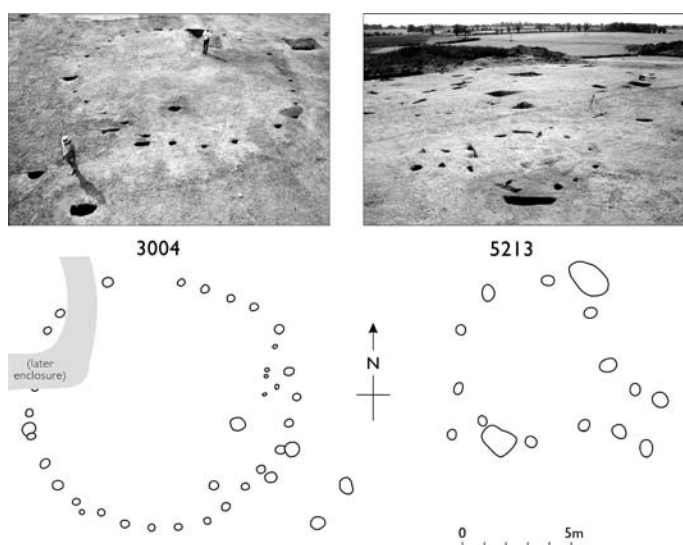


Fig. 1 Plans and photographs of Iron Age roundhouses at Harford Farm, Caistor St Edmund



Fig. 2 Reconstruction of an Iron Age roundhouse recorded at West Stow, Suffolk, by Christina Unwin.

## Goldsmiths' Premises in East Anglia, 1500—1750

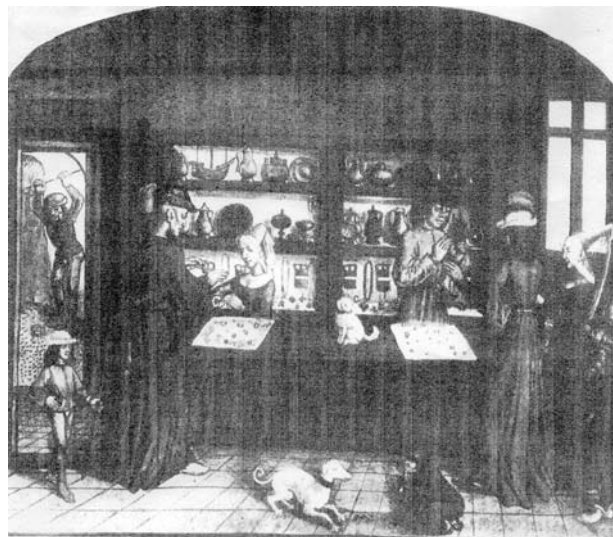
Mary Fewster



*Etienne Delaulne's engraving of his own workshop. He was a famous Parisian goldsmith of the 16th C. Source: R Came, 'Silver', London 1961.*

Goldsmiths were found only in certain towns, and within them, only in restricted areas. Not surprisingly, the greatest number were in Norwich, followed by the two Suffolk 'capitals', Ipswich and Bury St. Edmunds, and the two major ports of King's Lynn and Yarmouth. Other evidence shows goldsmiths in Beccles, Woodbridge, and Harleston. There are references to goldsmiths in Stowmarket and East Dereham, but no evidence that they were working in those towns; they may have retired or moved there, as did John Page of Ixworth, who had worked in Bury St. Edmunds, and William Rogers, who died in Lowestoft, but had moved from Norwich and taken up trade as a merchant. The absence of goldsmiths in major market towns like Wymondham, as well as their presence in places such as Harleston, is explained when the main through-routes are plotted on a map. The luxury nature of the craft required a greater customer base than the locality could provide. Goldsmiths could be supported in provincial capitals, major ports, administrative centres like Woodbridge, and major specialist markets, like the corn market at Harleston, whose prices were quoted in Norwich, but they also relied on passing trade. The same criteria applied to their position in the towns. Whereas they might have been found in the market places of smaller towns like Beccles, in the larger centres their shops were on major thoroughfares, in Norwich and Bury between the civic and the ecclesiastical centres, elsewhere on the way to central markets. The craft was closely connected to the civic elite, both in terms of the goldsmiths themselves, and in terms of their customer base. They are therefore found only in central parishes, among others of the mercantile class.

Sadly, the commercial importance of these areas means that most have been redeveloped. Most of our information on the goldsmiths' premises comes from wills and inventories, and even here we are reliant on four wills and four inventories



*A goldsmith's shop in the 15th C; a miniature ascribed to Alexander Bening, the renowned Flemish illuminator, who died at Ghent in 1519. Source: R Came, 'Silver', London 1961.*

from the whole period. These show a wide variation, from the simple four-roomed unit of shop and hall, with a chamber over each, in the will of John Shaw of Bury (1563), to the premises of Simon Borrowe, of Norwich, whose inventory lists a shop, hall, parlour, three chambers, kitchen, buttery, and other work and store-rooms. The house of Peter Peterson, which stood in London Street, Norwich, roughly on the site of HSBC bank, was undoubtedly even larger: his will refers to a great hall, little hall, parlour, long parlour, and great chamber. There would obviously have been other chambers, and extensive service quarters. There is no reference to a workshop. At the age of 85, and a prominent citizen, he had retired. His tools were in an iron-bound chest in the little hall, and his premises would have been rented out or even sold.

There are no pictures of the interiors of the shops of English goldsmiths, but a fifteenth century Flemish miniature shows a surprisingly modern arrangement, with a counter and display shelving. The counter is referred to in sixteenth century documents, including Simon Borrowe's inventory, as a 'goldsmith's desk', and Margaret Oliver of Bury referred to her shop as being 'for the making *and shewing* of goldsmith's wares', suggesting a similar display element. An engraving of a Parisian workshop illustrates what would have been found in East Anglian premises, and indeed is not unlike goldsmiths' workshops today.

Four buildings or features survive that illuminate the documentary record. Blomefield, in his 'History of Norwich' referred to a goldsmiths' guildhall, which from his plan appeared to be on the site now occupied by Jarrold's. However, recent research by Chris Garibaldi showed that it was on a corner site where modern Dove Street joined the Market Place, the area of the medieval 'aurifabria' (see photo). Blomefield described

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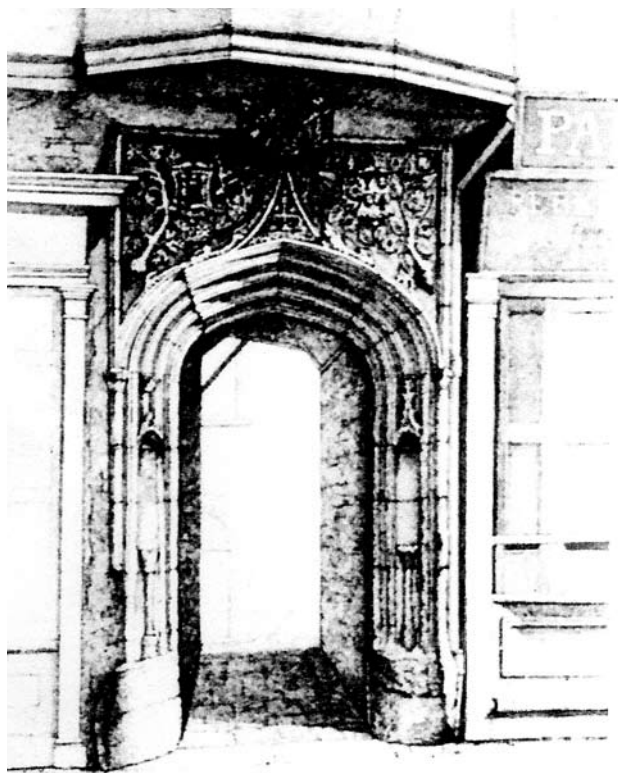


*Dove Street joined the Market Place, the area of the medieval 'aurifabria' and now thought to be the Goldsmiths' Guildhall.*

it as having been recently rebuilt, and the present building is remarkably similar to post-Great Fire guildhalls in London: a block of shop units with the hall behind in a courtyard, reached by an archway. Two goldsmiths premises also survive; the premises of the Olivers in Abbeygate, Bury, a large corner site built round a courtyard, with the shop on the corner. The shop and part of the living accommodation has been extensively altered, but the side street frontage still retains its half-timbered construction and courtyard entrance. In Norwich, the London Street premises of William Cobbold, the greatest of the sixteenth century East Anglian goldsmiths, are the only remaining jettied buildings in the street. Recorded in the Landgable rents as four units 'buildd as one', this division can be clearly seen in the layout of the (replaced) windows and the blank arches. The most iconic of the survivals, though, is the doorway that led to the courtyard house and premises of John Basyngham, another Tudor goldsmith. Removed when the building was demolished, it was attached to the south side of the Guildhall. A re-used monastic doorway, the added superstructure shows three shields that demonstrated his beliefs - the Royal Arms, showing loyalty to the Crown and the Reformed church, the City Arms, to celebrate



*London Street, Norwich: the premises of William Cobbold, the greatest 16th C goldsmith.*



*The goldsmiths' arms on the Basyngham gateway, Norwich (etching by H E Blazebly c. 1850, in C Hartop, ed. East Anglian Silver, 2004). Below: Detail of Gate now on The Guildhall, Norwich.*



*Left: The arms of the London Goldsmiths' Company, from the title page of the Book of Ordinances, 1516. (S M Hare. "The History of the Goldsmiths' company". (Proc Soc Silver Collectors II, 1982, p 174)*

*Below left: embossed fraction of goldsmiths' arms from a house in London Street, Norwich. (Norfolk Museums Service).*

*Below Right: Detail of Goldsmiths' arms on Basyngham Gateway, Norwich.*

*Note: the two Norwich examples of the arms are reversed.*



## The Building History of St. Margaret's Church, Cley-next-the-Sea, in the Middle Ages. Gerald Randall

Except for the tower, surviving features of the church date from c. 1280 to c. 1450. A small C11 or C12 church of which most of the north wall is an updated version, can be confidently located at roughly the site of the present north aisle or part of it, a supposition partially supported by GPR (Ground Penetrating Radar.) The tower was added to its present west end in the thirteenth century. A major expansion was planned in the last quarter of the thirteenth century. A new chancel was built, presumably at the rector's expense,

well to the east, anticipating transepts and a nave three times the size of the whole of the original church. The patron until 1288 was Sir John de Vaux, one of the most powerful men in East Anglia. He left no male heir and his Cley property was divided between his two daughters, Petronilla de Nerford and Maud de Roos. While both sisters probably financed the new church, Maud and her descendants held the advowson. The footings of the transeptal chapels were probably laid out when the chancel was built, but there was a delay of at least twenty years after the completion of the chancel, probably due to the sisters' other commitments. The Roos family in particular were generous church patrons, with founders' rights at several monastic houses and some parish churches near their principal homes, Helmsley and Belvoir Castles. At the critical time, they were contributors to the new nave of York Minster, begun in 1291, and their Carmelite priory at Blakeney, founded in 1296, was in progress. The family hall in its precinct was completed in 1321. By this time both the sisters were widows and so had control of their own finances, though in fact Maud may have already died (1317?) leaving the responsibility to her son, the third Baron Roos. Building was resumed c. 1320 by a first class team who had worked in Norwich under John Ramsey, who may himself have been the designer-mason, though he can have given little further time to it afterwards. Several of his characteristic features can be seen in the building, which was completed c. 1345. The most important of these



changes was the decision to retain and heighten the existing tower, now at the north-west corner, rather than replace it with a new west tower, and to extend the nave and south aisle for a further bay to create an ambitious west front instead. Its original window was probably replaced or remodelled about c.1390-1400. Between 1405 and 1413, a grand new two-storied south porch was built with an important display of heraldry on its south face.

The posthumous presence

of the arms of Queen Anne of Bohemia (d.1394) suggests her involvement with the church in some way, and this might have been connected with the murder of her friend and servant Sir Ralph Stafford, the nephew of Lady Beatrice Roos, the then patron, another close friend, and/or the need for a chapel for Hanseatic traders. About 1430-40 the aisle walls were raised and new windows were put in by the master who rebuilt the nave and tower of Blakeney church. Perhaps a little later still, the chancel side walls were raised and the east lancets were replaced by the present perpendicular window. A recent exploration of the church with members of the Blakeney Area Historical Society raised some interesting points. Dowsing revealed no trace of my suggested alignment of the old church's east wall. There appears to be a north-south line

one module to the west, suggesting it was even smaller. There are also apparent north-south lines across the chancel and near the east end of the nave. Might there originally have been two small churches in one churchyard with the new chancel temporarily attached to the second one? When the flooring on the north side of the nave is replaced later this year, some informal poking around might yield more information about the old church(es). The tower has been raised at least twice, and there is evidence to suggest that the carved work on the south porch may have been done in advance, perhaps at the quarry, and the plain ashlar only added by the actual builders. Further analysis will hopefully add to our understanding of this spectacular parish church.



## Historic Wallpaper Christine Woods

Curator (Wallpapers) at The Whitworth Art Gallery, The University of Manchester

Generally speaking, wall-papers don't survive for posterity. Subject to the ravages of time, war and changes in fashion, they are among the most ephemeral of products and are certainly not regarded as family heirlooms. So it's not surprising that few collections of wallpaper exist.

The V&A holds the UK's national collection. In size and scope the Whitworth Art Gallery's ranks second and is the only major repository outside London. The only other substantial British collections are held at the Museum of Domestic Architecture & Design (MoDA) at Middlesex University and Manchester Art Gallery, whose small collection dovetails with the Whitworth's. So, aside from the National Archive at Kew (which holds examples of wallpapers registered for copyright protection since the early 19th century), small groups of papers held in country houses, such as Temple Newsam (Leeds) and Erddig (near Chester), and papers remaining *in situ* in National Trust properties or other large houses, there are few places where research into the history of the subject can be carried out and fewer where one can find expertise in the subject.

The Whitworth's collection of several thousand historic and modern wallpapers is designated of national importance and has an international reputation. It ranges in scope from small sheets of block-printed and stencilled paper produced in the 1680s, through 17th and 18th century embossed and decorated leather, luxury hand-printed decorations from the 'golden age' of French wallpaper production, to British examples machine-printed for mass market consumption. And, of course, there are blown vinyls and other miracles of modern technology. Subject matter varies widely, including hunting scenes and other pictorial patterns, architectural motifs, flowers and foliage of every type and size, imitations of drapery, marble and wood to media spin-offs such as the Flintstones and James Bond.

We are not always aware of it but wallpaper is an indicator of our cultural preferences and allegiances, representing current cultural preoccupations via fashionable styles, most of which are represented in our collection - for example, arts and crafts, art nouveau and modernism.

In addition to home-produced decorations, the collection also includes wallcoverings from Germany, Scandinavia, Japan and the US but, owing to the British penchant for copying French designs, particularly in the 19th century, most of our foreign examples are from France.

Compared to textiles, ceramics and furniture, wallpaper has a relatively short history. The earliest example found in the



French, early 19th century, hand-printed and flocked trompe l'oeil wallpaper decoration. The Whitworth Art Gallery, Univ of Manchester.

UK dates from c.1509, which is much earlier than any at the Whitworth but most of our pre 1840 examples were printed in a similar way, i.e. by hand with engraved wood blocks. Colours were either applied through stencils or with several blocks, the whole process being slow and extremely labour intensive. For this reason, coupled with the skill required to engrave the blocks, the results were relatively expensive, particularly if they were highly coloured. Until the 1830s and the introduction of continuous paper, small printed sheets were either hung individually or sheets were pasted together before printing but changes in tech-

nology, removal of taxes and, by the mid-1840s, mechanisation of the printing process (and subsequent development of so-called washable wallpapers) had enabled a relatively modest industry to expand dramatically. By 1900, the market was swamped with wallpaper and other wallcoverings, such as Lincrusta and Anaglypta.

The Whitworth's collection represents all these developments as well as many of the more exotic French styles, particularly highly decorated 17th century arabesque patterns and early 19th century *trompe l'oeil* draperies that appear not to have found favour in more restrained English interiors (too sexy for us?). But by the 1870s English designers were beginning to overtake their European counterparts in matters of design and growing confidence contributed both to the *fin de siècle* popularity of English patterns and the exuberance of British design in the 1950s and 60s.

The introduction of screen-printing enabled production of large-scale avant-garde designs which were used in the same way that 'feature walls' are today, the ubiquitous woodchip enabled young couples to disguise the cracks and blemishes on their walls and vinyl coated paper and inks resulted in production of truly washable wallcoverings. Blown vinyl provided an alternative to embossed paper and new methods of printing and designing using digital technology made traditional machinery and techniques obsolete and a talent for drawing unnecessary.

Whether we like it or not, what we put on our walls signifies who we are - it is one of the many signs used by our friends, neighbours and relatives to make assumptions about us. So, choosing wallpaper is a dangerous business but, if you decide to take the plunge, please contact the Whitworth before you throw out the old stuff - it might be more important than you think!

See page 18 for a note of the current and future wallpaper exhibitions at The Whitworth Art Gallery.

## Manor Farm, Pulham Market John Walker

In the NHBG Newsletter dated Spring 2007, the 'Digest of Buildings Visited 2006-7' on page 16 described Manor Farm, Pulham Market as a 'Tripartite timber-framed late sixteenth century house with regionally unique plank-and-muntin internal structure and original first floor corridor'; Manor Farm is indeed a fascinating house for a number of reasons which I would like to explore.

Manor Farm is a two storey house, which was built with a separate private entrance to the parlour as well as the normal crosspassage, and more interestingly its parlour, which is at the east end of the building, appears to be earlier than the rest of the present house. The parlour was originally lower, only 1¾ storeys high, and seems to have been 'jacked up' by a couple of feet to make it a full two storeys, the same height as the rest of the present house.

I stayed at Manor Farm in 1985, six years after it was acquired by the Landmark Trust, and felt the house had a number of important features not reflected in the report published by Lt-Col S E Glendenning in *Norfolk Archaeology* 1952 (p223-225).

Manor Farm was built in the late 16<sup>th</sup> or early 17<sup>th</sup> century. The north side faces a road, but a good case could be made for arguing that, for the builders, the front was the south side facing into the farmyard, as the parlour chamber has no windows in the north wall facing the road but does have them in the south wall. The house consists of three-cells, from west to east, an unheated service bay, hall, chimney bay and parlour. The chimney is at the high end of the hall and provides four fireplaces heating the hall and parlour on the ground floor and the hall and parlour chambers on the first floor. There is a crosspassage at the low end of the hall (Fig. 1). This is a very popular form in north Suffolk and south Norfolk. The partition between the hall and service bays is of plank and muntin construction. This, also called plank and stud, having studs with planks between them instead of wattle and daub. There are also plank and muntin partitions dividing the service bay into two rooms on both the ground and first floors, and another plank and muntin partition creating a corridor along the front of the hall chamber on the first

floor. In addition the hall has a draught screen on the hall side of the crosspassage, again of plank and muntin construction. The timber framing of the services, hall and chimney bays is close studding with a mid-rail, drooping corner braces halved across the external side of the studs, and there is a side purlin roof with wind braces and two purlins, the lower purlin tenoned to the principal rafter, the upper clasped between a collar and the principal rafter. The parlour is different. It sits on a 2½ ft (0.76m) brick wall (the hall range sits on a 6in (152mm) wall), has in the side walls continuous studs from the ground sill to wall plate with no mid-rail, uses drooping braces halved across the inside of the studs, and its roof is slightly different from that over the hall and services as it has three side purlins, the lower two tenoned into the principal rafter and the upper one clasped. There is a join in both wall plates immediately to the west of the parlour.

Later a clay lump kitchen was added against the west gable of the house. Glendenning dated this to the 18<sup>th</sup> century but today, thanks to the work of John McCann, it is much more likely to be dated to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. John McCann has shown that clay lump was not used for building houses before the 1790s (John McCann 2004, *Clay and Cob Buildings*, Shire p17). Apart from this addition, the main house appears to have survived without major alterations since it was built in the late 16<sup>th</sup> /early 17<sup>th</sup> century.

One of the interesting features of the house is its plan; it was built with a separate private entrance to the parlour as well as the crosspassage entrance at the low end of the hall. This private entrance was in the rear wall from the farmyard and entered into a lobby on the side of the chimney, which in turn had a door into, and only into, the parlour. There was originally a solid stud wall on the west side of the lobby preventing access to the hall. This door was later converted to a window, but was clearly originally a door as its head, the soffit of which is 13in (330mm) below the mid-rail, is morticed and pegged to the adjacent studs while the sill for the later window is not. Also all the original windows elsewhere in the house did not have a separate dropped head below the mid-rail or wall plate, again indicating that this one must have been a door. This type of private parlour entrance is not a common feature of 16<sup>th</sup> /17<sup>th</sup> century transitional houses, although a number have been noted in Suffolk, usually as here at the rear of the house, opening into the farmyard. However, I am not aware of another house which had the private entrance into a lobby on the side of the chimney; such doors usually opened direct into the parlour at the chimney end of the room. I would be grateful if NHBG members could let me know if they are aware of other examples. As mentioned, the lobby entrance doorway in Manor Farm was later converted to a window and, either then or later, a direct entrance to the parlour was inserted in the rear wall close to the chimney. This entrance was still there in 1946, although it has since been blocked up.



Fig. 1 South rear of Manor Farm



Finally, as noted above, the timber framing of the parlour is different from the rest of the house, and is perhaps the most interesting part of the house. Glendenning thought it was a later addition, but it is clearly earlier as the wall plates over the chimney bay, hall and service end of the house are supported by the ends of the parlour wall plate. The timber framing of the parlour, combined with some empty mortices, and the fact that it sits on a 2½ft (0.76m) brick wall, suggests that it was originally part of a lower 1¼ storey building that has been raised to make a full two storeys. The evidence for this is that on the first floor the midrail in the east gable is 2ft (0.6m) above today's floor, and there are empty mortices for a similar rail, which had to be removed as it cut across the new first floor parlour fireplace. Even more positive evidence is that the roof has three sets of side purlins and, while the upper two are set at the angle of the roof, the lower set is 14in (0.36m) above the present attic floor and has horizontal tops which must have supported the common joist of an earlier attic floor. There is also a mortice below the attic window in the east gable and a corresponding one in the opposing truss which originally supported an east-west central bridging joist for this earlier floor. Pegs in the tiebeam of this truss against the present chimney suggest there was a large gap between the studs in the centre of the truss, consistent with it having been built against a chimney stack, suggesting it was originally built as a parlour. A number of medieval houses survive where a chimney was added in the 16<sup>th</sup> century at the high end of the hall by building the stack into the parlour and, because this took up most of the parlour, a new parlour was then added on the other side of the chimney. Possibly this is what happened at Manor Farm, but when they came to rebuild the old medieval house they wanted it to be a full two storeys high, requiring this 'reused' parlour to be jacked up 2 to 2½ft (0.6-0.76m). It is interesting that they were happy to build the new hall and services the same width and with the same roof pitch as the 'reused' parlour.

The 'reused' parlour was probably built in the second half of 16<sup>th</sup> century as its framing uses timber of a similar scantling to the hall and service bays, and it has a similar style of roof. The main differences are that the parlour does not use a mid-rail in its side walls, and has its braces halved across the inside of the studs compared with external bracing in the later part of the building. Also the hall, service and chimney bays have close studding on the ground floor - the public space - but much wider studding on the first floor, suggesting the exterior was always plastered over, whereas the parlour has close studding on both floors in the west gable and thus may have had exposed framing when built. If so, the development of this building marks an interesting change in the exterior of vernacular houses. Interestingly, this parlour was in use for sufficient time before it was raised for a direct entrance to be inserted in its rear wall (Fig 2). In the parish there are still a number of 1¼ storey timber framed houses of a similar width with roofs of a similar (50° – 55°) pitch. Not all of the neighbours of the builder of Manor Farm felt it necessary, or could afford, a house of a full two storeys.

One question with a parlour like this is, was it jacked up or was it dismantled and re-erected? Where a complete house has been raised, I think the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century builders may have dismantled the house, but at Manor Farm the survival of the lower purlins for the attic floor suggests to me they may



Fig 2. Rear wall of parlour (below) and parlour chamber (above). The head of door inserted before the parlour was raised is just above the floor on the right on the first floor

have jacked it up. Why bother to put these back if the building was dismantled?

I hope this account provides additional insights into an exceptionally well preserved house, which has a very interesting development and plan form. I am sure a full measured survey could discover more, including whether the bottom part of the present chimney is the same date as the parlour. The farmyard would also benefit from a survey as the barn, some outbuildings and some boundary walls, which were still standing in 1985, were of clay lump.

*John Walker*

*Marks Cottage, Stoke Road, Layham, Ipswich IP7 5RB*

## Postscript

In December we accompanied the dendrochronologist, Ian Tyers, on an assessment visit to Manor Farm. Ian examined the timbers and found that the planks of the plank and muntin partition are all contemporary with the hall and service parts of the building. Planks (which could be dated if they were ever taken out) are of locally grown oak; they have been pit sawn and they have "thinning" across the grain at the top. The best side is "dressed" and finished with a "shave". The muntins are also of a consistent quality in oak. The parlour end has elm (elm is not datable by dendrochronology) storey posts, studs, tie beams and principal rafters, but the decayed wallposts are of oak. This is typical of other houses we have looked at in South Norfolk where elm and oak are both used.

*Susab and Michael Brown*  
01362 688362  
17 March 2008

## The Rookery, Fundenhall

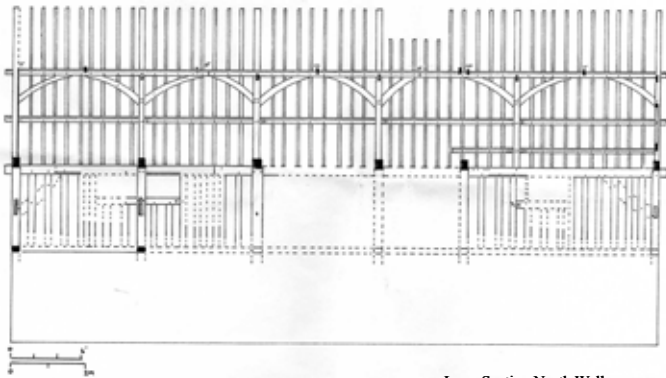
This house is clad in brick with a pantiled roof but was probably thatched originally as there is a drip course on the original chimney stack. The ground floor windows are twelve light sashes with horns, the upper floor windows have nine light sashes with no horns. The porch to the north (rear) has Georgian or Regency detailing with a demi-lune light above the door. There are later extensions to the west, south-west and the east.

As the drawings show, this is a timber-framed, lobby entrance house of the early seventeenth century. It was a display house with a great show of windows which may have been mainly oriels at first floor level and probably glazed, which was later Georgianised with sash windows and ground floor decorations.

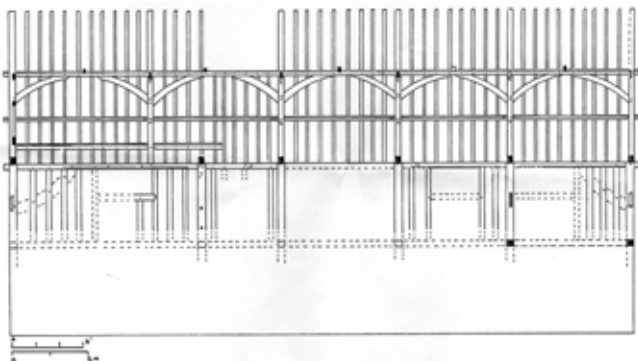
The plan form of the first floor is unusual in that there is a large unheated chamber, a small heater chamber as well as the heated parlour chamber. It would be interesting to see if there is any documentary evidence to explain this plan form.

**Susan and Michael Brown**

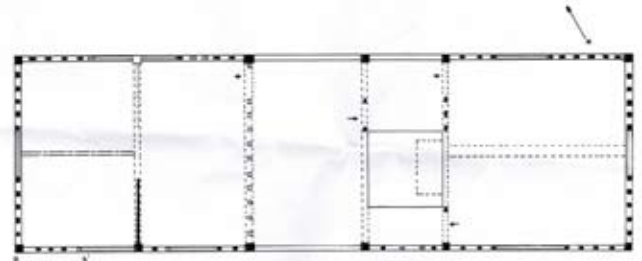
*[A more detailed report will appear in the Tacolneston Journal next year]*



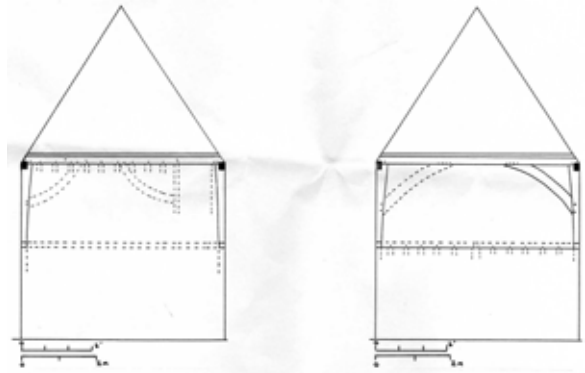
Long Section North Wall  
The Rookery, Fundenhall, Norfolk  
Surveyed April 2007



Long Section South Wall  
The Rookery, Fundenhall, Norfolk  
Surveyed April 2007



First Floor Plan  
The Rookery, Fundenhall, Norfolk  
Surveyed April 2007

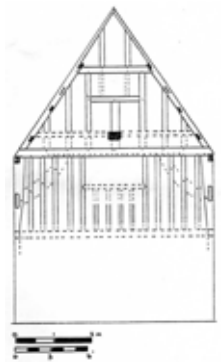


X-Section Paartition  
above the centre of the Hall  
The Rookery, Fundenhall, Norfolk  
Surveyed April 2007

X-Section Service End  
Paartition with Open Truss above  
The Rookery, Fundenhall, Norfolk  
Surveyed April 2007



West Gable Wall  
The Rookery, Fundenhall, Norfolk  
Surveyed April 2007



East Gable Wall  
The Rookery, Fundenhall, Norfolk  
Surveyed April 2007

Original survey & drawings by:  
Mary Ash, Clive Baker, Diane Barr, Michael Brown, Susan Brown, Lynette Fawkes, Lynne Hodges,  
Karen Mackie & Diane Maywhort.  
All drawings compiled and inked by Susan J. Brown

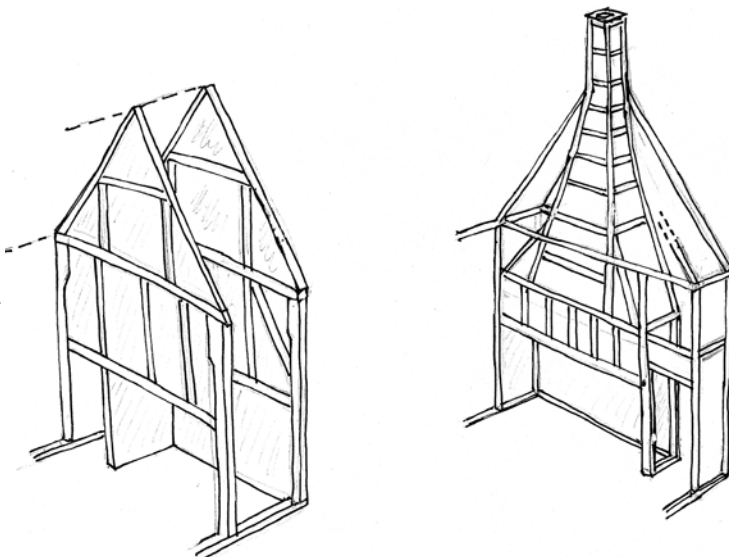
## Members' Evening 17 January 2008

A well-attended meeting enjoyed three talks: from Susanna Wade-Martins on buildings for smallholdings, Sue and Michael Brown reporting on progress of the Tacolneston project, including some surprising discoveries, (see below) and Adam Longcroft describing the houses of Binham, which we shall be visiting in the summer.

Susanna outlined the background to her survey of dwellings built for smallholders. The 1892 Smallholders' Act enabled county councils to buy land and create smallholdings of 5-50 acres (0-5 acres was termed an allotment) plus often a (very) basic cottage. Norfolk was a leader in this field and there was a great expansion of the scheme post World War One. The accommodation ranged from the division of existing houses to newly built brick cottages and included rather nasty asbestos bungalows in which the unfortunate tenants froze and/or roasted. In spite of frequently being reported as sub-standard, fifty one were, amazingly, still in use in 1957 (though mostly brick or cement-clad) and the last one was only demolished in recent years. Members may remember the visits to South Burlingham Hall (see Newsletter No. 9) which was once divided up as part of this scheme and when those wonderful farm buildings there were re-thatched. It is perhaps ironic that many of these originally very basic cottages have become well-appointed holiday homes for city dwellers.

the greater fear of fire in an urban situation may account for the more general use of brick in new Buckenham, but it may be that the Tacolneston houses are significantly earlier than those in New Buckenham or that people in Tacolneston for some reason continued to be happy with the medieval solution for much longer. We hope to find some answer to this as the project progresses.

(See Karen Mackie's Tacolneston Progress Report on page 17)



Above: Drawings of smoke bay and smoke hood after Richard Harris in 'Discovering Timber-framed Buildings' Shire Books (still the best brief introduction to the subject).

Below: Ground Floor and first floor room showing the timber-framed chimney in a Tacolneston house.

## Timber-framed Chimneys

### Susan and Michael Brown

An unexpected feature of the Tacolneston Project has been the number of houses which show evidence of having started life with timber-framed chimneys. These come in two basic varieties as shown in the drawing: the smoke bay, where a section of the room (usually the hall) is partitioned off to contain the hearth, and the timber-framed chimney proper or smoke hood. These are important features in the development of the modern house, replacing the inconvenient central hearth and preceding the brick hearth and chimney. The ability to construct a chimney out of timber meant that the carpenter could complete the house without recourse to brick, a material that was not always immediately available or completely understood. We suspect the former presence of one of these structures when we find the mantle beam tenoned into flanking upright timbers, even though the rest of the hearth is in brick, and when we see a row of peg holes in the mantle beam or in the transverse timber above it. These features are even more convincing when there are other anomalous mortices in the surviving structural timbers, or indeed the survival of the smoke hood itself as in Warren Cottage.

We have found the remains of ten timber-chimneys or smoke bays in the Tacolneston area, contrasting with New Buckenham where we found one (Gingerbread Cottage). Of course



## Lime Day Dorset Centre for Rural Skills, Blandford Forum Simon Padfield

In recent years conservators, historic buildings students and architects will have become increasingly aware of the revival of the use of lime in building, both as a sensitive alternative to cement in structures built of softer materials like brick, and as a carbon-neutral building material whose manufacture has a lighter impact on the environment. Now this trend appears to be trickling down more and more into the world of the 'lay builder'. Castle Cement for example now lists putty lime in their 'conservation' range, and centres for traditional crafts are increasingly including lime courses in their offering. Fired by a determination to attempt restoration work to our small London terrace, built in c.1913 loosely in the Garden Suburb style, I trawled the Web for something lime-related. In the weeks before a holiday on the Isle of Purbeck I was thrilled to find a one-day course nearby introducing the enthusiast to building lime and its uses. The 'Lime Day' aimed to give brief background of the origins of the use of lime in England, its chemistry, and some hands-on demonstrations and the chance to try out the material for ourselves. The Dorset Centre for Rural Skills holds courses near Blandford Forum on a variety of building-related subjects including straw-bale, timber frame, cob and earth construction, blacksmithing, and caring for older buildings (a course aimed at local house-owners). The tutor, Rob Buckley, has a background in construction, particularly with sustainable materials, and is able to demonstrate the material with great fluidity and confidence. Most of my co-students were owners of buildings of (to me) impressive antiquity, and had a pretty clear idea about what they were trying to achieve with them. One was a local builder who had found that he was getting more requests to do lime work, particularly with the soft local stone. The morning lectures (given in a straw-bale-built room within the demonstration barn) began with a description of the lime cycle, a widely-used diagram showing how through its correct use the carefully assayed putty lime can turn gratifyingly back into a substance resembling limestone – or at least sand held in a limestone matrix. The stages of manufacture – burning limestone in a kiln, crushing and slaking in pits – are familiar from industrial archaeology, but one is unprepared for the beauty of the final material, fine putty lime fresh from the tub: a buttermilk-coloured mass, quiveringly ready to vanish into a measure of coarse sand, filling up the air-voids

between the grains without noticeably increasing the volume. We learned about the near-obliteration of native lime skills in the twentieth century largely as a result of the two World Wars, lingering on in the use of bastardized Portland cement mortar mixes after the Second War, where lime was used apparently to 'impart flexibility'. A few dozen miles across the Channel meanwhile, the French lime industry seemed to suffer no such great upheaval, and modern lime crafts survive happily there, using hydraulic limes that are burned with clay to provide accelerated setting times; these 'Roman' limes occupy a mid position on the NHL scale of setting hardness (cement is up at about 12, although high clay-content limes of NHL5 and above are virtually cements and are more suited to foundations). I was particularly grateful to hear about the three 'golden rules' of lime work, the first of which leads directly from the lime-cycle diagram: to keep the work damp for three days. Without this, the lime simply dries without carbonation; the latter reaction occurs only under damp aerobic conditions and it is this that imparts the strength to the dry mortar – hasty drying leads to powdering and falling out of the mortar. The other two rules are to use a suitable sand – Rob showed us a locally dug sand with particles of hugely varying size (some up to 5mm) – and only to add extra water if absolutely necessary. Even partially-stiffened mortar of several days' vintage can be revived by vigorous mixing rather than re-wetting.

After a lunch break we moved on to the demonstration area of the barn. A large pile of Suitable Sand waited nearby as we watched the slaking of quicklime in a bucket of water. I was prepared for a violent reaction (after all, I had read about the quicklime poured into plague pits or onto the bodies of the executed) but not how slowly it would start, beginning with some prefatory bubbling at the bottom of the water, building to a crescendo of blubbling, sending clouds of steam into the air around us. We later returned to the finished bucket to find that a couple of trowelfuls of quicklime had filled the bucket to the top with putty, another instance of lime's volumetric tricks already mentioned above.

Rob Buckley presumably felt that that we would feel more in touch with the materials if he made some of us mix the general-purpose mortar, and he combine this with a demonstration of the correct sand to use (a brownish-gold example that crackled when squeezed in the hand and comprising surprisingly large particles). This initial mix is called 'coarse stuff', and will

keep some small time if swaddled up to keep the air out. It formed the basis of all the afternoon's demonstrations, beginning with plastering onto cut laths, although it might equally have been used for laying brick, stone or flint. At this point, the builder in our group became quite agitated, pronouncing the plaster quite unlike any-



**continued from**

thing he had used before, and definitely something he would try again. It actually did feel very unctuous, although it didn't seem to stick quite as much as mortar made with Portland cement. Once one got used to it, though, it could be made to stick very well, helped by the 'hooks' that form when plaster is forced through laths, and we even managed a second coat in places. We also tried pointing, being careful as ever to wet our work down thoroughly before starting. Rendering was also covered, although the much-vaunted render-gun was unavailable (this device is an interesting hybrid, combining traditional raw materials with a modern compressor tool, but given that the job was to hurl – or 'harl' – render at the wall, it would certainly have fitted the bill).

The final use for lime we saw was in lime-wash, the watery part of which is identical to the covering of liquid on a tub of putty lime when you open it for the first time, and was what we called at school 'lime-water'. Lime-washes are pigmented coatings that dry limestone-hard (if only in very thin layers – they must be built up gradually like other lime work), and are mostly suitable for lime-constructed substrates. Rob took great care

to select only colours resistant to the very high pH (i.e. very high alkalinity) of the medium, showing us how to gauge the quantity of pigment to get a reasonable colouring, and to attempt to match existing washes.

It was a very enjoyable day, both from the point-of-view of seeing an experienced practitioner actually wielding materials that I previously only had a hazy grasp of, and as an opportunity to meet like-minded laypersons anxious to do right by their diverse, precious and potentially vulnerable houses. I'm left wondering why I haven't come across anyone yet in London like the enthusiastic builder on the Lime Day, and why I can't buy locally slaked lime inside the M25. Admittedly, working with lime requires a generous timescale that can allow the practitioner to return to their work, perhaps several times. However lime has such advantages in correctly matching to the strength and flexibility of historic structures. Perhaps the recent influx of craftsmen from Eastern Europe will bring in more willing users of traditional skills. The Dorset Centre for Rural Skills runs lime courses throughout the year at:

*West Farm Barn, West Farm, Farrington, near Blandford Forum, Dorset. My lime day cost £88. Contact DCRS at [www.dorsetruralskills.co.uk](http://www.dorsetruralskills.co.uk) <<http://www.dorsetruralskills.co.uk/>> , or telephone 01747 811 099.*

## Norfolk Churches

The Church and Chapels Group is continuing to survey the church aisles of Norfolk with the intention of publishing the results. As you would expect, in common with everything else "Norfolk" we are finding piers and bases which are unique to the county. So far we have surveyed over 120 churches, adding to the detailed recording of Norfolk's Decorated and Perpendicular church architecture. There are a few still remaining which we will be starting on when the weather warms up a little. If any members fancy an occasional day out around the county, usually with a pub-lunch, do come and join us. You do not need any detailed knowledge, but extra eyes are always useful. Please let Ian Hinton know if you are interested at:

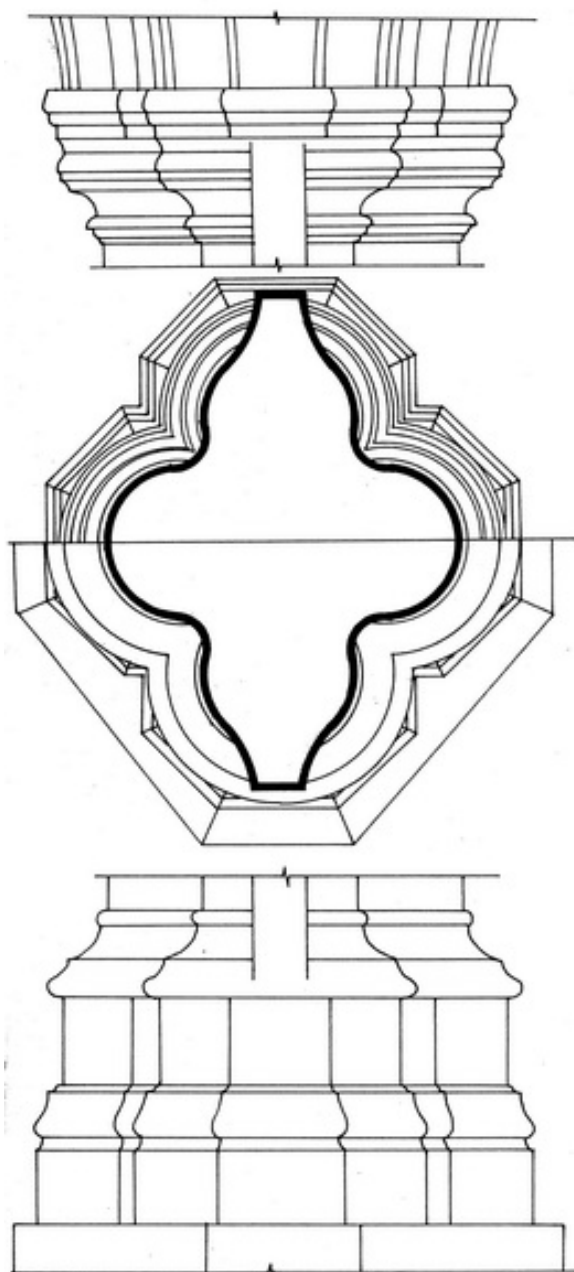
[ian.hinton@tesco.net](mailto:ian.hinton@tesco.net)

or speak to

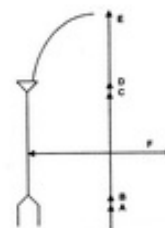
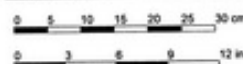
Dominic Summers : [d.summers1@btinternet.com](mailto:d.summers1@btinternet.com)

or

Robin Forrest: [robin.forrest@gmail.com](mailto:robin.forrest@gmail.com)



**St Mary  
Attleborough**  
Both Aisles – Pier s4  
Nov 2007  
Ian Hinton



Attleborough – North Aisle		
Dimension	Pier	Other piers
A	0.30	
B	0.90	
C	5.88	
D	6.18	
E	9.24	
F	4.49	4.47-4.59
Pier	0.55 x 0.77	
Aisle width	3.67	
Nave width	6.90	

Attleborough – South Aisle		
Dimension	Pier	Other piers
A	0.30	
B	0.90	
C	5.86	
D	6.16	
E	9.22	
F	4.49	4.45-4.63
pier	0.55 x 0.77	
Aisle width	3.71	

## EDITOR

Since the last Newsletter my involvement with vernacular buildings has largely been concerned with selling mine, and whereas the sixteenth-century widows of Tacolneston tended to be accommodated 'behind the chimney' and supplied with bundles of faggote, bushels of corn and malt and the odd cow, I have been attempting the 21st-century equivalent, to 'downsize'. Because of all this I'm afraid my documentary dealings with the Browne clan have had to be put on hold for a while. Our winter lectures provided a welcome respite from all this and Dominic looks to have done us proud with this summer's programme.

I draw your attention to Ian's piece on p.13 about the NHBG putting on more courses without the back-up of UEA. This UDI or going it alone can be perfectly successful so long as those interested let Ian know ASAP. Turning up on the night is no use as numbers have to be known early enough to set it all up. So don't hang about.

See you in the summer - and let's hope it's a fine one.

*Alayne Fenner*

### **Insurance Cover— all members should be aware of the following:**

When involved in an NHBG activity, members are covered by the NHBG Insurance. This covers liability to third parties for damage to third party property, ie the legal liability of the NHBG for any amounts it becomes liable to pay as damages for Bodily Injury or Damage caused accidentally, including legal costs. The excess is £250. The insurance DOES NOT cover 'member to member' liability. That is, if one member accidentally injures another. Most members will have cover on their household insurance.

If a member feels the cover is insufficient for their needs, then it is their personal responsibility to obtain adequate cover.

It is worth pointing out that members have a "duty of care" in looking after themselves and others.

## Vernacular Architecture Group Memorial Essay

In memory of the giants who founded or belonged to the Vernacular Architecture Group in its early days, and prompted by the death of Pauline Fenley, former editor of Vernacular Architecture and a keen promoter of good writing, the Group has established a memorial essay prize. Through this it is hoped to encourage articles from those who have not previously published in national or international journals.

A prize of £250 will be awarded annually for the best essay on a subject related to vernacular architecture. The emphasis may be historical, structural, stylistic or archaeological, and the winning essay will be considered for publication in Vernacular Architecture.

The essays will be judged by a panel appointed by the committee of the Vernacular Architecture Group, and the judges will be looking for evidence of originality of thought, quality of research, and clarity of expression. The decision of the judges is final, and the Group reserves the right not to award the prize if there are no suitable entries.

There is no age limit for entrants, but entry is restricted to those who have not previously had their work published in national, rather than in local or county, journals.

The essay should be preceded by a short summary of no more than 150 words. The total length, including summary and references, but excluding any figure captions or tabular material, must not exceed 8000 words. A word count should be included. Shorter essays will be welcome, but longer ones will be rejected.

Essays must be written in English in a form intended for publication. Three copies are required in hard copy, typed and double-spaced on one side of plain paper.

Essays may be accompanied by a reasonable number of illustrations. So long as these are clear, photocopies of photographs may be used. Drawings should be reduced to A4 size. All illustrations should be clearly numbered and captioned (including acknowledgment of sources where necessary), and reference to them included as appropriate in the text.

Although not essential, it would be helpful if essays could be written in the format required for Vernacular Architecture. 'Notes for Contributors' may be obtained by writing to the Editor at the address below.

The essay must not have been published previously, and if it is under consideration for publication elsewhere this must be stated and details given.

If an award is made and an essay is considered suitable for publication some amendments may be required before it is finally accepted.

The closing date for entries is 30 September each year, and the award will be announced the following January.

Please send any initial queries, and completed entries with your name and address (including email address if you have one) to:

Dr Martin Cherry

66 Moorcroft Road, Moseley, Birmingham B13 8LU

*Email:* martincherry@btinternet.com

*Tel:* 0121449 8569

If you would like to discuss your ideas prior to submission, please do not hesitate to contact Martin.

## A Digest of Buildings Visited Since October 2007

*This is a digest of all the Norfolk houses (excluding New Buckenham) into which the NHBG has been invited to look at and prepare brief reports. 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, and will not be printed on the Internet.*

### **90 The Street, Great Snoring**

Report by Mary Ash, Sue and Michael Brown

A late seventeenth century brick & flint 1.5 storey house, upgraded to two storeys in the eighteenth century with Georgian fenestration.

### **Dildash House, Great Snoring**

Report by Mary Ash

An early seventeenth century flint and brick house of two storeys originally with upper crucks possibly for a thatched roof. In the eighteenth century the roof pitch was changed and some of the flint walling replaced with brick.

### **Saffron Cottage, 116 Norwich Road, Tacolneston**

Report by Karen Mackie

A late seventeenth century two cell, 1.5 storey house with an end stack. One original lead lighted window. Thatch fire four years ago.

### **Marsh View and School Cottage, Hapton**

Report by Diana Maywhort

A tripartite house possibly late fifteenth century. A queen post roof with an original king stud in the service partition. Possibly remains of two timber-framed chimneys.

### **Blackberry Barn, Bentley Road, Tacolneston**

Report by Sue Brown

A conversion of a late eighteenth or early nineteenth century cart lodge with granary above complete with surviving stair.

### **Christmas Cottage, The Green, Tacolneston**

Report by Sue Brown

A sixteenth century two cell house (hall & service) originally with a timber-framed chimney. In the early seventeenth century a parlour end and brick stack were added. Attached to the service end is a mainly nineteenth century range. In the middle is an original single storey, single-cell seventeenth century building with brick stack and fireplace. All buildings show evidence of nineteenth century repair or alteration using clay lump.

### **Riverside Farm, Fomcett St. Mary,**

Report by Lynne Hodge

An early sixteenth century tripartite building with evidence for a timber-framed chimney or smoke bay.

### **Walnut Tree House, Forncett End**

Report by Sue Brown

Part of a seventeenth century house with eighteenth and nineteenth century additions and alterations.

### **Warren Cottage, Fisk Cottage & Oak Cottage, The Green, Tacolneston**

Reports by Jill Napier, Karen Mackie and Lynne Hodge

Now a complex that is three separate tenements. Possibly sixteenth century with the remains of a timber-framed chimney

### **The Manor House, Tibenham**

Report by Sue Shand

A sixteenth century 1.5 storey hall and service end raised, in oak, to 2 storeys in the eighteenth century. A two storey parlour end, possibly rebuilt, or a new construction at the same time as the (rebuilt) hall chimney.

### **102 Norwich Road, Tacolneston**

Report Sue and Michael Brown

Probably of seventeenth century date, it was originally 1.5 storeys which has had a roof raise. It has a face-halved scarf joint in the earlier wall plate and a clasped purlin roof.

### **45 All Saints Green, Norwich**

Report by Sue Brown

A late eighteenth century town house with many original features; fireplaces, door surrounds and front door. Documentary research gives owner and tenancy changes which are reflected in the building e.g. windows.

### **Old Hall Farm, Tacolneston**

Report by Karen Mackie

Possibly eighteenth century; a four bay plus kitchen house with its symmetrical window sidefacing the Old Hall.

### **St Mary's Farmhouse, Tacolneston**

Report by Karen Mackie

A tripartite house with a rebuilt or new parlour cross-wing (1628 on chimney). Over the hall two studs are rebated for a vertical sliding shutter.

### **Hill Cottage, Tacolneston**

Report by Mary Ash

An early sixteenth century two-cell house with an intact timber-framed chimney still in use.

## Newsletter Request

Please do not forget that we are always looking for articles, items of interest, queries, photographs, or anything which has taken your interest to include in newsletters.

Alayne Fenner: 01603 620690  
Rosemary Forrest: 01603 742315

## Are you interested in learning more about buildings in Norfolk?

Over the last two years the NHBG has run several successful courses in partnership with UEA on buildings research and churches. Unfortunately UEA has altered its strategy in relation to partnership courses, but this has given the Group the opportunity to consider offering whatever courses the members wish at a lower cost, as there will be no UEA costs involved for accreditation etc.

Is there is sufficient interest?

What subjects would members be interested in?

Daytime or Evening?

As an example:  
a 5 session evening course at Wensum Lodge would cost in the region of £30 per head for 15 participants, or £45 for 10 participants.

If you have general or specific suggestions on aspects of vernacular architecture or churches, please send them to **Ian Hinton** preferably by email:

ian.hinton@tesco.net

or post:

The Old Rectory, Barnby, Beccles NR34 7QN

## NHBG Committee

*The AGM is coming around which means that the Committee has to be elected, re-elected, and new members sought. There will be vacancies coming up and Lynne Hodge (01362 620 690) would be delighted to hear from anyone who might be interested in joining. The Group has an exciting programme and many thoughts for future projects and the Committee would welcome fresh input, enthusiasm and commitment. Do think about joining us.*

**Adam Longcroft** *Chairman/Journal Editor*  
*Centre for Continuing Education, UEA, Norwich, NR4 7TJ*

01603 592 261 [w] e.mail: a.longcroft@uea.ac.uk

**Alayne Fenner** *Deputy Chairman/Newsletter Editor*  
13 Heigham Grove, Norwich NR2 3DQ  
01603 620 690 e.mail: alayne.fenner@btinternet.com

**Lynne Hodge** *Committee Secretary*  
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**Sue Shand** *Treasurer*  
*Tibenham Farm, Long Row, Tibenham, Norwich NR16 1PD*  
01379 677677 e.mail: sushand@hotmail.co.uk

**Ian Hinton** *Membership Secretary*  
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01502 475 287 [h] e.mail: ian.hinton@tesco.net

**Michael and Sue Brown** *Buildings*  
Woodlands, Bylaugh Park, Dereham NR20 4RL  
01362 688 362 [h]

**Mary Ash** *Winter Programme/Publications*  
*107 St Leonards Road, Norwich, NR1 4JF*  
01603 616285 [h] e.mail: mary.ash@ntlworld.com

**Dominic Summers** *Summer Events*  
*1a, 39 Middleton's Lane, Hellesdon, NR6 5NQ*  
01603 788374 e.mail: d.summers1@btinternet.com

**Rosemary Forrest** *Newsletter*  
3 Highlands, Costessey, NR8 5EA  
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**Richard Coulton**  
Little Ketlam, Low Road, Pentney, King's Lynn PE32 1JF  
01553 691 661[h]

**Karen Mackie** *Tacolneston Project*  
44 Norwich Road, Tacolneston NR16 1BY  
01508 488467 e.mail: karen\_mackie@btinternet.com

**Jackie Simpson**  
The Chestnuts, Church Road, Neatishead, Norfolk  
01692 630639 e.mail: jackie\_simpson@beeb.net

**Diane Barr** *Documentary Research*  
24 The Shrublands, Horsford, NR10 3EL  
01603 898928 e.mail: di.barr@btinternet.com

## Annual General Meeting at Binham

*Coffee—Meeting—Talk—Walk—Scones and Cream Teas*

Saturday 11 June 2008 meet at 10.30 am in Binham Priory for the business then Adam Longcroft will talk to us about the houses of Binham and after a B-Y-O lunch we shall walk round with him and visit some houses before cream teas back at the Priory.

Papers will be sent out nearer the time.





# Tacolneston Project



The project to look at Tacolneston and its environment continues to progress. Much of the documentary work is based on sources at the Record Office, including the sale of the village in the 1920's by the Boileau family, and the 1845 title map. One of the challenges of the documentary work has been the prevalence of the name Browne within the village. During the nineteenth century the Boileau family bought many properties off the Brownes, including 60 Norwich Road, White House Farm, and the Manor House.

We have now visited over forty properties in Tacolneston parish, plus approximately ten others in the nearby villages. Most of these date from sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and have subsequently been much altered. St Mary's Farmhouse, a tri-partite open hall house, had a parlour wing of two-cells added in the seventeenth century. Old Manor Farmhouse now has a very curious floor plan representing three separate phases of building and the seventeenth century parlour wing incorporates an upstairs corridor. In addition, the parlour contains a level of carving to the timbers that is quite unusual in the context of the often quite plain tastes of Norfolk (*see photo*). Tacolneston Hall was a tri-partite house which had two Elizabethan wings added before further extensions led to the Georgian appearance we see today. Symmetry became more important in the Georgian period and this was reflected at Old Hall Farmhouse. The nineteenth century school house now called Woodpeckers, was originally a seventeenth century timber-framed property which has had all the external walls replaced, presumably when it was converted to a school house by John Boileau, with clay lump walls.

One of the most interesting finds so far has been the number of timber framed chimneys in the village (*See article page 11*). If you are passing the village it is also worth dropping in at

the Pelican Public House, which offers a further example of a timber-framed chimney – and good food. Peer up the chimney and you can see that the brick is only round the fireplace and the chimney above is still plastered.

For the purposes of dendro-dating there have, as at New Buckenham, been difficulties with finding timber that has grown slowly enough to provide sufficient growth rings for dating purposes. At one property a storey post was found to contain only 15 rings; for secure dating a run of around 50 years is needed. Ian Tyers suggested this timber must have come from a managed and well-fertilised source of woodland.

Buildings in Tacolneston have also proven to contain a lot of non-oak timbers such as elm and ash. As there is no database of records for these woods it is not possible to use these for dating purposes. Were these other timbers taken from hedgerows? It is interesting to speculate on why they might have used other wood types. Did this indicate shortage of oak, or were elm and ash considered to be equally useful? There is some evidence that the better houses contain more oak: this would tend to suggest oak was a sparse and more expensive commodity. In some houses oak is used externally with elm inside, where the hardness and longevity of oak was perhaps not considered so vital. Ian Tyers, our dendrochronologist, has now taken some cores from houses likely to date and will continue this process in the spring and summer. To find out more about the discoveries we have made, come to a meeting in Tacolneston Village Hall on Friday 6th June 2008 at 7pm for 7.30 pm.

Finally, if anyone is interested in assisting with this project in any way please get in touch – we would be delighted to take you aboard even if you feel you are a 'novice':

**Karen Mackie**  
**01508 488 467**

***karen\_mackie@btinternet.com***



Wallpaper Exhibition at  
The Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester

**Flights of Fancy: select decorations of the 1920s and 30s**



The Whitworth has an exhibition space dedicated to the display of wallpapers. The current exhibition *Flights of Fancy: select decorations of the 1920s & 30s* continues until mid-October and *Putting on the Glitz* opens 8 November 2008. Admission free. [www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth)

**The Archaeology of Post-Medieval Religion**

**12-14 September 2008 at The Maids Head Hotel, Tombland, Norwich**  
**Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology & Society for Church Archaeology**

*Topics*

Church and society in post-medieval Britain and Europe; Immigrant communities in early modern Britain and the New World; Nonconformist landscapes of 19th C Britain; Burial and commemoration

*For more details, visit:*

[www.spma.org.uk](http://www.spma.org.uk)

or

[www.britarch.ac.uk/socchurcharchaeol/](http://www.britarch.ac.uk/socchurcharchaeol/)

**Vernacular Architecture Group**

**Oxford Weekend School**

**Rewley House: 26-28 September 2008**

**Vernacular Interiors in the British Tradition**

*Speakers:* James Ayres, David Yeomans, Hentie Louw, Kathryn Davies, Claire Gapper, Nicholas Mander, Richard Nylander, Claudia Kinmonth, John Steane, David Jones, Jane Nylander

*Topics:* construction, wall-painting, decorative plasterwork, painted cloth, wallpaper, furniture, craftsmen

A date for the diary:

**Winter Conference**

13-14 December 2008-03-03 University of Leicester

**Marginal Architecture**

If you are interested – please contact:

Rosemary Forrest

01603 742315/[forrest.rosemary@gmail.com](mailto:forrest.rosemary@gmail.com)

**Essex Historic Building Group**

**Saturday 12 July 2008-03-03**

**Kingposts to Crownposts: the historic development  
of medieval roofs**

**Cressing Temple Day School**

David Stenning..... East Anglia  
Edward Roberts..... Hampshire  
Bob Meeson ..... Wes Midlands  
John Thorp ..... Devon  
Bob Hook ..... Northern England

Cost: £20, lunch extra £7.50

*Details from:*

Mr Ian Greenfield, Yew Tree Cottage  
Stanbrook, Thaxted, Essex CM6 2NL  
01371 830416

## Summer Events 2008

Being new to the job of coordinating the summer events, I proposed this year's programme to the members with a little trepidation, knowing the high standard of trips that have been organised in recent years. I think that we have arranged an interesting range of events this time around, with a balance struck between vernacular, church and grand house architecture, with some very well-informed experts to guide us. Circumstances have dictated that there is something of a concentration of events at the end of June and the beginning of July, but I hope that this will not deter you from joining us on as many trips as possible. I would like to highlight, in particular, the opportunity to explore historic King's Lynn in the company of its pre-eminent historian, together with the borough conservation officer, as well as the "flint day" at the end of the programme – getting to grips with flint construction must surely be one of the best ways of attaining a deeper understanding of historic Norfolk buildings! Can I just remind you that these events are principally for members, who have priority booking, if you do wish to bring along a non-member please check with the event organiser to see what spaces are available. Whatever events you decide to attend, I hope that you have an enjoyable and informative time.

*The Norfolk Historic Buildings Group wishes to make it clear that Risk Assessments have been carried out for all visits, and where special equipment or care are required, applicants will be informed. Those attending events are responsible both for themselves and towards other members of the group.*

**Dominic Summers**  
01603 788374

[d.summers1@btinternet.com](mailto:d.summers1@btinternet.com)

### Annual General Meeting and Tour of Binham

**Date:** Saturday 21 June 2008  
**Meet:** 10.30am at Binham Priory for coffee  
**Time:** 11.00 am AGM in the Priory (Papers will be sent nearer the date)  
12 noon Presentation:  
Adam Longcroft  
Tour of the Priory  
**Lunch:** 1.00 pm B-Y-O Picnic at Priory and lunch venue  
**WCs:**  
**Tour:** 2.00 pm - 4.00 pm-ish Binham Village  
**Tea:** Cream tea in Priory (do you remember the delicious scones at Wolterton last year?)  
**Limit:** None at all. Do come to part or all of the day, but do come to the AGM  
**Cost:** FREE; no booking  
**Contact:** Dominic Summers  
01603 788374  
[d.summers1@btinternet.com](mailto:d.summers1@btinternet.com)

**Title:** Four Norfolk Roodscreens  
**Date:** Saturday May 10th 2008  
**Time:** 10.00 am – 4.00 pm  
**Meet:** Aylsham Town Centre car park  
**Limit:** 20 Members only  
**Cost:** £6  
**Lunch:** Bring Picnic lunch - in a members garden  
**Contact:** **Ian Hinton**  
**01502475287**  
[ian.hinton@tesco.net](mailto:ian.hinton@tesco.net)

Four fine examples of the remains of magnificent pre-Reformation church furniture in Norfolk. We will visit churches in Aylsham, Marsham, Barton Turf and Ranworth. Our guide will be John Mitchell, an art historian at the University of East Anglia, who has researched widely on this subject.

**Title** Heydon Hall, Village and Church (continued)  
**Date:** Friday 23 May 2008

The owner has kindly agreed to show us around Heydon Hall, an important late sixteenth century brick-built house with seventeenth and eighteenth century interior fixtures. We can also explore the exquisite village, one of a very few privately owned estate villages in England, often used as a film set, as well as the fine late medieval church.



**Title** Heydon Hall, Village and Church  
**Date:** Friday 23 May 2008  
**Time:** 10.30 am  
**Finish:** 3.30 pm  
**Limit:** 20 Members only  
**Costs:** £8 plus lunch  
**Lunch:** The Earle Arms or a picnic on the village green  
**Contact:** Dominic Summers 01603 788374  
or  
[d.summers1@btinternet.com](mailto:d.summers1@btinternet.com)

**Title:** Tacolneston Project Latest  
**Date:** Friday 6 June 2008  
**Time:** 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm  
**Place:** Tacolneston Village Hall  
**Cost:** FREE—DO COME!

Just come along and see what the Group's research has been up to so far and meet Ian Tyers, the dendrochronologist who is working with the Group.

Please come to our AGM to be held in the medieval magnificence of Binham Priory. Afterwards there will be an opportunity to explore the Priory and its important Norman - Early English transitional architecture, the ruins of the conventual buildings and the late medieval seven-sacraments font. Our chairman, Adam Longcroft, will give a presentation on his research into the vernacular architecture of Binham followed by a tour of the village and an opportunity to look inside a couple of interesting houses.

## Summer Events 2008 (cont.)

*Title:* A King's Lynn Treat  
*Date:* Saturday 28 June 2008  
*Meet:* Boal Quay car park (£1.90/day)  
*Time:* 10.00 am–4pm-ish  
*Start* 10.30 am Red Mount chapel to meet David Pitcher  
*Limit:* 20  
*Costs:* £16 (including lunch)  
*Lunch:* The Green Quay will put on lunch. It is licensed.  
*Special note:* lots of walking, so wear comfy shoes  
*Contact:* Mary Ash  
01603 616285  
mary.ash@ntlworld.com

Not one but two hugely knowledgeable and interesting leaders will introduce us to the gems of King's Lynn historic architecture. David Pitcher will show us around recent conservation projects funded by Heritage Lottery grants - Red Mount Chapel and Greyfriars Tower. We shall then meet Paul Richards, 'Mr Lynn', for a tour taking in Saturday Market, St Margaret's Church, the Custom House and Tuesday Market, amongst others. In between we hope to take lunch in the top floor meeting room of the Green Quay, a wonderful 14th century warehouse thought to have been built originally on an island.

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*Title:* Worstead Village  
*Date:* Wednesday 2nd July 2008  
*Time:* 10.00am – 4.30 pm  
*Place:* At the Church  
*Limit:* 20 (Members only)  
*Cost:* £7.00  
*Lunch:* B–Y–O (unless pub is re-opened by then)  
*Special requirements:* walking shoes and slippers...  
*Contact:* Jackie Simpson  
01692 630639 or  
jackie\_simpson@beeb.net

A brief history of the village from the pulpit and then we divide into two groups to explore the church in greater detail and up to four houses including the manor house and a farm. This is a wonderful opportunity to get to know more about a famous village and its material culture.

*Title:* Old Hall, Barnham Broom  
*Date:* Friday 4th July 2008  
*Time:* 6.30-8.30ish  
*Limit:* 35 (Members only)  
*Cost:* £6.00  
*Food:* Drinks and nibbles  
*Contact:* Lynne Hodge  
01362 668847  
lynne@walknorfolk.co.uk

The owners of this fascinating house have kindly agreed to allow us to investigate its history. It is an early sixteenth century brick house, enlarged and altered in the early seventeenth century. It has a three storey porch with polygonal angle turrets, a fine, dated, plasterwork ceiling and a seventeenth century staircase complete with dog-gate.

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*Title:* Wingfield College and Church  
*Date:* Saturday 12 July 2008  
*Time:* 11.30 am  
*Finish:* 4.00 pm prompt  
*Meet:* Wingfield Church  
*Group:* 20 limit  
*Costs:* £15 not including lunch  
*Lunch:* In the De La Pole Arms or picnic  
*Contact:* Peter Cranness  
pscranness@hotmail.co.uk  
01603 300395

We have an exciting opportunity to explore Wingfield College and Church, buildings intimately associated with the De La Poles, one of the greatest aristocratic families of East Anglia in the late middle-ages. The present owners will show us around the College, the Georgian façade of which conceals a rare survival: a chantry college of priests complete with a cloister walk and a Great Hall dating from 1362. It is one of the largest surviving timber-framed buildings of its type and age in Europe. We will also look around the church with its magnificent Wingfield and De La Pole tombs.

*Title:* Lutyens at Overstrand  
*Date:* Friday 1st August  
*Time:* 2 pm–6.00 ish  
*Meet:* Overstrand Hall, 48 Cromer Road, Overstrand  
*Limit:* 25  
*Cost:* £10  
*Food:* Cream tea at 4.30 included in price  
*Contact:* Tony Wright  
01603 452041  
tw101@talktalk.net

Lutyens designed two magnificent houses in Overstrand, near Cromer, at the turn of the 20th century, The Pleasaunce and Overstrand Hall. We can visit these important Arts and Crafts buildings with Dr Stefan Muthesius of the University of East Anglia as our guide, and see the development of the architect's ideas from the earlier commission to the later one at Overstrand Hall. We may also be able to have a look at Lutyen's Methodist Chapel as well. Cream tea will be taken at The Pleasaunce, so that members will feel fortified in the face of all the Arts and Crafts magnificence.

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*Title:* Flint Day  
*Date:* Saturday Sept 27th 2008  
*Time:* 10.00am – 4.30 pm  
*Place:* To be informed nearer the time  
*Limit:* 12 with possible repeat next year if over subscribed  
*Cost:* £15.00  
*Lunch:* picnic/pub depends where it is  
**Special requirements: work gloves and goggles will be provided; sturdy work clothing and footwear should be worn**  
*Contact:* Carol Nutt  
01379 640007 or  
carol.nutt@phonecoop.coop

This is a splendid opportunity for some hands-on learning about Norfolk's signature building material: flint. We will learn about flint-knapping and flint wall construction at a site, hopefully an ancient church, yet to be agreed. Our guide and master will be Richard Hyde, who has led some splendid craft days for the NHBG in the past.