# Norfolk Historic Buildings Group

# Newsletter

Non members
£2.00

Number thirty-three
Spring 2017

www.nhbg.org.uk
norfolkhistoricbuildingsgroup

Contents

# CHAIR

Politics shouldn't really mix with Heritage, but inevitably it does. Successive governments have reduced spending both nationally and locally and it tends to be the areas which are not directly involved with people and their welfare that suffer the deepest cuts. Locally this has meant threats to museums, the archaeology service and the research and information storage and management that are part of these functions. Although they escaped the worst of the cuts this time round, there is no guarantee for the future. All this makes the work and research that voluntary organisations undertake even more important. The NHBG has already won a national award for the New Buckenham Project as "the best volunteer-led project"; we must ensure that future projects measure up to the same, or a better, standard. See page 13 for the details of our latest project and opportunities for volunteers.

The threat to the HER also makes the database of property information that the NHBG holds more important. Each building that the group surveys or inspects has its details entered into a database that sits behind the website, and is available for members to use in their own research. This was created as part of a generous grant from English Heritage. It has been operating for several years as a result of the dedication of committee-member Jackie Simpson in entering most of the data. We are just about to enter negotiations with the web developer over possible improvements, so please let Jackie or I know if you have any suggestions.

**Ian Hinton**
**Chair, Norfolk Historic Buildings Group, March 2017**
*ian.hinton222@btinternet.com*

## Committee Contact Details

**Ian Hinton** *Chair & Journal Editor*
*134 Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew, NR7 0SB*
*01603 431311 [h] e.mail:ian.hinton222@btinternet.com*

**Alayne Fenner** *Deputy Chair & Newsletter Editor*
*24 Mount Pleasant, Norwich, NR2 2DG*
*01603 452204 [h] e.mail: alayne.fenner@btinternet.com*

**Lynne Hodge** *Committee Secretary*
*Tannery House Worthing, Dereham NR20 5RH*
*01362 668847 [h] e.mail: lynne@walknorfolk.co.uk*

**Maggy Chatterley** *Treasurer & Membership Sec.*
*The Old Rectory, Barnby, Beccles, NR34 7QN*
*01502 475287 [h] e.mail: maggy6@btinternet.com*

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

**Dominic Summers** *Summer Events*
*3 Speke Street, Norwich, NR2 4HF*
*07709 028192[m] e.mail: d.summers1@btinternet.com*

**Jackie Simpson** *Web Page Database*
*The Chestnuts, Church Road, Neatishead NR12 8BT*
*01692 630639 e.mail: jackie.g.simpson@btinternet.com*

**Diane Barr** *Documentary Research*
*24 The Shrublands, Horsford, NR10 3EL*
*01603 898928 [h] e.mail: dibarr@btinternet.com*

**Anne Woollett** *Web Pages*
*The Cardinal's Hat, Back Street, Reepham NR10 4SJ*
*01603 870452 [h] email: anne.woollett@tiscali.co.uk*

**Hilary Newby-Grant**
*Ketteringham Cottage, Sloley, Norfolk NR8 6EG*
*01692 538383 [h] email: billnewby8@hotmail.com*

**Brendan Chester-Kadwell**
*Oldakre, 63 School Road, Drayton, Norwich NR12 8HF*
*01603 260307 [h] email: b.chesterkadwell@btinternet.com*

*2 Vacancies*

**Paul Hodge** *(not on committee)* *Facebook Group*
*The Cardinal's Hat, Back Street, Reepham NR10 4SJ*
*01603 870452 [h] email: pt.hodge@tiscali.co.uk*

## Administration

### Full-Colour NHBG Newsletter

Printing costs prohibit a full-colour printed version of the newsletter, restricting colour to the front and back cover, but the many photographs on the interior pages do look much better in colour.

A full-colour version is produced for the web edition which is uploaded a year after publication (so that the up-to-date newsletters are a benefit of membership, rather than available to everyone). This version can be emailed to members at the time of publication in addition to the monochrome version sent by post. Please let Lynne or Ian know if you would like it sent to your email address - the usual version will continue to be posted to you.

Visit the website nhbg.org.uk and click the "publications" tab, click Newsletters on the right-hand side, scroll down through the newsletters and click the one you want to see - notice the difference that colour throughout makes.

### NHBG Journal 1 - Research Agenda

The first NHBG Journal - produced in 2002 after our first conference, setting out the Group's research agenda for the future - has been out of print for some time. It contains papers by Bob Meeson, Adam Longcroft, Susanna Wade-Martins, Victor Morgan and Tom Williamson.


There have been requests for a reprint, but the original layout and text files cannot be found, so I have scanned the text of the document resulting in two PDF files. These are now available by email to anyone who is interested. Let me know if you would like a copy sent to you.

Ian Hinton

## Membership Secretary

Volunteer required - our treasurer, Maggy Chatterley, took over the job of Membership Sec. on a temporary basis when Ian was elected Chair last year. It is not a difficult task, just requires a couple of hours a week and a little computer knowledge. Speak to Ian or Maggy to see what is involved.

Newsletter 33 Front cover:
A George Skipper front door in Norwich (David Bussey)

# Summer Programme 2017

If booking by post, please use the forms provided to book, **with a separate cheque for each event**, even if going to the same person. IF YOU WANT TICKETS POSTED TO YOU, DON'T FORGET the SAE.

If you are happy to receive the tickets by email, DO NOT SEND AN SAE, the tickets will be despatched by email, but I am afraid that, until we have the ability to handle money electronically, we have to rely on the cheque and postage for payment.

We have attempted to avoid having limits on numbers attending, but at some venues we have no choice. Booking is on a first come, first served basis, but if there is considerable over-demand we will try and run a similar event in the future. *Dominic Summers*

## Walsingham - Joint meeting with RUBL (Lincs HBG)

Saturday 20th May

*Time:* *11.00 am*
*Meet:* *Walsingham village hall (NR22 6DJ)*
*Cost:* *£10*
*Limit:* *25 (members only)*
*Walking:* *Town and building stairs*
*Food:* *Tea/coffee in the hall, am &pm. Lunch available in town*
*Contact:* *Lynne Hodge 01362 668847 lynne@walknorfolk.co.uk*

A joint meeting with RUBL, the Lincolnshire HBG - a chance to exchange ideas with members of a sister group.

There will be a presentation of the Walsingham survey results as well as a guided walk around the town by Susan & Michael Brown, highlighting the principal findings, including a detailed look at the fifteenth-century Friday Cottage located by the Friary gates in Friday Market.

## Thetford Town Walk

Wednesday 31st May

*Time:* *10:45 am*
*Meet:* *Thetford Priory car park (free)*
*Cost:* *£10*
*Limit:* *20 (members only)*
*Walking:* *Stairs, pavements*
*Contact:* *Carol Nutt 01379 640007 carol.nutt@phonecoop.coop*

Guided by local historian David Osborne. From the Cluniac Priory, via the Burrell Works, White Hart Street, St Peter's church, The Bell and other local buildings of historic interest, ending at Castle Hill. Lunch will be available (not included) at The Bell, where we are expected at around 1:15pm.

## Shropham Hall

Saturday 3rd June

*Time:* *2:00pm*
*Meet:* *Shropham Hall (NR17 1EA)*
*Cost:* *£10*
*Limit:* *30 (members only)*
*Walking:* *stairs and garden*
*Contact:* *Jackie Simpson 01692 630639 jackie.g.simpson@btinternet.com*

Shropham Hall is a five-bay, brick-built house of the late 17th/early 18th century; it has recessed side bays with a 19th C stuccoed porch. It was built for John Barker, a later High Sherrif of Norfolk. and was built on the site of a Norman monastery. It has beautiful gardens and an exhibition of childhood. Tea will follow.

## Aylsham Town Walk

Saturday 24th June

*Time:* *2:00pm*
*Meet:* *Market Place*
*Parking:* *Market Place or Burgh Rd car park*
*Cost:* *free*
*Limit:* *no limit*
*Walking:* *Mostly roads and pavements*
*Contact:* *Dominic Summers 07709 028192 dominic.summers1@btinternet.com*

We will be shown round central Aylsham with access to an historic house or two, one with a medieval undercroft. We will finish at The Town Hall for the AGM

**followed immediately by the AGM**

*Time:* *4:00 pm tea & scones, 4:30 pm AGM*
*Meet:* *Aylsham Town Hall*
*Food:* *Please return ticket, or email Dominic, for catering numbers*
*Contact:* *Dominic Summers, d.summers1@btinternet.com*

AGM Papers to follow nearer the date.

## Church Day - Central Norfolk Spectacular

Saturday 15th July

*Time:* *10:15am*
*Meet:* *North Elmham (NR20 5JU)*
*Parking:* *Church carpark*
*Cost:* *£10*
*Limit:* *no limit (members only)*
*Walking:* *Churchyards*
*Food:* *BYO picnic OR pub lunch (tba)*
*Contact:* *Ian Hinton 01603 431311 ian.hinton222@btinternet.com*

We will be visiting two magnificent churches in central Norfolk and the so-called Bishop's Palace in North Elmham. On the site of the early See of East Anglia is a 12th C church with 15th C alterations and 19th C restoration. Inside are the remains of a magnificent roodscreen and some entrancing 15th C benchends.

Behind the church are the combined ruins of two buildings built by different Bishops of Norwich - a 12thC chapel built by Herbert de Losinga and the 14thC Bishop's house built by Hugh Despenser.

We will also visit Brisley church, equally large, but less restored, with an interesting tower, benchends, the remnants of wall paintings and the magnificent Althorne Brass.

We hope to be able to picnic in the lovely gardens at Tannery House in Worthing.

## History Walk - Thorpe St Andrew

Summer Party afterwards at 134 Yarmouth Road (NR7 0SB)

Sunday 6th August

*Time:* *3:00 pm*
*Meet:* *Thorpe Council offices, Pound Lane (NR7 0SR)*
*Park:* *Stanley Lane or carpark for Carrey's Meadow, south side of Yarmouth Road*
*Cost:* *£15*
*Limit:* *none (members only)*
*Food:* *Drinks and finger food*
*Contact:* *Maggy Chatterley 01603 431311 maggy6@btinternet.com*

A guided history walk along Yarmouth Road, Norwich, led by Thorpe History Group members. Yarmouth Road into Norwich contains Thorpe Hall and was once the place where rich Norwich residents built their country houses on the river.

Finishing at Ian & Maggy's new (not-country) house - 134 Yarmouth Road for a glass (or two) of wine and lots of nibbles in the garden (weather permitting), inside if wet!

## Assembly House, Norwich

Details and a date are still being organised for a visit to The Assembly House and its medieval undercroft.

Details will be circulated by email when they are finalised.

# Terraced Housing in Norwich (15th November 2016)
## David Bussey

From medieval times many of Norwich's houses were built in rows, but the architectural coherence that distinguishes a terrace only emerged in the eighteenth century, when relatively grand terraces were constructed in Surrey Street and the Cathedral Close as part of the process of gentrifying a prosperous city.

The main development of our terraces, however, occurred in the nineteenth century. Norwich's housing stock expanded from 9,000 in 1811 to 21,000 in 1881. Almost all the early working-class terraces have been demolished, not always with good reason, but a short terrace of one up, one down houses survives in Barrack Street, though altered, and delightful examples of modest housing from 1820 can be seen in Winkle's Row, off King Street and Ice House Lane, below Bracondale.

*Winkle's Row - 1820*

Terraced houses were usually rented, £4 per annum in Ice House Lane and at least £30 in The Crescent (1821-6) where tenants would have up to three servants and in some cases stabling. The more expensive terraces had more showy facades, with fine gauged brickwork above windows – increasingly the more expensive white or gault brickwork - Welsh-slate roofs, elaborate doorcases and sometimes central pediments among their features.

*The Crescent - 1821*

Grander terraces are generally to be found on main roads and a particularly interesting group is on Bracondale, promoted after 1810 as a genteel place to escape deteriorating conditions in the city centre.

Colman's, established in Carrow in 1854, purchased much of Bracondale for its senior employees but built further terraces for workers, for example on Trowse Green in the 1880s. Other tied housing includes an unusual set of three terraces built around a central green for skilled railway workers beyond Carrow Road, the houses having half dormers, gothic entrances and polychromatic brickwork.

*above: Bracondale - 1823*
*below: Railway Cottages - 1847*

Spacious and showy housing continued to be constructed in the second half of the nineteenth century, for example in Chester Place (1869) and Valentine Street (c.1850), but the main story as the century evolves is the development of substantial private estates outside the city walls. The most interesting of these is the work of Clement William Unthank between what was then Unthank's Road and the area of the old Norfolk and Norwich Hospital. Most of the building here is between 1870 and 1890, by which time the new railways meant that Welsh slate and gault brick were much cheaper to transport. However modest the house, and many have no hall entrances and two bedrooms, Unthank

*above:*
*Valentine Street*
*- 1850*

*left:*
*Newmarket Road*
*- 1830-1840*

laid down strict covenants to ensure they would not deteriorate and would present an attractive and consistent face to the road.

By the end of the century a vast expansion in population required large new estates north of Norwich, and these were built more cheaply, with a return to red brick and concrete lintels replacing gauged brick over windows and doors. At the same time, on major routes into the city, such as Thorpe Road, very large and heavily built terraces emerged, with elaborate cosseyware ornament.

*above:*
*Concrete lintels and elaborate woodwork in CeciRoad - 1905*

More imaginative work is also in evidence during the late Victorian and Edwardian years. For example a short terrace designed by George Skipper in College Road has striking doorcases in a Queen Anne revival style (shown on the front cover). Other houses have stained glass and elaborate woodwork reflecting the Arts and Crafts movement, for example in Cecil Road.

This story of course was cut short in 1914. Between the wars the principal appearance of terraces in Norwich was for social housing, beyond the scope of this talk. In the last fifty years, however, a more general revival has been underway. In Conesford Drive, Michael Innes (1966) designed an effective modernist version of the terrace, with careful proportions and use of different materials. Friars Quay (Luckhurst and Thompson, 1974+) is a challenging interpretation where the houses seem to be slipping away from each other. Not all modern terraces rise above the routine, but there has been good very recent work in New Mills Yard (2009) and Aspland Road (2015).

*Conesford Drive, Bracondale - 1966*

*above: Friars Quay - 1974 on*

*below: New Mills Yard - 2009*

David Bussey has researched Norwich terraced housing and written about local architects. We hope to hear him in the future continuing the story with post First-World-War terraced housing in Norwich.

# Building Recorder Training Sessions
# Ian Hinton

## Session 1 - Heath Farmhouse

Reinstituting the occasional training days for recorders has been discussed by the committee for some time. After new members Rob & Nesa Howard volunteered their house for measuring, members were canvassed to gauge interest. Eventually, ten members gathered for an initial session at Heath Farmhouse near Fakenham (see the "houses visited" report on page 18) on a cold Saturday in early December.

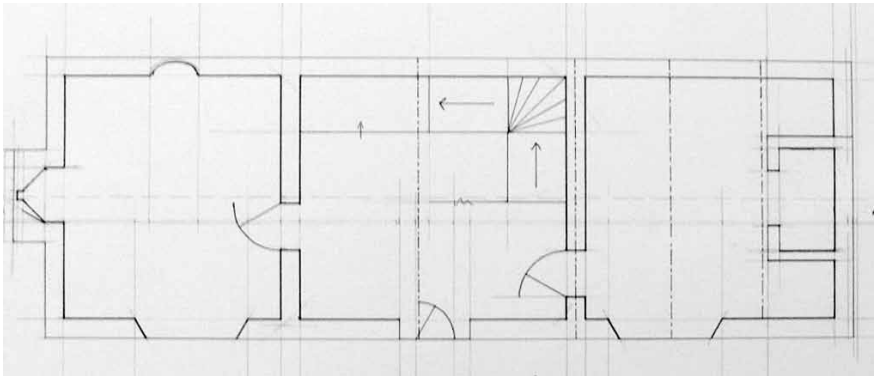
Recording and interpreting buildings takes years of experience, particularly assessing which features need to be recorded, as does assessing which features may be diagnostic and which are typical so can be omitted, but the basic skills of measuring accurately and transferring those measurements to a drawing, to enable the details both to be registered with the county Historical Environment Record and to allow interpretation by others, can be acquired with practice.

Buildings which have been substantially altered over time provide a particular challenge. Repairs and upgrades can mask the original form and features of a building. Unpicking these can be assisted by careful measurement and drawing up. Heath Farmhouse provided this challenge. Features inside the house and on the rear wall indicated an earlier date than the 18C date which was noted when the building was listed in the 1950s.

The staircase was particularly interesting. Built in oak, it has "splat" balusters made of pine (a representation of the richly carved-on-four-sides balusters of the earlier seventeenth century, but consisting of a thin piece of wood, carved on the two edges following the angle of the stair) and displaying the original scribed lines for the carpenter to follow. It was not possible to determine whether they were pegged into the string and handrail, although there were pegs present. The opening through which the stair passed had clear empty mortices for joists - circled on the photo - complete with pegs, indicating that this was not its original postion. Was it brought here or only moved within the house?

The rear wall had two small blocked windows which appear to have had dripmoulds of brick above them, the right-hand end circled on the photo. They were apparently blocked during the Georgian remodelling of the interior (and perhaps the front facade).

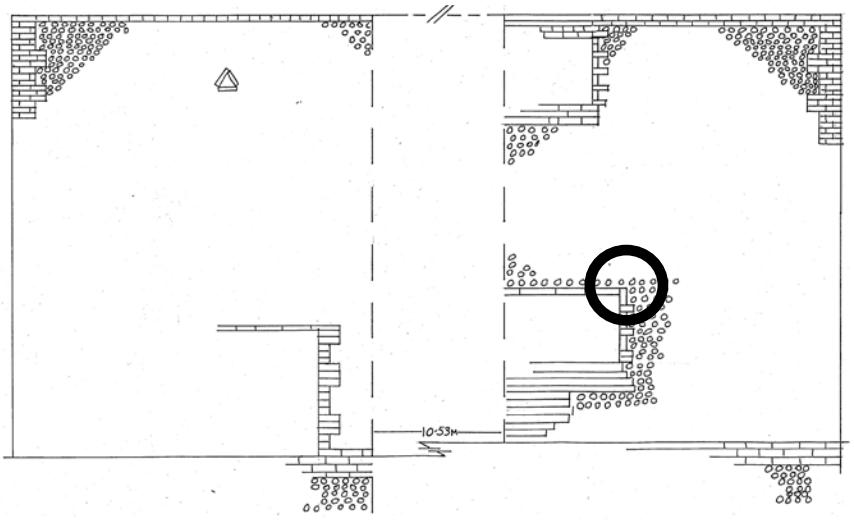
Two teams measured the ground floor plan and one measured the rear wall elevation as an initial exercise to practice the techniques. Two of the resulting drawings are shown below.



*resulting drawings*

*above: floorplan, below rear wall elevation*

*scales and panels omitted for lack of space*




*above right: measuring the rear wall using a surveyors staff*

*below left: the staircase with splat balusters - the empty mortices for joists are circled*

*below right: baluster close-up*

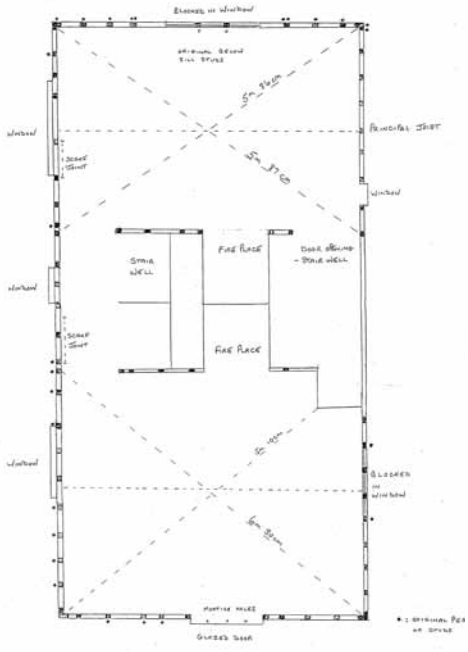
## Session 2- Diss Ironworks

The second session took place in February in a timber-framed building in Diss - 7 St Nicholas Street (Diss Iron Works), by kind permission of the owner. This was the first chance for the group to record timber-framing and provided a good example of the range of situations to look for before recording begins. Differentiating between original timber and those inserted at a later date as well as those that had been removed can all be assessed by the presence of the pegs used to fix timbers at both ends, as it is not normally possible to insert and peg a timber into position later without dismantling the frame. The differences between an original timber and an inserted or removed one all help to provide a pictiure of the building's original form.

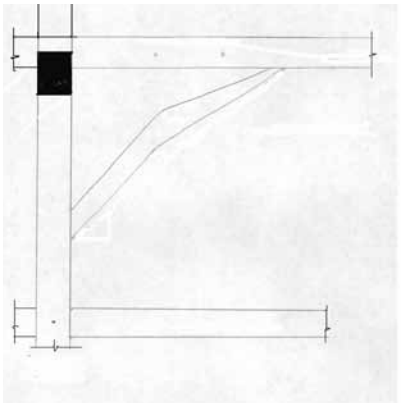
Dendrochronological samples had been taken from the building recently so a definive date might be possible in the near future, buta combination of the features in the building (double in-line butt-purlin roof, face-halved scarf joints, ovolo mullions on ground and first floors and the plain chamfers with lamb's-tongued and nicked stops on the principal joists) appear to point to an early seventeenth-century date.

Three teams measured different parts of the building and some of the many cranked braces - two of their drawings are shown below.

A further session - in a medieval undercroft - is planned for April.



*First-floor plan*



*Cranked brace in the southernmost roof bay*

*Continual discussion is needed - before, during and after recording!*

# Administration

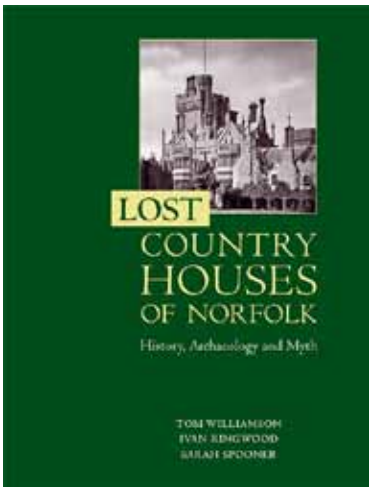
Boydell & Brewer, the academic book publisher, is offering members of the Norfolk Historic Buildings Group a 25% discount on the award-winning

**Lost Country Houses of Norfolk, History, Archaeology and Myth by Tom Williamson, Ivan Ringwood and Sarah Spooner**.

Norfolk is a county sadly rich in "lost" country houses; this account and gazetteer offers a comprehensive account of them. The 25% discount will make the price £22.46 (instead of £29.95 RRP).

Orders can be placed by phone on 01243 843 291, by fax on 01243 843 303, by email at customer@wiley.com or online at www.boydellandbrewer.com. Postage is £3.70 in the UK.

Please note you **must quote the offer code BB304** when ordering, in order to redeem the discount. **The offer code expires on 30th June 2017**.



# Historic Decorative Plaster (13th October 2016)
## Simon Willcox

Unfortunately, Simon was unable to provide us with a summary of his talk on historic decorative plaster. By this time, it was too late for a coherent account to be written by someone who heard his fascinating talk.

He described the methods used to make and erect the magnificant plaster ceilings and cornices that were created over the four centuries that he covered. He also outlined the processes involved in the repair of these works of art and the various techniques that go into creating modern versions.

Below are some of the stunning images taken from his Powerpoint presentation.

*Blickling Hall - 1620*

*Astley Hall, Lancs - 1666*

*Sudbury Hall, Derby - 1675*

*left: Houghton Hall - 1726*

*below: Felbrigg Hall - 1752*

*London Colliseum - 1904*

# Winter lecture synopsis

*A new ceiling at Kilboy, Ireland in 2010*
*1 Drawing 2 Casting 3 Installation*

# Notes from around the County

The first in an occasional series of images and/or notes submitted by members, which illustrate Norfolk's built heritage or raise interesting points about aspects of it - similar submissions welcomed for the future.

## St George's, Shimpling

The four bays of the chancel roof of the church must have been rebuilt in 1633, with two massive tie-beams with sunk-quadrant chamfers displaying the date and presumably the initials of the churchwardens at the time. The double in-line butt-purlin roof has a domestic feel about it when compared to the nave roof which is a more traditional arch-braced structure. The five high-level narrow collars do not seem to be of the same quality as the rest of the roof - were they added later to save the roof from sagging? As it is possible to insert timbers such as these with tenons at both ends to angled rafters.

Photos: Lynne Hodge

## Norwich Stonemasons' Guild Parade

The NHBG was invited to send representatives to join the Guild of St Stephen and St George on their annual parade through the City on December 16th. Five committee members joined Master Mason Stephen (who spoke to the Group about Limestone during the summer) and Guild Clerk Colin, their apprentices and other heritage based organizations in the County, resulting in about 80 people parading from the Cathedral to St Clements, *via* the Castle and the Guildhall, on a beautifully snnny day.

Photos:
James Cross

# Norfolk's Rood Screens in their national and regional context

(6th December 2016)

## Lucy Wrapson

Although late-medieval painted screens survive throughout England and Wales, it is East Anglia and specifically Norfolk that retains the highest density of this type of church furnishing. Other notable areas for screens include Devon and the English and Welsh Marches. Remarkably, as many as 40% of churches in the East Anglian region have some surviving medieval wooden screenwork, as it was explicitly retained in parish churches during the Reformation, despite the destructive iconoclasm unleashed on the painted images of saints which screens often bore. In Norfolk, nearly ninety figurative screens or panels from screens survive, making it the county with the greatest number of extant late-medieval religious paintings on oak, among which are some of the highest quality in the English context such as Ranworth and at Barton Turf (Figures 1 & 2).

*right: Figure 1. Detail of St Michael from Ranworth rood screen.*

*below: Figure 2. Detail of St Apollonia from Barton Turf rood screen.*

Traditional writing about East Anglian rood screens has been antiquarian in outlook and descriptive in nature, often separating out either the architectural structures or the figure paintings. Lacking from the literature on East Anglian rood-screens is a thorough, integrated technical study of the woodwork and painted figurative and decorative surfaces of screens (where the latter survive). Rood screens have been used as starting points for discourse, but not as valuable primary sources, nor has their status as physical objects with trajectories of style and design been adequately appreciated.

The work I have done on East Anglian rood screens, based at the Hamilton Kerr Institute, University of Cambridge and funded by the Leverhulme Trust, has sought to redress this balance. I devised an integrated approach, looking at aspects of carpentry design and painting techniques, visiting over 500 screens and screen fragments in the process. What I discovered through my study was a fascinating world of interrelated paintings and carpentry. Notably the two were not closely allied, that is to say painters and carpenters worked separately, and carpenters do not seem to have subcontracted to favoured painters – this process instead was patron-led. By looking closely at consistent aspects of screens, such as the moulding profiles of screen transoms and the jointing techniques, I was able to identify twenty nine groups of related works of carpentry and thirteen groups of two or more related paintings. It has also been possible to build a chronology for Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire's rood screens, as certain features could be demonstrated to be diagnostic of certain periods. To give one example, a new type of joint came to be used in screen dados and muntins from c.1485 and its presence can assist in determining the date of screens.

The rood screens at Westwick and Barton Turf are within three miles of each other and were evidently the output of the same carpentry workshop, probably located nearby. Their transom moulding profiles are near-identical, as is the dado upper tracery and spandrel carvings (Figures 3-5).

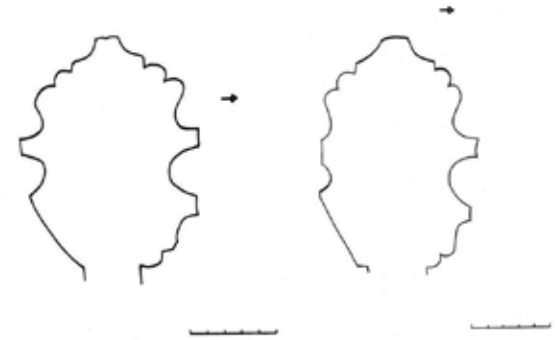


*Figure 3. Transom moulding profiles from Barton Turf and Westwick rood screens.*

*Figure 4. Dado upper tracery and spandrel carvings from Barton Turf and Westwick rood screens.*

All photos
Lucy Wrapson © Hamilton Kerr Institute, University of Cambridge

*above: Figure 5. Dado base tracery from Barton Turf and Westwick rood screens.*

*right: Figure 6. Matching tin relief from Alburgh rood screen (left), Trunch rood screen (centre) and South Burlingham pulpit (right).*

In addition the design of the cusped quatrefoil at the base of the dado is comparable, although at Westwick the design is turned through 45º compared with Barton Turf. There is no direct dating evidence from inscriptions or wills for either screen. However, the paintings at Barton Turf relate closely to those at St Michael at Plea in Norwich, parts of which are now in Norwich Cathedral. The painting on the two screens at Westwick and Barton Turf is evidently the product of different workshops, one of many instances demonstrating the typical separation of the craft disciplines of construction and painting.

As screens were painted in situ, their painters were itinerant through necessity, although there are a small number of paintings on paper that have been stuck on to the screens, and which could have been brought to the site. Sometimes the same groups of painters can be seen at work on different screens. This can be determined through stylistic similarities, but also through the use of the same cast relief moulds and stencils. Cast relief or tin relief was a convenient way of making repeated patterns that could then be attached to a surface and decorated. In much the same way, stencils were often used to embellish the paintings with metal leaf and paint. Both types of mechanically repetitive techniques are useful in assessing the proximity of screen paintings to one another as they are discrete and identifiable. Stylistic similarity of tin relief patterns on their own is not sufficient to postulate a relationship between works of art. However, the use of the same moulds is more definite. To show an example, the same mould can be seen here on two different screens and a pulpit, at Trunch, Alburgh and South Burlingham (Figure 6) as can the same stencil patterns (Figure 7).

*Figure 7. Matching stencils from Thwaite rood screen (top left) South Burlingham pulpit (top centre) Lessingham rood screen (top right) Fritton St Catherine's rood screen (bottom left) and Alburgh rood screen (bottom right).*

The survival of such a large body of wooden polychrome objects as the rood screens of East Anglia is unparalleled in the English medieval context. It is for this reason that it is vital that these screens are conserved as a corpus, for future generations, as it is precisely because they survive in such large numbers that wide-ranging conclusions can be drawn from them. My colleagues and I are now working closely with the Churches Buildings Council, among other partners, to raise funds for assessing the condition of East Anglia's screens with a view to their long-term preservation, as well as academic study.

For more information and academic papers resulting from this work, please see https://cambridge.academia.edu/LucyWrapson

# Courses

## The Medieval Material Culture of East Anglia

A ten-week course (one afternoon a week) based at Wensum Lodge taught by Dominic Summers starting on April 27th.
Contact Adult Education at Wensum Lodge for more details of cost and timing at information@norfolk.gov.uk or phone 0344 500 8020

# Church Benchends and some regional differences

(Members' night - 10th January 2017)

Ian Hinton

## Pews in churches

In the past, it has been held that the stone "seats" around the inside of the walls of some churches and around the base of the piers allowed people to sit during the long services before seats were installed - giving rise to the maxim "the weak go to the wall". While this may be true in some instances, in others it may just be the result of a lowering of the floor whilst not weakening the wall's foundations. In the case of aisle walls, their use as a seat would have a reduced value as the person sitting there could not see the altar and other important parts of the service such as Elevation of the Host. Seats round pier bases might allow a view of the chancel but equally, the continued support after lowering the floor argument might also apply, especially as footings are often very shallow.

## Dating

Conventional wisdom has it that benches/pews dated from as early as the late thirteenth century. This is now doubted as there is no actual evidence above an assessment of relative crudeness of construction. Cathedral pews are often stated as early - Chester Choir stalls of 1380, for example - but this was the date of the choir building itself, not necessarily the pews in it. Only two pews have been successfully dendro-dated and the earliest felling date established was 1409-41 for a pew at Dunsfold in Surrey. However, documentary evidence from the mid fifteenth century seems to refer to seats as though they had existed for some time. At Dartmouth in 1438 reference is made to a servant paying for the privilege of using a seat; someone who is unlikely to be the first in line when seats became available, however important his master. Another documentary reference in Oxford in 1436 refers to pews to be placed in front of the altar of Our Lady of Pity and in front of the north door - suggesting that seats in the main body of the church already existed.

Damage to the faces of people represented on bench ends usually means that the figure existed before the Puritan period and the damage was iconoclastic. Churchwardens' accounts can often indicate particular dates, but the use of particular words such as build and emend can mean either built new, renewed or repaired.

## Development

Many of the pews that still exist in churches in East Anglia started life as plain benches with no backs - a few of these remain as built (Cawston) , whilst others had backs fixed to the bench ends (Cawston,Field Dalling, Wickmere...), some more neatly than others. Whilst others appear to have been built originally with backs (Gooderstone, Walpole St Peter ...) - are these all of a later period?

The decoration of the bench ends also developed; from simple carved poppy heads to representations of people, figures added to the shoulders of the ends (Cley, Harpley, Tuttington...) and elaborately carved end panels (Swannington, Tottington, Wiggenhall St Germans...).

In many cases the woodcarvers' art reached its zenith in bench ends. Allowed more freedom on bench ends than in the stylised carving on screens etc, some of the tops of the poppy heads portray extremely lifelike figures amongst the caricatures and mythical devilish creatures.

Sources:
Cooper, T., (ed) Pews, Benches and Chairs, Ecclesiological Society, 2011 (available for download at ecclesoc.org)
Crossley, F., English Church Craftsmanship, Batsford, 1941
Grey, T., Devons Bench ends, Mint Press, 2012
Hewitt, C., English Church Carpentry, Wayland, 1974

*The development of pews in East Anglia*

*Simple benches (top left - Cawston),*
*backs added later (top right - Field Dalling),*
*original carved pew backs (bottom left - Gooderstone),*
*elaborate carved ends (bottom right - Tottington)*

## Regional differences

The poppy heads of East Anglia are conventionally thought of as named after the French *poupee*, meaning puppet, but *poupee* also means a bunch of hemp or flax tied to a staff, which in simple cases seems a more likely explanation. In the west country, poppy heads are rarely seen, most bench ends are square and have elaborately carved faces.

The square ends display a variety of themes - The Crucifixion, angels (including fallen angels), elaborate Renaissance foliage and perpendicular-style tracery, the usual grotesques and some odd subjects such as tumblers.

Both poppy heads and the carved square ends of the west country continued for several centuries - bridging the Reformation - making dating them difficult. What does help are the kinds of ornament on the bench ends that can be more closely dated - particularly figures of the Virgin, often from the High Middle Ages, or carvings of the symbols of the Passion - always pre Reformation, or in local areas, symbols that refer to the dynasty of a particular patron or family.

# Winter lecture synopsis




*Some Devon bench ends - almost entirely square ended, but displaying a remarkable range of images/themes.*

*above: Fallen angel at Ashcombe, grimacing and with broken wings*

*right: Crucifixion at Abottsham (complete with 19C replacement face)*

*above far left: tumblers at Abbotsham*
*above left centre: Saints at Combe-in-Teignhead*
*above right centre: Renaissance blends of animal and foliage at Newton St Petrock*
*above right: Gothic/Renaissance mix at Sutcombe*

*All photos: Ian Hinton*

A range of the stunning carving of Norfolk's poppy heads and bench ends are shown on the rear cover in colour

# Winter lecture synopsis / NHBG Research

## Future NHBG Project on Boulton & Paul Buildings

(Members' night - 10th January 2017)

## Brendan Chester-Kadwell

Although there has been considerable interest in the company of Boulton and Paul (B&P) over the years, particularly about their manufacture of aeroplanes, the story about their prefabricated buildings is still largely untold. B&P manufactured a very wide range of such buildings for about a hundred years from the 1860s onwards – including commissions by princes to the production of the humble dog kennel. We now wish to tell this untold story and are about to start a three-year research project leading to a future NHBG Journal.

B&P developed out of an ironmongery shop founded in 1797 and managed by William Moore and John Barnard. The business produced some agricultural and domestic goods in a small iron foundry on the premises, but it was not until 1864, when the then owners of the firm acquired a larger iron foundry in Rose Lane, that the business really took off. Following the sale of the shop side of the business, the company name was changed to that of the then governing partners William Boulton and Joseph Paul. As their foundry capacity expanded the company looked for new business and found it in the growing demand for prefabricated buildings inspired by new technologies and the economic benefits that they could foster. This versatile system of construction supported the rapid expansion of urban areas and the development of rural estates and gentlemen's residences.

The underlying technologies for this type of prefabrication were well tried and tested by the

*From the smallest to the largest - pre-fabricated buildings made by Boulton & Paul in their Norwich and Lowestoft works in the second half of the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries.*

*Dog Kennels to Mundesley Sanatorium*


middle of the nineteenth century. They involved the combination of industrially-organised carpentry and the use of cast and forged ironwork. Buildings could be manufactured in relatively small sections for easy assembly and disassembly that could be transported by railway and steam ship. The result was a flexible, cheap and popular way of quickly erected buildings that could be constructed in a variety of different designs for a wide variety of purposes. The range of buildings offered by B&P was indeed very great and included domestic dwellings from villas to humble cottages and bungalows; conservatories, aviaries and other embellishments to great houses; churches, chapels, mission and gospel halls; hospital and sanatoria; school rooms; agricultural buildings such as stock yards, chitting houses, poultry houses, and kennels of various complexity; sports halls, gymnasia, swimming pools, pavilions, and equestrian centres. These buildings were sent all over the British Isles and abroad, particularly to the countries of the British Empire.

How the materials that were used in the construction of their buildings changed over time. During the nineteenth and early years of the twentieth century, the emphasis was on cast and wrought iron in the structural elements as well as exterior cladding. Following the closure of the foundry in the early 1930s, most buildings were constructed entirely in wood (with steel being used where necessary): for example, the Mundesley Santatorium of 1899 (overleaf). and The Rookery in Staffordshire (reported in *Newsletter* 29).

The emphasis of this project will be on the buildings of Norfolk. The project aims to identify B&P buildings still standing within Norfolk as well as those now lost, where this is possible. The accompanying illustrations show examples of the Norfolk buildings that have already been identified as being by B&P, although some are of ones whose provenance has yet to be proved. As with other projects undertaken by the NHBG, the research will rely on volunteers. Tasks include documentary research and Internet searches; photographic and measured recording of standing buildings; data collection, management and presentation. Past NHBG projects have focussed on a particular place (such as New Buckenham or Walsingham) or class of building (for example, schools). However, in this instance, we need to identify an unknown number and types of building, which is a great challenge in itself. Therefore, we will depend on members (and others interested in the topic from outside the NHBG) to help 'spot' possible B&P buildings.

The project will be officially launched at Easter and anyone wishing to be involved, or who has information to share, should contact Dr Brendan Chester-Kadwell in the first instance. E-mail: **boulton.paul@btinternet.com** or telephone 01603 260307. (If you have already volunteered you will be contacted again later).

PROJECT AIMS & OBJECTIVES

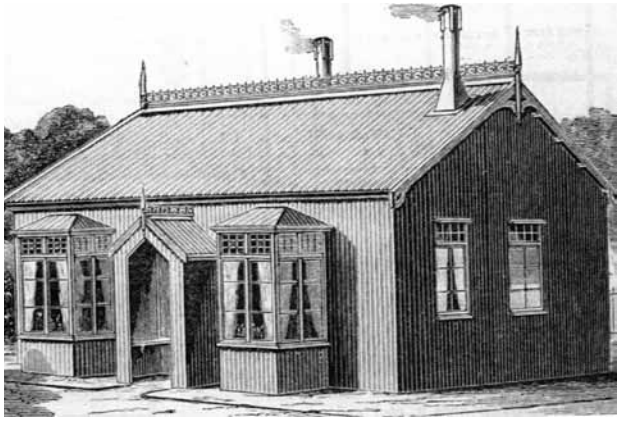
To identify, locate, and record the Boulton and Paul buildings erected within the county of Norfolk, whether extant or not.

The objectives of the project include:

1. Research to establish the range of buildings manufactured by B&P, how their designs changed over time and the technology used for their construction;
2. Investigation into their place in the history of such buildings, the origins of the technology they used and how they made use of it;
3. Determining how B&P's business was conducted and using that information to help identify where their buildings were erected within Norfolk and (where appropriate) beyond;
4. To establish links with individuals and organisations (e.g., the Museum of East Anglian Life) to identify the location of B&P buildings in Norfolk and elsewhere;
5. To record the location of B&P buildings, whether extant or not – including information about those exported to other countries, particularly the Empire;
6. To record in detail (as far as possible) extant buildings/ structures using appropriate recording techniques and at least forming a photographic record;
7. To produce written reports for each stage of the research and a final report for publication.

*Suffield Village Hall - corrugated iron (photos - Ian Hinton)*

*5 Boulton Road, Thorpe St Andrew - for sale (Feb 2017)*



*1888 catalogue image of a corrugated-iron cottage*

*St Paul's, Magdalene Road prior to demolition in 1956. Photo from the George Plunkett collection by kind permission*

# Excavations at All Saints', Bircham Newton

(Members' night - 10th January 2017)

Steve Hickling

NPS Archaeology carried out monitoring work at All Saints' church, Bircham Newton during a lowering of the church floor because it was slumping into below-floor grave cuts.

Features of the structure of earlier phases of the building were discovered beneath the floor, such as the foundations of a probable earlier chancel south wall - see plan. Earlier floor surfaces, one of compacted chalk and at least two of medieval tiles were uncovered as well as a post hole (which contained one sherd of 12-14C pottery). It is possible that one of the tiled surfaces was made at nearby Bawsey .

Taken together with the features in the extant walls, these features point to at least four phases of construction.

**Phase 1** consisted of a nave the full width of the present nave (*c*. 6.50m), but only 8.04m long. It was built of flints, with no evidence for limestone surviving. The quoins were of flint (the northwest quoin is of limestone, but this may be a rebuild as the lowest quoins are of flint), and the south door was probably in the same position as the current doorway (**D**), which has since been remodelled. Just to the east of the doorway there is evidence of a blocked window (**W**). There is no evidence of windows in the north wall, although the north door may also be of Phase 1.

Although the northwest corner of the nave was reconstructed, probably in Phase 2, the base of the corner appears to be Phase 1 and shows the stub remains of a wall continuing west on the same alignment as the north wall of the nave. The stub wall is difficult to reconcile with the church plan. Is it the remains of a larger Phase 1 square tower as wide as the nave, or perhaps a stair turret associated with a Phase 1 tower? Was the nave originally longer? The evidence for a tower as part of Phase 1 is quite compelling, as the tower arch in the west wall of the nave, although having a badly formed two-centred arch (possibly of the 12th–15th century), has proportions and imposts suggestive of a reshaped Saxo-Norman (Phase 1) semi-circular or triangular arch.

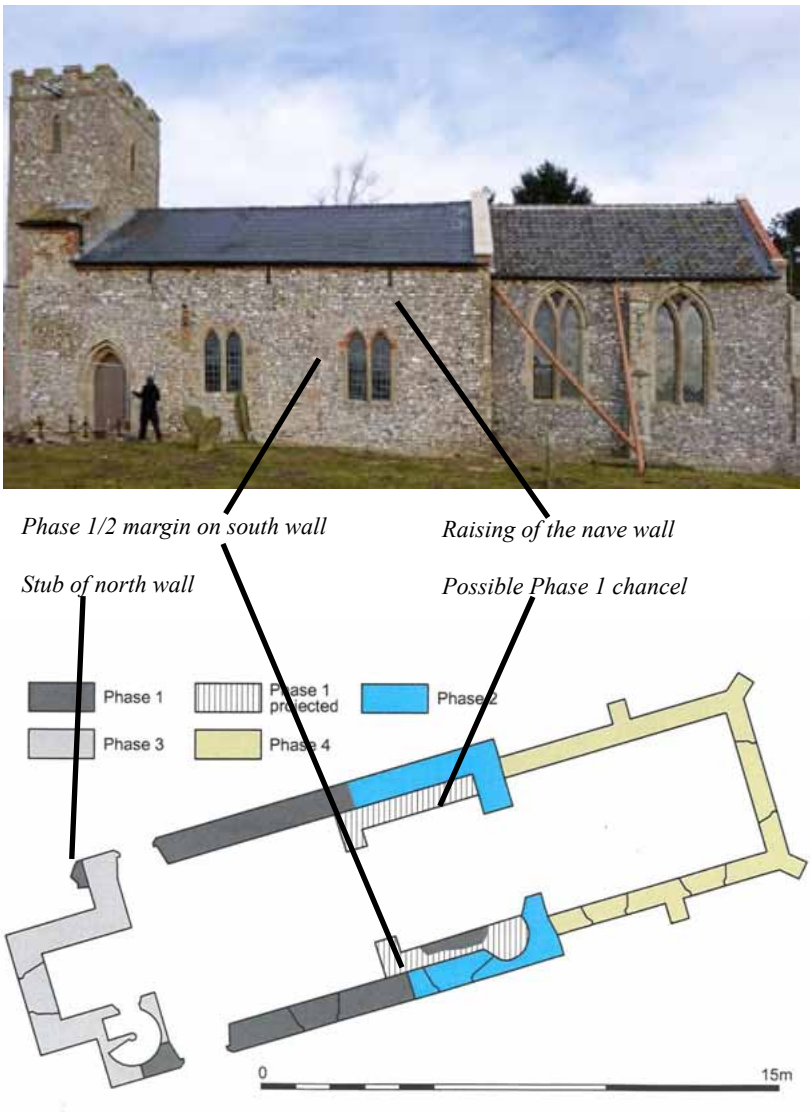
**Phase 2** consisted of an eastward extension of the nave by 4.40m and the probable movement of the Phase 1 chancel arch to become the Phase 2 chancel arch (S. Heywood pers. comm.), 4.40m east of its original position. The imposts for this arch do not stretch for the whole thickness of the arch, suggesting that in its original position it was thinner. Also, the arch, although it is supposed to be semi-circular, is very badly formed and appears 'squashed'. If however, Phase 2 is a subsequent Saxo-Norman phase, the arch could be in its original position. The walls of Phase 2 are mainly of flint, but with occasional pieces of re-used limestone, and limestone quoins on the southeast and northeast corners. The quoins are of interest, as some of the limestone blocks are laid on edge, in a manner suggestive of Saxo-Norman long-and-short work, although not alternating. Occasional re-used Roman tiles are also included. As the quoins have been (at least) repointed in recent years, it cannot be said with certainty that they are original. There is also a notable step-out of the masonry of the foundations at the base of the Phase 2 north and south wall extensions, a feature which is not present on the Phase 1 walls.

**Phase 3** involved construction of a stair turret at the southwest corner of the nave, requiring a small west extension to the nave. This is of flint rubble with fragments of limestone and limestone quoins. The upper part of the stair turret appears to be later and is constructed of flint with Roman tile and possibly post-medieval brick, with brick (possibly early post-medieval) quoins. The construction of the stair turret in Phase 3 suggests that the current west tower is also of this phase, although there is evidence that there may have been an earlier west tower.

**Phase 4** involved raising the height of the nave in well-coursed flints with occasional re-used limestone pieces. The east quoins are of limestone and the southwest end abuts the Phase 3 stair turret. The raising of the nave could be contemporary with the construction of the current chancel (early 14th century) (S. Heywood pers. comm.), which is of similar height and would not work well with a lower nave roof.

The picture established for Bircham Newton church, of a small Saxo-Norman two-celled building added to gradually and expanded during the medieval period, is not unusual for Norfolk. Other churches, such as All Saints', South Pickenham are similar.

Steve Hickling works for
NPS Group Archaeology



# Baltic Timber Marks 1700-1850 (23rd February 2017)
# Lee Prosser

*Unfortunately, the slightly over-pessimistic Met Office forecast for the evening kept numbers down to only 28 who enjoyed an entertaining and fascinating lecture . Ed.*

Curious markings are very often observed on timber in historic buildings. Occasionally these form the cross-hatching which is universally understood to represent a batch or cubic assessment of the timber. Mostly however, longer sequences are found cut with a gouge or rase-knife, painted or chalked on the wood. Though they have long gone by the general name 'Baltic marks', few people have any idea what they mean. When many hundreds of the marks were observed in the 1830s building now housing the Manchester Museum of Science and Industry during its refurbishment in the 1980s, they were duly recorded, but no attempt was made to understand them. What they represent first and foremost is that much of the timber found in our eighteenth and nineteenth-century buildings is not of English derivation, and represents almost world-wide trade over the past 200 years. Indeed we now know, though scientific advances, that imports of timber, especially from the Baltic, go back to the Middle Ages.

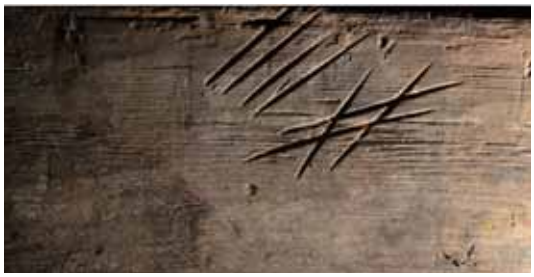
As more buildings have been recorded and the marks systematically drawn and photographed, so a typology has been established through comparison and analysis. This has been helped by documentary research, similar work on the Continent and by work in the naval shipyards, but there is still much to do. Nineteenth-century books of shipping marks exist, but they paint only part of the story. So far, the research seems to suggest that the markings represent the following:

- Cubic assessment and volume
- Timber quality
- Merchants' or handlers' marks or initials.
- Purchasers' names or initials
- The names of ships used to transport the timber
- The names of entrepots, ports of origin or destination
- Batch or supply numbers.
- Date

Some are found individually, others in combination. A good example of the former is a mark found at Hampton Court Palace, where a nineteenth-century timber repairing an earlier roof has a marking which can be read as 'Amaranth'; the name of a ship recorded in Lloyd's List in 1837. A particularly good mark at the roof of the Banqueting House in Whitehall, reconstructed in 1830 reads 'Georgena', which may be the name of a ship.

The quality of the timber can be found in combination with the port of origin. By far the most commonly encountered is the shipping mark for Danzig (now the Polish port of Gdansk) then part of the kingdom of Prussia, which combines a mark derived from the arms of the city with an assessment of the timber as crown, first or second middling quality. Dates are harder to tease

## Examples of marks identified



*Batch No. or Volume Assessment*

*24*

*Name oif purchaser or merchant*

*J.A Willing?*

*Transport Ship*

*Georgena*

*Destination*

*London*

*Date*

*1805*

*Images taken from Lee's Powerpoint presentation*


*left: red-painted marks*
*above: the symbol for DANZIG*
*right: The extensive forest in the Vistula and Bug basins*

from the evidence, often represented as two or three digits and so difficult to distinguish from batch numbers. What is clear, however, is that as our typology builds, so understanding of origin, context, quality and date grows and these help refine our knowledge of the buildings.

In terms of date-range, Baltic marks are found throughout the eighteenth century, particularly the gouged markings, but before around 1784, they appear to make little sense, are short and may just be localised numbers or tallies. Around 1800 they become much better defined and occur in abundance, before ceasing abruptly around 1870. This brief window is likely to tell its own story of a complex trade emerging between Britain, the industrial super-power of the age and the rest of the Continent, as well as the tumultuous events following the American and French revolutions. Britain appears to have had a long reliance on Norwegian timber, and later of colonial sources in North America. But the American wars, coupled with Napoleon's attempt to strangle Britain by embargo, cut off these traditional supplies and forced Britain to switch instead to the eastern Baltic, to Prussia, Sweden and Russia. The conquest and partition of Poland in the 1790s opened the vast forests of central Europe to exploitation, and ports such as Stettin, Danzig and Memel boomed as a result, standing as they did at the heads of huge catchment rivers such as the Vistula and the Bug.

The process of procuring the timber was long and drawn out. Deep in the hinterlands, which contained forests of tall, knot-free pines, the crown or aristocracy owned all the land. They sold the standing timber to groups of specialist wood cutters, who were usually Jewish. Entire settlements or 'shtetls' could be found dedicated to the process, as Jews were forbidden access to other professions, particularly in the Russian Empire. The workers would fell trees and strip them of bark during the winter, dragging them with horses to the frozen rivers, where they would be gathered together to await a thaw. Then, they would be lashed together in bundles, making their way slowly down the tributaries, and into the main channels, before being consolidated at entrepots and eventually forming huge rafts of perhaps 300 metres in length, which might take a year or more to travel with the river current to the sea-ports. This slow passage gave rise to whole communities of rafts-men, who built log cabins on the rafts and travelled with their families, together with cargoes like wheat. Once at the ports, or perhaps even the entrpots, middlemen could purchase the timber and sell it on to merchants, either local or foreign, who would determine its despatch on special ships of shallow draft, or more usually leaky, clapped out hulks, making the crossing to British ports. In England the timber was used to feed our voracious industrial development; for mines, mills, factories, barns, ships and masts, and all manner of other materials.

At every stage from selection in the remote forest, to delivery in a wood yard in England, the timber needed to be assessed, measured, graded, claimed, and despatched, and each of these processes probably generated marks of identification. In it we see an efficient economic process and a form of record-keeping. Thus when we see Baltic marks in our mills, maltings and barns, we are viewing a snapshot of a long process. With more research we will hopefully decipher them for further insights into our historic buildings.

The talk was ended with a plea to send photos of baltic marks to Lee on Lee.prosser@hrp.org.uk

Lee Prosser is the Historic Buildings Curator with Historic Royal Palaces. He is a committee/panel member of the Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain, the Vernacular Architecture Group, and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings.

# Bessingham: A brief account of its buildings

Jonathan Spurrell

When an old cottage was pulled down in Bessingham, near Cromer, in the 1920s, six half-pennies were discovered in a recess in the fireplace, along with the names of those who had donated the coins and a note stating that 'William Chapman made this chimney piece – January 20th, 1773'. One newspaper called it 'a most interesting link with former times' and it is a rare example of precise information regarding the origins of one of Norfolk's vernacular buildings.

Between 1776 and 1970 the small farming community of Bessingham experienced cycles of prosperity and depression, and an overview of its history can very neatly be given by looking closely at the buildings that were erected, adapted or dismantled during this period.

Several agricultural buildings and a number of cottages were built in the late 18th and early 19th centuries as agriculture prospered, but the decades after that were marked by the challenges of modernisation and a period of neglect as the village's last squire refused to repair or re-let the cottages. Bessingham was described as a 'ghost village' in the 1960s but has since revived. The once derelict manor house has been restored and now operates as self-catering holiday accommodation.

## The village

Bessingham contains about thirty houses, situated mainly along one thoroughfare. In 1766 John Spurrell, a farmer and maltster from neighbouring Thurgarton, purchased most of the farmland from the Ansons and created an estate that remained in the family until 1970. The Spurrells' arrival coincided with the start of a century of building at Bessingham. This period also saw the building of a new manor house in 1812 and a malthouse.

*Manor House Farm*

*The Horse-shoes Inn - closed in 1959*

In 1837 Daniel Spurrell inherited the estate and by 1840 he had already pulled down the malthouse and erected a new granary. Thirty years later he moved the manor house and home farm to a different part of the village and the old site was eventually abandoned. The new manor house was designed by Thomas Lawrie, a London architect, and built in 1870 by William Chapman of Hanworth, possibly a relation of his namesake who erected a chimney piece a century earlier. Daniel turned one of the roads in the village into the driveway to the new house and building a replacement road. Called New Road, it runs along an estate wall that separates it from the walled garden. A 'polite' landscape was created around the house, with lawns and a grotto, and a ha-ha separated the gardens from about 40 acres of parkland that was grazed by sheep.

*Bessingham Manor shortly after completion in 1870; the now-demolished conservatory at the rear*

The new manor house was built entirely of brick, with three floors over a vaulted cellar. Though an interesting building, it is not considered architecturally outstanding despite a handful of unusual features. Pevsner ignored it in his survey of the buildings of Norfolk and in a book on country houses by John Kenworthy-Browne, it is described briefly as a 'not very large, red-brick Victorian house, with Dutch gables and brick quoins'.

One structure that has disappeared is the heated conservatory, which could be viewed from the dining room through an unusual window above the fireplace, the flues rising either side of it. The unusual tower which overlooked the entrance to the driveway has lost its pointed roof. It was designed by Daniel's nephew Herbert Spurrell, who had trained with Alfred Waterhouse and went on to practise in Eastbourne. The Bessingham tower is the only structure he designed in Norfolk.

## A ghost village

Bessingham's last squire was almost 70 when he inherited the estate in 1952. He lived in Hampshire and rarely visited Norfolk. He kept estate business to a minimum, refusing to replace tenants who died or moved away. The Eastern Daily Press labelled Bessingham a 'ghost village' and by 1970, when he died and the estate was broken up and sold, several cottages had fallen down. The pub, which had served its last pint in 1959, stood empty.

Since then, most of the cottages have been repaired and modernised. The manor house, however, also experienced further neglect. The roof and ceilings collapsed and by 2010 plans were underway to demolish the whole building, but in 2013 it was sold to a couple who restored it and reopened it as self-catering holiday accommodation. In 2014 they won North Norfolk District Council's award for the renovation of an historic property.

Jonathan is a translator and amateur historian and is an NHBG member who now lives in the USA. His book - 'Bessingham: The Story of a Norfolk Estate, 1766-1970' was published in 2016 and is available in bookshops in Norwich and North Norfolk and online at www.bessinghamhistory.org.

# NHBG Research

## A Digest of Buildings Visited Since August 2016

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

### Heath Farmhouse, Fakenham

Located on the heath to the north-east of Fakenham, this house is listed as eighteenth-century with later alterations.

Three celled with gable-end stacks and an unheated central cell, there are several features indicating an earlier building that was refaced in the nineteenth century - an oak and pine staircase with splat balusters, oak principal joists which have stops with nicks, hoodmoulds over the blocked rear windows and a possible shifting of the front door, all point to a seventeenth-century origin.

Fielded pine panelling in the western room, along with half-round cupboards set into the blocked windows, amongst other additions, indicate a concerted effort to Georganize the house. It is unclear whether this campaign coincided with the refacing of the front wall and replacement of the thatched roof.

Ian Hinton & Lynne Hodge

### Home Farmhouse, Briston

A three-celled house of brick and coursed flint, the north wall is rendered and scord to imitate ashlar. The east gable wall (facing the road) is built in English Bond with triangular pediments over the original windows, now blocked and replaced by sashes. The front door is probably in its original position giving onto a lobby with later staircase. To the west is an unusually large room which is 20'6" long. The mantle beam of the inglenook fireplace, the two transverse beams and the axial principal joist all have the same profile with concave, hollow and convex mouldings and shield stops with a bar and notch. The form of this house is essentially lobby-entrance although it is unusual in having such a large and decorative imposing hall and hall chamber and very narrow service bay. The features including the brick pediments, brick hood-moulds and principal joists with concave, hollow and convex mouldings, as well as its ground-plan, suggest a date c1625.

Lynne Hodge & Susan and Michael Brown

### Iken's Farm, Barton Turf

This house has 3 cells and two storeys and is built of brick, mostly of Flemish bond, with a thatched roof. It has an axial chimney stack in both gables and between the north and central cells.

At first floor level there were seven evenly-spaced casements with soldier-arched heads, two of which are now blocked. The south gable has a platband at eaves level with brickwork in a random bond below and Flemish bond above. The north gable is also built in a random bond and there appears to be a blocked opening to the attic. To the rear is a catslide roof over lean-tos of various dates.

The roof has two tiers of inline purlins, slightly shaved, with straight collars. The collar rafters are pegged. There are chiselled carpenters' marks with No. 1 to the north. The positions of three former dormers which faced the road can be seen.

The original ground plan of this house is uncertain. The axial stack is off-centre as in many 17th century lobby-entrance houses in Norfolk. However, the chimney bay is only 3' 3" wide as there is only one hearth on the ground floor. The façade of the house is not symmetrical and seems to be in transition from the post-medieval tripartite lobby-entrance form or the end stack plan with cross-passage to the fully realised William and Mary/ Queen Anne style as seen locally, for instance, at Manor Farm, Itteringham dated 1704 where there are gable-end stacks, a central doorcase and an unheated central cell containing the grand staircase. Lynne Hodge

# Administration

## Journals of the Vernacular Architecture Group & Local History Society

The NHBG is an assocate member of both these organizations and receives a copy of their publications - The *VAG Journal* - an annual volume containing up-to-date research in the field, and the four-times-a-year *Local Historian* which contains articles and research on local history.

In addition, Brian Ayers has kindly donated his copies of the VAG Journal to the NHBG so that they can be accessed by members.

Unfortunately, many of the NHBG's early copies of both sets of these Journals have gone missing, but once Brian's copies are in hand, I will put a list of all the articles contained in them in the next *NHBG Newsletter,* so that members may either ask to borrow them for their own research or ask for a particular article to be scanned and emailed.

Ian Hinton


Fressingfield


Wiggenhall


Tuttington


Wickmere


Gt Walsingham


Tuttington


Cawston


Harpley


East Winch


Saxthorpe


Cley


Rougham


Southwold


Ranworth


Walpole St Peter

# Norfolk Benchends

(some are in Greater Norfolk)

photos: Ian Hinton


Woolpit


Fressingfield


South Burlingham