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The Merry Mawkin



Newsletter of Friends of Norfolk Dialect
website: www.norfolkdialect.com

Norfolk FOND attracts East Lincs links

By Robin Limmer

The fame of Friends of Norfolk Dialect, already reaching the ends of the earth through our website, has percolated, perhaps more unexpectedly, over our county's north-western border, culminating in an invitation for FOND members to visit the East Lincolnshire Dialect Society, known as Far-Welter'd.

Off to Louth!

As a result, a party of eight members of FOND are travelling to Louth on September 25 to meet their opposite numbers for an evening of discussion and entertainment. The initial approach was made by Far-Welter'd in July to our chairman Tony Clarke, proposing closer contact with

FOND and an invitation to visit them in Louth with a possible reciprocal visit by them to Norfolk.

Thus, after FOND's committee meeting in July, acting secretary Peter Brooks, closely involved with our schools project, contacted the Lincolnshire society and received an enthusiastic letter from their chairman, Alan Mumby, inviting FOND representatives to explain what was involved in achieving Far-Welter'd's long-term aims in creating a dialect archive available in a variety of media, from the written word through to DVDs.

FOND has already pioneered with Norfolk county educationists a project introducing an appreciation of the Norfolk dialect in schools and supplying recordings to the Norfolk Archive Centre at County Hall.

The Louth get-together will be reported on and discussed by our FOND committee on October 15.

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Beauty and ugliness are 'in the ear of the beholder'

FOND cultivating pride in the way we speak, says professor

I have just come back from three months at Ohio State University in the USA,

where I had a series of experiences which are always denied to me in this country: I was complimented on my speech.

"I just love your accent!" shop assistants would exclaim.

"You sound so authoritative when you speak," academic colleagues would admit. "It's so nice to hear your beautiful voice in the hall," students would say. This is of course not something which normally happens to people who speak with a Norfolk accent on this side of the Atlantic. In

fact, as we know, there are people who go very much the other way, and even write letters to the EDP virulently asserting that our local accent and dialect are ugly, and that they make the speaker sound stupid and ignorant. Why is this? Beauty and ugliness are very much in the eye the beholder, and this is perhaps truer of perceptions of speech than of anything else – though it is of course in this case the *ear* of the beholder we are talking about. Academic sociolinguistic research that we have carried out over the last 30 years into listeners' reactions to accents show very clearly that, if people find a Birmingham accent ugly, or

a Highland Scottish accent attractive, this is not a genuinely aesthetic judgment about a

series of speech sounds they are making. Rather, they are responding to their knowledge about the accent, and the social connotations that the accent has for them. Take away that knowledge or familiarity, take away those connotations, and there is no

"aesthetic" response. How many of us can imagine finding different dialects of Vietnamese ugly or beautiful? So, Americans are generally hard pressed to tell one British accent from another, and have favourable reactions to all of them. Britain for them is a beautiful country



By PETER TRUDGILL

Emeritus Professor of English Linguistics at Fribourg University, Switzerland, Honorary Professor of Sociolinguistics, University of East Anglia, and president of FOND

where they can go for vacations, and they have no awareness of different social class accents, or of what is rural and what is urban. For them the accents are just accents. It is generally only English people who react negatively to the accents of England. If other English people do not like us speaking with a Norfolk accent, this is in an important sense because they don't like *us*. We are right to be offended by this. And if they find it makes us sound ignorant as opposed to authoritative – to their ears – that is their problem. We should not let it be our problem. Rather, we should feel proud rather than ashamed of the way we speak – an attitude which FOND is doing an excellent job of cultivating – and use our natural speech in all possible circumstances.

FOND stalwart MIKE COLEY, from Northwold in West Norfolk, a sufferer from multiple sclerosis, is dependent on his mobility scooter for getting around his home village, accompanied by his faithful Welsh terrier, Taffy. Together on July 25 they set off on a sponsored ride to visit nine churches, covering 18½ miles to raise money for the MS Trust. Would the battery expire before the end of this somewhat hazardous journey?

Mike's nine-church challenge

18-mile MS buggy ride raises £1000

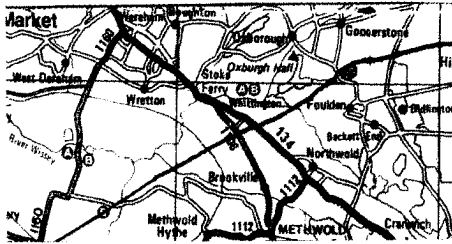
Bearing in mind that simply moving from one room to another in my own home has become something of a major undertaking these days, when I proposed making a trip of some 18½ miles (albeit astride my trusty mobility scooter), visiting nine churches, the consensus of opinion was that I must be barmy. Nonetheless I devised a route and recruited my back-up team, consisting of my Welsh terrier called Taffy riding shotgun, and my darling wife Pat on the "chuck wagon" who met me at each of the stages with a hot cup of coffee and a lot of encouragement. I set out early on the morning of July 25, a foggy day to start with, but a lovely contrast to the unremitting heat of the previous week. Poodling along through the Norfolk countryside at five or six mph is a sheer delight



Start at Didlington.



Coffee at Methwold.



ROUTE: Didlington, Northwold, Methwold, Whittington, Stoke Ferry, Wretton, W. Dereham, Boughton, Wereham

if you've never tried it. At Didlington, where my journey began, I encountered a number of deer on the road. In fact, throughout the trip I was delighted to see wildlife, the like of which I've not enjoyed close-up for years. It was a close-run thing in the end; the attempt would have ended in failure except for the fact that my route ended at Wereham. I had reached Boughton safely when the battery on my buggy gave out. This is where my trusty back-up

team really proved their worth. By sheer muscle power my "little old mawther" pushed me and my machine just over a hill and there she left me to free-wheel the last

mile or so into Wereham, where she was waiting with camera to record that triumphant moment when the finishing post came into sight.

The journey took me about five hours. I enjoyed every moment and it made me feel a bit less useless than I usually do.

Thanks to the efforts of some good friends, we have raised £1000 for the Multiple Sclerosis Trust at Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire.

East Lincs Dialect Society's invitation to Norfolk's FOND

As reported in the lead story on Page 1, FOND has received and accepted an invitation to visit the East Lincolnshire Dialect Society, Far-Welter'd, to advise them on achieving their aims and establishing a social link between the two organisations.

This is the letter which, following an earlier phone conversation, our acting secretary, Peter Brooks, received from their chairman:

*Dear Peter,
Good to talk to you last week and very encouraging to hear that FOND would like to come up to Lincs.*

A brief summary of Far – Welter'd: we started in 1999 and have gradually built up our membership to about 100. We meet about four times a year in local pubs or village halls and entertain ourselves with Lincs dialect poems, tales, songs, etc.

We also send some of our dialect speakers out to events run by local organisations. Our long-term aim is to create a dialect archive available in a variety of media, from the written word through to DVDs. We'd also like to create an online, interactive platform. We'd like to think that this archive would be used by schools and the general public. You seem

to have similar aims, although you appear to be a little further down the road than we are. It would be very useful for you to explain to our group what is involved in getting the funding to achieve our long-term aims—what work is involved and what the commitment is in general. We know we can get funding from various sources: the question is, who will do the donkey work?

If we have a joint meeting in, say, late September, your talk on this could perhaps be at the start of the evening.

After that we could move into the entertainment section. We always have food (provided by our members), a raffle, and enjoy ourselves!

If a group of, say, 4-6 FOND-ers came up we could put you up overnight, either in a local hotel or with families.

And who knows what might develop out of that?! Certainly, in the first instance, a return trip. Please get back to me asap with a possible date. We normally meet on a Monday evening at 7.30, although I'm sure we could be flexible. I look forward to hearing from you.

*Best wishes,
Alan.*

(Alan Mumby, chairman, Far-Welter'd, East Lincolnshire Dialect Society).

*'Nothing but
good can
come
from this'*

PETER BROOKS, acting secretary of FOND, writes:

The power of the Press has resulted in news of FOND's schools dialect project reaching all parts of the world, including East Lincolnshire!

The latter is most welcome because it has resulted in FOND being invited to send a deputation to visit a similar-minded group of enthusiasts who rejoice in the name The Far-Welter'd East Lincolnshire Dialect Society. No, I don't know what it means but this only adds to the anticipation of meeting the society's members, having a good old muddle on our joint interests and explaining not only how we obtained funding for the schools project but the other activities we have participated in and have succeeded in raising FOND's profile not only across our home county but also to a much wider audience.

Our committee has long believed that there is much to be gained by contacting and co-operating with similar-minded societies. Whatever our interests, be they dialect or deep sea diving, nothing but good can come from an interchange of information and experiences.

FOND and schools' pioneering initiative deemed great success

By Peter Brooks, acting secretary

The partnership between FOND and Children's Services of Norfolk County Council to introduce an appreciation of our local dialect into schools across the county has been a great success.

All the right signs had been there for this groundbreaking initiative. Enthusiastic teachers and children who had enjoyed taking part in the project, some wonderful material in the recordings made by pupils and teachers and the creation of links between the schools and their local communities. For example, Brancaster Primary pupils went into the community to talk to elderly people in residential homes.

A bonus was the media interest, local and national, with pupils, teachers and FOND members in radio, Press and television interviews.

Our technical officer, Stewart Orr, sourced all the recording equipment, ensuring everyone knew how to use it, collating some 200 recordings and produced an hour-long programme for BBC Radio Norfolk.

The culmination of the project was a week-long display of the schools' work at the Forum in Norwich. Visitors could hear the dialect recordings made by the Brancaster pupils, read the dialect dictionary compiled by pupils at

Langham school and watch videos, such as a play based on the Pedlar of Swaffham, by All Saints' Primary School, Great Ryburgh, and a song and dance performance by pupils at Sheringham Primary. There were stories from

Diss High School and Firside Middle, Norwich, who also provided a range of Norfolk puppets.

Congratulations to FOND vice-chairman and education officer, Norman Hart, kingpin of the project. Thanks also to Anna McCarthy, arts development officer, children's services, and Gill Seaton, of arts development administrative assistance.

The project was funded by the Local Heritage Initiative, a partnership between the Countryside Agency, Heritage Lottery Fund and the Nationwide Building Society, whose William Wall, Eastern region adviser gave invaluable support. Praise, too, for the Spin-Off Theatre Company's dialect

performances and traditional Norfolk music. The future? A report on the project, examining its highs and lows and bringing together all who took part to discuss the lessons learned in raising the profile of our county dialect. We're encouraged by a Norfolk head mistress who said she plans to include work on Norfolk dialect in her school's curriculum next year, and by a Scottish head who said she would strive to include Scottish dialect in a similar project to FOND's.

THE BOY COLIN GOES BACK TO SCHOOL— PAGE 6



FOND president, Professor Peter Trudgill is interviewed by EDP reporter Caroline Culot at Norwich Forum. Recording their every word is Stewart Orr, FOND technical officer. BELOW: Attentive visitors at our Forum exhibition.



Was the FOND Lost in Translation yes! declares The Boy Colin after he

The *Lost in Translation* project, which for many years was a dream for FOND and for Norman Hart, our education officer, in particular, finally dawned on us with the award of a Local Heritage grant, enabling us to make schools in the county aware of the rich heritage of our dialect. I volunteered to be liaison officer for Great Ryburgh All Saints' Primary School, near Fakenham.

Welcome

Having made contact with Claire Lawrence, the teacher involved, I was invited to attend the school on March 21. The children made me feel very welcome and the staff and teaching assistants were very helpful. This would be my only visit to these premises as the school was moving to a new site at Stibbard. On this visit I spoke to the children about accent and dialect words and found them keen and quick to learn. Some told me how my accent and some of the dialect

words were exactly as their grandparents spoke. I let them read poems by John Kett and put them right on the parts they could not pronounce.

Script

It was on that visit that I learned that it was their intention to put on a play about the story of the Pedlar of Swaffham but it was their wish that it should be done in "the Norfolk language."

I volunteered to translate the script, written by Graham Hampton, another of the teachers involved and, following my submission of the original translation, he visited me at home with more dialogue to which I gave my "Norfolk" treatment. The script was then taken back to the school for the children to read.

Rehearsal

On my next visit, this time to All Saints, Stibbard, they were rehearsing the play under the guidance of two members of the Spin-Off Theatre Group and while at the school I recorded all the characters on cassette to help get the accent correct.

Oh that the BBC and ITV would

*project worthwhile? A thousand times,
goes back to school at Great Ryburgh*

heed our advice on this matter! I received an invitation to see the production on June 16 and to give my opinion. I was very pleased to hear how most of the main characters had mastered our native tongue and felt immensely proud of the children who had become very special to me.

I was presented with a be-ribboned bottle of beer and a bouquet of flowers by the “leading lady.”

Recording

I thought this would be the last occasion I would see the children, but I was invited to attend the Royal Norfolk Show with them and to hear them record the play for broadcasting on BBC Radio Norfolk’s special programme on August 28, entitled Fondly Speaking, presented by Stewart Orr.

I also discovered that a DVD of the play had been produced and the children’s parents had been snapping them up like hot cakes!

The day after the show I collected a woman reporter from The Economist at Norwich Station, taking her to Stibbard where she took notes as I put the children through their dialect vocabulary.

I’m pleased to say they did me proud and had remembered most of the words I’d taught them.

Questions

They followed up with a run-through of The Pedlar of Swaffham, the reading of some more John Kett poems and answered her questions intelligently. She was writing an article for The Economist on the project which has since been published. Finally, my wife and I were invited to attend the children’s end-of-term party where we were greeted with loud cheers and persuaded to join in the party games, together with eats and drinks.

A game of Pass the Parcel was contrived to make me the winner—the prize being a blue All Saints fleece jacket, an idea thought up by the children.

Tears

Call me an old softy but it almost reduced me to tears. I have received an open invitation from the head teacher to go back to see the children whenever I wish to do so. I feel sure I shall see “my children” again.

Was the Lost in Translation project worthwhile? From my point of view, a thousand times, yes. From the children’s point of view, I sincerely believe it was.

My Norfolk - *In which well-known Norfolk people express their thoughts on what makes the county special to them.*

MAGGIE SECKER, BBC Radio Norfolk producer and the presenter of the Sunday afternoon show, *Maggie's Brew*, looks forward to spending the rest of her life in the Norfolk countryside.

Urge to go back to our roots

It seems we always have an urge to go back to our roots. I was born and brought up on a Norfolk farm in the days when a child could roam the countryside and take part in virtually all the farm activities.

To be out in the fields during the school holidays was bliss, although getting on the old bike for the ride to Attleborough station to catch the train to Thetford Girls' Grammar School at sugar beet time wasn't quite so much fun.

The countryside lost its appeal during my teens. I had a great love of music but the big pop groups didn't come to Morley St. Peter! It all happened in Norwich and other larger venues, which proved difficult when the last bus home was around 10 o'clock.

Teenagers didn't have cars like they do today to get around.

I lived in Norwich for a short time in my twenties



Maggie Secker: 'Born in one of the nicest parts of the world.'

and discovered that the "Big city" had its own appeal. There's much more to it than shops and crowds of people. Once I'd been told to look around me, appreciate the architecture, see the trees and shrubs which grace virtually every street, I began to enjoy our county as a whole.

In 1978 I joined the BBC and Radio Norfolk when it came to our airwaves in 1980.

Since presenting *Maggie's Brew*, I've really started to learn about the county, home to so many talented people, many of them with a good old Norfolk twang. I recall going on holiday

with my new husband in the early 1970s and being made to feel about six inches tall by a rather "posh" lady at our dining table in the hotel. "You're from Norfolk aren't you? We have a lady at work with a funny little accent like you," she dared to say, looking down her nose at me.

Cor blast bor, she wunt get away with that today, now would she! She'd be told firmly but fairly (to use a common phrase of a colleague) that "I'm Norfolk and proud on ut."

We Norfolk people should never be ashamed of our Norfolk accents.

It hails the fact that we were born in one of the nicest parts of the world. The coast, the Broads, wild countryside, pretty villages, wide open skies... it goes on and on....

And getting back to those roots. I now live up a rutty old loke with trailing brambles, wildlife a-plenty, and look forward to spending the rest of my days in the Norfolk countryside.

Rare Norfolk words - by Sid Kipper

No 8: COYPU

Now at one time of the day people in Norfolk talked of little else but coypu, but if you was to ask a young Norfolk man or mawther what a coypu was now, they'd more than likely tell you it was what a sneaky cow done in the corner of a field. Well, what do they know? Some years ago coypu rampaged across the county, devouring children and terrifying old ladies.

They especially liked the Broads, which people used to think was very old. Of course now we know the Broads was dug out by a bloke called Pete, and got filled with water in a heavy down-pour.

The coypu liked to live in banks, which was all right until you wanted to get your money out. Because then you might find they'd chewed it all up.

Obviously when they affected people with money that couldn't be allowed to go on, so the Coypu Control was invented. Well, actually, it already existed, but up till

then it had only been there to stop the coypu getting drunk and causing disturbances in Ranworth, due to the people of Ranworth being quite capable of causing their own disturbances. But now their job was to



Sid: Coypu? 'Bit like rabbit but less hoppy.'

catch the coypu, confirm they was illegal immigrants, and then send them back where they come from. Only no one was quite sure where that was, so a lot of them got eaten. If you must know they were a bit like rabbit, but less hoppy. After a bit of this there was no more coypu in Norfolk, so people stopped talking about them, because obviously people weren't interested in anything not in Norfolk.

Except London, of course, but people only talk about that to moan about it. And so you get to where we are today, which is no coypu, but a lot of Londoners. And they call that progress!

PS: I see from your last Mawkin you say "Norfolk children rediscover language of their forebears."..Well, I'm surprised at you. Everyone know there were only three bears—the other one was Goldilocks.

Sid Kipper is currently available virtually via his "Kipper Country Code," downloadable monthly from www.channel4radio.com—select "comedy."

He will be appearing in the flesh at the following prestigious venues:

Sept 8: REEDHAM FERRY Folk Festival (01493-308534).

Oct 5: GORLESTON Pavilion Theatre—Should the Team Think? For Radio Norfolk (afternoon recording).

Oct 6: NORWICH Maddermarket Theatre (01603 620917) ['In Season'].

Oct 7: KING'S LYNN Arts Centre (01553 764864) ['In Season'].

Oct 8: CROMER Pavilion Theatre—with Keith Skipper and others ['Squint on the Pier'] (for BREAK).

Nov 18: HALESWORTH—New Cut Arts Centre (0845 6732123) ['In Season'].

Dec 16: TRUNCH Village Hall (01263 721931) ['Christmas Cod Pieces'].

10 The Merry Mawkin

*An international group of 60 speech and drama teachers gathered in Norfolk in August at Gresham's School where they were exposed to the local dialect, squat and a mardle on a Broads "boot trip," as well as some workshops at the conference base. The Society of Teachers of Speech and Drama watched plays, listened to folk songs, took part in puppet therapy and joined in talks and lectures. **KEITH SKIPPER**, founder-chairman of FOND, welcomed it as a golden opportunity to show what real Norfolk sounds like and was one of the contributors.*



Golden chance to teach them Norfolk

I felt the comforting presence of an old master as new pupils filed into the classroom.

Gresham's School, Holt, was the setting for my Saturday morning workshops designed to unravel a few mysteries and misconceptions hanging over the Norfolk dialect.

The Society of Teachers of Speech and Drama, in the county for their summer conference, were set for a good mardle. We mingled informally the night before on a Broads cruise when there were far more questions than hamsers. The size of my task could be measured by the range of backgrounds represented here in this famous seat of learning. A partnership from Sri Lanka nodded greetings. An English couple who ran a drama school in Kuwait waited for the curtain to rise. A woman from Preston told me about her holiday guide who billed himself as "Lawrence of Romania." Suddenly, the idea of such a cosmopolitan gathering took on extra appeal. That old dia-

lect master Dick Bagnall-Oakeley, who taught generations of Gresham's pupils from all over the world, would have relished this get-together. Dick was asked to hold the fort for a couple of weeks as a ge-



Dick Bagnall-Oakeley
— master on our side.

ography teacher at Gresham's when he was 25. He accepted – and stayed for the rest of his career. He would often break into his native Norfolk dialect both at the school where he had been a pupil and while delivering natural history lectures throughout the region and beyond.

He died in 1974 but remains a key inspiration in the campaign to promote and preserve our vernacular as a vibrant part of Norfolk life. I'm sure he was tuned in as those delegates, some from faraway places, tried

to hunt down the authentic sound. I shared my enthusiasm for home-grown delights like the lyrics of the Singing Postman, the Boy John Letters from Sidney Grapes, Bible stories in Norfolk dialect by Colin Riches and John Kett's local verses. I asked for general acceptance that Norfolk people swallow their consonants, do strange things to their vowels (of which we have too few) and are mostly incapable of rolling an 'r' or dealing with a round 'o'. Perhaps the most telling episode in either packed session came with a call for volunteers to read the opening lines of Arnold Wesker's *Roots*, the play which has put Norfolk on an international stage since 1958. Wesker set a trend few have seen fit to follow when he made genuine attempts to find out how Norfolk people really talk and included notes on pronunciation to help "furriners" get somewhere near the accent and intonation. Predictably, most brave efforts floundered in murky, Mummerzet waters – but deep disappointment among impromptu performers promised renewed zeal to get it right. I was assured Norfolk is not alone in being badly misrepresented on TV, radio and stage. The best way, urged one passionate delegate, is for each abused area to fight its own corner until phoney phonetics dry up. At least we've got Dick Bagnall-Oakeley on our side.

September's night

*Surlingham, September 7th,
1953*

At the close of this summery September day, the orange glow of sunset faded but slowly in a clear sky. The earth gave up its warmth to the upper air and long before the light had died a chill mist began to brood over the meadows.

It came first as an almost imaginary gossamer to be traced now here, now there, as an unsubstantial mirage or the shifting curtain of pale aurora light; then as a thickening fleece of fairy snow through which could be seen the softened contours of mole-hills and out of which peeped the tips of rushes darkling and separate. The air, to all feeling, was per-

By E.A.E. (Ted Ellis)

fectly inert and no single leaf trembled upon a tree, yet the mist played strange tricks before my eyes. It advanced and receded, thickened and shrank, hovered in detached lens-shaped strata and, in fact, played will o' the wisp almost magically in the changing light. Presently, four peewits appeared on the scene. They swooped skirling as they skimmed the surface of the mist.

I heard the deep droning of more than one dor-beetle abroad over the meadow, but otherwise the field of the cloth of silver was as serene as the face of a winter's moon when I left it in the dusk..



***Ted walking through Wheatfen* is the caption to this drawing by David Poole, one of the 78 that the artist contributed to *Ted Ellis's Countryside Reflections*, first published in 1982.**

Ted said of David Poole's drawings: "Artists have many ways of portraying what they see and feel and in deft and sympathetic hands the pencil can be a magic tool." In 2001 Ted's widow, Phyllis, gave The Merry Mawkin permission to reproduce any of the essays from the book, a classic collection of the Norfolk naturalist's articles written primarily for the Eastern Daily Press between 1947 and 1981.

History repeated — how 40 new broad Norfolk book

**Norfolk antiquary
and book-collector
RON FISKE
continues his
series**

**The Norfolk
Dialect: Guides to
Reading
and Research.**

**No 13,
Broad Norfolk,
written by readers of
the Eastern Daily
Press, Norwich,
1949**

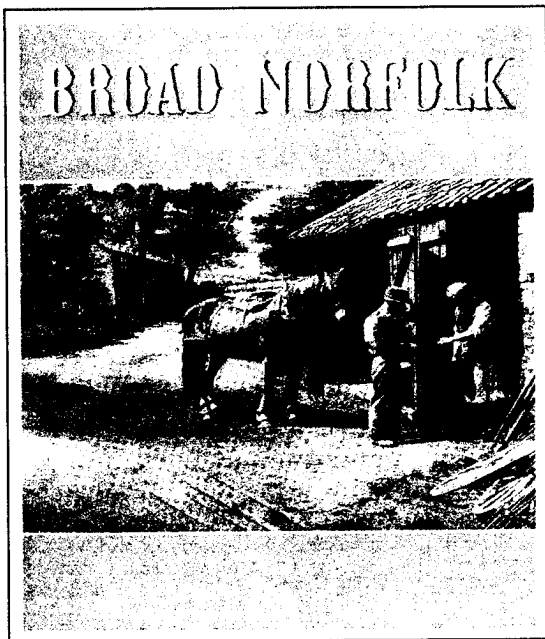
The previous article in this series showed how 125 letters which were sent to the Eastern Daily Press within three weeks resulted in a little booklet being published in 1893 called *Broad Norfolk*.

Fifty-six years later history was repeated. This time a G.H.Durrant of Cromer sent a letter to the EDP listing the local names of a number of British birds. This sparked off a more rapid correspondence—some 400 letters in the space of two weeks. Indeed, more would have been writ-

ten had not the editor called the correspondence to a halt. Again a new booklet was called for which, somewhat confusingly, was given the same *Broad Norfolk* title. The orange and black

folk Annual and the *East Anglian Magazine* (volume IV. Page 669.)

The editorial work for the new booklet was placed in the capable hands of the late Eric Fowler who normally wrote under the pen-



cover of the new booklet was made up of what appears to be a photographic foreground set against a Swannington view, which had previously been published in 1939 in the *Nor-*

name of Jonathan Mardle. Eric was born in Norwich, the son of a Norwich coal merchant. He was educated at Bracondale School before joining the Eastern Daily Press in 1925. With a

00 EDP readers led way to

break for war service he spent his entire career with the newspaper until he retired in 1981. His Wednesday column, mostly covering local subjects, was a delight which has yet to be surpassed. He had an extensive knowledge of the Norfolk dialect, often using it himself with that twinkle in the eye which some of us thought we could detect, even when listening to him on the telephone!

Intonation

It had been suggested that the spelling of Norfolk words should be phonetically standardised but Eric would have none of it. He believed that no phonetic symbols could convey the intonation, the drawled prolongation of some vowels, the clipping of others, and the rise at the end of a sentence. He was right to do so. While phonetics must play a part in academic studies it is best avoided for general readers. Local people can read in their own language although, for more distant readers, a better use of apostrophes and extended vowels is helpful. Local writer "James Blyth" (Henry James Cat-

ling Clabburn), whose popular novels reached a wider audience, and whose work we will consider in a future article, attempted to do so as, for example, this welcome from his Marshland neighbours:

"That might be conveynient," said Philip, puffing hard to get a fair start on his pipe, "If a Toold yew how we fare ta manage about hare. Theer's a post ivery daay esceptin' Sunday. That come about ten in the morning' an' goo out about half arter tew in the arternewn. The post box is a holler slit in the gre't ellum what stand agin the chutchyard gaate.

"An the butcher come for orders o' Wensdays," broke in Peggie, "an' bring the meeat o' Friday arternewns. Yew want ta mind he doan't bring moor an' what yew oorder, as he fare wery fond a' dewin'. I allust make him taake a knife an' cut a bit orf in the cart if ta come ta moor 'an half-a-crown. I allust bake of a Friday, like other folk an' I'll cook yar bit o' meeat as well—willin' an' welcome.

*"Then about waashin'," continued Peggie, "I doan't s'pooz as yew'll hev that done at hooam. Now I waash ivery fortnight of a Monday, when my husband waash hisself an' change his shut. An' I'll dew whaat yew ha' got, willin an' welcome, an' oon't hu't yew wi' muh charge. That yew maay deepend. I ha' done yar sister's waash iver since she come ta live at St. Mary's [Beccles—R.F.], soo that 'ull tell ye as I can dew it prarper.**

Blyth was well educated and, as a consequence, tended to shorten a rural sentence forgetting that it was not ignorance but local voices across ages of windy fields that brought about the rising emphasis in speech—if yew know what I mean!

Index

While the *Broad Norfolk* of 1893 simply published the letters in chronological order, the 1949 booklet divided the letters into categories—Bird names, Coquilles, Carpenters' tools, Craft vocabularies, Norfolk words, the manner of speaking, Norfolk sayings, Telling the tale, and Ideas from foreign. Best of all is the index which lists all the dialect words used in the correspondence.

* *Celibate Sarah*, 1904.

Our website clocks up 35,800 visits

On-site praise by students for FOND's schools initiative

Since the last Merry Mawkin was published in June, the FOND website has attracted a further 4000 visits, bringing the total from its inception in January, 2002, to 35,800. From schoolchildren to 90-year-olds it seems the website has been enjoyed by them all. There have been so many interesting entries in the guest book over the past few months—far too many to list here, but I have picked out a few of the best. You can read them on the website at <http://www.norfolkdialect.com>. Click on the Guest Book sign at the bottom of most pages. Have you visited any good Norfolk sites recently? If so, please let me know so that I can link ours to them for others to enjoy.

Schoolgirl **Katie** visited the site as she was researching a school project. She discovered that interviewing people was “really good fun.” You may recall that in the last issue of the Mawkin **Eloise** said our website helped her with her homework. She has since followed up with this: “We spent a day doing workshops and learning words and

dances when the Norfolk people came to our school. My friends and I are now doing a Norfolk timeline



By our website
co-ordinator
PAULINE DODD

and information page on Norfolk!” Sadly, there was no e-mail address for Eloise. I would like to have found out how the project was progressing. **Etienne** received help from the site as well: “We are English Lang A-level students. We were advised to look at this website by our teacher. It has helped us grasp the concept of the importance of dialect. THANK YOU!!!! Ps: If it's possible, could you please send us more information? Thanks again.x.”

Ross has recently created a website to “promote and explore the diversity of dialects in England by regional poetry.” Sadly he has no entries for East Anglia. Perhaps someone could help him? His e-mail is englishdialects@hotmail.co.uk

Mike Watson was delighted with the pages on the Norfolk harvest. “My own earliest Norfolk harvest was behind horses in 1944....”

Dave Holmes has a friend who was retiring to Norfolk. He wanted to put a message in her card to make her feel at home here. He asked how a Norfolk person would say, “Have a nice day. Have a safe journey and good luck, until we meet again. Goodbye for now.” The suggestion was: “Fare yew well tergether, mind how yew go and dew yew keep a’ troshin’.” He was very happy with that.

Colin Wilson found the site: he is related to the late Sidney Grapes. “I never thought I would read an analysis of his writing from a Professor of English Linguistics!! The world is definitely a strange place and
(continued on next page)
(from previous page)

An article in a previous Merry Mawkin reminded reader **RALPH WOODGATE** of his schooldays in Norfolk in the 1930s. He is now in his 80s. Here's the first extract from his website: <http://userweb.suscom.net/~woudyet>

Vital role of the 'haller howgee boy'

After the age of 12 I spent most of this holiday time working in the harvest fields.

The first job given to the youngest kids was to stand at one corner of the standing crop and pull the sheaves of corn away so that the horse-drawn binder which cut the crop and tied it into sheaves could manoeuvre past on its next circuit without the horses stamping on the corn.

Then when I became older I became a "Haller howgee boy." It was some time before I realised what this phrase meant. I had to ride on the first horse of the team that pulled the large cart into which the sheaves were piled 10 to 15 feet high.

To pack them in efficiently two or three men rode on the top of

the load and could easily be knocked off and injured if they were not warned when the team of horses were about to move the cart. The "Haller howgee boy" on the leading horse had to keep the team still while the men were loading the corn and shout "Howgee" before moving off to the next "stook" of corn. If the cart moved before the warning was shouted, the boy was in serious trouble as he was totally responsible for the men's safety. It was several years before I realised that "haller" was a derivation of holler or shout-out-loud and "howgee" was a version of the old medieval phrase "Hold ye" - in other words, a warning to hold on tight, that had probably been in use for several centuries.

(To be continued)

Two new words: wheisk and cuppieharley

made more so by the internet. Good luck to you and your future research, Sir." **Peter Calver** came up with a couple of new words for us: "...wheisk and cuppieharley—used on North Norfolk farms when working horses, meaning left and right (not sure which is right or left or indeed spelling.)". Perhaps someone out

there knows which is which?

Jane Langley-Holmes's father, Jim Langley, is in his 90th year. She writes: "My father, Jim Langley, originates from Walpole St Andrew and has always been very proud of what he calls his birthright, ie his 'mother tongue.' This site has been a great joy to him in his 90th year and he will certainly be

following up some of your book suggestions. Thanks." **Adrian Whittaker** comments: "Long may your lovely dialect continue. I'm a Yorkshireman but lived for a while in Norfolk and appreciate the importance of keeping regional differences going. I enjoyed the website—what about a dialect dictionary on line?"

cup - er left
wheisk. rt

NORFOLK QUIZ

Compiled by The Boy Colin

1 Who wrote The Story of a Norfolk Farm, first published in 1941?

2 Which two Norwich City managers have served two separate spells with the club?

3 An oak tree was presented to Norfolk yachtsman Christopher Boardman by Adolf Hitler at the 1936 Olympic Games. Where was it planted?

4 Name two Norfolk villages beginning with the letter Q.

5 Which Norwich-born trombone player led a band known as The Confederates?

6 Where is Threehammer Common?

7 The building known as the Bishop's Palace in Norwich later became a public house.
What was its name??

8 Where are the remains of Bromholm Priory?

9 Where in Norwich is the Boer War Memorial?

10 Which Norfolk village is reputed to have the largest inland colony of natterjack toads?

ANSWERS ON PAGE 23

ROAD NAMES WORDSEARCH

Hidden below are the names of 31 roads
in Norwich or its surrounding area

Compiled by Brenda Bizzell
Solution on Page 23

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

ALBEMARLE
BRAZENGATE
CATHERINE WHEEL
ELLA
EXETER
FOSTER
GURNEY
HALL
HOTBLACK
KESWICK
KNOX

LEAS
LILBURNE
LINACRE
MAGPIE
NORTHCOTE
NOTYKIN
ORWELL
PADDOCK
ROWAN
SCOTT

TELFORD
TRILITHON
UNTHANK
WELLESLEY
WINKLE
WITARD
WOLFE
WOOD
WREN
WYMER

Celebration of an era lost for ever

Lost Norfolk Landscapes:
Paintings by Horace Tuck
(1876-1951). Simon Butler
in association with Cyril
Nunn. Halsgrove 2006.
143 colour illustrations,
40 b/w. £24.99.



The Three Swallows Inn, Cley, and Blakeney Church.

Horace Tuck taught at the Norwich School of Art for 19 years (1920-1939), his composition and style being influenced by forays into the Norfolk countryside in the company of Alfred Munnings.

The paintings come from a time when the North Norfolk coast and landscape were free from the menace of modern-day traffic when boatbuilding, farming and fishing were labour

intensive with a lack of sophisticated machinery and equipment. His subjects range, unexpectedly, from female nudes, Norfolk landscapes, excursions into Devon and Cornwall and across the Channel into France.

All of his work has a naive simplicity about it and, like fellow artist Tom Armes, he painted what he saw without embellishment or pretension.

This is a book to savour and is a

celebration of an era which has disappeared for ever. Horace Tuck has left us a legacy of life and an environment free from the stresses and complications of modern life. But this would not have been possible without the generosity of retired Sheringham photographer Cyril Nunn who has made his collection of Tuck paintings available for reproduction in this high quality book.

Poppies — the myths and the legends

Looking at Poppies. By Grace Corne. *Flora Facts and Fables, Church Farm, Sisland, Loddon, Norwich, NR14 6EF.* £4.50, plus p&p 50p

With more than 95 per cent of our wild flower meadows disappearing under the plough, poppies seem to have survived, especially in North Norfolk where the flower is immortalised through the writings of Clement Scott, the Poppy Line railway and Poppyland Publishing, which specialises in Norfolk books.

But is a poppy simply a poppy? Not according to this book which provides detailed information on native species and how they can be used. The plant is the symbol of sleep and has many myths and legends associated with it. It has been placed on roofs to prevent lightning strikes, hence the local name of

"Thunder Flowers." In Ireland single women were thought to be threatened by the plants so refused to go anywhere near the "headache" flowers.

In the second world war the Ministry of Agriculture directed the cultivation of opium poppies and in the 19th century opium eating was common place in England. Poppy seeds are shed in enormous numbers and can remain dormant for years, coincidentally flowering in periods of warfare. In the first world war soldiers reported literally "seeing red" after marching through fields full of the plants.

The flower has been adopted by the Royal British Legion as their symbol. It is also a plant inextricably associated with Norfolk. Should we formally adopt it as our official county symbol?

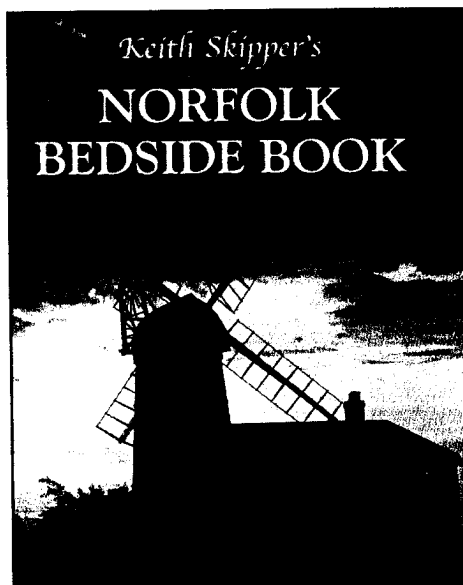
Norfolk characters as bedtime companions

Keith Skipper's Norfolk Bedside Book. Halsgrove. £12.99

Such was the response to the first soft-back edition of this book in 2002 that the hardback version is a tribute to the author's enduring reputation.

Keith has drawn on the writings of over 100 Norfolk writers, from 1802 to the present day to create a book which should be on the bookshelves of all of us who take pleasure in recalling days past as described by top-notch writers who bring their story-telling skills to our bed-sides.

Wherever you dip you are sure to find something in its pages to interest, amuse and inform on some aspect of Norfolk life. From tales of smuggling, Mary Mann's harrowing tales of poverty in rural Norfolk, life in the workhouse and a cure for warts to tales of drunken pigs and fallen women. Add in stories of Old Shuck, the effects of the Black Death, memories of the Scottish



Sunset behind Weybourne Mill. - Alan Childs.

fishergirls at Yarmouth and the 1953 floods, all ably supported by one of Sid Kipper's imaginary tales concerning a gentleman in charge of the honeycart and you have hours of entertaining reading.

The darker, vicious side of smuggling

Smugglers All - Centuries of Norfolk Smuggling. By Kenneth Hipper. Larks Press. £8.50.

This book is the result of many years of diligent research and exposes the often romantic view of smuggling for what it really was. A vicious and unrelenting challenge to authority with the sole aim of bringing wealth to the perpetrators at whatever cost to innocent victims of this illegal trade.

As the author shows, smuggling was not confined to the coastal areas and involved all levels of society, including such pillars as Parson Woodforde (he of the diaries) and Sir Robert Walpole, "Norfolk's most famous customer of the smuggling trade." Norwich, King's Lynn and Yarmouth were hotbeds of activity, along with coastal towns and villages stretching from Hunstanton to Hemsby. Within the text are detailed accounts of how, where and by whom smuggling activities took place, with partici-

pants being named thereby offering the opportunity for family tree researchers to identify any "black sheep" in their ancestry. Fraud and corruption existed at all levels, again with individuals named and shamed. Villages and towns with a smuggling history are identified, as are farmers, millers and others who co-operated with the smuggling fraternity involved in both import and export evasion of duties. This is an important contribution to our social history and knowledge of people involved in it.

Childhood in an impoverished Norwich

The Seventeenth Child: Memories of a Norwich Childhood, 1914-1934. By Ethel George with Carole and Michael Blackwell. The Larks Press, £8.50.

This is a gem of a book: oral history at its best; memories of a woman born and brought up in an overcrowded terrace house in Cavalry Street, Norwich, close to Barrack Street, then one of the most impoverished areas of our capital city. Ethel George was born in 1914, 17th child of Albert and Eleanor Edwards and this is the story of her first 20 years. She tells it without restraint; from a drunken father (until

her mother hits back), a mother who married for love despite parental objection and a family life rich in detail which opens a window on how poverty-stricken families lived during this changing period of city life.

Almost every street had a corner shop—Mrs Howell's sweet shop; Sally and Thursy Winter who sold "nearly everything"; Mrs Coosey's baker's shop and Park's second-hand shop, all vying for custom. Not to forget Mrs Parsons, who sold "Dirty Mixtures" - sweets which had been in the shop window and were fly-blown, hence their name. "A big bag

of 'em for a ha'penny" - "Of course, we knew they weren't clean, but I'm alive to tell the tale!"

Despite the poverty she considered her family life was better than those of neighbours who lived "up the yards. They had nothing.

They had no sanitary, no water inside. The didn't have nothing to keep them clean."

This is a book to cherish: pure "Norfolk speak."

Thank you, Ethel and Carole and Michael Blackwell who met her during their time at UEA and had the foresight to record her memories unedited and "unsanitised."

Ida Fenn book: granddaughter's SOS

Bilingual Maggie Risby writes to The Merry Mawkin from Staffordshire:

I be Gal Ida Fenn's grandorter and I need ya help—if you're got any ta give.

I sinsarly hope you're hard o' my fermus grandmother? Arsk bor Skipper, he hev. She writ sum books, well two anyways—Norfolk Tales wuz one on 'em and th'uther wuz Tales of a Countryman.

Now let me get to the poynt. I're bin lookin' on that Amazin website for har books, cos moi boy hint gotta copy of the Norfolk Tales and he hoolly want one. I clicked on the button and up popped another book writ by har that I din't know about. It say—Tales of a Countryman, edited by Radio Society of G.B. ISBN 0900616075 1998. Paperback (128 pages) £2.75. I rung my arnt and she din't know nuthin'

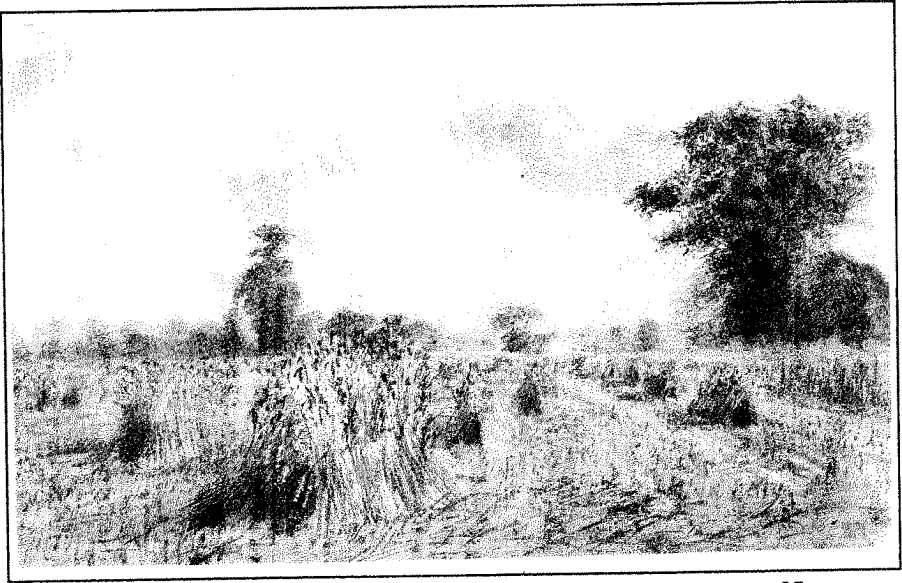
about it eetha. Now we're hoolly wondrin' was gorn orn! Moi arnt thort she wuz in charj o' orl har mutha's stuff. I can't git hold ora copy cuz they're out onem, so they say.

Hev eny o' yor reedas gotta copy that I cud hav a lend on? Thank ya kindly

Maggie then abandons her Norfolk prose:

"I would appreciate your help on this one as the book I'm trying to locate is a mystery to us. I'm thinking it may be something to do with some of her articles she sold/wrote on a weekly basis to the EDP. I ordered it weeks ago from Amazon and they have just informed me that it is unobtainable. Please e-mail me:

maggie.risby@btopenworld.com or phone 01538 304115. (Shame orn me, I're decamped to Staffordshire—but o'i'll be back!)"



From *Naturally Norfolk*. Text Keith Skipper. Picture Ken Walton. Publisher Jim Baldwin Publishing, Fakenham, 1988.

September should never be rushed

September's Song is sweet before autumn's shawl starts slipping over summer's final hours. Green is still a fashionable colour, but there are alternatives. Hedges dripping red. Brown fields tend to shy away from the sun, but they are not yet ready for frost. Birds begin restless flights.

A time of transition, not least for homes with five-year-olds coming to terms with a new life at school. Breathless reports of new discoveries, new friends and new problems as the combines beyond charge into the remaining acres. The village fete season is winding down, along with the cricket fixtures. Mornings turn cool, urging you to make the most of each day if the sun comes out. We watch the last holidaymakers drift away, and wonder what new delights will lure them back next year. We watch the football followers arrive, herded in and out of Norwich. An affront to the decent traveller, and yesterday's fun and friendship on the terraces.

We know Santa Claus will be in the shops to stoke the commercial fires as soon as any stubble-burning has died down. We fear he could be rubbing beards with The Lord of the Harvest before the end of the century.

For now, we hope our reflections will be allowed to play for a while, enjoying the late warmth, the still-fresh green, the haze of evening. September should never be rushed.

Bruther Will goes a'troshin'

Wunce thuh sugar beet
wus orl up arter Criss-
mass thuh ole troshin'
engine, drum an' straw
pitcher wud cum chug-
gin' up thuh road. If that
worn't for thuh troshin'
we'd likely be stood orf
(on the dole). Thuh land
wus ayther tew wet tew
wark or that wus fruzz
hard.



Bruther Will

So cumma thuh Munda'
mornin', in thuh dark, we
med our way up thuh fild
where two corn stacks
stood. Thuh fust job wus
tew git thuh thatch orf.
Broaches wud cum
rainin' down on us boys.
Our job wus tew pick 'em
up an' lay 'em in bundles
close tew thuh stack.
Now we'd hev a ten-minit
break for a bite tew eat
an' a drop o' tea outa
thuh bottle afore that got
cold. Then thuh shout,
"Are yew reddey, boy?"
Hastily shuvvin' our
things back in our bags
we took up our places.
From a low hum tew a
steady roar thuh drum

As from: Thuh Hovel,
1 Muckbarrer Farst,
Littul Swearin',
Near Cussen, Oathes.

cum up tew speed an'
in went thuh fust shoaf.
For a toime thuh dust
an' corn muck worn't
tew bad, then thuh
wind got up. 'Corse
that med things wuss.
Thuh muck an' chaarf
stung yar eyes an' stuk
tew yar clothes. Sum
rich langwidge wus
cummin' from them on
thuh straw stack. No
suner had one on 'em
laid a hip an' thuh wind
blew it orf agin'. All on
us wus glad wen
dinna-time cum.
Now I 'spect yew're
wund'rin' why we kept
them broaches near
thuh stack. It wus law
in them days tew put a
ring o' close mesh wire
netting round thuh stack
so thuh rats coon't git
away. We boys got a
ha'penny a rat tail an' a
gud tellin' orf if thuh
chaarf run ova outa thuh
sack.
By abowt a quarter arter
tew thuh stack wus fin-
ished. Only a bit o'
clearin' up, then we cud
orf go hooome.
Howsomever, we knew
we'd be back in thuh
mornin' tew trosh thuh
uther stack. Let's hope
thuh wind don't blow
agin.

VERA YOUNGMAN

concludes the story of her
father, Charlie Andrews,
and the part he played in
the international success
of show jumper Sunsolve.



Sunsolve's farrier shod horses till he was 84

After returning to Norfolk from the North-
East my father and mother lived at Clifton
Villa, Paper Street, Yaxham, hiring a work-
shop from Morgan's Brewery, attached to
the Bush public house near Yaxham railway
station for his business as a blacksmith. He
earned 2s 6d the first month. My mother picked
blackberries and hazel nuts from hedgerows and
sent them by rail to West Hartlepool market.
The business picked up and they bought two
rows of stables near the shop in 1926.
Later they converted one into a bungalow.
Mother helped father in the blacksmith's shop
and was proud to say she had done everything in
it except shoe horses, which she wasn't allowed
to do!
In 1938, the business flourishing, they moved to
nearby bigger premises, a row of military horse
stables, becoming the largest blacksmith's shop
in Norfolk.
My father served on Yaxham Parish Council
and was chairman for a record 37 years. Among
his other interests were attending dog shows in
East Anglia with his Cairn terriers, a tradition
my daughter carried on but with Cavalier King
Charles spaniels.
Father was still shoeing horses, including Sun-
solve and race horses, till he retired at 84. My
brother carried on the business until his death in
1993. His son took over but due to a shortage of
horses on farms, Trevor had to close the busi-
ness and the blacksmith's shop has been demol-
ished. I have one consolation, however, as the
original shop is still attached to my house and I
hope it will still be there after I've gone.

FOND-dew

Sunday, September 17, Hemsby Village Hall, 2pm. Folk violinist Chris Holderness, of Rig-a-Jig-Jig, a Norfolk Music History Project, with film of local folk singers, including the legendary Sam Larner of Winterton.

The editor thanks all who have contributed to the autumn edition of The Merry Mawkin, especially Charles and Joy Boldero for their print production and administration.

PRESS GANG 2006

Second farewell tour! Keith Skipper and friends with homespun entertainment.

ALL CONCERTS – SATURDAYS (except Cromer) 7.30pm.

September 16, Walsingham Parish Hall, for Royal British Legion Women's Section funds. Tickets £6 (including refreshments) from Alva Grove on 01328 820681.

October 7, East Harling Old School Hall, for hall funds.

Sunday, October 8, Cromer Pier Pavilion Theatre, for BREAK. Featuring Sid Kipper and other special guests. Tickets £12 from Pavilion box office, on 01263 512495.

October 14, Brancaster Staithe Village Hall, for hall funds.

October 21, Stibbard Village Hall, for hall funds.

Answers to The Boy Colin's Quiz

From Page 16

- 1 Henry Williamson
- 2 Tom Parker and Mike Walker
- 3 How Hill, Ludham.
- 4 Quarles and Quidenham
- 5 Bobby Mickleburgh
- 6 Between Wroxham & Stalham
- 7 The Dolphin Inn
- 8 Bacton
- 9 Near the Shirehall
- 10 Syderstone

Wordsearch solution

From Page 17

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

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Letters, articles and pictures for potential publication in The Merry Mawkin are always welcome.
Copy deadline for the winter edition is November 11

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):

£6 (single member)

£10 (family membership)

£20 (educational establishment)

£50 (commercial company)

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

Address.....

.....

Postcode.....

Telephone.....

PLEASE SEND TO: Brenda Bizzell
Walnut Tree House, Forncett St Peter,
Norwich, NR16 1HR.
Cheques made out to FOND, please.