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Spring 2003
No 9

The Merry Mawkin

Newsletter of Friends of Norfolk Dialect

Thank goodness for FOND says Gillian Shephard

Gillian Shephard, MP for South-West Norfolk and former Cabinet Minister, a member of FOND, writes in praise of the preservation of Norfolk's cultural heritage.

Every time I visit a school, or talk to young people locally, I am struck by their lack of a Norfolk accent.

In some ways their speech is more correct than a broad Norfolk accent, but with the cockney overtones, the interrogative ends to sentences which are not questions, and the frequent glottal stops their speech is more like their peers' in other parts of Britain than like that of their parents, or grandparents.

When I was at school, we were taught to be bilingual. As someone who went on to be a linguist, I was perhaps more interested than most in our ability to switch from one mode to another, and in the contrast there already was between our language and that of our older relatives..

Our family used some extraordinary words, some of which I suspect were Romany rather than Norfolk words. Parney was used for rain, dannocks for gloves and cushies for sweets. My grandmother always referred to highmagulls (those of high birth or in charge), and to desabills (what you wore before you got dressed).

Tricolate was in common usage, from tricolour, or so my Oxford French tutor told me. Dodman was always used for snail, and dickey for donkey.

EDP library

Gillian Shephard, MP

Maufrodite was used for a kind of wagon which could be used for various purposes, and obviously, also for a hermaphrodite animal. One of my favourite words was blunk, used for a heavy fall of snow, although that may have been purely a family word. On the other hand it is clearly onomatopoeic. Does anyone else use it, I wonder?

Vocabulary is one thing, usage, sentence form, expression are others. Norfolk people, anyway from the north-east of the county, are not known for their garrulity. Brevity, especially in the

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NORFOLK CULTURE 'AT RISK'

FROM PAGE 1

put-down, is the essence of Norfolk speech. Thus the late Dick Bagnall-Oakeley of blessed memory, records meeting someone on a freezing February day on a North Norfolk beach. As they struggled past each other, the stranger said to Dick, "Sweatin'?" Sidney Grapes, of equally blessed renown, insisted that we are so brief because of the wind. Will we change with global warming?

What is clear is that with what is nothing short of an agricultural and economic revolution in our county going on, much of our cultural richness and diversity risks extinction. Think of all the language devoted to the care of horses, the blacksmith, and the unmechanised harvest that is already lost.How much can we remember between us?

Thank goodness for FOND. Let's collect all we can remember, together!

Overdoing the writing or speaking of dialect!

FOND president Professor Peter Trudgill, Chair of English Linguistics, University of Fribourg, Switzerland, discusses *remedial dialectology*

As I have mentioned before, in Norfolk we have two different vowels corresponding to the single long *a* vowel that occurs in words like *face* in General English.

This is because all forms of English used to have two such vowels up until the 17th century, but most dialects have now lost the difference between the two, while we have kept it. It is mostly possible to tell which word has which of the two vowels by looking at the spelling. This is because the spelling reflects the original Middle English pronunciation.

In Norfolk words like *day, may, pay, praise, maid, raise, eight, weight, wait*, which are spelt with *ay, ai* or *ei*, are pronounced with a diphthong, a vowel which begins with one sound and ends with another. Our vowel in *day* sounds rather as if it begins with the short *a* vowel of *trap* and ends with the long *e* vowel of *fleece*, and it is not very different from the way these words are pronounced in other parts of southern England.

On the other hand, words which are spelt with *a_e*, like *gate, face, tape, lake, safe*, are pronounced with a pure vowel (a monophthong). This vowel is rather similar to the one used in these words in many of the dialects of Lancashire and Yorkshire. Norfolk dialect writers normally spell it with ear or air: "fearce" = face, but this spelling is rather confusing for outsiders, particularly people like Scots or Americans who pronounce the *r* in words like *fear*. The Norfolk dialect poet John Kett uses *aa* — "faace". Perhaps the best way to describe the vowel to people who have not heard it is to say that it is rather like the short *e* vowel of *dress*, only longer. So *gate* is pronounced rather like a longer version of *get*.

In the Norfolk dialect, then, pairs of words like the following are *not* pronounced the same, although they are in most other forms of English:

Monophthong	Diphthong
daze	*days*
made	*maid*
wade	*weighed*
gaze	*gays*
gate	*gait*
graze	*greys*
pale	*pail*
male	*mail*
place	*plaice*
sale	*sail*
tale	*tail*

Nowadays, this distinction between the two vowels is being

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What a pantomime!

Boy Bernie and the Beanstalk

FOND frolics at North Elmham

A cast of thousands — at FOND's N. Elmham panto.

FOND's annual pantomime this year, Boy Bernie and Beanstalk, came with one of those disclaimers about all the characters being figments of someone's tortured imagination and not being anything like real people.

Mind you, it had such an outlandish story and such a colourful cast of unbelievable people — wonderfully portrayed by sundry FOND members hand-picked from the audience — that nobody in their right mind could have believed this production to have been based on fact. I mean, it's a traditional panto story. There's this poverty-stricken widder woman, Widder Cranky, whose son sells the cow for a tin of beans which grow into a genetically-modified canned beanstalk.

Boy climbs up beanstalk, pinches the Ogre's six-legged turkey (which just happens to lay golden eggs), falls in love with the Ogre's daughter, Princess Lovely Legs, makes a fortune and everybody lives bootifully ever after. Even the Ogre gets it together with Widder Cranky.

By producer and scriptwriter
TONY CLARKE

With stories like this, told in tortured rhyming couplets based loosely on Norfolk dialect, I am always amazed at the sporting good humour of fun-loving FOND members who allow themselves to be persuaded to take part.

To be honest, members of the audience who gather at North Elmham Village Hall on the first Sunday in January don't need much persuasion to join in the fun.

About 70 of them travelled from all corners of God's Own County to come down to earth after the excesses of Christmas and the New Year by indulging in an afternoon of old-fashioned do-it-yourself entertainment. It's better than the telly any day - so I'm told. During the first half there was a succession of readings, jokes and songs from FOND chairman Peter Brooks, Alan Smith, Eileen Bent and

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More pictures from FOND's panto spectacular at North Elmham Memorial Hall.

'Volunteered' by their 'friends'

FROM PAGE 3

Press Gang stars Colin Burleigh, the Gal Liza and the Boy Jimma. Brother Will played his harmonica and then thanked the audience for not going home.

Mawkin editor Robin Limmer entertained us with a selection of humorous howlers from a number of publications (not including this one!) Then it was time to set the scene and recruit the cast for the panto.

Some of them came willingly; others were "volunteered" by their "friends." Which is why it is probably a good idea not to ruin their reputations by mentioning any names! I should just report that the pantomime would not have been possible without them, or without the collaboration of the "wardrobe department" (Pat Clarke and Joan Bidnall), props mistress Vera Youngman and musical director (plannerist) Liz Austrin.

What with the excellent refreshments supplied by the mawthers of the FOND committee, and the inevitable raffle, a hully good time was had by all.

Did somebody mention next year? Well, we'll hatta see....

Modern dialect writers beware!

FROM PAGE 2

lost, and most younger people use the diphthong in both sets of words, so that *daze* now sounds the same as *days*. This has led to an interesting development. There are some people who are very fond of the Norfolk dialect and who want to speak or write in as Norfolk a way as possible but who have never mastered the original distinction between these two vowels. These people not only try to pronounce *daze* with the pure vowel but sometimes erroneously pronounce *days* in the same way as well.

This is particularly common in dialect writing, unfortunately. There are people who try to write in the Norfolk dialect but who use incorrect spelling such as *dairze* for days and *plaired* for played. These are mistakes of a kind which is called "hyperdialectism" — trying to speak or write the dialect but overdoing it!

If people want to see how to write the Norfolk dialect, they should follow the example of Sidney Grapes, who observed this distinction scrupulously in *The Boy John Letters*.

He writes, for example:

monophthongs		diphthongs
pearper for paper but		*neybors* for neighours
plearces	places	*gays*
learbor	labour	*say*
pleartes	plates	*days*
keark	cake	*straight*
fearce	face	*lay*

In one of his letters he writes: *Old Mrs W_ wus full o' earkes and pains.* The word "ache" is shown as having the monophthong, while "pain" has the diphthong. To write "pain" as *pairn* or *pearn* would have been quite wrong, something which modern dialect writers, including (dare I say it?) some contributors to *The Merry Mawkin* would do well to remember!

** FOND president Professor Peter Trudgill's book, The Norfolk Dialect, will be published in May by Poppyland Publishing of Cromer. It will appear as No 7 in the Norfolk Origins series and should be available for under £10. It will also have associated pages on the website, with Prof Trudgill illustrating examples of dialect. An example of this interactive work can be found on Poppyland's web page, interlinked with their Norwich at War book at* **www.poppyland.co.uk/support.htm**

Norfolk Non-Stop drama

Norfolk Non-Stop is a new festival of Norfolk-inspired drama at the King of Hearts, Norwich, from March 16-23. It has been put together by Spin-Off Theatre, a company that has been collecting and performing Norfolk stories for the past five years.

Sid Kipper performs his show *Cod and Ships*, an armchair tour around the Norfolk coast, billed as "nautical but nice"; Brancaster-born actress Patience Tomlinson will present her one-woman show, *A Tale That is Told*, about Norwich-born author Mary Mann. The early stages of Patience's work were performed by her at the Weeting FOND-dew last September.

The festival, organised by Eve Stebbing, will also include a Norfolk retelling of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, called *Mardling the Bard*, by Spin-Off Theatre, weaving Norfolk myth and mayhem around the Bard's original, and there are play-readings of new Norfolk-inspired plays, workshops and a masterclass.

Box office: Tuesday to Saturday 10-4: 01603 611412. More information from Eve Stebbing on 01603 663676.

In-joke place-name pronunciations are not just confined to Norfolk

I don't often watch these "let-me-renovate/decorate/find-your-ideal-house/garden" type programmes, but a recent close encounter with a nasty bug left me feeling sorry for myself and sitting in front of the box when such an apology for entertainment came on.

Not feeling up to the effort of locating the handset and switching off, I let it wash over me until my mind was brought sharply into focus. The gushy blonde (I nearly wrote *bland*) presenter had just announced that she had found just the thing in "Kirk-Cud-Bright." I nearly had apoplexy. My sons warned me that at my advanced age and current parlous state such outpourings could well be fatal. But surely the silly woman had heard of "Kercoobri," I ranted.

A View by
OUTSIDER

Together with Dun Laoghaire (Dun leeri) in Eire they must be the most well-known not-pronounced-as-written place names in the British Isles. I thought everybody living south of the Arctic Circle knew how to pronounce them!

Naturally, a lack of knowledge of how to pronounce other, more local, place names was excusable. It is entirely possible that not everybody has heard of Windum, Cossey, Hazeborough and Hobbis. And as for Hindol and Fulmuston, well, even locals stumble over them sometimes. Anyway, they are just there to provide a source of entertainment and feelings of superiority for locals to laugh at newcomers and visitors.

Of course, such local in-jokes are not confined purely to Norfolk. Leicestershire has its own version in Belvoir — pronounced *Beever.*

As a child, I remember being dragged by the hand down Belvoir Street in Leicester, probably to Lewis's department store, (a place that, to a child, only came alive at Christmas when Santa took up residence in his sublime grotto). I remember exercising my new-found skill at sounding out words and speaking them, only to be sharply pulled up and told it was *Beever.* No it wasn't..... it was spelled b-e-l-v-o-i-r.....

Once I was old enough to understand that not everything was always as it seemed, I encountered several other little traps for the unwary in our travels round the country. A holiday in Cornwall revealed a place called Fowey, on a river, with a ferry crossing. It, of course, was locally called *Foy.*

Not far from where we lived in Sheffield was an area which the map said was Beauchief. Everyone I went to school with called it *Beechief* .Even the ruined abbey, built by one of the knights responsible for the murder in the cathedral of Thomas Becket, was *Beechief* Abbey. No one called it *Bow-chief.*

Scotland also has examples of the locals' perversity. An area of Glasgow we regularly went through was signposted Milngavie. We soon learned to ask the way to *Mulguy.* Kirkcaldy (Kercoddi) sometimes leaves visitors with red faces, but the vocal is not so far away from the written in this case.

But I really thought everybody would know Kercoobri.

NORFOLK BY ADOPTION 7: In which contributors, though not Norfolk-born, have made their permanent home here. **LOUISE PRIEST** began her broadcasting career at BBC Radio Norfolk as a young and enthusiastic reporter and within two years she had become a producer and presented the afternoon show. After four years, a marriage and family commitments took her off to Essex. Later she rejoined Radio Norfolk and after six years of getting up at the crack of dawn to present *Today in Norfolk*, she now presents *The Morning Mix* three-hour programme each weekday.

Truly settled in unique county

Strange as it may seem, the first thing that really struck me about Norfolk was just how lovely the roundabouts were as I travelled into Norwich.

There seemed to be an endless procession of beautifully manicured flowering beds which certainly put me in good spirits as I cautiously made my way to Radio Norfolk for the first time.

Until that day I knew where Norfolk was but had only heard stories from the lucky people of the Midlands (I come from Leicestershire) who came here to stay or had a home here. I wish I'd been introduced sooner... all those lost years!

I've loved the county from that first day, in the early 1980s, all for the obvious reasons: the glorious countryside, beaches and friendly people. Although there were one or two who were a little suspicious of me at first — another incomer, eh?

BBC Radio Norfolk

I was lucky enough to see quite a lot of Norfolk through my job, reporting for both BBC Radio Norfolk and Look East and soon began to feel this really was home. The nearby coast was a big draw, too, having lived throughout my childhood in the middle of the country, the idea of being near the sea seemed particularly attractive. At last, half an hour in the car and I'd be paddling.

In subsequent years, the draw of the sea has remained just as great (the wilder the better in North Norfolk!) I remember one day I visited my in-laws at West Runton. I had a sudden urge to go to the beach; the fact that it was nearly dark and the middle of the winter was neither here nor there!

I am proud to say I've done a lot more than just dip my toe in the North Sea over the years. We have spent many a happy day on the beach at Gorleston being proper "grockles" (tourists to you and me). A picnic, ball game and, of course, a swim, not to mention the frothy coffee from the nearby cafe — bliss!

A decade later we had to part from Norfolk due to my husband's job, but as soon as the chance came up, we were back. We had two children by then and felt how lovely it would be for them to grow up here.

Having been back now for more than seven years we feel truly settled and, dare I say, the odd Norfolk pronunciation slips out, even on the air. Does that mean I'm a true native?

Our pal Keith Skipper pops in to the programme once a month to remind us of the wealth of stories, history and characters that make this county unique. I'm happy to say I can understand most of what he's going on about too!

National Sarvice — or git yar hair cut!

By THE BOY COLIN

Arter moi medical at Colegearte I hatta wearte a few weeks afore that thare brown envelope tarned up a'tellin' me I'd gotta mearke my way up ter RAF Padgate.

That really cum at the roight toime cos I wuz a'runnin' around wi' three different mawthers then and I wuz hevvin a helluva job a'keepin' moi social diary in order, dew yew understand wot I mean?

The weekend afore I wuz due ter go, orl moi meartes say ter me: "We'll hatta give yew a bit of a send-orf dew, so dew yew meet us in the Fleece on Sat'day noight." Well, bor, toime I'd had a few bottles o' Bullards light, a glarss or tew o' port and 10 dubble rums inside a' me I wuz a dancin' on the tearble.

When we got inter the Memorial Hall fer the dance I wuz that wound up I told 'em orl I'd show 'em how to mearke a parachute jump an they had a helluva job stoppin' me from jumping orf the balcony. Still, arter they'd primed me up wi' black cawfee I took the gal Mary up to the stearshun ter git har tream back to Fearkenham (I dunt know ware the other tew were and dint feel tew bothered). Blarst dint I feel bad when I got hum and moi mother give me the ruff end o' har tongue.

I set orf nexta Wednesda' morning, an' I still stunk o' rum (I musta larnt suffin, though, cos I're never touched rum since). The trearn went "round the warld" as travellers yewsta say in them days (round Elmham, County Skule, Buxton and Wroxham afore gettin' inter Norwich). Sune I wuz on a trearn a'tearkin me acrorst the Fens and up tew the Midlands, chearnge at Crewe, and a'pickin' up boys orl along the way orl hiddin fer Padgate. One on'em hallered out, "Hey, Moosh," and loike a grit fule I answered and got stuck wi' "Moosh" fer a nicknearme fer the next tew yare.

Once we got ter Warrington thare wuz a line o' lorries a'weartin' ter tearke us ter Padgate. Thare were corporals a'runnin' up and down wi' clipboards orl a'hallerin' at us an' I thowt ter meself, "What the hell are we a'lettin' arselves in fer?"

"Yew're now orl gorn tew wear the King's uniform," they say. That musta fitted him betta than it did me, cos I hatta hev it altered. We had underpants that med yew itch, bewts that nipped yar feet and needles stuck inter our arms wot wholly hart fer a day or tew. The farst thing we were told ter dew wuz ter roight hoom. "Tell yar mother har darlin' boy hev got hare," they say. "Yew moighta bruk har heart, but yew enta gornta breark ours."

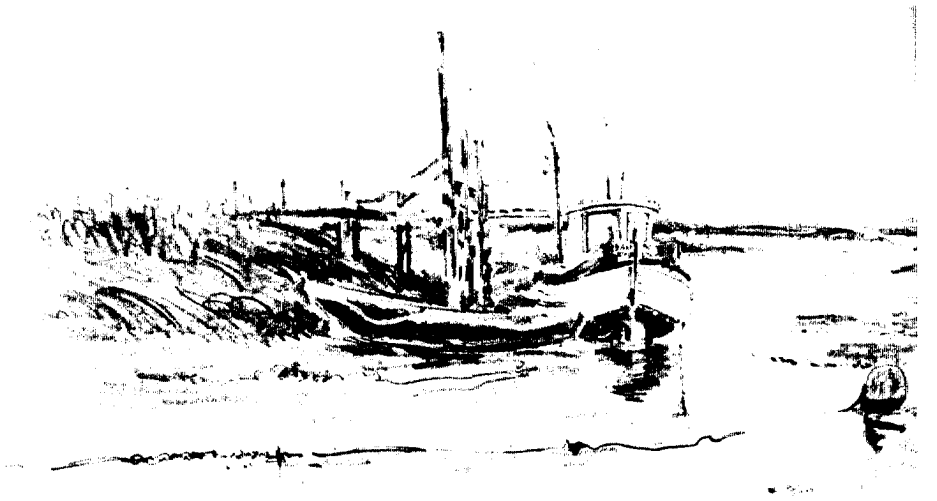
The nexta day we wuz out on the square. Well, bor, dint they haller at us and question our parents' marriage loines. When that cum ter marchin', some o'the lads wuz swinging the searme arms as they did thare legs and got us orl mussed up. Yew coon't hare the orders prop'ly cos drill instructers hev a language orl o'thare own. "Yip" stood fer "left" and "yite" fer "right." One day I found myself marchin' acrorst the square orl on moi own cors I mishard wot he bawled out.

They let us loose on the rifle reamge wi' ammo and blarst if my Sten gun wunt faulty and I nearly shot orl moi meartes. Th'ow sergeant used a lotta funny wads 'bout me.

When we parst out they reckon we wuz the smartest bunch wot ever set foot on a parade square. That wuz funny corse ony a cuppla weeks a'fore that they reckon we wuz the biggest shower wot ever walked.

Square-bashin' wuz over and I wuz told I wuz gornt ter be sent tew Compton Bassett in Wiltshire, but not a'fore I'd sed cheerio to Hilda (yis, I'd gotta nuther one thare tew!) and hadda bitta leave. More tearles next toime.

Mind how yew go!



Thornham harbour, North-West Norfolk. *David Poole*

An unspoilt haven

By Ted Ellis*

Surlingham, March 6th, 1967

This afternoon I visited a desolate little harbour on the North Norfolk coast, where the final loops of the Stiffkey river converge and gush through a sluice into a broad, deep creek and sweep out into the sea.

To reach this little-known point I followed a farm track from the coast road west of Morston, where undulating ploughland adjoins the green meadows of Stiffkey "freshes." This land must have experienced a turbulent history, judging from the quantity of angular pebble mixed with its loam, and by the fact that in places the top soil has been scoured down to the underlying chalk and capped to seaward with bluffs of rounded pebbles during one of the later interludes between ice ages.

In the harbour, where stalwart mussel boats keeled over at low tide, I found the thickest accumulation of salt marsh litter I had ever seen. Apparently the prevailing set of both tide and wind had combined to heap layer after layer of dead grassy material along one stretch of the shore.

The material resembled long weathered hay, and must have been a yard thick in places, almost burying the tall bushes of shrubby sea-blite growing there. From the shore I found myself looking out to the top of Blakeney Point, with its sands gently luminous in the sunshine. Twenty Brent geese rose from the water, looking as black as cormorants silhouetted against the gold of the distant sands.

I was happy to come upon this out-of-the-way haunt of fishermen and wildfowl still free from the press of holidaycraft and commercial exploitation.

*From *Ted Ellis's Countryside Reflections, 1982* by kind permission of Phyllis Ellis.

The men behind THE stan

Norfolk antiquary and book-collector RON FISKE continues his series The Norfolk Dialect: Guides to Reading and Research.
No 6, *The Vocabulary of East Anglia*, by the Rev Robert Forby and the Rev William Tylney Spurdens.

Forby's *Vocabulary of East Anglia* is still accounted THE standard work on the local dialect. The oft-heard phrase "not in Forby" still denotes a word of some rarity.

The *Vocabulary* was originally published by subscription in two volumes dated 1830. There were some 400 subscribers — quite a lot for a local production at that time — so it is not particularly rare. What scarcity it had was much reduced when the book was republished in 1970.

The original edition was a posthumous one as Forby died at his Fincham home on September 20, 1825, when he unhappily fainted and drowned in his own bathtub. By then the work was quite advanced: more than half was ready for the press, and the man who undertook to edit it, George Turner, had sufficient of Forby's, and his own materials, to complete it.

The Rev Robert Forby, 1822.

The matter did not rest there for, in 1858 there appeared a third volume, still under Forby's name, but with an addition to the title claiming it as "being a Supplementary Volume by the Rev W.T. Spurdens, 1840." In his preface Spurdens not only claimed the authorship of the supplement, but also said he and John Deere of Brundall had been responsible for most of Forby's original work. He added that the lack of proper credit was due to Forby's untimely death leaving Turner unaware of the full facts.

The 1852 supplement is much rarer than the original work but like it, the rarity is offset by a reprint, edited by the well-known philologist, Professor W.W.Skeet, for the English Dialect Society in 1879 (Series B, XVIII-XXII). Skeet managed to find Spurdens's manuscript, which enabled him to add some words missed in the publication and some corrections and revision of his own making. He also accepted Spurdens's claim to be the chief author of the original work although, one suspects, it would be truer to say he was a chief contributor.

Since the issue of the Supplement in 1879 several *Additions to Forby* have been published. The Rev E.F.Gillett added a list in *The East Anglian* (Vol IV, pp 128 and 156) and two lists have been published in *Norfolk Archaeology* (Vol V, p 188 and Vol VIII, p 167).

Forby and Spurdens had much in common. Both were schoolmasters, parsons and antiquarians, and both had something of an impulsive nature. Spurdens waged a running war with his school governors at the Paston School at North Walsham, while Forby's reputation was seriously degraded when he issued a

dard work on local dialect

pamphlet against the Bishop of Norwich for the prelate's support of missionary societies. Taking the similarity of the two authors further, both men took an active interest in the natural orders. Spurdens wrote *An Account of the Corporation of Beccles Fen* in 1807, and Forby's work in botany is preserved by the *Saltx Forbiana*, a willow he discovered at Litcham.

Of the original edition, only two-thirds comprised the alphabetically arranged glossary. The remainder comprised a long and learned introduction by Forby, a full and honest memoir of Forby by his former pupil, Dawson Turner, and an interesting appendix on local superstitions probably added by the editor, George Turner.

The book seems to have been well received although his successor at Litcham, the Rev William Blyth, who considered Forby rather brusque, could not resist commenting that the book "contains some things that are mere vulgarisms, and which did not offend his [Forby's] own ear." That little snobbery aside, the value of the *Vocabulary* cannot be over-estimated. It brought together words from a number of little known sources and, much more importantly, it preserved some words that were then being used but are now seldom, if ever, heard.

Some owners of the *Vocabulary* have added to it by interleaving the pages with plain paper and adding any other words they may have come across. One such copy had important annotations by the Rev E.S.Taylor of Stokesby, but this has not been traced. Another, added to by an unknown owner, passed to the Hon Frederick Walpole of Rainthorpe Hall, who made his own additions. Two of the best are worth adding here:

1 An apology for being late for dinner from a young lieutenant to old Admiral Windham. Enter the young lieutenant dressed in a blue half pay coat and brass buttons rather besmeared with grass and mud. "I got on to father's old hobby. As I came jobbing down the loke — slips goes the hobby — swaps goes I a right ol parpendicler gulch into the deeks holl, and there I lay sniggling."

2 A beater's remark on one of the shooting party: "He can't shoot, yet he don't seem to want for understanding either."

Missing verse and author traced

A missing verse and the missing author of the poem *Song of Norfolk*, which appeared in the winter edition of *The Merry Mawkin*, have been provided by Christine Press, from Beeston Regis, who says it appears in an anthology of prayers and poems called *Morning, Noon and Night*, compiled and published by Norwich Diocese Mothers' Union.and first printed in 1976.

Entitled Norfolk, its author was Canon F.C. Oakley, rector of Necton from 1926 to 1946. The missing penultimate verse reads:

Devon may boast her sailors
But Norfolk makes her claim
To lead all England's counties
By right of Nelson's name.
And mark in France and Flanders
And far beyond the waves
The thousand wooden crosses
Guarding our Norfolk graves.

FOND member Joan Witham, of Cromer, read the poem at a WI Christmas concert last year. This copy stated: "By the Rev F.C. Oakley, Booton Rectory, 1924-26."

Sid Kipper's Norfolk capons: No 5

Big campaign to F

You probably don't know my Uncle George. That's because he hasn't been in Norfolk for a while. He's been staying as a guest of Her Majesty, on the Isle of Wight.

Well, he asked to be somewhere near Yarmouth, so that's where they put him. But the thing is, he didn't do it. All right, he was in the bank at the time, but it wasn't him that robbed it. It was all a case of miss-spoken indemnity. So come June, I'm having a really big campaign to Free the Trunch One!

There'll be a tour, an album, a song-book and a T-shirt. And in the song-book George is going to tell the story of his life in his own words. Well, he couldn't rightly use anyone else's — he's in enough trouble already. And FOND is a part of it, as the following extraction will show you:

'I became homesick for Norfolk. I dreamed of Dersingham. I conjured up Catfield. I idealised Itteringham. When I started thinking fondly of Felbrigg I pulled myself up short...'

"When you live somewhere like Norfolk you don't think about it. It's just normal. But not when you're away from there. Then you realise what you're missing. I suppose I'll even miss this place. When I go. If I go.

"Some people say that Norfolk is awfully flat. That's because they're thinking of the Fens. Or possibly the Broads. If they're thinking at all. But that's only a little bit of Norfolk. Anyhow what's so awful about being flat? You wouldn't want uneven pancakes, would you? And you wouldn't want to live in a council lumpy. Well, I wouldn't.

" The warden here reckons that Yorkshire is God's own county. In that case Norfolk is where He takes his holidays. And Suffolk is where He goes when He's not feeling well and needs a long lie down. In about 1999 I got a letter. I read the envelope before I opened it. Written on it was 'FOND.' I thought perhaps it was like one of those wartime codes people used. Like SWALK. That was 'Sealed With A Loving Kiss.' That was one of the more repeatable ones. So was HORWICH. That was 'Hat Off Ready When I Come Home.' NORWICH was a lot ruder. Well, it was supposed to be, except you don't start knickers with an N. If you start them at all.

"When I opened the letter it turned out FOND didn't stand for 'Fling Off Nickers Dear' after all. It stood for Friends of Norfolk Dialect. They were just setting it up. They were contacting various Norfolk writers and artists, and I was part of the

My Uncle George

Free the Trunch One!

variety. They wanted to know would I like to be a patron? Well, far be it from me not to patronise someone when the opportunity presents. My nephew Sid put me in for it, naturally. He thought it would help take my mind off things.

"It did exactly the opposite. It put my mind on to things instead. I became homesick for Norfolk. I dreamed of Dersingham. I conjured up Catfield. I idealised Itteringham. When I started thinking fondly of Felbrigg I pulled myself up short. That was going too far. I had to stop this daydreaming and do something. So I started writing songs about Norfolk places. Some of them weren't half bad, if I say so myself. Like The Bluebells of Scottow. Or Twenty-four Hours from Tunstead. New Buckenham! New Buckenham! And The Loddon Derriere. Well, that last one wasn't a song as such. More of a rhapsody. In two parts.

"I did join FOND. Everyone who's anyone did. Cyril Cockle didn't. Which just goes to prove my point."

So that's my Uncle George. His book, *Man of Convictions*, comes out in June, from the Mousehold Press, who are from the big city of Norwich. That's also when the album will come out — *Chained Melody* that'll be called, on Leader Records, from the big town of Harrogate. And all being well they'll both be available when I launch my brand-spanking-new show, An Evening Without George Kipper, at the Arts Centre in the medium-sized town of King's Lynn on June 7th (01553 764864). If you want to see it in Norwich you'll have to wait till October 8 at the Maddermarket (01603 620917). If you don't want to see it at all, then you can do that straight away.

> **"I started writing songs about Norfolk places .... *The Bluebells of Scottow*. Or *Twenty-four Hours from Tunstead. New Buckenham! New Buckenham!* And *The Loddon Derriere*... That last one wasn't a song as such. More of a rhapsody. In two parts."**

Before then, I'll be taking what they call a virtual cruise round Norfolk at the King of Hearts, Norwich, on March 16, as part of the Festival of Norfolk Drama (01603 766129), and then I'll be part of the Folk on the Pier festival with a lot of other people, off Cromer on May 9 (01263 512495) — shipping permitting.

FOND INTERNATIONAL — More news of Norfolk e.

The identity of an expat

BY ANDREW FORD

Mexico City.

My roots are important.

I'm not referring to my need for Grecian 2000; nor to the contents of my vegetable patch; but to my cultural and geographical ones.

In the age of globalisation such a declaration is perhaps a bit controversial. After all, these days the concept of family, as we used to know it, is unfashionable. Children leave home ever younger to live in all parts of the world — well, at least beyond Thetford. The very idea of nationhood is under question. Individualism rules: all that matters is who you are.

I don't disagree with all of that. But as I wander the globe, getting older, the question of "Who am I?" increasingly gets entangled with "Where am I from?"

In pondering this, as in so many other things, I have been guided by my wife. Some 20 years ago she left Lins, the small town in rural Brazil where she was born. Despite having traipsed round three continents with me during the last decade, she remains in spirit not only completely Brazilian but one hundred per cent Linense (as they call folk from Lins). Multicultural, international in outlook and as global as could be, nevertheless her roots continue to define her. And having lived with her through the last three World Cups, I do know what I'm talking about.

On to Norfolk and yours truly. My mother is from King's Lynn (which actually contains the word "Lins," but let's not get sidetracked). Although born in London, I grew up in North Norfolk in the seventies and early eighties before heading to Scotland for university. Two years working in London were followed by nearly seven abroad and getting on for four in Leicestershire. It was only when we already knew we would be leaving the UK again that I suddenly realised that my wife had little idea where I was from. My daughters had none. It was time to define myself in their eyes and re-define myself in mine.

So we took the plunge, sold our Midlands semi and, after much searching, bought a tiny, tumbled-down cottage in a beautiful West Norfolk village. The two-year project to find and restore it worked wonders with my sense of self, of belonging somewhere. It not only succeeded in reconnecting me with my own history, but my family too. And so, oddly enough, as we left England to begin our latest adventure living abroad, at last I felt I'd come home.

Moral of the story? If there is one, I suppose it would be: if yer gornta leave Norfolk in the fers' place, doan't way' twen'y yair afore decidin' yew wanta live thair ah'er orl.

Andrew Ford lives in Mexico City.

Thanks from Canada

Thanks from Canada have been forwarded to Keith Skipper following the dispatch of dialect recordings to assist the National Arts Centre in Ottawa with a production of Mary's Wedding, which called for the "right sort" of Norfolk sound. As reported in the winter *Mawkin*, Eileen Leiper of North Walsham had contacted Keith on behalf of her daughter Moira in Canada. Kate Hurman, of the NAC, said: "The material was invaluable and I'm positive will also come in handy in the future, should we require the Norfolk dialect again."

...iles living abroad

FOND letters from our website

www.norfolkdialect.com

By late February, the FOND website had received 6070 "visits" since the site was launched in January, 2002.

FOND now has a prominent link on the BBC/Norfolk page at:
http://www.bbc.co.uk/norfolk/have_your_say/dialect.shtml#lingo

Among Norfolk exiles making contact with FOND were two from the United States:

'Would love to hear from someone living in Norfolk'

Vivienne Bothway wrote from Texas:
"I was born and raised at Thwaite Hall, Thwaite, Norfolk. Went to school at Thorpe House for girls in Norwich. I then went to live in the US, but come home every two years. I will always have my roots in Norfolk. I don't care where you are, 'Being from Norfolk' stays with you. I live in Humble, Texas, 15 miles from Houston. Would love to hear from someone who lives in Norfolk."

After FOND website co-ordinator Pauline Dodd had asked Vivienne if we could publish her e-mail address, she replied:

"Hi Pauline, So glad to hear from you. Yes you have my permission to post my e-mail. **<vbothway@hotmail.com>***I would love to hear from people in Norfolk. Hear you have had snow recently; would love to just see some. In Texas that's impossible, as you know it is very hot here. Look forward to hearing from Norfolk people."*

After eight years in US, Dan meets 'a fellow bor'!

Dan Bookham wrote from Camden, Maine, "via Norwich, Coltishall and Cley." He said:
"I have lived in the 'Yooessaiyyy' for eight years now and had yet to meet a fellow bor until last week, when a gentleman came into my store. He was English and we got into the usual 'Whereabouts in Blighty are you from, mate?' conversation. 'Norfolk,' I says. 'Blarst!' he exclaims, 'I'm from Norwich.'

"I asked him if his father had a donkey, and he replied in the affirmative, adding that he was in search of a fool to ride him, thus proving his bona fides.

"At which point, we both began bemoaning the dearth and expense of Colman's mustard in the USA, NCFC's poor showing against Southampton in the FA Cup, and agreed to disagree over whether my New Catton's Waterloo Park was better than his Newmarket Road's Earlham Park.

"Jist shews ter go yer: no matter how wide the loke, sum fellah iss gunna cum up wuth a canry on his shulder."

From Catalonia

Former FOND vice-chairman and ex-*Mawkin* editor Martin Kirby, who emigrated with his family to a Catalonian farm two years ago and appeared in a second *No Going Back* TV documentary on Channel 4 in January, writes in a recent e-mail to Robin Limmer: "Best wishes to all. Keep you a'troshin', bor. And congratulations on the ever-improving *Mawkin."*

And finally.....

From Somerset — ok, it's not abroad but in the Norfolk sense it could be classed as "furrin" — came Christine with her website message: *"Comfort at last, to know that others share my love and enthusiasm for the Norfolk dialect. I so miss Norfolk, my roots will never leave me. Are there any cassettes or CDs available, please, to play while on my daily journey here in Somerset?"*

To which Pauline Dodd was able to respond: "Yes, there are three wonderful CDs you can get nostalgic over..... Details at this link:" **http://www.norfolkdialect.com/**

Valley of memories

Copyright: Joe Crowfoot

The Waveney Valley Line closed to passenger traffic 50 years ago, on January 3, 1953. The railway, which opened on March 2, 1863, linked Tivetshall on the Norwich-Ipswich line with Beccles on the Yarmouth (and Lowestoft)-Ipswich line. Nine of the 11 stations were in Norfolk, including Ellingham, pictured here by Suffolk artist Joe Crowfoot, as a train pulls out on its way to Beccles via Geldeston.

An exhibition of Joe Crowfoot's paintings and prints will be held at The Works, Blyburgate, Beccles, June 6-12 inclusive, 10am-5pm.

Oi'd know yar voice anywhere, Sar!

Norwich-born BRIAN ALDRICH, who served as a second lieutenant in the Royal Norfolk Regiment in Cyprus in the 1950s, concludes his reminiscences related in the winter Mawkin:

We were all set up for a night attack exercise and my platoon was forward on the left flank, with trenches and soldiers manning them. Before mounting our attack we were instructed to expect infiltration by enemy patrols.

About 1am I was alerted by activity involving my forward trench. The conversation, between our CO and Private A, went thus:

CO: "Why was I not challenged when I approached your position?"

Pte A: "Wal, Oi knew who yew wus."

CO: "What do you mean?"

Pte A: "You're the CO, Sar, an' Oi'd know yar voice anywhere."

(The CO and two field officers were the enemy!)

Your letters

Trace of Norfolk in Germany

From Nancy Goodman,
Sheringham.

Some years ago when I was living in Germany, I was in Woolworths in Dortmund when I overheard a conversation in English, between a mother and daughter. I immediately recognised a trace of Norfolk dialect.

I went over and asked the mother where she came from in Norfolk.

She was born in Norwich and hadn't been to Norfolk for 27 years, having married and gone to live in Edinburgh, and the last 11 years with her daughter and family in Germany.

I lived in Sheringham from the age of two and was brought up here, including the war years.

My mother continued to live here, so I always kept in touch with Norfolk and 21 years ago my husband and myself came back here to live. We had always wanted to be here and wouldn't want to be anywhere else.

Now, one of our daughters(my two girls adore Norfolk) lives at Hindringham, having managed to persuade her husband that there was nowhere like Norfolk — now he also is happily settled here!

Thank you for your excellent magazine.

Spring cleanin'? Dew yew look hard, tergether

From Bruther Will,
Thuh Hovel,
1, Muckbarrer Farst,
Littul Sweaarin',
Nr Cussen,
Oathes.

Dear Editta,

Well now, that'd be abowt this toime o' thuh year, menny years ago now, thaat spring cleanin' took on a new meanin'. Just arter the war we got put on to the alactric.

My heart alive, we hed a gud cleaar owt then. We chucked owt them ole flat irons along with paraffin lamps (warks ov art sum o' them), tin kittles and thuh ole Primus stove awl went down thuh pithole. Alactric kittles wus orl thuh craize now. Until one mornin' father switched ut on an' northin' happened.

Thass how we got tew know abowt such things as power cuts. Father sent me owt tew thuh shed tew see if I cud foin an old kittle. I put some water in ut an' set ut on thuh fire.

Verra sune arter thuh fire wus owt, father wus a mobbin' corse thuh darned thing wus full o' hewles. Father feared tew lewse faith in alactric for a toime arter thaat.

Next thing tew cum intew thuh village wus piped warter. Bor, worn't we glad tew git rid o' them ole yokes an' hevvy pails. They went down thuh pithole anawl, alonga Granfar's scythe.

Later on, Muther bort a second-hand alactric cooker, so owt went orl thuh fire tongs, black lead brushes an' thuh ole coal scuttle. Thuh companion set in thuh front room sune follered suit. An' so we become verra nigh orl alactrified. Nut litterrally yew unnerstand, although thuh sparks did fly sumtoimes.

A long wile arter thaat, we woke up tew to thuh fact that we'd thrown thuh best part ov a tidy sum o' munney down thaat ole pithole orl them years ago. Ole flat irons wus a fetchin' up tew a fiver a piece, an' sum ov thuh more fancy wuns cud cost yew a tenner. Dubble-barner lamps an' acetylene bicycle lamps, hurricane lanterns an' ole paraffin stoves sowld for sums ov munney we dassent think abowt.

So if theer's enny on yuh woss athinkin' abowt hevvin a gud clear owt this heer spring cleanin' toime, dew yew hev a gud hard look at ut afore yew sling ut away. Yew naver know, thaat cud be wath a bob or tew tew sumbody.

Norfolk, My ol' Bewty

Now my ol' bewty, I'll hev yew know,
Norfolk's the place that yew orta go.
There's singing bads and hosses tew,
So many things to show to yew.

The cold North Sea to dip your toe,
On Webborn cliff, how she dew blow,
So hold on to your hat, my friend,
Cors over in Holland it might end.

The Norfolk Broads with reeds and flowers,
The windmills tall, like Norman towers,
The sails, bor, they turn to grind up grain
Thass grown in fields just down the lane.

Nowhere in England can grow corn like us,
Us Norfolk boys, we git on, we don't mek no fuss.
There's gret old halls and chatches so fine,
And sumtimes a train cum puffin down the line.

Why, bor, we even hev some speshull grub,
Samfer and cockles sold in a tub,
Down thar at Wells, at Gret Yarmouth tew,
With a nice cup o'tea, when yew need a brew.

So cum yew to Norfolk when yew need a break,
And then into heaven yew'll have a pake,
But mind how yew treat her, treat her with care,
And yew'll find a welcum like no other there.

Fare ye well, my ol' bewty.

Barbara Bishop

Norfolk Riddle Me Ree

Compiled by Ann English

My first is in TRICOLATE but that int in HIMP

The second's in HARNSER and that int in CLIMP

My third is in PINGLE and that is in PIT

Fourth is in DODMAN but never in SQUIT

The fifth is in RUBBIDGE but not in a DOLLOP

My sixth is in HULVER and also in LOLLOP

Seventh is never in HIGHLOWS and always in GAYS

My whole can be seen smoking sometimes through a haze

Answer at foot of Page 23

NORFOLK QUIZ

Compiled by The Boy Colin — Answers on Page 23

Another quiz — ware dew he git 'em orl from?

1 Where can you find a restored Victorian garden?
2 Which well-known beer is brewed at Woodbastwick?
3 What is the name of the boating lake near Wells beach?
4 Where is the Norfolk Rare Breeds Centre?
5 Who owns Mannington Hall and Wolterton Park?
6 Which Roman goddess is on top of Swaffham's Butter Cross?
7 Where is the African Violet Centre?
8 How many gates were there into the old city of Norwich?
9 What is the Poppy Line?
10 Which Norfolk store claims to be the World's Largest Village Store?
11 What is a "pollywiggle"?
12 Which well-known Norwich landmark was originally known as Sandlings Ferry?
13 Where is Pretty Corner?
14 Which Norfolk village is at the northern end of Peddars Way?
15 From the abundance of Georgian houses surrounding its market place, which town claimed to be the "Montpellier of England"?
16 Name one of the Norfolk Broads which is privately owned.
17 Where did Strangers' Hall in Norwich get its name?
18 Which Norfolk church tower has three main sections built in different styles?
19 Where is the "Pingo Trail"?
20 What is a "pingo"?
21 Where in Norfolk can you find a Custom House built in 1703?
22 Who commissioned the Clock Tower at Guist to be built?
23 What does it commemorate?
24 Which Norfolk dance hall once had two 1674 carvings of giants flanking its doorway?
25 Where in Norfolk can you find the oldest remains of a Saxon cathedral?
26 Why was the workhouse at Gressenhall nicknamed "The Spike"?
27 Norwich had the country's first pedestrian precinct. Where?
28 Which water garden contains the 900-year-old King Oak?
29 Where is the site known to the Romans as Garionnonum?
30 The Norwich surgeon Kenneth McKee based an invention on simple car mechanics. What was it?

NORFOLK WORDSEARCH

All these places are in West Norfolk

Compiled by Brenda Bizzell

B	E	A	C	H	A	M	W	E	L	L	S	T	T	Y
U	O	M	B	E	S	R	E	M	R	A	B	R	F	C
R	O	U	G	A	N	Y	R	V	G	Z	E	O	I	T
N	U	M	G	C	E	H	E	P	O	J	U	C	P	E
H	P	A	N	H	W	Q	H	F	O	L	A	O	M	K
A	D	H	I	A	T	U	A	M	D	I	T	N	R	R
M	T	C	K	M	O	O	M	E	E	T	A	G	E	A
T	S	N	C	P	N	X	N	L	R	C	N	H	M	M
H	T	I	O	N	G	B	L	O	S	H	M	A	N	M
O	A	F	D	A	N	O	W	B	T	A	E	M	A	A
R	N	S	Y	S	M	R	D	L	O	M	R	R	Y	H
P	H	T	C	F	N	O	G	B	N	W	H	B	S	N
E	O	S	L	P	D	U	T	E	E	A	W	T	T	W
N	E	F	R	I	N	G	T	F	M	G	B	V	M	O
Y	E	L	P	R	A	H	S	A	R	E	V	N	E	D

ANMER*
BARMER
BEACHAMWELL
BOUGHTON
BURNHAM THORPE
CONGHAM
DENVER
DOCKING
DOWNHAM MARKET
EMNETH
FINCHAM
FOULDEN
FRING
GAYTON
GOODERSTONE
HARPLEY
HEACHAM
LITCHAM
MARHAM
NEWTON
OXBOROUGH
POTT ROW
STANHOE
WEREHAM

***Anmer is in there twice!*

SOLUTION ON PAGE 23

Press Gang's 20th anniversary tour

Keith Skipper and his Press Gang colleagues have a packed programme to mark their 20th anniversary as entertainers on the local circuit.

The great Norfolk adventure started at the end of Cromer Pier in the summer of 1984 when an evening of Norfolk yarns, readings and songs attracted a full house to the Pavilion Theatre.

Suitably enough, one of the early dates on their 2003 fixture list is a show in Cromer Parish Hall on Saturday, March 29. The list also includes three trips "over the border" into Suffolk.

FIXTURES 2003

(all Saturdays, except Wednesday, May 14 at Leiston):

March 15 - Eye Community Centre, in aid of Diss Friends Group for East Anglia's Children's Hospices. Tickets £7.50 from Pauline Manson on 01379 740222.

March 22 - Pulham Market Memorial Hall, in aid of hall funds. Tickets £6 (concessions £5) from Steve Hewitt on 01379 676602.

March 29, Cromer Parish Hall, in aid of Norwich Soroptimists. Tickets £6, inc refreshments, from Pat Winter on 01603 401301 or K Hardware shop in Cromer.

April 5 - Saxlingham Nethergate Village Hall, in aid of hall funds. Tickets £6.50, inc refreshments, from Ken Hulme on 01508 498170.

April 12, Acle Recreation Centre, in aid of Acle Indoor Bowls Club and East Anglian Air Ambulance. Tickets £5 from Acle Indoor Bowls Club, 01493 750869.

April 26 - Binham Village Hall, in aid of hall funds. Tickets £6 from Richard Lewis on 01328 830723.

May 10 - Gislingham Village Hall, first of Suffolk leg of world tour! In aid of East Anglian Air Ambulance. Tickets £7.50, inc refreshments, from Sheila Taylor on 01379 788110.

Wednesday, May 14 - Leiston Film Theatre. Tickets £6.50 in advance, concessions £5.50, from theatre box office on 01728 830549.

May 24 - Gorleston Pavilion Theatre, in aid of Rotary Club. Tickets £6 from Colin McManus on 01493 662440.

June 21 - Banningham Village Hall, in aid of hall funds.

July 5 - Stibbard Village Hall, in aid of hall funds.

AUTUMN FIXTURES

Sept 6, Tilney St Lawrence Village Hall. **Sept 13, Brancaster Staithe** Village Hall. **Sept 20, Attleborough** St Mary's Church Hall. **Sept 27, Bressingham** Village Hall. **Oct 4, Mattishall** Sports and Social Club. **Oct 11, Tasburgh** Village Hall. **Oct 18 - Gillingham** Village Hall. **Oct 25 - Elveden** Village Hall.

Norfolk born and bred

Bor, I'm Norfolk bred and born
In that land of waving corn
Where the willows shade the rivers flowing by,
Where the Broads are full of boats,
Where the young lambs grow their coats
And the pigs lie softly grunting in the sty,
Where the cows graze on the marsh
And the east wind's cold and harsh.
But the summer skies are big and wide and high
Above the ronds and banks
With their flags in golden ranks
And the reeds sway to the gentle west wind's sigh;
Yes, I'm Norfolk born and bred
Though my path has often led
To city streets and flats up to the sky.
Yet for all their tawdry shine,
Give me the east wind's whine
And a Norfolk churchyard grave in which to lie.

PETER HART

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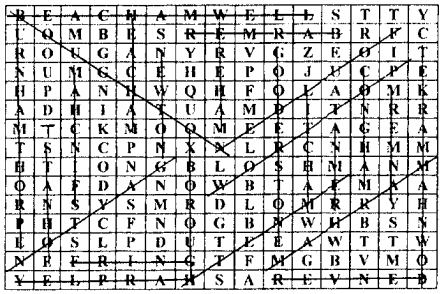
***Letters/articles for publication in The Merry Mawkin are always welcome**

Norfolk quiz answers

1 Earlham Road, Norwich. **2** Woodfordes. **3** Abraham's Bosom. **4** Decoy Farm, Ormesby St Michael. **5** Lord and Lady Walpole. **6** Ceres. **7** Terrington St Clement. **8** Twelve. **9** The North Norfolk Railway. **10** Roys of Wroxham. **11** A tadpole. **12** Pull's Ferry. **13** Sheringham. **14** Holme-next-the-Sea. **15** Swaffham. **16** South Walsham. **17** Dutch settlers, known as Strangers, used it as a meeting house. **18** Quidenham. **19** Thompson Common. **20** A shallow pool. **21** King's Lynn. **22** Thomas Cook. **23** King George V's silver jubilee. **24** The Samson and Hercules. **25** North Elmham. **26** Male inmates picked oakum from ships' ropes. **27** London Street. **28** The Fairhaven Trust at South Walsham. **29** Burgh Castle. **30** The artificial hip joint.

WORDSEARCH SOLUTION



Riddle Me Ree answer: Chimbly

FOND-dew dates

(Press Gang fixtures are on Page 22)

East Anglian Film Archive show, presented by Stewart Orr, Denton Village Hall, Thursday, April 10, 7 for 7.30pm.
Dialect Evening, Cromer Parish Hall, Tuesday, April 29, 7.30pm.
FOND-dew, Hoveton Community Centre, Sunday, June 15, 2pm.
'Posh' FOND-dew, Wolterton Hall, Friday, July 11, 7pm.
Fond-dew, Ditchingham Village Hall, Sunday, September 14, 2pm.

ADRIAN BELL SOCIETY — For details, contact John Ford, Apple Acre, Church Lane, Claxton, Norwich, NR14 7HY. Tel 01508 480665.

FRIENDS OF NORFOLK DIALECT

Membership application

I/we wish to join Friends of Norfolk Dialect (FOND) and enclose the membership fee of (*delete as necessary*):

£5 (single member) **£20 (educational establishment)**
£8 (family membership) **£50 (commercial company)**

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms.....Surname and initials.....

Address.....

.....

.....

Postcode.....

Telephone.....

Please send to: **Shelagh Limmer, Mill House, Walpole Close, Broome, Bungay, Suffolk, NR35 2RP.**
Cheques made out to FOND, please.