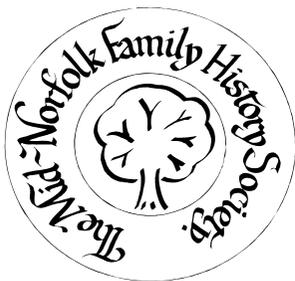


News

Volume 5 Issue 12



Letter

Autumn 2010

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WORD SEARCH

Having recorded over fifty churchyards our small MI recording team are 'experts' at reading 'unreadable' epitaphs, but they were nearly beaten by one at Weasenham. The year was 1768 and the problem part read:

"... Also Anne his widow who [...]dly married George Darby...".

There is only space (shown by the brackets) for 2 or a maximum of 3 characters. What would you suggest to complete the word?

Answer on page 19

A few words from your Editor ...

Thank you all for your letters, your views and contributions are important.

What would you like to see in your Newsletter? Please write and tell me. I would also like to know if there is anything you don't like.

I always watch "Who Do You Think You Are" on the television and wonder why they seem to have such interesting ancestors, I haven't found anyone really exciting in my family tree yet, but I'm still looking.

Format for Newsletter Contributions Preferably typed using Microsoft Word or Works, or handwritten, then please either:

- email the file to me at Familyhis@aol.com or
- post handwritten copy/CD/floppy disk, to me at the address on the back of the Newsletter

Deadline for inclusion in the next Newsletter 20th October 2010

Kate (Editor)

FORTHCOMING SPEAKERS

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| 18 th August | The Times of Coke of Norfolk 1754-1842
(Susanna Wade-Martins) |
| 15 th September | Good Old Norfolk! (Neil Storey)
Programme Discussion and AGM |
| 20 th October | Home Front in the Second World War (Katrina Silipandi)
Little Treasures & Memories: Home Front |
| 17 th November | Bringing the 14 th Century Alive (Ross Orton)
Norfolk and Norwich Medieval Association
Refreshments |

LETS LOOK AT A CHURCH

No.59 – St Thomas, Foxley



‘As many trees there as there are days in a year,’ my old granddad used to say about Foxley Wood and his wise saw sprang unbidden to mind as we approached Foxley village to see what we could find out about its church of St Thomas, the tower of which we could clearly see as we turned off the main Fakenham to Norwich road which bisects the village. Disaster! Our route to the church was blocked by major road works and as we sat and contemplated St Thomas’s we knew how Moses must have felt in sight of a Promised Land where he was destined never to set foot. Hoping to come in at the other end of the village we took a detour and many miles of increasingly narrow lanes later, some of which had grass growing down the middle, praying all the while not to meet anything coming the other way, we finally arrived at our destination. The church was locked as we guessed it might be but a notice in the porch directed us to the organist who lives next door and we obtained from him the huge key which we inserted with great care into the equally huge key hole having been warned that it was a favourite spot for birds to build their nests and that a previous avian occupant had had its life cruelly cut short by an overzealous insertion of said key. Entering, we found a relatively bare, light interior with no memorials on the walls and headed straight for the font which is 15th century and of classic proportions having quatrefoils as its only decoration. The wooden cover is also refreshingly simple and the church guide tells us it is a Victorian copy of a medieval design made by a local craftsman. A charming little carved dove, symbol of the Holy Spirit, perched

atop the cover and reminded us uneasily of what we had been told about the door lock. We also examined with interest a large old painted holy water can which stood at the base of the font. There is an impressive gallery at the rear of the church added in the early 1800s which gives evidence of the rising population of Foxley then. Continuing into the body of the church we examined the half a dozen box pews at the front provided for the local farmers who formed the elite of village society in Georgian times. Behind these are benches for their social inferiors with the usual poppyheads, some carved in naive designs. A square two-decker pulpit is of a similar age to the box pews but pride of place must go to the chancel screen c.1485 with large paintings of the four 'Latin Doctors of the Church' on its gates. This has been much vandalised and restored over the years but when and by whom remains a matter for debate. The Puritans, the usual suspects, did have a bit of a scratch at it but the worst damage was probably carried out at the time of Edward VI. Such doctrinal concern with church furniture is also apparent in the so-called 'Laudian rail' partly erected to keep dogs off the altar and which dates from the time of that *bête noire* of the 'godly' Archbishop William Laud whose wish to re-introduce to Anglicanism features they considered 'popish' was later to cost him his head. In our haste to enter, we had hardly examined the exterior of the church which sits in a neat graveyard and leaving we correct this omission. St Thomas's is a fine little church as are so many in this part of rural Norfolk and old – the nave although of more recent construction is thought not to have changed in size since before the Norman Conquest. The high stylish tower is said to date from around 1380 and used to have tall pinnacles but these were removed for safety in 1947 after a marathon ringing of the six bells, a spectacular 5040 changes in two and a half hours, almost toppled one of them. The village (population under 300) also boasts a well preserved Primitive Methodist chapel built in 1898 to replace an earlier building and now used for self catering. Home via Foxley Wood, the largest ancient woodland in Norfolk, resisting the temptation to stop and count the trees!

The original parish registers are held at the Norfolk Record Office (Cat. Ref. PD233) and comprise Baptisms 1700-2006, Marriages 1701-1837, Burials 1700-1976 and Banns 1755-1800 & 1824-1985. Microform copies are available covering the same dates except for Burials which end in 1901. Archdeacon's and Bishop's Transcripts cover Baptisms 1600-1907, Marriages 1600-1837 and Burials 1600-1907. The Parish Chest items are mostly from the 20th century although there are a few Settlement Certificates relating to the period 1705-1756, papers referring to Leeds Charity & School for 1728-1922 and a Clergymans Register with notes on parishioners c1833-1850. Also to be found here are Poor Rate valuations for 1839 and a Tithe apportionment & map for the same year.

Roderic & Denise Woodhouse

FOOD FOR THOUGHT - Too Good and Potentially Useful

In our Summer 2010 Newsletter (page 10) Pat Skittrall, our treasurer, offered her back issues of Family Tree magazine to a good home but she tells me that to date she has not had a single enquiry. Now I know a little about Family History magazines.

Several years ago one of our society members moved from this area into smaller accommodation, which meant that he had to 'downsize'. One of the casualties of this move was his collection of Family Tree magazines. He had a dozen or so volumes, dating back to Issue 1, eight filed in purpose made covers and several more tied together with string. They were *too good and potentially useful* to throw away, but he simply did not have room for them in his new home, so he very kindly donated them to the MNFHS library. However, these back issues didn't seem to inspire the imagination of the members for they were rarely, if ever, taken out on loan. Maybe the members already had their own collections. Whatever the reason, as our library grew, the book storage space seemed to shrink and drastic action was required. It was decided that the magazines took up too much space and would have to go. But, they were spared the indignity of the recycling bin and were transferred to my bookshelf at home, where they are very occasionally given an airing.

Until a few years ago, back numbers of Family Tree were sold at the Annual Norwich Family History Fair. Visitors could be seen searching for individual issues, presumably to complete their sets. This year at both the Norwich and Gressenhall History Fairs we gave away back issues of Family Tree and other history magazines, free of charge, 'donation appreciated'. Although, at both locations, response was slow at the beginning, by the end of the day most went, some even attracting a donation!

Today every aspect of our lives is being made easier and quicker. In theory we should have a lot more leisure time - ideal for sitting 'in front of the fire', and maybe discovering previously unknown, or forgotten research sources by perusing back issues of the Family Tree Magazine. So why are Pat's still available? Have we all stopped reading? Obviously this magazine is no longer unique, there are now many History titles available but it is still one of the best for the family historian. There is still a market for back numbers - the publishers offer their magazines issued in the last five years for sale on their website, individually priced from £1.50 - full price. Surely there must be someone out there willing to recycle Pat's magazines as reading material, after all they really are *too good, and potentially useful*, to be recycled as waste paper.

TFG

NEW ONLINE RESOURCE FOR PHOTOGRAPHIC DATING

Directories of early studios can be of great help when trying to date old photographs, but coverage of Great Britain is patchy. What's more, the directories that exist can be costly or hard to find. So it's something of an event when (like long-awaited buses) three free directories come along together.

A-Z directories of early photographers in Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire, compiled by Robert Pols, can now be found on his *Early Photographic Studios* website at www.early-photographers.org.uk. Each covers the period from the earliest known commercial studio to the First World War (1843-1916 in the case of Norfolk and 1844-1916 for Suffolk and Cambridgeshire). Each draws on a wide range of trade directories along with a variety of other sources, including specialist studies and photographic mounts.

Trade directories often contained uncertainties and discrepancies, and additional notes point out where these occur. But, in a departure from the usual practice of photographic directories, sources are recorded for every studio that's listed. This means that, where there seems to be a problem, researchers can consider the compiler's comments but also make their own judgements about the reliability and interpretation of evidence.

In the case of many photographers, extra biographical or background information has also been added to their entry.

A further feature of the *Early Photographic Studios* website is a page of links to other free directories of Victorian and Edwardian photographers. This will enable family, local and photographic historians quickly to identify and access the range of information that's available. It will be added to as more such directories come online.

Information for Editors:

The compiler, Robert Pols, has been writing about early photography for nearly twenty years. His most recent books are *Family Photographs 1860-1945*, *Dating Nineteenth Century*

Photographs and Dating Twentieth Century Photographs. His next book, *Dating Old Army Photographs*, is due out later this year. He has written articles for *Ancestors* and *Practical Family History*, and he produces a regular *Photo Detective* feature for *Family History Monthly*. He has also contributed to programmes on Radio 4 and regional and local BBC radio channels. He can be contacted at robert.pols@early-photographers.org.uk.

At the May meeting Roy Scott gave a very interesting talk on about Norwich vaccination registers. It makes me glad to be alive in the 21st century!
Kate

NORWICH VACCINATION REGISTERS

I have been researching my Family History since the early 1970s. In the first 20 years I managed to discover what you could find now in around 20 minutes, with all the new online aides and indexes and transcripts. Some people can't understand why, after all these years, I am still researching.

But I have successfully expanded my research to include all my ancestral lines, but more interestingly, I have managed to uncover stories by using records less commonly used by family historians. The records of the Parish Overseer's of the Poor, for instance, will almost always mention your ancestors either paying or receiving benefit. Newspapers too can prove useful if you have plenty of time.

But I want to make sure that all the family historians are aware of a set of very under used records **Vaccination Registers**.

Widespread vaccination was introduced across England, following an outbreak of smallpox in the late 1830s. It was made compulsory in 1853. The Smallpox Vaccination records have survived in varying degrees of completeness in Norfolk mainly amongst the records of the Guardians of the Poor. However, some Registers survive amongst various Council health records and some even amongst Business records (ie Medical practices)

Vaccination records also survive in Suffolk although when I asked the Archivist at Bury St Edmunds she had no idea what I was talking about. But they do exist for Suffolk especially for Ipswich.

The easiest way to find Norfolk records, use the catalogue search computer at The Archive Center by inserting the word Vaccination. The first time I did it only one record appeared due to my bad spelling. Also do it at home using (A2A)

Access to Archives. www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/A2A
Archon www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archon
Documents online www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documentsonline
Norfolk Records Office www.archives.norfolk.gov.uk
Suffolk Records Office www.suffolk.gov.uk/RecordOffice

The records I personally have used most are the records for Norwich. The various Norwich Wards were merged into just two soon after the vaccination programme was started (early 1880s). The returns for the wards of East Wymer & West Wymer at that time were collected by The Norwich Poor Law Union, a situation that existed until 1930. The Weekly Vaccination Returns were filled in by the Registrar and completed by the Vaccination Officer, recording date of vaccination.

Also I am pleased to say weekly returns of all births and deaths were completed by the Norwich Registrar and forwarded to the Norwich Poor Law Union and subsequently to the Norwich Medical Officer. The weekly returns were bound into books. Soon after the Public Health Department of Norwich City Council took over, the two City Wards became Norwich North & Norwich South.

The Vaccination records ceased in 1948 with the commencement of the National Health Service, but the returns of Birth & Deaths continued to be collected until 1960s.

On 31st March 1974 Regional Health Authority took over public health duties previously undertaken by Norwich City Council resulting in the

closure of the Churchman House Office. Fortunately this huge and valuable group of records was deposited with Norfolk Records Office. They survived an infestation of silverfish and the fire in 1994, and in 2000 were filmed and made readably available to researchers.

This important group of records collected by Norwich City Council Public Health Department covers a 70-year period:#

Vaccination Registers 1882- 1948 (Archive Centre Ref N/HE12)

Death Returns 1894 – 1965 (Archive Centre Ref N/HE11)

Birth Returns 1904 – 1961 (Archive Centre Ref N/HE10)

Any researcher will know that probably the most expensive part of researching your Family History apart from your time is the cost of Birth & Death Certificates. In most cases you don't actually require the certificate only the information it contains.

For family historians with family living in Norwich between 1882 and 1965 these records are very important because every time you find a relevant entry you save £7 because each entry provides the same information as a birth or death certificate. I believe this amount has now gone up to £9.

Norfolk FHS bought two films of The Death Returns covering 1894- 1902 and photographed and transferred to DVD. From the DVD Jean and I have been transcribing into a database. On the downside transcribing the death returns has been and still is for me a long slog, the hand writing is often poor and interpretation especially "cause of death" is often difficult. However, it has given me a tremendous insight into the lives of my Norwich Ancestors living at the turn of the 19/20th Centuries.

Causes of Death

With the onset of winter, many old people are dying from various chest conditions like Bronchitis, Pulmonalis, Pneumonia and all year, as now, from Senile Decay.

Throughout the year, people of all ages were dying from, Tuberculosis,

Phthisis, Asthenia. There were outbreaks of Meningitis, Typhoid, Scarlet Fever and Measles.

Poor sanitation, no refrigeration, slum living conditions, poor and in some cases lack of food, no antibiotics, no NHS is reflected in the “cause of death column” of the returns. You can even guess what the weather was like, a warm spell in July or August, resulted in whole pages in the returns, listing babies dying from Diarrhoea. A word you soon learn to spell when transcribing death returns. Left “O” out by Registrar

Convulsions, Dentition, Pertusis, Whooping Cough, but also Marasmus and Inanition (starvation) appear time and time again. There were around 2000 deaths recorded in Norwich for each year during period covered.

I worked out some statistics; in 1894 33% of all deaths were children under 2years. In 1895 almost 40% and in 1899, 34.5%, were infants. Just to put this into perspective, by 1965 of the 2039 deaths listed only 83 were children under 2years so the percentage of deaths of under 2years had dropped to 4.07%: also almost 2/3rds of the 83 were premature births (7months): which thankfully in recent decades even this problem has been addressed.

An important lesson learned, when I am writing or thinking about my ancestors who lived at the end of the 19th century and the early decades of the 20th century, I remember the harsh condition they experienced and don't judge them by the standards of today.

If you are lucky enough to have Norwich ancestors I would highly recommend the use of the birth, death and vaccination records to greatly expand your knowledge about them.

Roy Scott



PAUL ANSCOMBE ROBERTS

On the 9th June we gathered in St Nicholas Church Dereham for the funeral and to remember Paul Roberts, a founding member of the Mid-Norfolk Family History Society, who succumbed to Parkinson's disease at the age of 77.

Many of us knew Paul as a civilian working at RAF Swanton Morley where he was an active member of the Station's Family History Club. Towards the end of 1994 with the Station's impending closure a meeting was held to determine whether there was enough interest to form a civilian Family History Society in Dereham. Paul headed 'those in favour', and became Member Number 3. In those far off days home computers were still 'white man's magic' to many of us, but Paul was already considerably more than simply 'computer literate'. He became our first Treasurer come Membership Secretary and with his knowledge of databases was able to devise management programmes.

But that wasn't all - one of our early projects was to transcribe the Burial Books of Dereham Cemetery and it was Paul who did much of the early work including writing the recording programme. Our (Pauls) index to the Cemetery is still used by the Town Council today. Another early project was our involvement with the Federation of Family History Society's National Burial Index. Again it was Paul, still one of the few who understood the jargon, let alone how it worked, who took the lead and became our Co-ordinator. As time passed and the society grew others gradually became more proficient with the PC (often helped by Paul) and he was able to pass these jobs on. Whether it was MI recording or burial register transcribing Paul was usually there. Even in his latter days when he was finding it difficult to walk and stay awake he enthusiastically made every effort to attend our monthly meetings and AGMs.

Yes the society owes a great deal to Paul's knowledge and interest, without it we would have struggled to be the successful society we are today. He will be greatly missed.

YOUR QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Regnal Years

In our last Newsletter Sue Harris queried the date of an indenture shown as 20 Charles II for the year 1669. This of course, refers to the system once used in the 'legal' world known as Regnal Years whereby the year was identified by the year in the reign of the king or queen.

For example: Queen Victoria came to the throne 20 June 1837, which could be expressed in Regnal Years as 20 June **1Victoria**. Likewise 20 June 1838 was the first day of her second year as monarch - expressed as 20 June **2Victoria**, etc Simple enough. It will be seen that conventional years and regnal years are not fully interchangeable - 1Victoria is only 1837 from June 20 until Dec 31, the first part of 1837 is 7William IV (her predecessor) and continued until 19 June 1838. Although this system fell into disuse early in the 1900s, I was surprised to read in my very dog-eared 1989 copy of 'Dates for the Genealogist' by Clifford Webb, that this method of dating was still in use to identify Acts of Parliament until 1 Jan 1963.

My book also confirmed Sue's suspicions. History tells us that Charles I was executed 30 Jan 1649, normal dating was used during the interregnum and Commonwealth, and the monarchy was restored 29 May 1660. However, the Regnal Years for Charles II, were deemed to have commenced on 30 Jan 1649 (1Charles II), as though nothing had happened in the intervening years. Therefore twenty years on, 20Charles II could well be 1669.

Here's another odd one from my book:

William and Mary became joint sovereigns in 1689, their first regnal year began 13 Feb William & Mary. But Mary died 28 Dec 1694 and William became sole monarch starting his Regnal Year, not with a '1', as you might expect, but as 28 Dec **7William III**, which took into account his previous year as king. No wonder the system it was only used for legal work, it was too complicated for everyday use.

I thought I had done quite well, to explain for the benefit of our less well informed and forgetful readers until I realised that on top of the complications of Regnal years until 1752 England was using the Julian Calendar - the first day of the year was 25th March and the last the 24th March!

I think I'll quit here while I'm still a little ahead!

Tom Garland

Keith Gregson is looking for contributors for his new book. If you would like to contribute please contact Keith on his email address below. By way of explanation the following is an extract from his letter.

**‘Interesting Ancestors’
To Be Published By The History Press For Christmas 2010**

All Contributors Get A Free Copy Of The Book

My name is Keith Gregson and I contribute lead features to all the major family history magazines. I am also responsible for the ‘Tracing Northern Ancestors’ book in the Pen and Sword Family History series.

I have been commissioned by the History Press to produce the book mentioned above and am looking for one or two final contributions in order to complete it. The book will be made up of some fifty to sixty studies varying in length from 700 words to 1,000 words. The former will consist of a 500-word study and 200- word comment by me; the latter will have a 700-word study and 300-word comment by me. If you now read some of the current titles and the example below you should get the drift.

- IA1 My ancestor went shopping on 19 January 1718
- IA2 My ancestor was the Lambourn Arsonist
- IA3 My ancestor died then went to her daughter’s wedding
- IA4 My Ancestor was a true gentleman
- (There are many more in the series)

To any potential contributor

To some extent, the form in which it comes to me does not matter. You may want to try writing the 500 or 700 words yourself, you can send the raw story in your own words too or even details of where I can find the story if it can be found on the internet etc. It will then be put into the format shown above and I will then write the 200 or 300 word end piece. Please send a few lines about yourself if necessary with your entry and (if you can) copies of a picture or relevant document although there will not be space to reproduce one for each study.

All the information from the studies will also be gathered together in an informative introduction which I hope will be of help and assistance to family historians in their own researches.

As a footnote, I am very keen to ensure that you are happy with what ends up as your entry. I will be doing some editing and I know for certain that the History Press will too but I will update you as much as possible.

I look forward to hearing from you as time is of the essence

Best wishes

Keith Gregson

www.keithgregson.com

keith.gregson.t21@btinternet.com

The Anglo-Norman family of Malherbe

The Mid-Norfolk Family History Society has been approached by Professor Gordon Reeves of Bury St Edmunds who is researching the Anglo-Norman family of **Malherbe** during the late medieval period the name of which had several variants e.g. **Maleherbe, Malherb, Malerbe, Malerb, Malherbie and Mala Herba**. They were mostly present during the 12-15th centuries; holding manors in knight's service or as demesne lords and it is curious that their presence does not seem to be recorded in Britain after this period. They are thought to have descended from **Raoul de Malherbe**, Baron of La Haye-Malherbe in Normandy, who fought at Hastings although some Malherbes will have come to this country after the Conquest. The following is an extract from his letter:

*"I have read, mostly in Blomefield's History of Norfolk, of their existence in various locations e.g. Colney (West-Hall manor); Newton Flotman (where there was a **Malherbes/Malherbys** manor aka Myles; Mills or Rainthorp Hall manor); Framlingham-Picot; Scothowe; Stocton; Stratton, and Tacloneston. One of the earliest in Norfolk was **Roger Malherbe** of Tacolneston, who gave land to Wymondham Priory and whose daughter, **Amicia**, married John de Ovedale (he also featured at Rainthorp Hall) in*

1190. Sir Ralf seems to have been one of the 'bigger wheels' and had a presence at Colney; Newton Flotman; Scothowe; Stocton, and Stratton c.1300. The last mention I have for Norfolk is 1326.

I wondered whether this is an area in which your society may have been interested. Either way, I will be most grateful for any suggestions that you may have concerning these 'Norfolk Normans' and how I might flesh out the above; especially to do with the villages near Dereham. Do you know of any sources or contacts that I could productively pursue and heraldic material that survives? "

If you can help please contact:

Professor Gordon Reeves.
10 Guildhall Street
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk IP33 1PR

Parish Registers Indexed and Online

When I heard Parish Registers were being indexed and put online and that access was free I decided to give it a try on www.freereg.org.uk It is a similar concept to FreeBMD indexes. I have been researching my Norfolk Frost family for many years and had reached a brick wall trying to locate a marriage for Thomas Frost and Catherine Bowman in the mid 18th century. Within a matter of minutes I had found the marriage in 1742 at Little Dunham Church. A truly eureka moment .If you want to double check the entry then you can look at images of the parish registers at family search as detailed in the summer newsletter. Norfolk has good coverage so if you haven't tried this site yet do so now and you may well like me be very glad that you did. I then checked for another surname interest at Kings Lynn and found a great deal of information and all in the comfort of my own home! Margaret Bohn . Member No 21

Was your ancestor a Colour Sergeant?

In the Summer 2010 issue of the Newsletter there was mention of the rank 'colour sergeant' in the Army, I too am interested, as my great-grandfather was a colour sergeant and I have always wondered if there were special duties attached to the rank. *Kate*

Harold Hazell has replied with the following information –

“The keeping of records depends on senior officers being amongst the survivors of a campaign, that on top of the individual units having their own individual traditions, which in the case of ‘Valiant Stormers’ and ‘Colour Sergeants’ the establishment eventually caught up with.

The result was outlawing of some devices/traditions and the formal adoption, with military designation and law promulgated, to confirm others, viz: Colour Sergeant.

The enquiry owes much to the Peninsular War campaign period. There is one of Georgette Heyer's novels which is based on her research 'The Spanish Bride', that presents material relevant to the times. The character of 'Palmer', a stormer, is probably based on Stephen Palmer of Burwell, Cambridgeshire, who was a Colour Sergeant in the 48th/58th Foot Regiment; The Northamptonshire Regiment, at the Seige of Badajoz 1812, etc. His bride was in fact Portuguese, her family name perpetuated.”

Harold has sent me a typed copy of a General Order of 1815 (Source: Records office Kew) from the Adjutant General, creating the rank of 'Colour Sergeant'. Unfortunately I just do not have the space to print it in this edition, but if anyone is interested please let me know and I will pass on the details. There is also information on the internet. Kate

... and HELP PLEASE

Harold Hazell has asked if anyone recognises **FRANCIS JAMES LILLY** in their tree? *If you can help please contact Kate (Editor) address and email on the back cover.*

The census entries for him are:

Census Year	Age	Resident	Born	Trade
1851	41	Pontefract Yorks	Hingham Norfolk	Plasterer
1861	49	Pontefract Yorks	Hingham Norfolk	Plasterer
1871	63	Hull Yorks	Hingham Norfolk	Plasterer

THIS YEAR'S AGM WILL BE QUIZZLESS

Almost since the society's inception the compulsory AGM has been 'livened up' with a quiz. However, despite having fine-tuned the formal part of the meeting to a maximum of 30 minutes, many of our regulars fail to attend. It has been suggested that, although we try to make the quiz a bit of fun and maybe the chance to meet other members whom they might not normally speak to, not everyone shares our enthusiasm and it could actually be the quiz which is causing people to stay away.

Consequently, on Wednesday September 22nd 2010 we will be having a *normal* meeting and Neil Storey will be presenting 'Good old Norfolk'. Followed by a 'quick' AGM.

Members are reminded that the Secretary MUST receive nominations for the MNFHS committee, by no later than Wednesday 8th September.

FOR THE REST OF YOUR NATURAL LIFE by Pip Wright

At the May meeting Pip Wright spoke about transportation of convicts to Australia.

Pip painted a graphic view of life, as it must have been for the many sent to America and Australia between 1700 and 1900. In Suffolk 2500 were found guilty and sentenced to hang, although the majority were transported *For the Rest of Their Natural Life*. The minimum time was seven years but life meant life so very few came back, as they either could not afford to return or did not want to as they thought the weather and the chances to make a fortune was better. Certainly they had no chance of knowing how, or if they would be welcome back home anyway. Being branded certainly would not have helped their chances.

In 1778 at Bury St Edmunds ten people were found guilty and two were sentenced to be transported. America was no longer an option but judges kept sentencing criminals to transportation, and at this time Joseph Banks was encouraging the development of Botany Bay as the perfect place - as he saw it before someone else did take the initiative. Clearly distance was a snag as it was expensive to send prisoners by merchant ships via wherever their trade took them - often via South America. In 1787 the first ships or First Fleet were sent. The journey took nine months and conditions were very poor so the prisoners were in bad state when they did finally arrive, and certainly they were in no state to be ready to work and develop the new colony.

A Governor was sent to New South Wales, although it was not a popular task and was often used as a means of getting rid of people. Their task was to keep law and order and develop the new lands with the convicts and free settlers who had wanted to try their luck. The journey did get cut to three months and the prisoners arrived in better health having also had exercise for an hour a day.

Although the chain gang and tread mill were frequently used, more trusted prisoners were sent to work on farms. As the system developed you can imagine better conditions encouraged a sense of responsibility and development that encouraged prisoners to stay once they had finished their sentence.

Women were often sent to work in factories spinning and weaving, or picking oakum – separating strands of tarred rope to caulk or seal the joints in wooden ships. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oakum>

By 1840 New South Wales had they had enough settlers so other areas were used. Until 1850 Tasmania (or Van Dieman’s Land as it was known) and then Western Australia. However, they stipulated that they only wanted the best prisoners who had been in reformatory prisons before they were sent.

Another new trend was to advertise for female free settlers, as the imbalance of male to females was an issue when the intention was to develop a full community.

Pip included in his presentation three traditional folk songs, which members present felt added to the evening. If members wish to read more background this link might give a start. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Penal_transportation

ANSWER to WORD SEARCH ‘2ndly’

THE SOCIETY'S RECENT PUBLICATIONS

The Memorial Inscriptions of St Peter Weasenham and All Saints Weasenham (one book) ... £3.40

The Memorial Inscriptions of St Mary the Virgin North Elmham ... £4.80

The Memorial Inscriptions of St Peter and St Paul Salle ... £2.60

The Memorial Inscriptions of St John Alderford and St Andrew Attlebridge (one book) ... £2.60

The Memorial Inscriptions of St Swithin Bintree ... £2.80

The Memorial Inscriptions of Holy Innocents Foulsham ... £4.20

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