



The Merry Mawkin

£1

Number 28
Spring 2008

THE NEWSLETTER OF FRIENDS OF NORFOLK DIALECT



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COVER PICTURE *Many hands make light work at Reedham.*

EDITOR'S COLLECTION

EDITOR/DESIGNER

Ashley Gray
37 Ashleigh Gardens
Wymondham
Norfolk NR18 0EY

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A Mardle with the Editor

ASHLEY GRAY

A FEW WEEKS AGO I received an email from an old friend of mine, a work colleague from the 'good old days' at Jarrold Printing. Some of you may even recall him, Peter Salt, a member of Kemp's Men, a group of Morris dancers who delight everyone as they cavort and dance their way – 'Will Kemp' fashion – from one hostelry to another, imbibing as they go with bells a-jingling!

Peter, it seems, had been rummaging through a Norwich second-hand bookshop, and was eager to 'test' me with a recent discovery.

"Did you kno-ow," quizzed Peter, in his usual matter-a-fact sort of way, "that the dialect word 'mardle' has *another* meaning?"

I had to confess I did not, as, to me, it had always meant to indulge in some form of friendly social banter. But, no, my friend revealed, it was *originally* an old Norfolk word given to a 'pond'!

Recovering from my surprise – aghast at my lack of knowledge – I quickly referred to *Broad Norfolk* by Jonathan Mardle and there it was amongst the hallowed pages of that fine treatise: *Mardle* (n. and v.i.), (1) Pond. (2) To gossip.

But *how* did one of our most well-known dialect words derive its second meaning, and *which* came first, 'pond' or 'gossip'?

Along the way, it may have had a change of usage to disguise the *true* nature of the time spent by individuals at said pond on their masters' business! But can anyone enlighten me?

However, it's all right expounding theories, of this and that, as long as you know what you're spuffling on about. Take my comments in the last *Merry Mawkin*, for instance, with regard to the way true locals would have pronounced 'Cley', that pretty little village in north Norfolk so popular with bird watchers and tourists alike.

As you may recall, one correspondent said he always pronounced it as 'Clay' but I just *had* to suggest it should be 'Cly', which prompted our President, Peter Trudgill, to emerge from the solitude of the salt marsh with some home-grown evidence from his Granny, a *true* local, and one who had lived in the village many years ago.

At one point it seemed a fusillade of lightly-boiled samphire was about to be exchanged at dawn, but, I'm pleased to report, common sense prevailed and we agreed to concur – well *almost*. Anyway, read all about it on page four!

However, the most *strangest* of things: Jonathan Mardle, of *all* people, refers to the village as 'Cly' in his book – and goes on to blame telephone operators for the change!

Books are such wonderful things, aren't they? So full of knowledge, learning, and flights of fancy – and far more capable of awakening the moribund imagination than *any* virtual trip on the World Wide Web can *ever* hope to do.

I can still recall a few lines from a book from my childhood days, in which the author, George Beardmore, following a 'long and tiresome illness' was prescribed by his Doctor to: "Go into the country and do... nothing!"

"I am pleasantly lazy by nature," the ailing one confessed. "I hate travelling and prefer nothing better than to sit by a sunny window."

Taking his doctor's advice, he ventured into the country and was so successful at 'doing nothing' that his book *Going Into the Country* was the result – a darned good read then, and it still is!

As a child, living by the north Norfolk coast with all the attractions it offered, excursions into the hinterland were extremely rare and, in my case, accountable on the fingers of one hand.

There were, of course, the weekend visits to the Regal cinema in Cromer, 'bussing to the Saturday matinée of 'Dick Barton, Special Agent'!

But *how* could I ever forget those idyllic cycle rides along the coast road to Webborne, Salt'ouse and Cly – oh dear, *should* I have said 'Clay'?

EDITOR'S CONTACT DETAILS

The Merry Mawkin, Ashley Gray,
Ailsha, 37 Ashleigh Gardens,
Wymondham, Norfolk, NR18 0EY
Tel: 01953 607161
Email: merrymawkin@ashleygray.waitrose.com



The Chairman's Report

COLIN BURLEIGH

WELL, THE NEW YEAR is upon us and Christmas seems just a memory now and it's 'heads down' as we look forward, hopefully, to another interesting and busy year for FOND members.

I hope that the New Year has begun in a happy way for everyone and that, healthwise, you are all fit enough to be able to participate in the 'Dews' your committee will be preparing for you.

I am grateful to Tony Clarke for his efforts to see that the annual pantomime at North Elmham on 13 January went off with its usual chaos, and thanks are due to Pat for her part as wardrobe mistress. There seemed to be several new 'faces' there and I hope that some of them may have been moved enough to contemplate joining our ranks.

John Austrin and Owen Church have agreed to organize a 'Boy John' event for you and this should be taking place at Potter Heigham on

Sunday 30 March, and I shall look forward to meeting you there. Another date on the calendar, not to be missed, is the annual North Norfolk Dialect Festival to be held at Cromer Parish Hall on Tuesday 29 April. Keith Skipper, our first Chairman, adjudicated this event for many years, but has now relinquished the position and it has been my pleasure to have been invited to step into his shoes. I hope that I'm able to bring to it the expertise that Keith has shown during his time in that office.

Plans are going ahead for another meeting with our friends from Far Welter'd later in the year and the date will be advised in a later edition of *The Merry Mawkin*. We hope that this is an association that will continue to flourish.

Now I shall hatta go out an' water th'ow garden afore the hoospice ban tearke effect!

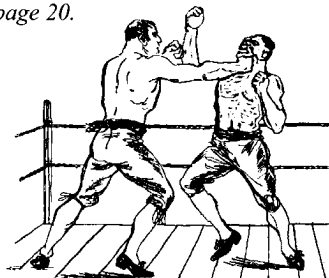


The Boy Colin's Norfolk Quiz

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF BYGONE DAYS

- 1 When was the building of Norwich Guildhall started?
- 2 What was the name of the lifeboat coxed by Henry Blogg at the time he won his first gold medal?
- 3 Who was hailed as Norfolk's answer to Thomas Hardy?
- 4 Which Norwich hospital can be found off Golden Dog Lane?
- 5 Who did Jem Mace beat in 1863 to become World Champion?
- 6 What is a balk?
- 7 Where was Allan Smethurst, The Singing Postman, born?
- 8 Where can the Black Tower be found in Norwich?
- 9 What is a fresher?
- 10 When was the last occasion that Norwich City FC had to seek re-election to the Football League?

Answers on page 20.





From Our President

IS IT 'CLAY' or 'CLY'? ASKS PETER TRUDGILL

EVERYBODY FROM NORFOLK knows that there is a very pleasant village on the north coast of our county called Cley. But *do* we know how to pronounce that name? Some of us say 'Clay' and others say 'Cly'. But what *should* we say? What is the *correct* pronunciation? Well, maybe that's not a very good question.

We *all* know what the correct pronunciation of 'Norwich' is. But there are several places in the USA with the name of Norwich which are called 'Norr-witch' – and it doesn't make much sense for us to say that's a mistake – if you are stuck somewhere in the middle of Vermont and ask the way to 'Norridge', it probably won't get you far!

When we talk about the 'correct' way of pronouncing a place name, what we probably really mean is something like 'what it's always been called traditionally' and/or 'what the locals call it'. We have to be a little bit careful about appealing too much to tradition, though, because the mediaeval pronunciation of Norwich was something rather like 'Norr-witch'. That's why it's spelt like that – modern English spelling is a very good indication of how English was pronounced in the Middle Ages, and place names are no exception. Ilppisburgh is spelt like that because its Old English meaning was 'the burg [fort] belonging to a man called Hæp'.

Even the point about 'what the locals call it' is a bit difficult, because that can change too. Ipswich was called 'Ipsidge' until the 1930s. But then the locals were so influenced by what bossy outsiders and incomers called it that they changed what they called it too – and of course the outsiders were simply going by the spelling. Many other places have suffered that fate – Wiveton used to be 'Wiff'n', and Hunstanton wobbles between older 'Hunston' and newer 'Hunstanton', and what about Northrepps and Southrepps? 'Spelling pronunciations' are a phenomenon which began to affect the English language during the first years of the 20th century when, for the first time, most people could read, and some insecure people had started worrying

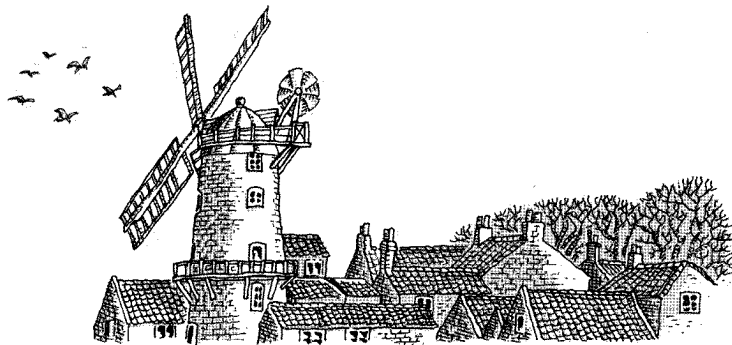
about speaking 'correctly' and looked to the spelling for guidance. We all now say 'handkerchief' more or less as it is spelt, but the older pronunciation was 'hankercha'.

So *what* about Cley? What do locals call it? (*Are* there any locals?) – and what *is* the traditional pronunciation? Are they the same thing? What is the evidence?

There is quite a lot of evidence that the 'correct' pronunciation is 'Cly'; and there are older maps which show the village as 'Cly'. The Cley website specifies that it should be 'Cly'; and the owners of CleySpy clearly also think it's pronounced like that.

Then there's the modern spelling. Now you might think that the spelling was actually in favour of 'Clay' – after all, think of the pronunciation of *obey*, *fey*, *grey*, *prey*, *osprey*, *they*, *why*. But actually this works against the 'Clay' camp. It's a useful rule-of-thumb for place name pronunciations that if there are two different pronunciations, the one which is least like the spelling is the correct one. After all, why would anyone pronounce Wymondham 'Wind'm' unless that was the right way of saying it? So it could be that 'Clay' is just a newer spelling pronunciation like 'Ips-witch'.

But there is also quite a lot of evidence in favour of the 'Clay' variant. First of all, if we are going to use arguments about the traditional pronunciation, then it is very clear that 'Clay' wins hands down. All English place names, in the mouths of our Anglo-Saxon and Danish ancestors, meant something; indeed, the original Old English name of the village of Cley was 'Clæg', and the word *clæg* quite simply meant 'clay'. The village was given that name 1,500 years or so ago because of its clayey soil. *Clæg* gives us modern English *clay* just as Old English *dæg* gives us modern *day* and *mæg* gives us *may*. There are many other place names in England which derive from the Old English word *clæg*: Claybrooke (Leicestershire), Claydon (one in Berkshire, one in Suffolk), Claygate (Surrey),



*In Domesday,
Cley-Next-The-Sea
appears as a place of
some consequence
under the name
'Claia'.*

Clayhanger (Cheshire), Clayhidon (Devon), Claypole and Claythorpe (Lincolnshire), and many places called Clayton. In every single case, the modern pronunciation has 'clay' and not 'cly'.

Mediaeval documents also provide us with spellings of our village name as 'Claya', and I have also seen a 16th century map with the name spelt 'Clay'.

But a very telling argument for me comes from my own family. My uncle, who died recently aged 95, was born in Cley in 1911, and quite naturally my grandmother was living there at the time. Like my grandfather, she was born in the 1880s, and was a *real* local. She came from very many generations of North Norfolk stock – and she always said 'Clay'. She was not the sort of person to worry very much about what was 'right' or 'wrong', and there was no reason for her to call it 'Clay' except that that was what it was called. (She always called North Walsham 'Wals'm'; and historically speaking, she was right there too – the original meaning of Walsham was 'the ham [home] of a man called Walh'.)

My grandmother called Cley 'Clay', we can suppose, because that was what it had *always* been called, going back many, many generations to her Anglo-Saxon forbears. I had never heard it called 'Cly' until the 1960s, when I was in my teens, and then I heard this pronunciation from people I considered to be 'posh' – visiting birdwatchers!

So where did the newer 'Cly' pronunciation come from? Well, it could perhaps be a spelling pronunciation, with outsiders being misled by analogy with the word eye. But a more likely

explanation is this. When posh outsiders first started coming to north Norfolk in large numbers, they heard people saying 'Clay' in a Norfolk dialect with which they were not familiar. This vowel sound in our accent was very different from what they were used to hearing – think of Her Majesty saying *day* – and they interpreted it as being a long 'i'. To them, a Norfolk person saying *paint* would sound more like *pint*, and *day* would sound like *die*.

Their confusion would have been increased by the fact that the Norfolk dialect had two different long 'a' sounds. The old Norfolk dialect does not pronounce words like *clay*, *stay* and *paid*, spelt with *ai* or *ay*, with the same vowel as words like *made*, *plate*, and *place*, spelt with *a_e*.

So for most words where the outsiders had their posh long 'a', Norfolk people wouldn't have had the 'aay' of words like *day* but the sound we generally represent in dialect writing as *gate* 'geart', *face* 'fearce'. The incomers were not prepared for the fact that Norfolk people pronounced words like *made* and *maid*, *daze* and *days* differently – 'dearze' versus 'daays'. So their reasoning would have been that if their posh long 'a' sound in *gate* corresponded to Norfolk 'geart', then the sound they were hearing in Cley couldn't be a long 'a' – and so it must have been a long 'i', because that was what it sounded like. So Cley, they thought, was 'Cly'. But my Granny thought different – and *I'm* sticking with her!

Peter returns in the summer *Merry Mawkin* with the continuation of **How not to make Norfolk people cross** – *Editor*.



The Trans-Norfolk Highway

SID KIPPER

SID KIPPER



THE TRANS-NORFOLK goes from Lynn to Mundesley, or vice-versa, depending on which way up you hold the map. Mind you, some people say it don't exist. Well, they're just showing off their own ignorance, when they'd be far better hiding it

under a bushel, because the road's even got a number. It's the B1145.

My antecedor, 'Gentleman' Jack Kipper, had a famous ride along it, and he couldn't have done that if it weren't there, could he? No he could not is the answer, in case you were wondering – or hidden under a bushel. He was a notorious highwayman, because he rode a horse. If he'd been on foot he'd have been a footpad. The way to progress from one job to the other was by way of being a horse-thief. On his ride, he notoriously leapt the turnpike bar at Gaywood Hall to avoid paying. Unfortunately his horse didn't, so old 'Gent' had to pay to go back and get it, and then pay again to take it through. They were very strict in them days.

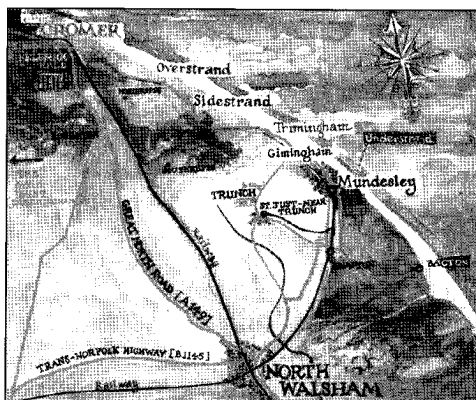
The Trans-Norfolk goes through loads of places. Places like North Elmham, which hundreds of years ago used to be a city, but got relegated after a run of poor results. And Reepham, which at one time had three churches, but one got razed not long after it got raised, in the Great Fire of Reepham, in 1543. Another idea them Londoners nicked.

Then there's Cawston, which has its own winery. And Aylsham, Banningham, Felmingham, and North Walsham – in fact the Trans-Norfolk is full of hams, due to it once being a major pig-droving route. Banningham is where they tried to stop it, but it was all to know of ale, as they say, and nothing come of it.

After Swafield, with its naturist reserve, and Knapton, which we don't talk about where I come from, at last it's Mundesley. And them four word's not something you hear said too often.

Of course my little village of St Just-near-Trunch lies just off the Trans-Norfolk, so we get the breast of both worlds. We get the convenience of travel, without all the hustle and bustle – although I don't know what people have got against bustles anyway.

I could go on – I often do. But I know what you're thinking. You're thinking all them fascinating facts would make a great stage show, if they were illuminated with some songs, say; and a few stories, perhaps. Funny you should think that! I'm planning to call it 'Mud & Pullets'.



COURTESY: PATRICK LOAN/TERENCE LOAN

This map, showing the Trans-Norfolk Highway, is taken from the front cover of Sid Kipper's best-seller, Prewd and Prejudice, now in its sixth edition!

Forthcoming Norfolk appearances of Sid (apart from drinking in various pubs):

29 March, Sheringham Little Theatre
Country Cod Pieces.

1 April, Norwich Maddermarket Theatre
Should The Team Think.

10 May, Cromer Pier Pavilion
Folk On The Pier.



Wordsearch: Broads and River Places

BRENDA BIZZELL

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

No apologies for including all my favourite places, especially St Benet's Abbey where I first met my husband (aaah!).

Acle	Langley
Aylsham	Ludham
Barton Turf	Martham
Belaugh	Oby
Breydon	Ormesby
Buxton	Potter Heigham
Cantley	Reedham
Coltishall	St Benet's Abbey
Dilham	Salhouse
Filby	Stokesby
Hickling	Sutton
Horsey	Thorpe St Andrew
Hoveton	Wroxham

Answers on page 20.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

A FOND TRIBUTE TO THE BOY JOHN

The Friends of Norfolk Dialect (FOND) present an afternoon of entertainment to pay tribute to Sidney Grapes and the Boy John, who helped put our Norfolk dialect firmly on the map.

It will be held on Sunday 30 March, at 2pm, in Potter Heigham Village Hall. Admission £3. This will be a right good Dew – so cum yew on tergether!

Further details from: John Austrin *Tel:* 01692 580517 or Owen Church *Tel:* 01493 730210.

CELEBRATION OF NORFOLK DIALECT

The Annual Celebration of Norfolk Dialect, which forms part of the Cromer and North Norfolk Festival, is to be held on Tuesday 29 April, at 7.30pm, in the Cromer Parish Hall.

As most of you will be aware, Keith Skipper decided, after 25 consecutive years, 2007 was to be his final year as adjudicator. The role this year will be taken by Colin Burleigh and, with his vast knowledge and experience of our dialect, we are confident he is the person to fill this post.

So, please come along to give support on the night, to take part or just listen and have a good laugh in the audience. "Tha's allus a bloomin' good Dew!"

Further details from: Derek Paul, 3 Church Close, Overstrand, NR27 0NY *Tel:* 01263 579688.



Weavers' Green: Then and Now

ASHLEY GRAY



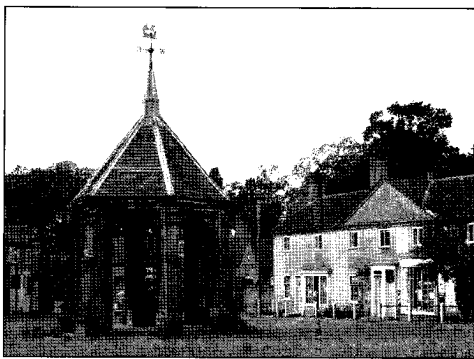
ALL PICTURES FROM EDITOR'S COLLECTION



THEN: (Above) Heydon's pretty village green. In front of the church stands the very ornate village well and on the left, near a shop selling 'Lyons Cakes' and 'Gold Flake', a tradesman is busy unloading crates of 'Corona Gold Medal Fruit Drinks'.

NOW: (Left) Today the buildings remain almost the same although the green has been 'plagued' by white posts and chains. Sadly, cars are parked everywhere, despite 'polite' requests to use the car park behind the pub!

THEN: (Below) A keen wind blows the weather vane round into the East.



IT IS HARD TO BELIEVE over forty years have passed since the picturesque village of Heydon, near Cawston, was transformed into the fictional *Weavers' Green* by the people from Anglia TV.

The twice-weekly series revolved around the everyday life of two vets and featured the likes of Grant Taylor, Megs Jenkins and John Savident, assisted by glamorous Susan George, Wendy Richards and Kate O'Mara, with a very young Dennis Waterman 'minding' the situation.

However, even in 1966, the Norfolk dialect proved to be somewhat of a challenge for the actors – but, has *anything* changed, I wonder?

Weavers' Green, although popular at the time, was killed off by the 'big boys' at ITV, with its time slot taken by *Crossroads* – a story of 'Brummy' hotel folk, with accents to match!

Today, Heydon survives in seclusion, hidden from general gaze down leafy lanes, accessed by only one road into the village, just north of the Cawston/Oulton crossroads, off the B1149.



"That sune cum an' went, din't it?"

SAYS THE BOY COLIN

ARTER ORL THAT RIPPIN' an' a'rushin' about, Christmas ruddy sune flew by, din't it? Wot wi' people a'pushin' an' a'shovin' one another round th'ow shops ter spend money that they can't really afford, that mearke yer wonder if thass orl warth it. Grit ow trolley loads a'grub from the supermarket just fer a cuppla dears an' blow me if they ent there agin arter another lot tha dear arter Boxing Day. Oi don't reckon sum onnem know what the real meaning o' Christmas is.

Fer me, one o' the best things is ter see them little ow kids fearces when they git their Christingle oranges an' loight the candles, singing 'Away in a Manger'. Thow I're gotta own up ter not seein' onnem this last Christmas Eve on account a'durn moi turn in tha grotto up Norwich. Moind yew, that din't dew me a lotta good this toime. The kids seemed ter hev a special arrearngement a'longa Santa – he give them a present and they give him orl the bugs an' colds yew kin think on. Oi'm still a'hackin' and a'corfin' a month learter.

They orl seem ter be arter these hare Nintendo things these dears an' Oi say ter one little ow boy: "Oi dun't know if there'll be enow ter go round". Yew can't steal a march onnem thow kin yew? He say: "They're still got pletty in Argos."

Oi spent New Year's Eve a'bangin' moi drums and warblin' down in Suffolk but yew're gotta be

somewhere hent yew? Oi dun't loike th' thutty-fust o' December a lot cors Oi allus think thass another yare gorn an' a'cors if yew're had a good 'un yew can't help thinkin' whether this one kin git any better. Still thass no good dwelling on the past is it?

Sometimes Oi think that is cors that dun't seem we hossed about sa farst in them dears and that din't fare ter corst anywhere near sa much ter live. Jist yew look at tha price a' petrol, stamps, an' grub terday, bor, that frighten yer, dun't it? Still, musn't grumble dew they'll put a tax onnit.

Thass wholly bin a wet ow start ter tha yare, hen't it? Tork about webbed feet wather an' they reckon thass bin the warmest January fer yares. We want a few good ow rimers ter kill th'ow bugs and garms and dew we dun't hev no snow we shorn't hev no pictures ter put on this yare's Christmas cards.

Tha missus hev hed a good dew just leartley. Oi took har ter see the panto in Norwich an' then down the 'Smoke' ter see a West End show. Can't tell yew what it was called but there wuz a bloke called Les Miserables in the leading part!

She's still a'mearkin' our soops an' we're got vegetable terday an', blarst, that whooly smell good. Tha pleerce mats and spuns are on the tearble so Oi better be orf now.

Cheerio tergether.

WELL, EN'T THAT A RUMMUN?

This ole parson he wuz a-wisitn' a parishioner in the West Norridge horspital one day, an' she wuz in the Coslany Ward. En't that a rummun how all them there wards is nearmed arter plearcas in th' city?

Well, he couldn't git a wud in edgewears, corse this ole mawthur, in the next bed ter the person he'd come t' wisit, kep' on a-talkin' ter him. She wuz hooly higgerent, she wuz!

"Yew know what wear orl got in hare, dun't yow, Wicca?" she sear t' him.

He shook his head corse he din't hev a cloo.

"Wear all got 'coslannies'," replied the old leardy, "corse thet sear so on th' dor."

"Did the doctor tell you that?" he asked.

"Wer, nooo," she replied, "he navver look up at the nootices so he wun't know. He allus hev his head in our notes, yer see!"

She wun't so far wrong, wuz she? Thass a rummun, bor, summa these hear people know more'un yew think!

Sent in by Peter C Nicholson.



HERE ARE JUST A FEW of the emails we have received at www.norfolkdialect.com over the past three months.

Stephen Webster loves Norfolk, and writes:

"We must never forget those who have gone before and made Norfolk what it is today. I have lived here all my life and love this county as much now as when I was a boy in the '60s and '70s.

Anything that helps to keep those memories alive must be encouraged!

Keep up the good work Mr Skipper!"

[Editor's note: My sentiments entirely! Our rich tapestry must never be permitted to fade, shaped, as it has been, by such colourful characters over countless generations.

Even today, the process continues with the likes of our well-known Norfolk-bred-and-born sons and daughters 'doing their bit' to ensure that 'Norfolk (Squit) Lives Forever'!]

The Boy Gerry suggests a flag for our County:

"Blast boi, howyer gittin orn? Over the years my Norfolk accent has been watered down to a shadow of its former self – sad, int it?"

I was born in South Lopham, Norfolk, in 1943 and moved to Gasthorpe, Norfolk, around 1951/2 and then to Norwich during 1955.

A spell in the forces and working in other parts of the country have all eroded the accent.

My maternal grandmother (Great Ellingham) enjoyed a broad Norfolk accent and my mother's accent still has a good smattering of Norfolk 'singsonginess'.

Here's an idea: Cornwall has its own flag – what about we design our own? Perhaps a rampant sugarbeet on a yellow background, or whatever? Come on you design students, get on with the task in hand!

Our flag would be flown at all crossing points into our fair county – especially on the occasion of Skip's birthday!

Keep yar a-troshin'!"

Richard Kent from 'Down Under' says:

"Love the website. I think what you are trying to do is terrific. Keep it up."

James, from Thurne, is beginning to appreciate the Norfolk dialect, and comments:

"I was looking on Wikipedia about the Norfolk dialect, and I never realised how much I speak is actually part of the dialect.

It's so funny talking to people from different places who don't understand 'Norfolk'.

At the tender age of 19, living in Thurne – but originally from Caister, with family from Caister and Yarmouth – I'm beginning to appreciate 'Norfolk' so much!

Keep up the good work."

Barry Chilton asks:

"Does anyone remember News from Dumpton and Harbut?"

[Editor's note: Maurice Woods, at one time London editor of the *Eastern Daily Press*, kept up 'Harbert's News from Dumpton' in the *Norwich Mercury*, for a great many years after leaving his native county – according to Jonathan Mardle in his book 'Broad Norfolk'.]

John Starling enjoys visiting our Website:

"Born and raised in Docking, I have read with interest most pages of your site.

My dad was a very proud Norfolkman. I have a copy of a poem about Norfolk people somewhere, I will have to look it up.

Great site and a wonderful idea to keep 'Norfolk' going strong in these years of heavy dilution. I will join and find time to get involved in some way."

[Editor's note: Speaking of poetry; *A Year Go By*, written by John Kett and published by Reeve in 1981, contains an anthology of over a hundred dialect poems, and is well worth a read – if you can still find a copy, that is!]



Norfolk: A Poetic County

LIL LANDIMORE AND HERB SYMONDS

A RARE NOICE PLEARCE

By Lil Landimore

NORFICK is a rare noice plearce,
Buth charm and bew'y tha' embrearce;
Markit town and villige street,
Them flint stune co'ages, small and neat.
Cathedr'l chaches, city wha's fine,
Stout owd oaks and tall slim pine,
Little owd becks and wooded hills,
Learnes tha' wind past farms and mills.
Marsh and heath, baads song at dawn,
Filds er beet and wearvin' corn,
Pasgers green and medders fair,
Sheep and cattle er grearcin' there.
From cliff top high ter Thetford chearse,
Yis, bor – Norfick is a rare noice plearce!

A NORFICK LOKE

By Lil Landimore

CUM YEW DOWN a Norfick loke alonger me,
Oi tell yer, bor, there's plen'er ter see.
All them broite and pritter flors,
They hen't half growd since them Eapril shors.

Elderbushes fuller bloom,
Yeller blossoms in the broome,
Tiny wiolets in sheardy nooks,
Blars, hark at them ole noisy rooks.

Here tha' cuckoo acorse the fen,
Watch tha' robin and li'le ole wren,
Look! A nest where the blackbaad sits,
Pearchan'ly hatchin'out its chicks.

D'yer see them rabbits ayond tha' gearte,
Where foxgloves grow so tall and strearte?
Wild roses ramblin' evra where,
Honeysuckle annorl, its scent fillin' the air.

Aren'tcher glad yer shared with me,
All these treashers here ter see?
There ent northin' ter beat it, Oi tell yer folk,
Than ter tearke a stroll down a Norfick loke.

FATHER BILL'S PIGS

By Herb Symonds



OLD FATHER BILL kept pigs y'know,
Right good 'uns too, they were,
He used ter tuck 'em up each night,
An' brush an' comb their hair.

He was real good to them thar pigs,
They were his pride and joy,
Yew knew it everywhere he went,
He stank jus' like the sty.

His missus didn't half create
About them 'mucky things,'
"Why dorn't yew keep suffin' useful
Like a couple a dozen hins?"

Then father Bill would hev his say
On what he thort o' hins,
He never saw no use for them –
Just sows, with pigs, in pens.

Years passed by, the house smelt more,
The neighbours ceased to call,
The butcher, baker, paper boy,
Jus' hulled things in the hall.

His missus was more bitter now,
Not hurt by his derision,
But from the fact that now she knew,
She'd not get television.

And then one day a caller came
Asking of father Bill,
That were the old chap's birthday,
An' he'd come to wish him well.

"Yew'll find him up thar wir 'is pigs,
And know him without fail.
He's the one what wears a hat,
And doesn't show his tail!"



Dick Squittington – The Panto

TONY CLARKE

DICK WHITTINGTON and the Pedlar of Swaffham had something in common – they were both poor men who went to London to seek fame and fortune.

Well, that's not quite true. The Pedlar wasn't so bothered about fame. Like all good Norfolkmen he would have avoided London like the plague – or because of the plague – if it hadn't been for a dream, and he ended up finding his fortune in his own back yard.

The Pedlar was poor because he kept asking the farmers round Swaffham for a job, and they were famous, at that time, for expecting people to 'do a dear's troshin' fer nothin'.

But what might have happened if Dick Whittington and his Cat had met the Pedlar and his 'ow dorg' on the way to the big city? They might have had to cross several time zones, and they would hardly have been taking the same road since Dick Whittington apparently hailed from the West Country.



COURTESY, SHELAGH LIMMER

FOND's production of Dick Squittington played to a packed house at North Elmham Village Hall.

But hey! This was FOND's scratch pantomime, Dick Squittington, and the encounter happened because Dick's clockwork sat-nav system went wrong and changed the course of history.

Everything became clear, more or less, at North Elmham Village Hall on Sunday, 13 January. The 'house full' signs were again ready to go out as panto enthusiasts from all corners of Norfolk

The cast of FOND's pantomime 'Dick Squittington' raised broad smiles to brighten the January gloom!



COURTESY, SHELAGH LIMMER

converged for an afternoon of lunacy, most of it conveyed in some kind of dialect.

The event began with an impromptu selection of whimsical entertainment from individual FOND members which was humour with a touch of music (thanks to Brenda's guitar).

Then the scene was set, and the cast recruited for the panto which, after the interval cuppa and 'wittals', took up the rest of the afternoon.

The action featured Pedlar John, his mother (Dame Polly Wiggle), his dog Piddler, Dick Squittington, the glamorous love interest Alice Fitzwarren, and Mick the Mighty Monk.

The entire lavish production was illuminated by wonderful costumes and the talents of musical director Gal Liza, three amazingly energetic dancers, and the entire audience who produced a goodly amount of good-natured backchat and joined in the choruses of *There's No Business Like Show Business* with great gusto.

Supported by the hard work of the kitchen staff, washer-uppers, money-takers and raffle ticket folder-uppers, the event, I'm told, raised more than £400 for FOND funds.

Most importantly, judging from the broad smiles which lit up the January gloom, everybody seems to have had a good time.

At least, that's what they told me!

"There's no business like show business," sing the cast of the lavishly, no expense spared pantomime.



COURTESY: DAVID CHAMBERLAIN



The Strangers' Influence

WILLIAM WOODS

HOW AND WHEN did the endingless verb form of Norfolk dialect arise? According to Peter Trudgill it may be traced to the coming of the Strangers to Norwich in the 16th century and has spread outwards from there.

A simplified third person singular as in *he come, she go* and *it do* would have aided communication with thousands of immigrants from the Low Countries, when the Norwich Strangers started arriving at the end of 1565. Of course the theory would be spoilt if evidence were found of this grammatical form being in use before 1566, or being in use in the wider dialect area of Norfolk and Suffolk before enough time had elapsed for outward spread to conservative country folk, whose use of the now archaic endings of *cometh, doth* and *hath* was common at this time.

With this in mind, a document of 1570, in the Norfolk Record Office, containing an endingless third person form of *have* may be relevant.

Moreover it relates to a prominent member of the Dutch community in Norwich. Anthony de Solempne, printer and vintner, is recorded in the *Norwich Assembly Book* on 11 December, 1570, as having been admitted as a freeman on payment of forty shillings. The entry of that date specifies as a condition of his admission:

'...that he shall not occupye eny trade of marchandise eyther from the partes beyond the seaes, or from London, but only his arte of printing and selling of Renyssh wyne and for this he have agreed to pay xls.'

Solempne had set up the first printing press in Norwich, but he ceased this line of trade and moved, in 1572, to Dove Street where he ran his wine business and where he is now commemorated by a blue plaque. He is believed to have been one of the wealthiest Strangers in Norwich.



Norfolk: In Words and Pictures

BOOKS & VIDEOS REVIEWED BY PETER BROOKS

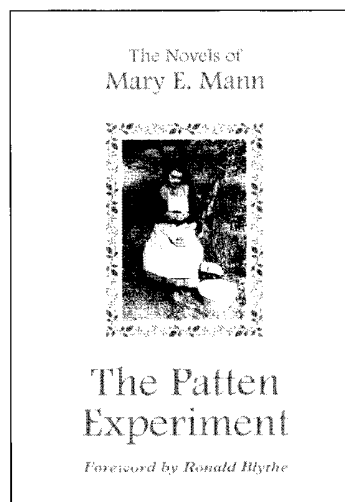
THE PATTEN EXPERIMENT

Mary E Mann, published by Larks Press.

128 pages.

ISBN: 1 904006 33 7

Price: £7.50



The Patten Experiment

A fascinating read by Mary Mann.

Disillusionment and resentments soon appear, not helped by an objectionable neighbour and suspicious villagers. A fascinating read based on Mary Mann's knowledge of the Norfolk landscape and its people.

ROSE AT HONEYPOT

Mary E Mann, published by Larks Press.

144 pages.

ISBN: 1 904006 36 7

Price: £7.50

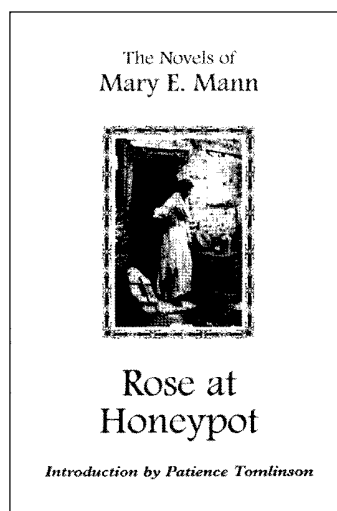
FIRST PUBLISHED in 1906, this is a story of unfulfilled love between the storyteller, Rose Abra, and a young gamekeeper, who both stay with the Jaggerd family in a Norfolk cottage.

The tenants comprise a brutal, drunken, husband, a subservient wife and two obnoxious children out of parental control. Expertly chronicled by Mary Mann who brings her knowledge of Norfolk life to bear on the twists and turns of these complicated relationships. A thoroughly good read, full of surprises.

LARKS PRESS are to be congratulated in republishing the work of Mary Mann, described as 'Thomas Hardy's East Anglian cousin'. Her short stories under the title *The Fields of Dulditch* and subsequent novels show a detailed knowledge of Norfolk village life and how families eked out an existence when times were hard – down to a wage of just 11 shillings a week for a farm labourer.

This novel traces the experiment by a group of wealthy young people who think it would be fun to try and live in a tied cottage emulating the lives of a typical labouring family.

Early enthusiasms are soon dented as the realities of their situation sinks in: drawing water from the well, lighting fires, scrubbing floors and finding food of inferior quality (in *their* eyes) before cooking it on the cottage stove.



Rose at Honeypot

A thoroughly good read by Mary Mann, packed full of surprises!

EXPLORING THE NORFOLK VILLAGE

A DVD by Poppyland Publishing.

Commentary by Christopher Barringer.

Running time approximately 45 minutes.

Price: £12.95

Available from John Nickalls Distribution.

Telephone: 01953 601893

Email: john.nickalls@btopenworld.

THIS SUPERBLY-PRODUCED video takes us on a tour of fourteen villages; from the Terringtons in the west of the county, to Hickling on the Norfolk Broads.

We see the different forms of landscapes and how they have changed over decades of human activity. Aerial views of the villages give us an immediate appreciation of their layouts, and the accompanying commentary provides surprises in knowing that Binham was once a market town and Brampton, near Aylsham, was a Roman town and a celebrated pottery centre.

The DVD is a companion to Barringer's accompanying book of the same title and both are recommended reading and viewing for anyone who wants to learn more about our beautiful county.

HOW TO SURVIVE IN NORFOLK

Keith Skipper, Halsgrove Publishing, 2007.

158 pages.

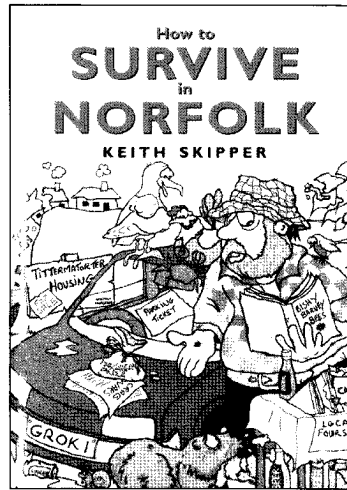
ISBN: 978 1 84114 654 6

Price: £12.99

Foreword by Sid Kipper plus an anonymous Backword, 6 Appendages, 5 pages of poems, an Epiclog and 22 Lessons on subjects ranging from 'Dialect Delights' to the 'Troscher Prize' and 'Beer Facts'.

THIS IS KEITH at his best – a mixture of facts, fantasy, imaginative writing, homespun humour and a wealth of serious writing.

It is, as the publicity tells us, 'a manual for long-suffering local crafty communities, naive newcomers, testy tourists, well-heeled weekenders,



*How to
Survive in
Norfolk*

*Homespun
humour at
its best by
Keith
Skipper.*

sophisticated second-homers, metropolitan missionaries and any other observers drawn to one of the last outposts of sensible living'.

Each of the 'Lessons' has some useful information to impart, be it true or the figment of a very sharp imagination as in: Number 8 'Trail of Surprises' or 'History Lessons' in Number 10. The former guides us to undiscovered attractions across the county, such as Norfolk's very own 'Dome' and our 'Cathedral of the Fields' in the village of Booton, just outside Reepham.

The latter provides guidance on some hitherto unknown famous characters such as Sir Robert Whirlpool, Thomas Pine and Horatio Elsan.

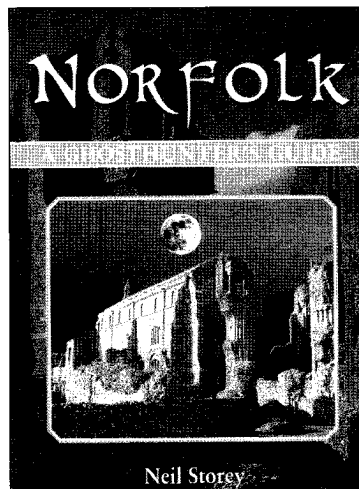
You, too, might be lucky next time you go to a Harvest Festival – as when an unidentified vicar set out his stall and put up a notice inviting visitors to 'Take only one apple, please. God is watching you'. At the far end of the church, local lad Horry had his stall loaded with tasty pork pies and sausage rolls. His notice invited people to: 'Help yourself, God is watching the apples'.

There is certainly something *catching* about this book (like measles according to one reader!) so pick it up at your peril and enjoy one of the best books published so far for informing, enlightening and instructing us on a whole range of Norfolk characters, customs, idiosyncrasies and places to explore.

You will enjoy it. Guaranteed!

NORFOLK: A GHOSTHUNTER'S GUIDE

Neil Storey, Countryside Books, 2007.
160 pages, 49 illustrations., 1 map.
ISBN: 978 1 84674 059 6
Price: £9.99



*Norfolk:
A Ghost-
hunter's
Guide*

*As usual,
impeccably
researched
by Neil
Storey.!*

'I DON'T BELIEVE IN GHOSTS – *not* really'; a typical response from anyone asked if they believe they exist, the last two words revealing a deep inborn suspicion that there might *just* be something out there and in the stories which have been handed down from generation to generation.

This thought-provoking book will do nothing to allay these deep held beliefs. If anything it could, if you visit the sites mentioned at dusk, cause you to look back over your shoulders a bit more frequently just to make sure there is nothing behind you!

Like all of Neil's books the subject has been impeccably researched, including interviews with people who really *have* experienced some aspect(s) of the supernatural world.

The book includes a very helpful splitting of the county into its geographical areas, as in North Norfolk, Broadland, West Norfolk and King's Lynn, South Norfolk and Norwich, Breckland and Thetford, and South-East Norfolk and Great Yarmouth. An accompanying map shows the location of all places mentioned.

Within the areas featured there are detailed descriptions of each 'happening' together with possible suggestions for them, from the oft-quoted sighting of Black Shuck and Anne Boleyn in North Norfolk to the mystery of 'Vinegar' Tom of Cobholm, whose stale vinegary smell might be noticeable long before you actually see him – but at least you will know he is near!

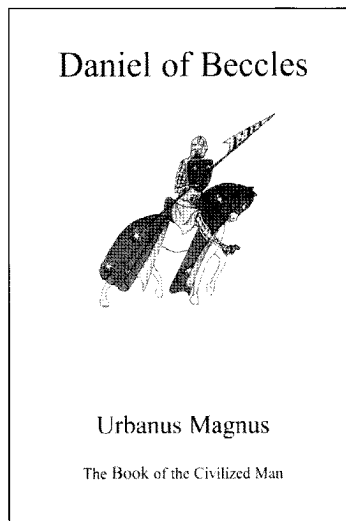
For further proof of Norfolk's associations with the paranormal just read through the 'Select Bibliography' with its 20 books and 13 other sources.

Perhaps there really *is* something out there we should be looking over our shoulder for?

DANIEL OF BECCLES – Urbanus Magnus, The Book of the Civilized Man

Ann Deed Frith, 2007.
46 pages, 18 pen and ink sketches.
ISBN: 978 0 9515985 5 9
Price: £5 or £6 inclusive of postage and packing

Available from: The Gazette Bookshop, 6a The Walk, Beccles, NR34 9AJ or Beccles Museum, Leman House, Ballygate, Beccles, NR34 9ND.
All proceeds from the sale of the book to be divided between four local charities.



*Daniel of
Beccles*

*A little gem
by Ann
Frith.*

THIS REVIEWER does not normally venture 'over the border' when reviewing books or tapes. This little gem is, however, an exception.

Until two years ago, no one in Beccles had heard of Daniel. Back in medieval days he wrote a 3,000 line poem aimed at advising young apprentices and others on how to behave in polite society.

Such advice as: 'In front of grandees do not openly excavate your nostril by twisting your fingers'. Or how about: 'If your lord's wife propositions you, you are on a hiding to nothing; feign illness' (literal translation).

In a letter to our editor, one of the compilers states that it might be possible that one of the cycles of medieval mystery plays was written in Norfolk because it was written in an East Anglian dialect.

Researches have revealed that Abbot Samson had, in the late 12th century, been recently appointed to the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds and that he preached in the Norfolk dialect 'so that he could be understood'.

Now here is a promising field of research for someone to take up – unless anyone can tell us any more about this enlightened preacher.

DARKNESS BEFORE THE DAWN

Jack Farrow, Stamford House Publishing, 2007.

435 pages, 43 illustrations.

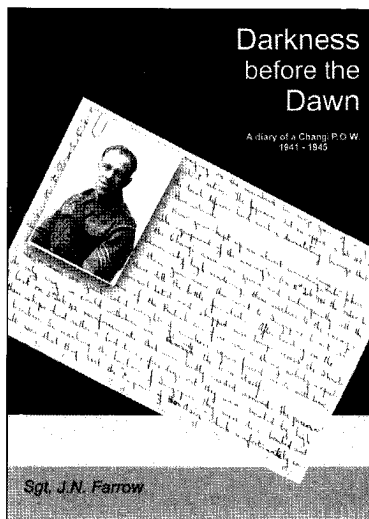
ISBN: 904985 55 6

Price: £9.95

BRAVERY CAN TAKE many forms, but keeping a diary may not seem to be one of them until you appreciate that discovery could result in torture and death plus reprisals against your colleagues.

Sergeant Jack Farrow, from Sheringham, was a member of 'B' Company, 5th Battalion, Royal Norfolk Regiment. They had fought in Malaya, been driven back to Singapore and then taken prisoners when our forces were faced with the highly controversial decision to surrender, unconditionally, to their inferior attackers.

This book is a daily diary of life in the infamous Changi jail on Singapore Island. It, too,



***Darkness
Before
the
Dawn***

*Surviving
the
brutality
of war in
the Far-
East, by
Jack
Farrow.*

is the record of one soldier's determination to survive nearly four years of starvation, disease, bug-infested accommodation, working in temperatures in excess of 100 degrees in the shade, lack of water, and lavatory 'facilities' comprising no more than 18 feet deep boreholes with no flushing or other means of control. Then there were the constant hordes of flies and mosquitoes who would follow men suffering from dysentery back to their beds.

Jack was put in overall charge of the prison cemetery: to design it, run it and be responsible for all burials and cremations, the latter being mainly for those who died from dysentery.

Some idea of what Jack and his small team of helpers endured comes from such comments as 'the sweat is bubbling through the lace holes of my boots' and reference to the 'skin and bone' men at work digging graves and tending the cemetery to create an area of tranquillity amidst the horrors of the camp. Jack, himself, was down to just 7 stones at one stage.

This is a book that deserves to be on the bookshelf of everyone interested to know how Norfolk men survived the brutality of war under atrocious conditions with very few signs of chivalry from a detested foe.



"The Panto mearde me a Leardy!"

TINA CHAMBERLAIN TELLS US



HOW ARE YA together?
Well thus bin another
good year up ta now,
an thus ony jus
startud.

The panto season's
gone an I reckon the
best one wuz ours,
woss held in the plush
2 n 9 seats at North
Elmham village hall.

Once agin, our
Panto Author, Tony Clarke (aka The Boy Jimma)
done us proud. He mixed Dick Whittinton wi our
very own local treasure hunter, The Peddlar a
Swaffham, n come up wi a witty combination
that cudda changed the way a the wuld... hed that
a bin right.

Now, I got an inclun that I wus gorta be dern a
turn in that panto, cos I wus told on the Saturday.

The gal Jean she phoned me an she say: "Gal
Tina, heya gotta dress?"

"Why?" I say.

"Well, cos I fare yull be a dern a turn at that
panto tomorra, n I think you mite need a dress,"
she say.

Well thut wus about eleven o'clock n I thought
um gorta hetta go up Norwich an hevva look in
them there charity shops.

So I got up there on the park n ride from
Thickthorn, n I gotta furrigun about them there
shops, n I come accorse one thut hed a lot a gorn
out stuff n bridesmaids stuff in the winda.

Well I went in there n I say: "Ken ya help me

please, ire gotta be in a panto, n I want suffun ta
mearde me look sofft."

Arter lookun at me as if I wuz, this here leardy
took me up the stairs n the fittun begun.

I musta bin in there an hour n I was in n out a
thut there chearngun room like a fiddlers elba. I
dint like ut much in there cos I cud hear the cars
gorn past n I keppea thinkun they might be able ta
see me a chearngun. Once or twice I got a zip
caught on ma sock cos I wuz a hurryun.

I dint want them ta look at me n think the boy
Dervud married me fa ma money, cos I hint got
none.

Anyhow, arter fittun a few on, we come
accorse this here pinkun. Thut looked orite, cos
sum on em they dint leave a lot ta the
imaginearton, specially the ones thut wunt do up
cos they wa tight.

Anyhow I paid for ut, the money went ta a
good cause, I borrod a blonde wig thut ma
nephew hed (yis he's as sofft as me), an so the
panto begun.

I wus The Peddlar's Galfriend... then I wus
Whittinton's Galfriend... then by the time thut
wus over I dint know who I belonged to, an I dint
think any on em wanted ta marry me anyhow, but
thut dint matter.

A good time wuz hed ba all an, arterwards,
many a the audience said how funny an
entertearnun thut wus, an they'll be comun agin
next year. Cant ask fa more an thut ken ya?

Anyhow ire gotta go now. Boy Dervuds a
hollorun about suffun.

See ya all soon.

ON ANOTHER WAVELENGTH...

Bob: "Dew yew know ennerthin bout
wirelesses?"

Harry: "Wer, yis. Oi knows a thing or two."

Bob: "Well, Ire jist bort one and thet say on it
'MW' in greart ole red letters. Dew yew know
what that stand for?"

Harry: "Oi got thet on moine. That mean yew
cant use it on toppera Micro Wearve, dunt it?"

Bob: "Oi thought thet ment Moi Woife, so she
kin tarn thet on when Oi arnt hear."

Harry: "Thet might well be, but Oi dornt
know - coarse Oi live alone!"

Sent in by Peter C Nicholson.



News and Chatter

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

OVER THE GATE

The following glossary of interesting local terms, gleaned by an avid collector of Fenland words 'n' ways, appeared in *Over the Gate*, the Newsletter of the Farmland Museum Friends last year.

I thought you might be interested to see how many similarities there are to Norfolk words.

Bear's muck: phosphoric nodules dug up and used as fertiliser.

Blar: to cry or be upset.

Bor: young lad.

Chats: small potatoes as fed to pigs.

Claggy: sticky, messy.

Clamp: heap of stored potatoes, covered with straw and soil.

Craze: to pester, to worry someone.

Dicky: donkey.

Ding: a blow or hit on the head.

Dizzy: silly.

Dockey: mid-morning meal of bread and cheese.

Doddy: small, tiny.

Fen nightingale: frog.

Flit: to move house.

Fuddler: cack-handed, awkward.

Get shut: get rid of.

Gansey: jersey.

Headland: end of field, turning area.

Hodmedod: snail.

Housen: house.

Lallygags: extra covering for trouser bottoms.

Lode: man-made waterway.

Lug: to lift or carry heavy load.

Moggy: cat (Sometimes a mouse!).

Paigle: cowslip (*Primula veris*).

Parky: cold weather.

Slub, Slubby: wet mud.

Spuds/Taters: potatoes.

Shock: heaps of corn sheaves in field.

Yourn: genitive, eg 'ourn = our house'.

Steve Wilkinson, Histon, Cambs.

The glossary of Fenland words was sent as the result of a telephone call. Thanks Steve. – Editor

PLAINS OF NORWICH

A number of blue plaques, recently erected in the Norwich 'Lanes' area, further commemorate the influence of the Strangers. One of these plaques, by St Andrew's Hall, relates to the Dutch influence on local dialect, and reads:

'Plains of Norwich. The Dutch and Flemish, who came to Norwich in the 16th century, left their mark on the Norwich landscape and local language. From the Dutch 'plein', the Norwich 'plains' define the squares and open places of land, in the midst of the narrow maze of streets. Maddermarket Plain, St Giles' Plain, St Benedict's Plain, St Margaret's Plain and St Andrew's Hall Plain can be found in the Norwich Lanes area.' *William Woods, Norwich*

PREACHING IN BROAD NORFOLK...

I heard the other day, as a throwaway remark in a lecture, that many now believe that one of the cycles of Medieval mystery plays was written in Norfolk, and probably in the Waveney Valley. Apparently this is because it is in an East Anglian dialect. I know nothing of this subject but would be most interested to hear if any of your readers have further information about this?

In our researches for *Daniel of Beccles* we read the late twelfth-century chronicle of Jocelyn of Brakelond who was a monk at the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds. Abbot Samson had been newly appointed and Jocelyn says that he preached in the Norfolk dialect so that he could be understood. *Anne Frith, Beccles, Suffolk*

...AND WITH BORROWED GLASSES!

Well, bor, thass a rummun, ent that? I love Norfolk dialect and often speak it at home to my wife as a bit of fun. Wass a 'mawkin', she say? I reckon thass an ole scarecrow, but I hent seen many on 'em down here. Thass corse thass town.

My family, the Nicholsons from Sutton, were traction engine proprietors and I used to spend my holidays on the farms helping with the 'troshin' as a chaff sacker – a *filthy* job!

I earned all of 5/- a day, which was good pay, but I went home totally whacked.

In the summer, there were three sets of threshing tackle in the yard all undergoing refitting and repainting in my grandfather's engineering shop on the premises. When new strakes were put on wheels, hot rivets would be rushed from the fire and hammered down by three men with bout hammers – *what* a sight it was to a small boy, it was great! My grandfather lived into his nineties and, when he was eighty, he made a wrought-iron gate with a traction engine steering-wheel as a latch!

Grandfather had only one book in the house and that was the Bible. One Sunday, Mr Beales, a fishmonger from Hickling, came to take the service at our local chapel, and he had the reputation for always preaching the same sermon!

As he stood up in the pulpit, he said: "I doarn't know how we shull git on hare tergather, 'cos I're left my spetacles at hoom."

My grandfather quickly replied: "Here, Tack (his nickname), dew yew hev mo'in." And then, calling across the pew to me: "Boy, dew yew tearke them up there ter him."

Putting on Grandfather's spectacles, Tack gave out the next hymn: "He who would valiant be – genst all disaster!"

Of course, we also knew Sidney Grapes as well, as he was my father-in-law's churchwarden at Potter Heigham. Sidney knew all them there Norfolk words, thet he did, bor!

Peter C Nicholson, Uxbridge

Thanks Peter, for the amusing anecdote of bygone 'chapel' days. Being a 'Primitive' myself, I can well recall those times! – Editor.

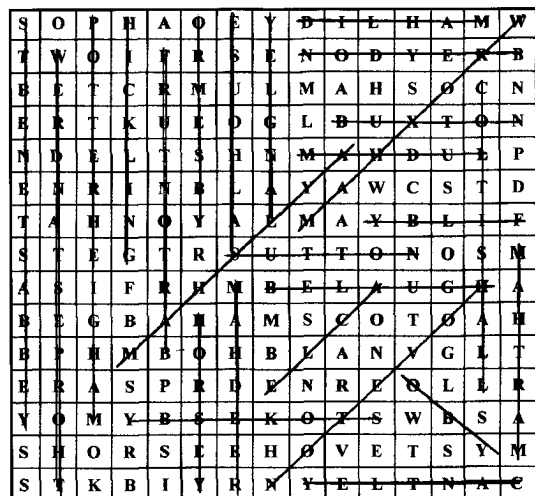
BISHY-BARNEYBEES OR CUSHIES?

Greetings from a Norfolk-born man now living in France. With reference to the letter from E Wood (*Issue 27, Pauline Dodd's page*), the 'cushy' referred to could have been the Yorkshire version of our Bishy-barneybee, as they were known as 'Cushy-cow-ladies' in that county!

Keep troshin', and best wishes to all Norfolk dialect enthusiasts. *John P Aldham, by e-mail*

I think I still prefer the 'sweet tooth' version, as Ladybirds can leave a bitter taste! – Editor.

Wordsearch Answers: Broadland Placenames



Answers to Boy Colin's Norfolk Quiz

- 1 1407.
- 2 The Louisa Hartwell.
- 3 Mary Mann.
- 4 The Doughty Hospital.
- 5 Joe Goss.
- 6 An unploughed ridge of land.
- 7 Bury, in Lancashire.
- 8 Carrow Hill.
- 9 A frog.
- 10 1957.



Every Picture Tells a Story

ALBIE OF WINDUM

IT CAME TO PASS early in the spring of 1963, at the time before ‘Albie-met-Margaret’, that I took to my sick-bed with a contagious continental condition – German measles, no less!

Fighting erupted on all fronts and between much irritable itching and scabby scratching, filled with languor and flushed with self-pity, I issued the occasional order, every now and again, for tea, coffee, custard creams and ‘suitable’ reading matter – usually *Reveille* or *Tit Bits*!

Languishing, however, was nothing new to me; indeed, most Saturday mornings on my day off from work I would enjoy a lengthy ‘lie-in’, doing nothing much, just contemplating the cracks in my bedroom ceiling. So, although illness in itself was irritating, that Saturday morning was really no different to any of the others.

My mother, however, had other ideas!

“Come on, yew learzy waarmin,” she mobbed, bursting into my room unannounced, “dew yew know what time it is? Tha’s nearly eleven!”

“But,” I moaned, locating as much lassitude as I could muster, “I’m still not feelin’ myself, yit!” Sadly, maternal sympathy was in short supply!

“Dew yew git outta bed, outta this house, an’ outta my sight – the fresh air’ll dew yew good!”

With this, Mother threw back the bedroom curtains inviting the mid-morning sun, in all its unwelcome intensity, to invade the sanctity of my darkened room. Quickly covering my eyes, in self defence, I knew all too well how Count Dracula must have felt, naked, in the cold the light of day!

“And *another* thing,” Mother went on, throwing the window wide open, “yew may not fare too well, but, for Gawd’s searke, chearnge them there socks – yew’ve had ‘em on *all* week!”

That was most unreasonable, that was. They were my *favourite* socks, you know the sort, those black ones with white ‘poker’ dots on! But anything for a quiet life; so, even though I was ‘under the weather’ I gingerly got up, wearily washed my washable bits, dressed myself as drearily as I could and – went out for a walk!

Now, all those years ago – as it is today – whenever I went out I was never without my trusty friend – my camera. Nothing new, is it?

Strolling down the hill from our family home in sunny Sheringham-by-the-Sea, with Mother’s parting phrases resonating in my ears, I breathed deeply hoping the homeopathic qualities of the salty sea air would effect an immediate change in my delicate condition.

After a few minutes, surprisingly enough, I began to feel better; yet, peeking down the front of my chequered ‘cardy’, the tell-tale Germanic symbols remained in force!

‘Twixt Sea and Pine’, the town’s motto declared; however, deciding the woods were too far away, and not wishing to over-exert my feverish frame, I headed for the beach instead.

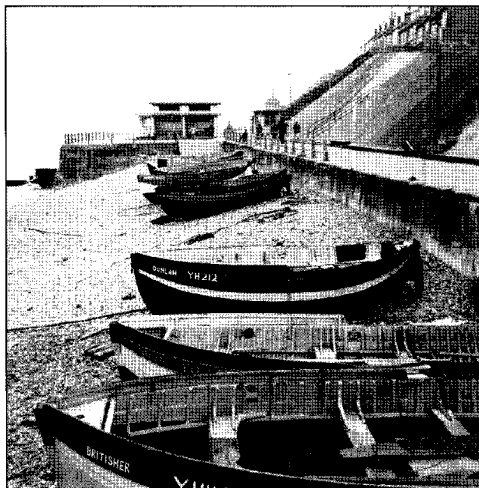
Down on the seafront several small groups of fishermen were merrily mardling, whilst others, who still had to ‘work for a living’, had begun preparing their crab boats to put to sea.

Siddie Holsey – a distant relative of mine – was standing by the winch, at the bottom of Beach Road, yarning with the winchman.

“Hello, boy Albie,” said Siddie, then, taking a sudden backward step at my approach: “blass, bor, yew dun’t half look *queer*!”



Flushed with self-pity, Albie languished as usual.



Crab boats on the East Beach, Sheringham.

Bob 'Rally' West, the winchman, paused from greasing the rusty rattling cogs to glance in my direction.

"What fares yew, lad?" he asked. Then, upon seeing my spots: "Yew looks sadly, yew dew. Git orf wi' yew, I dun't watta cop it, dew'uh?"

With that, Rally returned to his winching, Siddle to his yarning, leaving me alone with my thoughts, such as they were.

Walking along the line of crab-boats, high on the pebbles next to the promenade, I began to read their romantic-sounding names: *Britisher*, *Miss Judith*, *Duncan*, *Jubilee*, *Her Majesty*, and closer to the low-water line: *Florence Druce*.

Alone in my self-imposed keep-away-from-everyone world I suddenly sensed my camera see-sawing round my neck. It was then I decided to take some pictures of the fishermen at work with their boats. Every picture tells a story, or so they say, and, listening to the fishermen, I just *knew* they could tell a 'fishy' tale or two!

With a glint of determination in my eye – or was it a grain of sand? – I set to and prepared to preserve some of the action for posterity.

But where was I to start? Such was my quandary, as I was spoilt for choice with so many boats to choose from and so much happening.

There was, however, something about *Florence Druce*, that took my eye.

With its two-man crew, the Craske brothers, busily bustling about loading shanks of crab pots into their boat, flags flying and buoys bouncing, this was the one for me – *I was hooked!*

Shrugging off the effects of pimply pallor, feeling every inch the 'professional' photographer I had set out to be, I opened my camera – or at least depressed a button that did so.

As I sized them up in my viewfinder, the fishermen – always known by their colourful nicknames: *Teapot*, *Rally*, *Fiddy*, *Downtide*, *Butterballs*, *Crauncher*, *Paris* – seemed oblivious to the presence of a Sheringham-bred-and-born 'David Bailey' amongst their number.

Hands trembling with excitement, breathless, and with a pounding heart, I was ready to expose and preserve, for countless generations, an evocation of days past, a snapshot of life.

It was then I made embarrassing discovery – I'd forgotten to load film into my camera!

"Whassermatta?" laughed old 'Downtide' West, splitting his sides with laughter. "Hen't yew got no fillum then, bo-oy?" I *wholly* coloured up!

Looking up, from baiting their pots, the other fishermen had a right good old laugh at me as, hastily, I retreated towards the town to buy a roll of film from Cyril Nunn's photographic shop.

Twenty minutes later, all of a-slather from my over-exertions, nevertheless with a veritable supply of velochrome pan in my camera, I returned only to find five crab boats, bobbing up and down on the salty swell, heading out to sea.

My foolish mistake, it seemed, had cost me the chance of photographing the action, as most crab boats had long since sailed.

All except *Florence Druce*, that is!

Teddy 'Lux' Craske and his younger brother Billy 'Cutty', had been the last to arrive. Nothing surprising there, as they both liked a good old mardle and had spent far too long 'chewing the cud' under the Town Clock before getting their boat ready for sea. For me, it meant one *last* chance to achieve what I had set out to do – take an action picture of the launching of a crab boat.

Confidently calculating the exposure and adjusted the focus, I then squinted through the viewfinder and just waited for the *Florence Druce* to enter the water – and waited, and waited...

"I en't a'tall happy onna this," complained Cutty, shouldering the stern of their sturdy craft which stubbornly refused to 'take the plunge'.

Meanwhile, Teddy 'Lux' was swinging on the starting handle and 'verbally' encouraging the engine, which spluttered, coughed, wheezed, and missed a few beats, before busting into life.

"Dew yew git someone, Cutty," replied Lux, mopping his brow on the sleeve of his slop. "Pletty on 'em, on the prom, dew yew look!"

Rally West on the winch at the top end of the beach wasn't at all keen to help; moreover, he was having a bit of a 'fie out' and just about to light up a pipeful of his favourite, foul-smelling shag.

Just then Teddy Craske spotted me, patiently waiting to take my first picture!

"Tha's noo good yew a-standin' there tearkin' picatures, bo-oy," he shouted, gesticulating at me. "Dew yew come onner here an' girr'us a shove!"

I have to tell you, I wasn't at all keen to help, and told them so in no uncertain terms. After all, *I* was there to take pictures and nothing else – who could blame me for that?

But they weren't about to take 'no' for an answer and called out to me once more.

Again, I shook my head – *no*, definitely *not*!

Did they *really* expect *me*, a *photographer*, to shove their blessed boat out? I was there to take a picture – *not* get my bloomin' feet wet!

But, like a great many other people in this life when they want something, fishermen can be most persuasive – and they were!

"C'mon, boy Albie," Cutty halled at me, with growing impatience.

"Dew yew give us a hand an' we'll git yew a nice juicy great ole crab fur yar tea!"

Putting it like *that*, how *could* I refuse?

Now, I have to admit to a certain fondness for a sweet young thing and, at that moment, a nice fresh crab was closest to my mind!

In an instant, I forgot *all* about taking pictures and began thinking of my tea, and, against all my better convictions, found myself *offering* a helping hand – whilst my stomach began to yearn for the nice pink tender meat from the claws.

Joining Cutty on the launching-off pole – as he called it – and with a couple other 'press-ganged' helpers who also liked the sound of crab for tea – we gave an almighty shove on the blunt end of *Florence Druce*, whilst Lux, at the helm, opened the throttles allowing the 'prop' to knock six shades of crab food out of the briny!

The next thing I knew; my feet were *slopping* wet, *Florence Druce* had 'set sail', and Cutty and Lux were waving their distant goodbyes to me – and I **never** did get that photograph!

As for my crab for tea? – I'm **still** waiting!



ILLUSTRATION: ASHLEY GRAY

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 summer issue of *The Merry Mawkin* to the Editor by Monday 19 May 2008, please.



FOND Officers



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

Technical Adviser

Stewart Orr, Prior's Croft Barn, Withersdale,
Harleston, IP20 0JG Tel: 01379 854458

Newsletter Editor

Ashley Gray, Ailsha, 37 Ashleigh Gardens,
Wymondham, NR18 0EY Tel: 01953 607161

Social Programme Secretary

Position currently vacant

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

John Austrin, Euneda House, Yarmouth Road,
Stalham, NR12 9DF Tel: 01692 580517

Owen Church, The Post Office,
Ormesby Road, Hemsby, Great Yarmouth,
NR29 4AA Tel: 01493 730210

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

Ted Peachment, The Nest, Woodgate,
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Tel: 01362 637539

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