

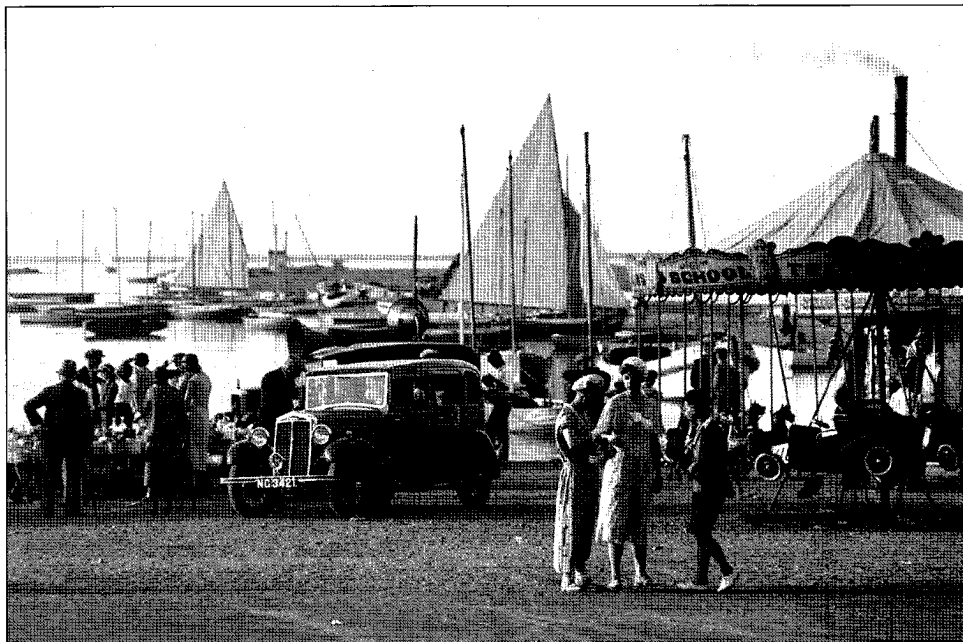


The Merry Mawkin

£1

Number 26
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2007

THE NEWSLETTER OF FRIENDS OF NORFOLK DIALECT



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COVER PICTURE *Blakeney Quay, seen in bygone days.*

EDITOR'S COLLECTION

EDITOR/DESIGNER

Ashley Gray
37 Ashleigh Gardens
Wymondham
Norfolk NR18 0EY

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website: <http://www.norfolkdialect.com>



The Chairman's Report

COLIN BURLEIGH

WITHOUT DOUBT, the highlight of FOND's activities, since the last issue of *The Merry Mawkin*, was the visit of eleven members of our recently-found friends of Far Welter'd, our 'twin' association in East Lincolnshire.

The event at Swanton Morley village hall was very well supported by our members and we had a large influx of locals who were keen to see what we were up to. Let us hope that the latter enjoyed themselves enough to want to join us.

From the letter we've received from Alan Mumby of Far Welter'd we gather that their members enjoyed the occasion, though their journey back to Lincolnshire was not a pleasant one due to torrential rain.

My thanks go out to everyone who contributed to the success of the evening, particularly to those who did their 'party pieces'! Who said Variety was dead?

The role of Chairman has kept me quite busy, but I am backed by a very hard-working and loyal committee who are striving towards making what is a successful association into an even more successful one.

We do our best to put on interesting 'dews' for you, but always invite you to put forward ideas for future occasions. FOND belongs to you, we are merely here to carry out your wishes.

Enjoy what is left of our beautiful summer!



Welcome to Our New Editor

PETER BROOKS

AFTER A LONG PERIOD without an editor, your Executive Committee is delighted to announce the appointment of Ashley Gray, who lives in Wymondham, as the new editor and designer of *The Merry Mawkin*.

Ashley comes to us with a determination to build on the progress we have made to produce a lively and informative newsletter. He has lots of ideas and we are sure we will be going from strength to strength under his guidance.

He will always be on the look-out for contributions and new contributors, and these are vital to ensure the newsletter is really 'YOURS' – and a means by which you can recall dialect words from the past you heard when you were young, or may have heard when you have been out shopping. Maybe you can remember certain dialect words used by your parents or grandparents, or perhaps you would just like to raise a question concerning our dialect or accent, or simply let us have your thoughts on what it means to live in Norfolk – be it good or bad!

Ashley joins us following a working life spent in Print Design at Jarrold Printing, once one of the leading printers in this country and all of Europe.

As well as being a graphic designer and artist he is also an author, having recently published his first book, *Albie's Poems, Reflections of a Norfolk Lad*, an illustrated anthology of short poems, reviewed on page 16 of this edition of *The Merry Mawkin*.

He also has a second book, *Albie's Thoughts, a Poetic Journey through Bygone Seasons*, due to be published in time for Christmas.

He is, no doubt, looking forward to hearing from you and his contact details are given below.

EDITOR'S CONTACT DETAILS

The Merry Mawkin, Ashley Gray,
Ailsha, 37 Ashleigh Gardens,
Wymondham, Norfolk, NR18 0EY
Tel: 01953 607161 (not after 9pm, please)
Email: merrymawkin@ashleygray.waitrose.com



From Our President

PETER TRUDGILL

HOW NOT TO MAKE NORFOLK PEOPLE CROSS: PART I

ONCE AGAIN there has been a TV drama series set in Norfolk, and once again local people have been protesting, rightly, about the low standard of competence in speaking the local accent achieved by the actors. It was good to see the beautiful Norfolk scenery, but some of the actors in Stephen Fry's *Kingdom* did not seem as if they were even trying to reproduce the Norfolk accent. Others did appear to be doing their best, even though they fell well short of what we would have liked.

So, in a spirit of gratitude to those who did try – and the respect for our area their effort implied – I now offer, for those actors who are prepared to try *even* harder in any forthcoming Norfolk-based drama, an educational check-list to be kept about their persons and consulted before every rehearsal and every take.

Here, in this issue of *The Merry Mawkin*, they will find the first, elementary lesson, with further more advanced instruction to appear in the next issue.

LESSON ONE

1 Basic Level – or how not to sound as if you come from somewhere else:

A: Do not pronounce an *r* unless it is followed by a vowel. Pronounce the *r* as you normally would in words like *rat* and *carry*. But do not EVER pronounce the *r* in words like *cart*, *bird*, *fort*, *beard*, *dared*, *muttered*. This makes you sound as if you have some kind of West Country accent, and it's what leads to the perfectly justified accusations in letters to the *EDP* (that's the *Eastern Daily Press* in case you didn't make its acquaintance during your visits to the county) that all that you are doing is speaking 'Mummerset'.

B: Do pronounce the short *a* vowel in words like *cat*, *bad*, *man* as you normally would, and not with a fake West Country accent which makes

bad sound like 'bahd'. Norfolk people, as near enough as makes no difference, pronounce *bad* in the same way that Londoners and other people in the southeast of England do.

C: Do not turn *l*'s into vowels in the way that Londoners do. Norfolk people do **not** pronounce *milk* like 'miook' or *pail* like 'pay-oo'.

2. Introductory Level – how to start sounding just little bit like you do come from Norfolk.

A: Try and pronounce words like *here*, *beer*, *clear*, *dear*, *fear* the same as *hair*, *bare*, *Clare*, *dare*, *fare*. Believe it or not, this is what we do. (Note for advanced and/or adventurous learners: this also applies to words like *idea*, *diarrhoea*, *vehicle*, *creosote*)

B: Try and pronounce words like *garden*, *path*, *half*, *cart* with a vowel in the front of the mouth rather like Australians do. Avoid the vowel sound in the back of the mouth that is associated with posh accents, Cockney and South African English. And of course, do not put an *r* in words like *garden*, *cart*. (And especially not in words like *path* – then you will sound like Eddy Grundy.)

Good luck with **Lesson One**! Next time: **Intermediate and Advanced Levels** – how to sound even more like you come from Norfolk, with an exciting and special section on the Norfolk long *o*.



The Kingdom of Swaffham.

COURTESY: GEORGE GOSLING



'Twixt Sea and Pine

ASHLEY GRAY

FIRSTLY, many thanks to the Executive Committee for appointing me as editor of your newsletter, *The Merry Mawkin*, and for Peter Brooks' kind words – I certainly have a lot to live up to, so I'll start with a brief look at our unique dialect.

Isn't broad-Norfolk truly amazing? Sometimes we tend to shorten words to the barest of syllables, proving almost unintelligible to those foreign ears unaccustomed to our language, whilst at other times extraneous utterings are used in order to hammer our message home.

"I dun't hatta dew tha', 'cos I ent gorta dew nourthin' I dun't want ter dew, dew I?"

I may have replied likewise, as a petulant small boy, refusing an order to wash hands before tea.

Followed by a quick 'clip round the lug' by my father, and: "Yew little warmin' ll yew, yew' ll dew as I dew, dew yew dun't yew' ll go streart t' bed!"

I *probably* succumbed as, after all, tea was not to be missed at all costs – specially if it was chips from the local 'feeshop' and a 'funter' for afters – with the reward of a 'coshie' if I was *really* good!

Then there's those folk, TV actors in particular, who, despite mastering a great many lines and playing their roles with utter conviction, display an inexplicable lack of mastery when it comes to our county's dialect and pronunciation. Heaven forbid that viewers in far-flung parts imagine that we sound like *that*! Those actors could probably speak Russian, Mandarin or Urdu more convincingly than 'Norfolk'. So, it's good to see, starting in this issue of *The Merry Mawkin*, that our President is about to set matters straight for these wayward thespians, by penning some ground rules in 'Norfolk as She is Spoke'!

Our culture and dialect, if my past experience is anything to go by, can be most *infectious*.

I recall an event many years ago, in the '60s, when a 'furriner' to our fair county found herself working in a school kitchen alongside a group of local women, in a North Norfolk seaside resort. Despite originating from 'Buurming-gum', way up in the smoke, the young lady's transformation in an attempt to blend in was truly amazing!

Shortly after I met Aileen – the young lady in question and later to become my wife (dare I admit to wedding a *furriner*?) – the subject of our scintillating conversation turned to the owner of the local Esso petrol-station, an ex-policeman.

"Whare dew 'e come from?" she asked, with *no* sign of a Brummy accent. "Dew'e live in town, dew'e?"

Those local ladies making dumplings in a hot school kitchen had a lot to answer for!

Sometimes the way we speak gives rise to mirth for some folk, as was the case on my first day at a new school in North Walsham.

"What is *your* name, boy?" demanded the ruddy-faced Biology master (from *foreign* parts!), singling me out from the rest of Form 1B.

"Gray, sir," I replied, unaware of my accent.

"*Grayee? Grayee?*" he mocked, causing much hilarity amongst the other scholars at my expense.

However, when it came to English lessons I was in far better company as our English master, who came from Swanton Abbot, was *blest* with a ripe broad-Norfolk accent. I felt quite at home!

I often wondered, gazing up at the portrait of Norfolk-born Horatio Nelson, the Paston School's proudest boast – hanging high on the Assembly Hall wall – did *he* speak the Norfolk dialect as well? I certainly like to think so.

You may be wondering which part of Norfolk I originate from? Sheringham – 'Twixt Sea and Pine – I'm proud to say! But, before you start jumping to conclusions and calling me names, let me put you straight. I was actually born *just* outside the town boundary and *just* within the parish of Beeston Regis.

So, *Shannock*, I may not be, but, as part of the old adage goes...

'Cromer crabs, Runton dabs,

Sheringham ladies, Beeston babies...

...so now you know!

Finally, my apologies for the need to combine the summer and autumn issues of your *Merry Mawkin*, due to the search for an editor. I was rather backward in coming forward it seems!



FOND

FRIENDS OF NORFOLK DIALECT

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Norfolk Dialect (FOND)
will be held at the Lincoln Hall, Hingham, Norfolk, on Sunday
25 November 2007, starting at 2pm.

AGENDA

- 1 Present: As recorded on the circulated attendance sheet.
- 2 Apologies for absence.
- 3 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Sunday 26 November 2006.
- 4 Matters arising.
- 5 Chairman's Report.
- 6 Acting Secretary's Report.
- 7 Membership Secretary's Report.
- 8 Treasurer's Report.
- 9 Newsletter Editors's Report.
- 10 Election of Officers:
Chairman: Colin Burleigh (Elected last AGM for a 3-year period);
Vice-Chairman: Norman Hart (Also our Education Officer);
Acting Secretary: Peter Brooks; *Treasurer:* Janet Woodhouse;
Membership Secretary: Brenda Bizzell; *Newsletter Editor:* Ashley Gray;
Technical Advisor: Stewart Orr. All are willing to stand for re-election.
- 11 Election of Committee:
Currently: Jean Eaglen, Vera Youngman, John Austrin, Owen Church,
Ted Peachment. All are willing to stand for re-election. 1 vacancy.
- 12 Election of Honorary Auditor: B Buck. Willing to stand for re-election.
- 13 Any other business.
- 14 Date, time and venue of Annual General Meeting 2008.
- 15 Welcome to Speaker: Patrick Thompson.



A Gem of an Aunt

PETER BROOKS

GARAGE PROPRIETOR Sidney Grapes was a letter writer extraordinary. He started writing to the *Eastern Daily Press* under the pseudonym 'The Boy John' in 1946 and for 12 years he built up a huge following of readers who delighted in his dialect-based tales of village and home life.

Just as some readers of crime novels always turn to the last few pages, to find out 'who dunnit' before they read the book, so readers of Boy John's letters would turn to his postscripts to find out what gems his Aunt Agatha had come up with.

The following are reproduced by kind permission of Keith Skipper from his book *The Boy John Letters* published by the Mousehold Press in 2003.

AUNT AGATHA SHE SAY:

*That earn't how much medicine we take in life;
thas wot good that du us wot count.*

*Troubles are like bearbies, the more yow narse
'em, the bigger they grow.*

*Yow dorn't help people if yow do for them wot
they should be a-doin for their selves.*

*Many a woman has lorst a good sweetheart by a
marryin' on him.*

*She's werry glad she worn't born afore tea was
invented.*

*If people think you're a fule, keep your mouth
shut, then they won't know.*

*A woman is judged by her company – but not until
after she's left.*

*It doesn't matter what happens, there's always
someone who knew it would.*

*I don't like to repeat gossip – but what else can
yer do with it?*

*Tact is making your company feel at home, even
though you wish they were.*

A man who can't smile shouldn't keep a shop.

*Some men git what they deserve, others remain
single.*

*All husbands are alike, only they have different
faces so you can tell 'em apart.*

*We are all sent here to help others. Granfar say
"Well, wot are the others sent for?"*

And the last word to Granfar: "If women know so
much, why do they ask so many questions?"



The Boy Colin's Norfolk Quiz

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF BYGONE DAYS

- 1 Where was Gybson's Pump to be found?
- 2 On what date did Norwich's first electric trams run?
- 3 What is a 'mardle'?
- 4 Who built the Customs House in Kings Lynn?
- 5 Which Norwich church has an affiliation with the acting profession?
- 6 What is an Aylsham Treat?
- 7 Which well-known steam train visited Norwich three times in 1967?
- 8 Where was the Royal Norfolk Show held in 1949?
- 9 In which year did Norwich City F.C. win the Division Two Championship?
- 10 What is a July Razor?

Answers on page 19.



Blakeney: Then and Now

ASHLEY GRAY



THEN: (Left) Looking down High Street towards the quayside.

A solitary Eastern Counties 'bus stands beside the quay, whilst an ice cream man is just about to set off on his bicycle. The Guildhall Café, on the right, is offering 'teas'.

NOW: (Below) A bright sunny day and not a 'bus in sight! The café has long since gone, although a 'cuppa' is available elsewhere.

Parked cars now line the High Street and quayside by those not wishing to walk too far!

BLAKENEY, a pretty village popular with sailing folk, is just off the main A149 coast road, between Sheringham and Wells-Next-The-Sea. It lies at the end of a channel, which almost dries up at low water, and, to some extent, is always at the mercy of the sea. Many years ago, the original village, Snitterley, was swallowed up by its waters and nothing remains of it today.

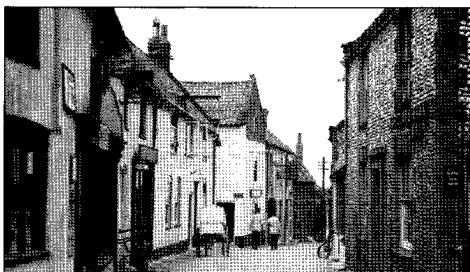
Blakeney, like so many other seaside towns and villages along the Norfolk coast, suffered badly during the 1953 North Sea floods.

On the corner of High Street is a plaque that marks the height of floodwaters during the disastrous night of 31 January/1 February 1953.



THEN: (Right) The white-coated 'bus driver and his conductor head back to their 'bus. Have they been for an EDP and twenty Players, or for a quick 'half'?

THEN: (Front cover) Some locals are having a muddle next to, what may have been, an early car-boot sale, whilst on the quayside there is a Fair complete with a Roundabout and 'Chip Potato Saloon'. Date unknown, but further information will be most welcome.



ALL PICTURES FROM EDITOR'S COLLECTION



'Dews' and Events for your Diary

PETER BROOKS

GOING WEST FOR OUR NEXT 'DEW'

Sunday 30 September will see us at the Wash Discovery Centre in King's Lynn.

Apart from the pleasure of visiting Lynn again, starting at 2pm, we have two fascinating films to enjoy; the first being 'The North Enders' which tells the story of King Lynn's fishermen and their fishing activities of some 25-30 years ago. It was filmed by our regional BBC office in Norwich.

The second film will be 'The Missing Scene', something quite different and filmed by the Children's Film Foundation in and around the village of Surlingham, just south of Brundall.

Admission to the Discovery Centre is free and there will be time to browse through their displays and enjoy a light snack or tea and coffee in their tea room before or after the film show.

Admission to the show will be £3.00 per person

and there is convenient car-parking either on the Saturday Market car park opposite the Town Hall or on the West Quay by the Discovery Centre.

A RIGHT ROYAL AGM

This year's AGM at the Lincoln Hall, Hingham, on Sunday 25 November at 2pm promises to include a 'right royal' flavour. No, not the business part!

Our speaker will be Patrick Thompson, for several years a member of the Royal Household. He is a gifted speaker who will provide glimpses into the lives and lifestyles at the very top of society. He has served the Royal Family both at Buckingham Palace and during their holidays at Sandringham and brings a warm and understanding approach to a subject which will be of great interest to all of us.



From Our Young Mawkins

Rain, Weather and a Farmer

All day long the rain kept troshin',
how am I s'posed to do my washun'?

It all looks fine over yonda,
how's it been with you Rhonda?

It's Blowin' a gale out there bor.
so com inside an' close the door.

My dad is a farmer he wuks all day
'cept wun he eat 'is dookeey sittin' in the hay.

Tea time com an' my tum got rum'lin',
I said what's for tea gal,
I hope it's dumplings!

Rebecca Barnard



Grandad



My Grandad wuz a farmer
he had a gret ol' farm
he kept a dickey in his fild
that never took no harm

The kids they used ter rad him
'afore they went ter skule
they really shunt adunnit
that wuz agin the rule

My Grandad got a shiver
from workin' ol' t' day
his ol' mawther gave cooked liver
to make it go away

Lucy Burleigh

Two delightful pieces of dialect poetry from
a selection sent us by our young friends in
Year Four at Scarning (VC) Primary School.
Well done to all of you!



Dialect Words Crossword

BRENDA BIZZELL

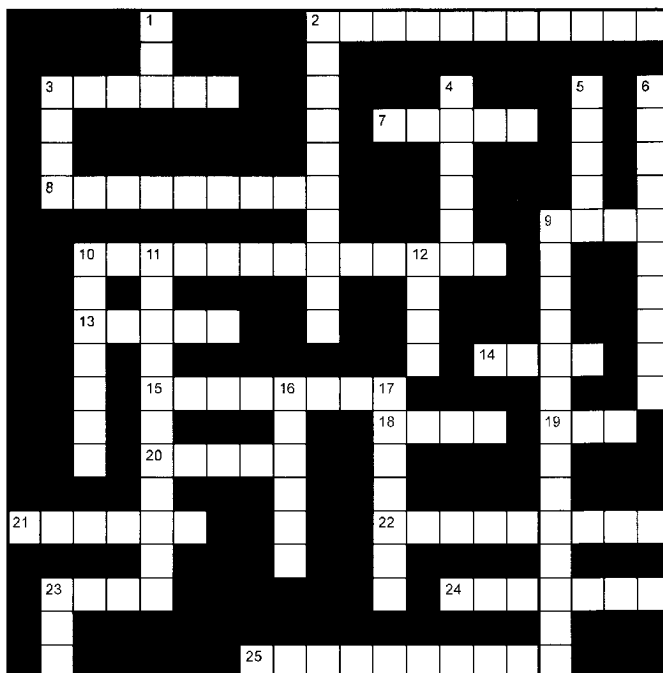
HOW MANY do you know? If you feel like cheating, consult *Larn Yarself Norfolk!*

ACROSS

- 2 Young of frog (11)
- 3 To toy with, food especially (6)
- 7 The floorcloth (5)
- 8 Used to call every week, thank goodness! (9)
- 9 The snow melted, it... (4)
- 10 Red and black spotted insect (13)
- 13 Daft stuff, like this crossword (5)
- 14 When used with 24 across and 11 down, describes a girl (4)
- 15 Hot and sweaty (8)
- 18 Against, or perhaps, again
- 19 Scold, nag (3)
- 20 Muck rake or implement for clearing ditches etc (5)
- 21 Scares the birds (6)
- 22 People bred and born in Sheringham (9)
- 23 What you git round yar 1 down (4)
- 24 Young girl (7)
- 25 However (10)

DOWN

- 1 You'll get a 23 across on this if you misbehave! (3)
- 2 In a confusion, distressed (10)
- 3 A boil (on the neck etc)
- 4 Jiggle about (6)
- 5 To thresh (5)
- 6 Earwig (10)



- 9 Playground toy for the ups and downs of life (14)
- 10 Leather gaiters (7)
- 11 Goes with 14 across & 24 across as a description! (11)
- 12 A stream (4)
- 16 Norfolk sailing barge (6)
- 17 Heron (7)
- 23 Dew or mist (3)

Answers to crossword on page 19.





Whas the Harm a Reminiscin?

TINA CHAMBERLAIN

I WAS TALKING to a colleague of mine at work the other day and he say thus a rummun how people always seem ta talk about the past.

“Well bor,” I said, “thus like this here, ya can’t look into the future do you’d be dressed in a floaty outfit n hev crystal balls.”

I mean whoda thought this here lot was a cummun: Computers, Playstations, X boxes. Diya know, my little niece put me ta shearme onna computer n she’s only seven!

When I was a youngun, well blast me we hetta make do wi popguns n acorns. I can remember my father a makun me a popgun outer a bit a elder n nuttery stick. Me n a boy down our lane we used ta sit in a tree n wait fa the ole boy from up the road ta go down ta Swardeston Dawg Pub, n we used ta see which one on us could hit his hat wi the acorn outa the popgun.

That was harmless fun, an the blook musta known we were there, but he dint never say nuthun, I reckon we dint hit him hard enough.

Also I used to climb up trees n make tree dens n mother used ta gi me a bottle a orange ta tearke up there so I could hev a picnic... I dint tearke na food wi me though, I reckon thus cos we dint hev enough ta go round. Or she hint done na cookun.

My mother, bless har heart, she could mearke a hearty meal outer nothun, n at times she hed to, cos there was nine a us kids, although time I was born, three on em were already married. I was the youngest (I still em).

We used ta hevva chicken run in our garden an often mother would git hold a one a them there chickens, n that ud be in the oven fa tea afore that could sqwark. Blast me that was like eatun one a the family. Father used ta keep the garden gorn wi fresh vegetables an they used ta taste a treat, what da we call em now? Oh yis, thar organic arnt they.

I used ta love the countryside, the wind a blowun the cobwebs orf ya on a cold day.. a gorn up the fields n gitten bits a wood fa the fire n hogweed outa the hedges fa ma rabbits. Me n dad would walk fa miles with our ole black n white dawg (we got thut colour cos the licence was

cheaper), n we used ta walk up through the fields an all the way round Swainsthorpe an come back up through dad’s allotment in Swardeston. We always called thut his allotment although thut was a bit a land of about 2 n a bit acres thut he rented orf the council.

I spent alotta time wi ma dad (Mother used ta say I orta a bin a boy). I learnt ta drive his old Fordson tractor when I was eight, an I used ta ride ma brother’s old trials motorbike around the fields when he dint want to. Diya know we dint hevva lot a gold but I reckon I hed a good young life, an a lovun set a parents an ya carnt ask fa more un thut can ya?

Ire gotta go cos boy David want his tea.

See ya all agin afore long.

DORA’S DUMPLINS

GAL DORA med sum dumplins
As lyte as they could be,
She popped them in a saucepan
An’ say, “They’ll do for tea.”

She poked the fire up fiercely
Ter mearke ’em boil an’ bubble,
When suddenly the lid blew orff
An’ started all the trubble.

For them dumplins started bowncin’
To the ceilin’ then the floor,
Then they bownced ryte parst har
An’ way ow’t tru’ the door.

Now Dora mearke har dumplins
The proper Norfolk way,
But she’d never sin them bownce afore,
Well, nut until terday!

LIL LANDIMORE

*If you have a culinary disaster to recall,
in dialect of course, we’d like to hear from
you!*



TO DATE we have had 53,600 visits to the website and here are just a few comments from some of our visitors:

Dan writes:

"Cor blast me, isn't this a timely project. If anyone can stem the tide of ignorance about the noble Norfolk dialect it's Skip and co. We've tolerated the kind of accents depicted in Kingdom for far too long – none of us speak like pirates or sea dogs and the sooner the Hoxton creatives realise this the better!"

June Wheatcroft thinks we have a strange lingo:

"'Struth! Have just read the 'Norfolk words and expressions' and they reckon Aussies talk a slang lingo! You Poms speak another language!"

Julia Hale had a rather special request:

"Can you tell me of any Norfolk words to do with sheep or sheep farming?"

I'm looking for a flock name for my small flock of Norfolk Horn's, I have 3 ewes, 1 ram and 6 lambs, I thought an old Norfolk word might be a good idea."

I searched high and low for a Norfolk name for Julie's flock and came up with one that she liked from Keith Skipper's book *Larn Yarself Norfolk*; Smittock = very small piece. A phone call to Keith came up with another; Shanny = harum-scarum, scatterbrained, frolicksome and unruly.

Now Julie has a problem, her husband likes one and she likes the other, I haven't been told the final decision as yet. Does anyone else have a good name for Julie's flock?

Later we received a reply from **Julia Hale**:

"We have decided on the flock name for our sheep – the Smittock flock of Norfolk Horns, registered with the combined flock book.

Just to add to the story, my family and I were talking about the difficulty of names going with 'Smittock', so we are going to buy Keith's Norfolk

dictionary and give the lambs Norfolk words for names.

The flock book people and other breeders I have spoken to liked the name and meaning. Our first lamb next year is likely to be Smittock Shanny!"

Steve Shug is trying to track down a Norfolk author, he writes:

"I am trying to find some poems/jottings about the Norfolk dialect, unfortunately I do not know the titles or who published them but just the author. According to our family history there were at least three articles published. These were published sometime between the end of the Second World War and the early 1960s.

The author was Harold 'Harry' Roberts of Rookery farm, Scottow, near North Walsham. I would be grateful if you could assist in this quest."

If anyone has heard of Harold 'Harry' Roberts, Steve would be pleased to hear from you. Please email fond@norfolkdialect.com in the first instance and we'll put you in touch with Steve.

Finally, do visit the Friends of Norfolk Dialect website at www.norfolkdialect.com. Also, if you've visited any other good Norfolk sites please let me know so that I can link ours to them for others to enjoy.

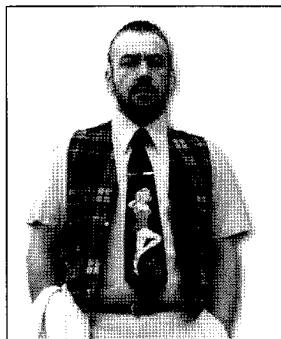


Cap'n Ted Dunnock, the fearless sea dog of Great Ellingham, makes a menacing appearance during the late July display of 'mawkins' in the Teddy Bear Trail. "Slow yew down, bor, when yar in moi kingdom," he was heard to say, "dew Oi'll set moi dawg on yew!"



Meet the Trunch Laureate

SID KIPPER INTRODUCES AUGUSTAS SWINEHERD



"NOW I KNOW you at Fondue are all about talking Norfolk, but best you don't forget there's people in this county can talk posh too. For instants, I got Augustus Swineherd to do

me some words for my new album, *In Season*, and I reckon they come up a real threat. And, to point my proof, here's some of what he writ:"

SEPTEMBER

The spheres spin, as, with Virgo in tacto, chaste September sallies forth, boldly knowing, but secretly yessing. On ancient acres it was time to push the painful plough. On today's farm it is time to fill in forms for foreigners.

As the year prepares to fade, feasts and festivals are frequent, as poet and peasant, pigman and priest, all alike celebrate the cornucopia of the countryside, and the fulsome fecundity of nature's wonderous womb.

Titian tinted twilights court contemplation, when absent friends are oft remembered. Present foes, of course, are never forgot.

OCTOBER

The spheres spin, revealing Miss Scarlet in Libra with the candlestick, October in her ambit. Sometimes there is an Indian summer, when in the hamlet of Hempnall cows are sacred, and the hills planted with tea.

Then Halloween happens, hand in glove with mischief, and knee in groin with nuisance. Spirits are abroad and phantoms at home, as together they go from door to door with an ancient cry – not the alien 'trick or treat', but the native 'kill or cure'.

In the streets of Sheringham a curious custom

is recalled, wherein a man betrothed to a maid would give her red ribbons to have in her hair. Thus the world would whist who was wooed – unless, that is, she kept her hat on.

NOVEMBER

The spheres spin, throwing Pluto and Mickey into opposition. But both know November is now. On past pastures tups were put to ewes, seeking their approval. On today's farm hard-hatted horse riders pretend not to hunt.

Winter waits in the wings and chilblains lurk in the green room, as bright fevers warm the blood, and frost once more nips the unwary extremity. Now there are dismal, dull dusks, when small children are comforted with big lies. Except in the livings of Larling, for there they tell only the truth.

DECEMBER

The spheres spin, and December dawns, as Mars is deep fried in batter, and the Yule log iced upon its tree. Manors of mellow memory had hedging, and itching. On today's farm simple Simones sit on stools, the better to milk the birds for cream of chicken soup.

'Tis the season to be merry, and, from Cranwich to Cley, Clenchwarton to Caister, Carol is sung, Belle is told, and Sherry is trifled with. Everywhere toasts are browned, healths are hered, and bottoms are up.

The year edges towards its end, as in the sheds of Shotesham the turkey gobbles, in more ways than one – but less than three. As he fervently fattens himself it is just as well he kens not his future. For, to be pointedly blunt, he does not have one.

"Mind you, he don't talk like that down the pub. There he always reckon it's rude to talk with your mouth full, and then fills it up again as fast as he can. He say he's driven to drink by ignorance, but if so how come it's always his wife that drives him home again?"

SID KIPPER ENTERTAINS

Sid will be performing a host of Norfolk gems at the following select venues:

27 October, **Gorleston Pavilion Theatre** (01493 662832) – *In Season*.

30 November, **King's Lynn Arts Centre** (01553 764864) – *A Kipper Country Christmas*.

1 December, **Norwich Maddermarket Theatre** (01603 620917) – *A Kipper Country Christmas*.

He also has an extensive website at www.sidkipper.co.uk, and six 30-minute episodes of his podcast *The Kipper Country Code* may be downloaded for free from www.channel4radio.com.



We're Bin Orf Agin!

THE BOY COLIN

"WHARE SHELL WE GO this time?" say the gal June.

Oi say ter har, less go somewhere we hent bin afore.

"Stick yar pin in th'ow map an' hope fer the best," Oi say.

"Hare go then," she say. "Cor, blast – Bulgaria!"

"Whare the hell is that?" she say "Dun't much fancy that, the sea is black."

"Blast," Oi say, "dun't be such a duzzy fule,"

that ent black, thass jist called that cors thass so bloomin' deep that look black when you look inter it."

Part from a bit of a conflopshun, when we got ter Luton, we got thare orlright but, blast, wun't that hot. Still, a few grit ow glasses a' bare sune cooled me down an' wun't that cheap an' all.

Funny ow lot them Bulgars. When they mean 'noo' they nod their hids an' when they mean 'yis' they shake 'em!

Some o' the toime Oi din't know if Oi wuz a-cummin' or a-goin'.

We dun a bit o' sightseeing, visitin' a winery – hev yew noticed how this haarldy seem ter hev a liquid content? That wuz good stuff an' Oi wuz glad when Oi'd hed enow.

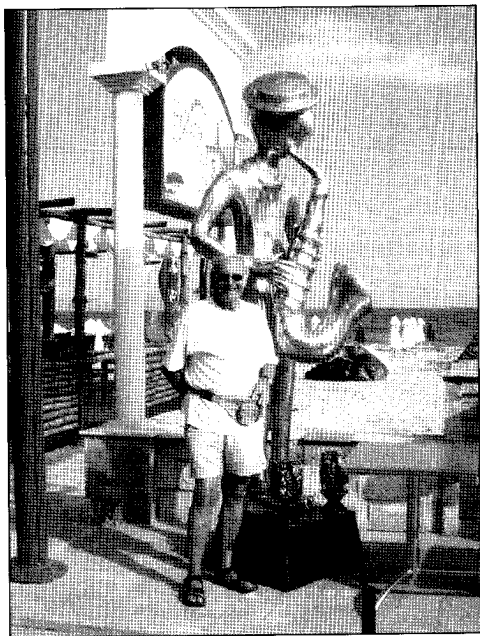
We went to a monastery an' see a little ow boy a-beein' christened. Th'ow parson wuz a-chantin' an' a-hollerin at the top o' his voice, scarin' the little ow fella, an' when they stripped the littlun orf an' dumped him in a grit ow tub he narely shruck the plearce down. An' they reckon we du diff'rent!

Dew yew want enny cheap shats or dresses thass the plearce ter go – cheaper than Primark, my missus reckon!

Funny thing 'bout haarldys is yew allus meet someone who know someone yew know, dorn't yew? Yew allus hatta watch what yew say an' orl, dorn't yew?

Still, we're hum agin now, got things ter dew but Oi reckon she'll be a-gittin' har pin out agin afore long an' giving th'ow map another poke.

Cheerio tergether.



"Thare, an' Oi thort Oi wuz the one with sax appeal!"

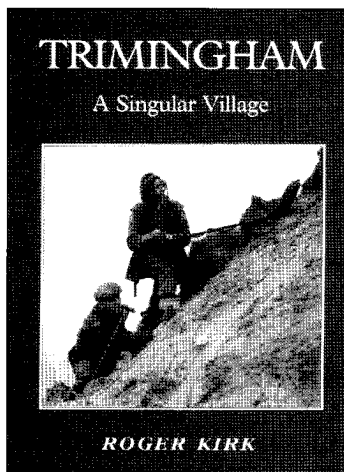


Book Reviews

PETER BROOKS

TRIMINGHAM – A SINGULAR VILLAGE

*Roger Kirk, published by Larks Press 2007.
122pp, 73 b/w illustrations, 5 maps and plans.
ISBN: 1 904006 37 4
Price: £8.50*



*Trimingham,
A Singular
Village by
Roger Kirk*

DRIVE THROUGH Trimingham today along the B1159 coast road and it really does not deserve a second glance. The first one will be fixed on negotiating the narrow road for oncoming traffic and pedestrians.

There is, however, a surprising history to this village and the author has very successfully combined detailed research and boyhood memories to provide a fascinating read. If we know anything about the village it will, no doubt, be the long-running saga of cliff falls, their mining and clearance, together with the presence of a highly visible Radar Station.

During 1940, sappers laid mines both on the beach and in the cliffs. With no invasion during wartime no harm was done.

Danger came post-war when it was discovered the original minefield plans were missing. During the ensuing 26 years, before the beach was

opened to the public, several brave members of the Bomb Disposal Squad lost their lives trying to clear the cliffs and beach, as did a few civilians either walking their dogs or hunting for rabbits.

It is, today, difficult to think of Trimingham being a popular holiday village, with a small, but thriving, fishing industry. Or of evacuees arriving by the coachload from Dagenham to a village that had no piped water until 1955 and no main sewerage until 1982.

The author is to be congratulated on such a detailed and well-researched village history.

BROADER NORFOLK – A QUIZZINARY OF ESSENTIAL NORFOLK

*David Stannard, published by Larks Press.
76pp, 47 b/w illustrations.
ISBN: 1 904006 03 5
Price: £4.95*

IF YOU FIND the word 'Quizzinary' unusual and are tempted to learn more, then this is the book for you. Enjoying quizzes and delving into the meaning of words will be a bonus.

The author has applied the simple idea of setting the scene with a brief introduction to a chosen theme – Ancient Britons, The Eastern Isles and Ancient Hostelties are samples – and then inviting the reader to answer questions relating to such associations as location, meaning and origin.

It is, as the by-line to the title suggests, 'a quizzinary into the exceptional dialect, places and characteristics of the County of Norfolk'.

It is a delightful book to read and one guaranteed to stimulate the old gray cells as you struggle with the questions, but at the very least your knowledge of your home county will be that much improved!

A POPULAR GUIDE TO NORFOLK PLACE-NAMES

James Rye, published by Larks Press.

76pp. ISBN: 0 948400 15 3

Price: £4.95

EVER WONDERED where Norfolk place names come from? This book will tell you, and in a somewhat unusual manner. First there is Part One where you will find reasons why our ancestors chose the names they did, the meaning of place-names and a short section on the influence of successive tribes such as the Celts, Romans, Anglo-Saxons, Scandinavians and Norman French.

Then, instead of the usual alphabetical listing, place-names are split into their subject classifications, such as Crops, Plants and Trees as in Banham; Animals as in Gateley; Birds and Insects as in Corpusty and through Land, Water and Settlements (Gressenhall) to Individuals, Families and Dependents (Hickling).

A comprehensive Index provides a short-cut to any place-name you seek. Altogether a useful and interesting book.

BEATING THE BOUNDS IN GEORGIAN NORWICH

David Berwick, published by Larks Press 2007.

67pp, 102 b/w illustrations, 3 maps.

Price: £6.50

TODAY WE HAVE digitally-produced maps and guides showing exactly where we are at any given location be it city or countryside.

In Georgian times, however, when parishes were responsible for maintaining their own pavements, providing a fire-fighting service, enforcing building regulations and preventing crime it was vital they did not trespass on a neighbour's land because of the extra expense that could be incurred.

So the custom of Beating the Bounds was introduced, originally as a pagan rite to implore

Beating the Bounds in Georgian Norwich



David A. Berwick

*Beating the
Bounds in
Georgian
Norwich
by David
Berwick*

the god Robigus to protect their crops. It was subsequently taken over by Christian communities as a festival based on prayer and supplication, complete with processions, choirs singing and plenty of food and drink. Young boys were 'bumped' to remind them of important boundary points, usually on the rear ends but also occasionally on their heads just to emphasise the point!

This small book is the result of 25 years of dedicated research. It laments the disappearance, through wartime bombing and careless post-war development, of so many historic boundary markers; from a list of some 205 in 1935 to the 90 known today and all illustrated in the book.

It deserves to be on the bookshelf of all Norwich citizens, if only because there may still be some undiscovered markers still waiting to be found.

If any reader does find one the author would be delighted to know of it.

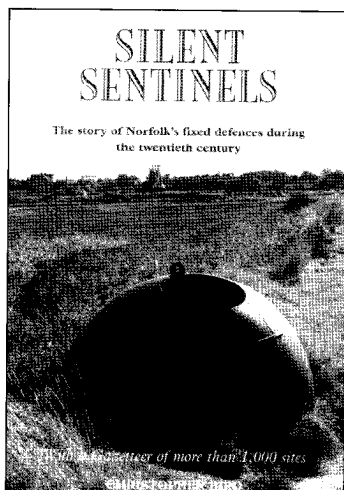
SILENT SENTINELS – The story of Norfolk's fixed defences during the twentieth century.

Christopher Bird, published by Larks Press.

82pp, 53 b/w illustrations, 8 maps and plans.

ISBN: 0 948400 81 1

Price: £6.95



*Silent
Sentinels by
Christopher
Bird*

THE NORFOLK COAST, especially that stretch along the North Norfolk bit, has always been considered a prime potential invasion area.

Today, there are reminders all along the coastal strip, and inland, of the defensive measures which were taken to oppose an invading force.

In this well-researched book the author outlines military strategies to impede, rather than annihilate, any such army with 'stoplines' based on coastal geography and rivers such as the Ant, Bure, Wensum, Yare and Ouse. The village of Thursford, renowned for its Christmas Spectacular Show, for example, would have been a key defensive point manned by members of the local Home Guard.

Pillboxes, strategically placed, were to be important points of defence. The author, whilst expressing concern that so many have been demolished, reminds us that 'hundreds', of varying designs, still survive across the Norfolk countryside.

The book is well-illustrated to provide a permanent record of part of our wartime heritage. As such it should be preserved and it is encouraging this is being done by a few far-sighted Councils.

It is doubtful if they will be required again. Any future conflict will be settled by unknown men pressing buttons in unknown locations many miles away.

ALBIE'S POEMS – REFLECTIONS OF A NORFOLK LAD

Ashley Gray, published by Geo R Reeve Ltd.

32pp, 44 b/w illustrations.

ISBN: 9780900 616 78 5

Price: £3.99

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED by Ashley Gray, this charming little book contains many amusing, yet thought-provoking, short poems.

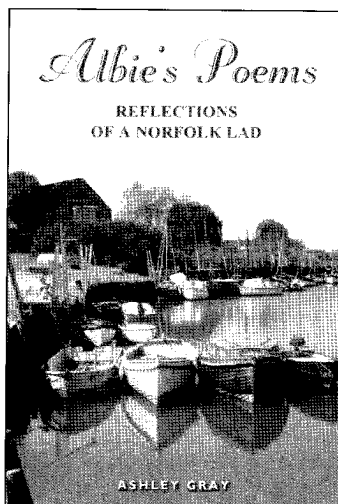
Produced as a popular A5-size book with over twenty pieces of poetry, it covers a variety of subjects and has been lovingly illustrated by the author with over forty enchanting pen and ink drawings.



With thirty-two pages of delightful poetry there's something to suit all tastes, be it amusing or nostalgic, such as a short piece about Spring, or a visit to see the Doctor.

"Oh, yes," he said, "that's going around, I've had it bad myself!" Sounds all too familiar.

There's also some poetry written in good old Norfolk dialect as well: *No plearce loike home* – something for everyone in fact!



*Albie's
Poems by
Ashley Gray*



An Inflexible Friend

ALBIE OF WINDUM

ARE YOU LIKE the gal Margaret and me, happily existing with the absolute minimum of these here plastic 'credit' cards? Or do you have a vast collection, with 'em all dangling down like a multi-coloured banner, neatly encased in clear plastic? Perhaps on the other hand you don't want to bother with all that there 'squit' associated with them; if that be so, I can't blame you in the light of *our* past experiences.

Every week, on a Tuesday morning, regular as Syrup of Figs, we go along to our local supermarket. It's a household name where we come from and we can't fault the friendly service we receive – well, not *usually*.

Now, I've always been known as an impatient shopper, I don't like being kept waiting or standing in a long queue, so, for that reason, we're always first through the doors at half-past-eight every Tuesday and woe betide anyone who gets in *my* way!

Going round the 'aisles' filling our moderately-sized shopping trolley – y'know the one, that always steers to the right – we are soon finished and prepared to pay our hard-earned cash for our purchases. Then out comes the 'plastic friend'. No, not to settle up on 'tick', but to confirm to the shop in question that *our* cheque is as good as the next person's and will be honoured by our bank. But, on one occasion, a year or so ago, we were in for a very rude shock indeed.

"Thass noo good, that there card o' yars," announced the checkout operative, in a rather petulant manner, having swiped all our groceries through at such a lightning rate that we were still struggling to coax the first of many tins and packets into the colourful bag that clearly advertised the store's identity!

Now, to explain, we *had* been rather caught off guard by all that week's offers and had just *slightly* gone over our self-imposed limit, but only by a merest pound or two.

"What'ya on about?" I asked the mawther who was, by now, reaching for the bell to summon a supervisor. "Hev ya gorn sorft in the hid?"

"That there card o' yars is only good fur fifty pound," the Supervisor declared, throwing her head back in a snooty manner. "We'll hatta 'phone Head Office to git it approved!"

Well, I thought, that was a *bit* odd, bearing in mind that most of the assistants know us quite well – as did the young lady in question, jiffing around on her seat in eagerness at getting her hands on the next customer – so I told them so.

"Rules is rules," replied the Supervisor, in no uncertain terms. "You'll hatta git another card, if yew watta spend more'n fifty quid, dew yew'll hatta put suffin' back!"

To be fair, on that occasion, she let us off with a caution and didn't pry too deeply into our bank details.

A few weeks later, there we were again nice and early to avoid the rush – but this time armed with a spanking new card that promised to pay the vendor whatsoever they should ask.

"Nourthin' can go wrong today, my little ole Mawther," I told Margaret, exuding the utmost confidence, proudly clutching our brand-new springy plastic cheque guarantee card.

How I was to regret those ill-timed words!

Same assistant, same palaver, you should have seen us scrambling about trying to control the unabated flood of merchandise off the end of the conveyer belt, vainly attempting to guide our groceries into the shopping bags provided.

I'm glad to tell you, through our pooled efforts, Margaret and I were victorious, and our shopping bags were soon brimming over.

I handed over a blank cheque for the store in question to print out for us – such are the miracles of modern technology – and proudly showed off our pristine, unused, flexible friend, which seemed to impress the check-out girl.

Our cheque disappeared into the hidden depths of her cash-desk-printer and, after much whirring and beeping, eventually emerged for us to sign.

"Oh, *blas' me*," sighed the girl, "I've gorn an' pressed the wrong button!"

The cheque was printed out upside down!

"D'yew know thass the fust toime I've ever done that!"

Once again help was summoned by the bell.

"What *would* yew like to do?" the Supervisor politely asked us, giving us a knowing smile.

By now the customers behind us had begun to view our situation with much ear-twitching and a high degree of suspicion.

'We'd loike t' pay ya for our shoppin' an' git home," I replied, trying to disguise my impatience as I felt my neck redden.

"Oh, *noo*," she retorted, "yew carn't dew *that*."

"Tear that there cheque up an' I'll gi' ya another one," I helpfully offered.

"Noo; yew carn't dew that *either*," she replied, shaking her head. "It's awl gorn through now."

I didn't understand where it had gone through to, and told her so, to which she agreed to 'sort it'.

Eventually, after ten minutes of wrangling, negotiating, head-shaking, refunding and signing of slips, we were asked – for a *new* cheque!

I wasn't too pleased, I can tell you, and left the store in a bit of a huff, leaving poor old Margaret to sign the cheque and lug the bags to our motor.

But, wasn't it better in the *old* days?

How many of you can recall the times before hypermarkets, supermarkets or even self-service, and all the panic buying? I do, and it was a less-hectic way of life, I can tell you.



"Go on, Albie, give it a shove!"

As a boy, I helped my father in the Sheringham Co-op, during the early 'fifties, when he was the Manager. I was twelve or thirteen at the time and to keep me out of mischief in my long summer holidays Dad put me to work filling and weighing up bags of sugar – you know the ones, blue paper bags with the folded-in tops.

I did weigh up bags of biscuits once – in those days they were never pre-packed and came in shiny, silver square tins – but we usually ended up having to sell them cheaply as 'broken biscuits', due to my cackhandedness, no doubt!

Smartly-dressed, white-coated assistants stood behind their respective counters ready to treat all their customers to some good old-fashioned personal attention. Ah, those *were* the days!

When it came to taking the money, that was the easy part, as it was all done by a cashier in a kiosk situated at the far corner of the shop.

Sheringham Co-op had, by that time, dispensed with separate cash-tills on each counter and replaced them with the some modern technology of the day – an overhead cable-car system.

Each counter was linked to the glass-fronted kiosk where the overhead catenary terminated, sometimes by a circuitous route.

"That'll be thirteen-an'-sixpence-ha'penny," said Billy Lubbock, one of the counter assistants, after totalling up Mary Crowe's weekly order. Reaching above him, he unscrewed the bakelite cup under the swaying cable-car and placed in it the lady's cash and hastily-scrawled 'divi' slip, before replacing it and giving a spring-loaded handle a really good pull. Soon the overhead wires began to sing merrily as the cash winged its way to the cashier.

However, on this occasion, running 'out of steam', the cable-car juddered to a halt half-way.

"Go on, Albie," Billy called out, "give it a shove, will yew?"

Using a broom handle, I obliged by tapping it all the way to the kiosk.

Huffing and puffing, tapping that darned clanking cable-car back and forth along those twanging wires, I began to realise how 'Heath Robinson-ish' this set up was. In the future, I told myself, things would be *much* different, far more efficient. But how *wrong* I was to be!

Then the day dawned when we entered the space age, or so it seemed to us, with the delivery by our friendly postie of our new 'chip and pin' technology, to replace our ageing plastic card!

Strange analogy, I thought, as to me 'chips' were to eat, tasty though prone to weight gain, and a 'pin' was used by us seaside folk to extract winkles and the like from their shells.

The day came to try out our new card. Same assistant, same palaver, but, safe in the certain knowledge that, surely nothing *could* go wrong this time, we inserted the card into the reader and prepared to tap in our indelibly-etched numbers.

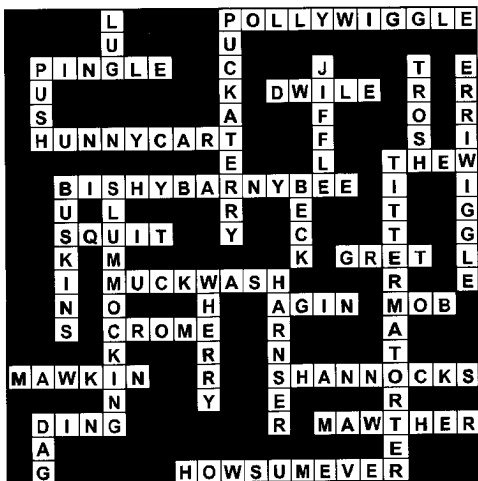
"Noo good yew a-doin' that," she said, with a wave of her hand, "the compooter's down!"

Now, *where* did I leave that broom handle?

Dialect Crossword Answers

ACROSS: 2 Pollywiggles. 3 Pingle. 7 Dwile. 8 Hunnycart. 9 Thew. 10 Bishybarneybee. 13 Squit. 14 Gret. 15 Muckwash. 18 Agin. 19 Mob. 20 Crome. 21 Mawkin. 22 Shannocks. 23 Ding. 24 Mawther. 25 Howsumever.

DOWN: 1 Lug. 2 Puckaterry. 3 Push. 4 Jiffle. 5 Trosh. 6 Erriwiggles. 9 Tittermatorter. 10 Buskins. 11 Slummocking. 12 Beck. 16 Wherry. 17 Harnser. 23 Dag.



Answers to a Norfolk Quiz

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Westwick Street, Norwich. | 6 You pay for yourself! |
| 2 30th July, 1900. | 7 The Flying Scotsman. |
| 3 A talk, chat or gossip. | 8 Keswick. |
| 4 Henry Bell. | 9 1972. |
| 5 St Peter Mancroft. | 10 A scythe. |

SOMETHING TO SAY? WHY NOT PUT PEN TO PAPER?



OR, BETTER STILL, if you have access to a computer, please submit your letter or article as good hard copy printed in a clear font such as Arial or Times Roman. If it's on a disk, or CD, in MS Word, all the better!

Send all material to the Editor at 37 Ashleigh Gardens, Wymondham, Norfolk NR18 0EY. If preferred, **text only** may be sent as an email attachment to: merrymawkin@ashleygray.waitrose.com – any photos by post please, together with your contact details for return.

All material for the Winter Issue of *The Merry Mawkin* to the Editor by Monday 12 November 2007, please.



FOND Officers



President

Professor Peter Trudgill
32 Bathurst Road
Norwich NR2 2PP
Tel: 01603 618036

Chairman

Colin Burleigh
7 William Cowper Close
Toftwood
Dereham NR19 1LT
Tel: 01362 697654

Vice-Chairman/ Education Officer

Norman Hart
Avonside
42 London Road
Harleston IP20 9BW
Tel: 01379 852677

Acting Secretary

Peter Brooks
68a Cromer Road
Sheringham NR26 8RT
Tel: 01263 822895

Membership Secretary

Brenda Bizzell
Walnut Tree House
Forncett St Peter NR16 1HR
Tel: 01953 789592

Treasurer

Janet Woodhouse
Tumbleweed Cottage
Eastgate Street
North Elmham
Dereham NR20 5HE
Tel: 01362 668525

Technical Officer

Stewart Orr
Priors Croft Barn
Withersdale
Harleston IP20 0JG
Tel: 01379 854458

Committee Members

John Austrin
Euneda House
Yarmouth Road
Stalham NR12 9DF

Owen Church
Hemsby Post Office
Hemsby
Great Yarmouth NR29 4AA

Jean Eaglen
Two Hoots
Manson Green
Hingham
Norwich NR9 4PY
Tel: 01953 850417

Ted Peachment
The Nest
Woodgate
Swanton Morley
Dereham NR20 4NU

Vera Youngman
Forge House
Station Road
Yaxham
Dereham NR19 1RD

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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

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Postcode Telephone.....

Please send completed form (*photocopies accepted*) to :

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Cheques made out to FOND, please.