

Glensford Local History Society

President: George Grover Chairman: Patrick Currie Secretary: Margaret King

NEWSLETTER - Autumn 2007

FREE TO MEMBERS (25p where sold)

It hardly seems possible that nearly four months have elapsed since the last Society newsletter. In the intervening period many of us have been on holiday or have indulged in other activities as well as trying to attend our fascinating meetings.

Unfortunately I was only able to attend Clive Paine's timely history of Thomas Clarkson, in this commemorative year of the abolition of slavery.

Our next meeting will be the AGM, at which I hope you will receive this copy of our journal, and this is an opportunity not only to look back at the past year's events but also to plan for the future, including offering yourself, if you feel so inclined for duty on the Committee.

As any present member will tell you our meetings are lively yet cordial (perhaps not the most appropriate reference to our beverages!) and a lot of "behind the scenes" work is discussed and concluded, including planning the forthcoming speakers and subjects.

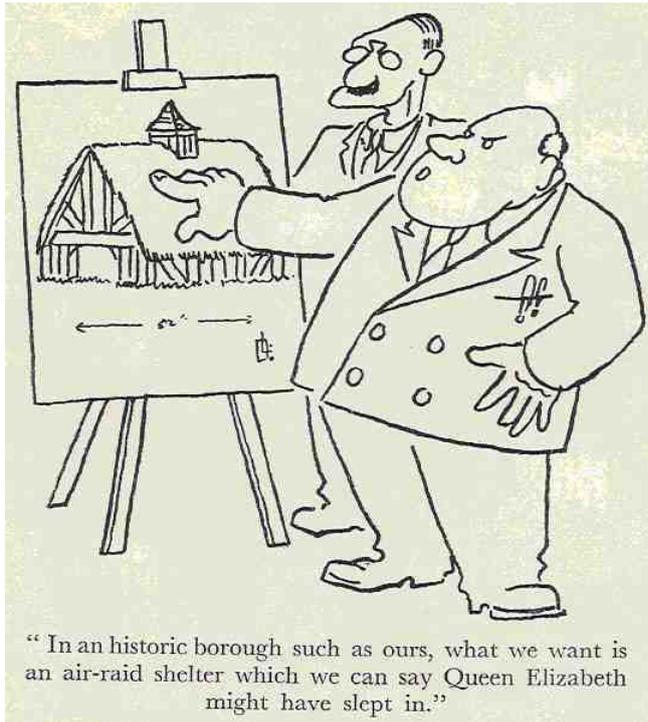
So if you feel you can offer some input do come forward during the meeting.

Another reason for mentioning the Committee is the need to fill the post of Editor of this newsletter.

Unfortunately I will be standing down at this AGM although I intend remaining a Committee member, if you'll have me.

It would be a shame not to have a Society newsletter so why not give it a go? There are plenty of willing contributors and support from the Committee as well as internal printing facilities so do consider it even if you have not edited a newsletter before.

It is good to see the fruition of the long-promised "guide to the clubs, business and organisations of Glensford" published by the Glensford Multi Agency Forum. Called "Glensford Matters", it is an up-to-date list of the facilities and societies



Osbert Lancaster

available to residents. Needless to say GLHS features within its pages complete with contact numbers and venue details. I expect a copy will have appeared on your doormat over the last few weeks; there should be a copy for every local household.

My final parish announcement is to remind you of the Society's website address - www.glemsford.org.uk - ably operated by past Chairman Steve Clarke. There are also links to other relevant websites to do with our own and neighbouring villages. Why not explore it?

Meanwhile enjoy the contents of this issue, including the final instalment of Jean Cook's experiences as an evacuee in Glemsford.

Patrick Hemphill.

Happy Vaccy

Jean Cook

(concluded from previous editions)

We made a lot of our own amusements (no TV and computer Singing this number games then). of carols meant that Most children had a trolley made with a plank of wood, a we needed to be wooden box and old pram wheels and steered by a rope selective in choosing attached to the axle of the front wheels. Mine was made by a the houses at which

local lad, George Cant, who did occasional work for Mr Cranfield in his spare time. I was very proud of this trolley as he had made it especially for me. It was very practical or He even gave me his large collection of birds' eggs which I kept carefully wrapped in cotton-wool. Years later, Margaret confessed that it was her and an "accomplice" who had accidentally smashed them. One particular memory of Christmas

A big treat was a trip to Bury St. Edmunds. While Mr Cranfield did whatever business he had at the market, Mother would take us to the shops, in particular to Woolworth's. Just inside the door on this occasion stood a lady in uniform and an Air Force officer selling raffle tickets for a huge box of chocolates. On buying a ticket, I said to Mother, "I hope we win it," in wonder at the size of the box. "I hope you do, too," said the lady. Imagine the excitement when a few days later a card arrived to say we had! I still have the card which I found among my mother's treasures. My very suspicious mind believes it was "fixed" that a deserving family should win it, but I don't suppose it was. It couldn't have gone to three children who appreciated it more than we did. mother for a celebration drink. A

Winters were a magical time when the Suffolk countryside was covered in a blanket of snow and lanes and ditches there was no sign of disappeared under snowdrifts. One couldn't see where the edges were and one day a man warned Pam and me to be careful and he promptly disappeared down a ditch. Huge ice slides would be made in the school playground, reaching from one end to the other and we skated on frozen ponds. I feel sorry for today's children when even playing conkers is banned. We never came to any harm apart from bruised fingers when we played. Christmas was an equally magical time. Like most children, we didn't receive a lot - nothing like today's standard - but we never felt deprived as we were all in the same boat. Some of the magic went when I discovered where Father Christmas hid the presents. Carol singing earned us a few pennies. It wasn't just a quick "We wish you a merry Christmas" and a knock on the door. We went out armed with hymn-books and torches, singing at least four carols before knocking.

I ran to fetch Mr Cranfield, who assisted Mother home. I still don't recall him being cross, but I don't think he could have been very impressed, being a staunch chapel

man. We had dinner rather late that Christmas.

Many old properties had no bathroom or toilet - the latter would be a galvanised bucket in a purpose-built shed placed somewhere as far away as possible from the house. Not for us the walk in the dark; we had an indoor toilet. We had no bathroom - baths were taken in a galvanised one in front of the fire, cleanest first, dirtiest last (usually me!). Very occasionally Muriel Lee would offer us a real bath. Whether she wanted to treat us or thought we needed one, I don't know; but a bit of dirt didn't worry me.

Scrumping was a favourite pastime. We were never hungry, but I suppose there's something about forbidden fruit. On one of our forays round a farmer's fields, we spotted a cherry plum tree absolutely laden with fruit that we couldn't reach, and when we told Mr Cranfield, out came lorry and ladder. We had half stripped the tree when the farmer on a tractor approached. "Now

we're for it," I thought, but he passed us with a wave. We were lucky that Mr Cranfield was a friend of the farmer! I rather think that a lot of scrumping was turned a blind eye to, even though it is stealing, I suppose. Farms in those days were not "no-go areas". I went with Mr Cranfield to Ketteridge's farm where he had some business. The son, Tony, was in my class and he took me off to the barns to play on the bales of hay and to show me his father's ferrets. Lifting the lid off the cage, he said, "They're tame, you can stroke them."

Not much went
Not wanting to appear "chicken", I did, the result being that I unnoticed in the
had one of those vicious beasts hanging from my hand by its village. Gossip was
teeth. "Didn't hurt," I said, holding back the tears. sometimes rife and as
one person once said,

Many days during the school holidays were spent by the river "If you cough at one
Glem and sand-pits, and the often flooded fields were a great end of the village, it
attraction. Pam and I used to hate the occasions when we would be heard at the
had to take Margaret along as Mother was too busy to watch other."

her. "Come along, you!" we'd say, dragging her as fast as we
could.

The American forces,
called "Yanks" or

I recall one day we wanted to take a short-cut across a "G.I's", were always
flooded field, but Pam was the only one wearing "wellies". Of polite and friendly to
course, she dropped me half way. On reaching the main road, us children. The sight
a concerned lady said, "Get home before you catch your of the familiar uniform
death of cold!" I think I did a four-minute mile, hoping to get brought a request
home before I died. from us, "Got any
gum, chum?", which

Gleaning after the fields of corn had been harvested was a was usually met with,
source of free grain for all the chickens. We would be "Got any big sisters?"
deposited at a field early in the morning and glean all day. Young ladies of the
"Wellies" were essential to guard against the stubble cutting village were

into the ankles. The "ears" were shaken to remove the grain especially well-treated and kept in a barrel for winter feed, and the stalks were used and gossip increased as bedding for the hutches. no end when these A machine called a binder was used to cut the corn, barley ladies were seen to and oats grown in the area and it would bind it into sheaves. be wearing "nylons" - Many villagers would gather on hearing that a field was to be a new and almost cut because as the binder drew nearer to the centre of the unheard-of luxury field, so the rabbits moved further in. We would watch, thick imported from the stick at the ready, to try and bag one as they emerged - great U.S.A.

fun, the chase, but I could never have hit one, no matter how

appealing the thought of rabbit pie was. At the end of the war the coal business was

Glemsford was surrounded by American air-force bases, so sold and in the drone of aircraft was a familiar sound. One day, while preparation for his playing by the river we heard an unusually heavy sound of an retirement Mr aircraft approaching and suddenly the sky was black with Cranfield bought a planes and parachutists. We dived quickly under the bridge small field just up the where the water was shallow, fearing the Hun had arrived. lane, where he built We learned later that it was probably a practice drop for himself a small one-bedroom house, part brick, part wood - in fact, anything he could find that was suitable. The bricks were from the barracks of a then obsolete air-base. While he knocked the walls down Pam and I loaded the bricks into the lorry. We then spent hours with hammer and chisel removing the cement to get clean bricks. I don't think it even occurred to him that he should get planning permission. One day, two officials arrived and there was some serious discussion going on, but somehow he got away with it. Soon after, he built a large garage with the remaining bricks. I very much doubt that this had planning

permission either.

Our return to Essex was delayed by two weeks owing to Mr Cranfield meeting with an accident. He usually did all his own vehicle maintenance, ably assisted by me who would pass the tools as he lay under the car. The car was hoisted up by a huge iron hook and chain. On this occasion, as he emerged he told me to stand back, the chain snapped and he caught a bit more than a glancing blow to the head, which knocked him to the ground. I screamed to my mother, who rushed out of the house to find him covered in blood from the gash. Had the chain broken a few seconds earlier, I might not be here to tell the tale.

We grew to love Mr Cranfield and stayed with him for seven years until my father was demobbed. He was a great influence on our formative years and there were tears in his eyes when, with a mixture of sadness and excitement, we returned to Essex to take up our lives there. However, it wasn't long before we

*yearned for
Glensford and
returned there
regularly until his
death in the early
sixties.*
(Concluded)

MORE GLEMSFORD HAWKS

from Robin Ford



Up until now, it has been the flying stage of hawkmoths that has attracted the attention of members. So, it was with interest that I called on a member who feared the fuchsia growing beside her front door was about to be consumed by two very large and ugly caterpillars. They proved to be the larvae of the elephant hawkmoth (*Deilephila elpenor*).

With its subtle pale green and pink patterning, the adult moth is a most attractive insect, which cannot be said of the caterpillar, although its eye markings are very striking.

Species of willowherb are its normal food plants. However, the larvae have also been found on Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) of which there is plenty along the river Stour.

I have found caterpillars and adults of the poplar hawkmoth (*Laothoe populi*) on the corkscrew willow in my garden but are there still further species to be recorded from Glensford?

The eyed hawkmoth (*Smerinthus ocellata*) is a not uncommon species in Suffolk, while I have seen a lime hawkmoth (*Mimas tiliae*) in Clare Country Park. A pine hawkmoth (*Hyloicus pinastri*), clinging to the west door of Lavenham church, was a major surprise.

I hope these paragraphs have sparked an interest amongst members and I look forward to receiving further reports of sightings of hawkmoths next summer.

A Glemsford family in the 19th Century

by Sheila Willmoth

Part Four

This is the last instalment of the Hempstead story and is *Emily Hempstead*, where the Byford connection begins. *born 1848 became* Keziah Byford was born in 1813, daughter of Richard Byford *my* great- and Alice Daniels. We assume she was in the Hempstead *grandmother*. *On the* household before Sarah, William's first wife died in 1837, *Glemsford census* probably to look after the youngsters while Sarah was ill. *An she was first a* illegitimate Caroline (b.1833) came with her. *scholar, then in 1861* Alfred Hempstead was born 1838 and must have been a *hair-server in the* conceived before Sarah died. None of the later family knew of *factory and in 1871 a* him as he was left with Keziah's parents in Essex. (This all *farm servant at Clare* came to light in 1989 when Rita Burgess organised a family *Downs farm. (Thomas* gathering in Glemsford.) *Eagle, farmer*). In 1840 Keziah had Emma (Byford). In 1841 Keziah and *Walter Deaves, a* William married and followed that by producing five more *mat-maker was born* children: Joshua (b. 1842), Ann (b. 1846), Emily (b. 1848), *in Belchamp St. Paul* George William (b. 1850) and Albert (b. 1852). *and lived on Hickford Hill. Walter and Emily*

These worked locally until four of them moved to London, *married in 1873. By* Stepney - Limehouse area about 1880. Albert was a mat- *1881 they were in* maker and moved to Feltham where he taught for some years *Limehouse, 96 Ben* in the Industrial School, which became the Borstal Institution. *Jonson Road and he* He had a small-holding and grew tomatoes and reared pigs, *was working as a gas* later making his living at market gardening. *stoker. Later they* Joshua was also a mat-maker, even in the 1891 census. *lived in Aston Street,* He was married to a Suffolk girl, Martha Chinery of *with lodgers from* Stowmarket. They also had a large family of 7 or 8 children. *Suffolk. (Late* George William was also a mat-maker and married Eliza *Georgian houses still* Barker from Stowmarket in 1874. In 1881 they were living at *exist in Aston Street,* 96 Ben Jonson Road, Limehouse, with his sister Emily and *now restored and very* her husband. In 1891 and 1901 when he had moved to 61 *up-market).*

Belgrave Street he was still a mat-maker. *Emily had eight* Ann at 18 years old was in service in London where she *children, four dying as* recognised the Suffolk accent of Robert Sharpe from Little *babies and one of* Saxham, who was perhaps a delivery boy. They married in *measles aged three.* 1868 and he became a stoker at the gas-works. Of their nine *Her three remaining* infants six survived. In 1881 they were at 92 Ben Jonson *daughters, Laurie,* Road. *Emily and Minnie* *matured and ran a* *dress-making* *business. Two* *married Essex men* *from the area and* *Emily Deaves, my*

grandmother married in 1899 a Highland Scot, William Stephen, who lived round the corner; their daughter Lilian, born 1900, became my mother.

Emily Deaves (Hempstead) died in 1941 aged ninety three. She lived with her one surviving daughter, Minnie, whose house in Woodford was bombed.

My grandmother Emily Stephen, (née Deaves) was widowed in 1902, when William Stephen, who was a Customs Officer at the Port of London, was killed in an accident (aged 23).

There is, so I am told, a likelihood that he was murdered, but the police at the time couldn't prove it. This story comes down from the relatives of the policeman, who in 1908 became my mother's step-father.

As I have grandchildren I suppose the tree is now two generations longer, but it would be good to get further back. The first William Hempstead we have, born c1765 is not

*recorded in
Glemsford.
Where is his baptism?
Perhaps we have to
search Suffolk and
Essex to find him.
Byfords we have in
Glemsford back to the
17th century. They
are present in many
parish records.
Pearman and Twinn
are other names to
trace back, so the
task is never finished.*

Sheila Willmoth,©
October 2007

GLEMSFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY NEWS

Margaret King

Owing to an unavoidable cancellation by Stuart Bowell, our brick building and lime planned speaker for the October meeting, it was with much burning. Old pleasure that we welcomed a return visit from well-known photographs and farmer and writer, Ashley Cooper, who agreed to step in at beautifully painted relatively short notice. Ashley has an eclectic mix of factual illustrations stories which cover his topic of '300 Years of Countryside authentically depicting History', plus a remarkable knowledge of various local a bygone age further characters who in previous generations have lived in the enhanced this Gestingthorpe and Bulmer areas. Their own words describing interesting and country life in the past were used by Ashley to explore humorous talk which pursuits and occupations as varied as farming, botany,

was thoroughly appreciated by the large audience.

Our Annual General Meeting will be held on Thursday, November 8th at 7.30p.m. in the Village Hall when we look forward to welcoming many members, friends and visitors. Following the official business, a glass of complimentary wine

for all will be on offer, as well as some intriguing 'mystery' talks from visitors and members on local historical topics.

And finally, an item by Gillman Game from Newsletter no. 2, Summer 1993:
Local Churches

The number of Church towers that can be seen from Glemsford has been debated many times over the years. And where better to start looking for other churches than from Glemsford churchyard - God's acre? Walk down the slope until Long Melford (127) church can be seen on the extreme right. (The figures in brackets are the approximate magnetic compass bearings for the benefit of any orienteers). To the front, just above the trees is Stanstead tower (55). To the left of Monks Hall are some poplars. Halfway between the poplars and Duffs Hill Farm, among the trees, can be seen the red tiles of Boxted church, about 1.5 miles away (343). Just to the right, on the skyline, is Rede church (344) and, just to the left of Boxted, again on the skyline, is Somerton (342). St Mary's is just behind us - six churches so far. Now to another view point - Seldon Waver. At the end of Angel Lane, turn right past the pond and walk to the first electric light pole, facing the Stour valley. To the extreme left is again Long Melford (110). Look to the block of houses in Egremont Street to the left of New Cut: between these houses and the Greyhound, and between the bushy topped tree and the poplar in the gap is Acton (116), in the middle distance. In common with Glemsford, in 1993 it has a wreath of scaffolding around the tower. To the left of the left hand chimney of the same block of houses is a row of poplars on the skyline; in the middle of this row is a church - Great Waldingfield (119). (Binoculars are needed for most of these). Swing right to the TV mast on the horizon; near the base and a little to the left is Little Cornard (144). Nine churches.

Tall electric pylons are visible on the horizon and at the foot of the 3rd pylon on the right from the TV mast, and in the middle distance, is St Peter's, Sudbury (150). It can be identified by the small spires on each corner of the tower. To the left of Potters Hill, the hill from the old Glemsford Station to Foxearth, in the middle distance there is a gap in the trees through which can be seen a pink coloured house. In the trees to the left of the house is Foxearth church (167). In the morning, with the sun in the East, it looks black among the trees, but in the afternoon, with the sun in the West, the brickwork can be seen. Between St Peter's and Foxearth, the tops of the three silver grain silos are just visible in the middle distance; just to the left of the grain silos is Borley church (160), and just to the right of Potters Hill, again in the far middle distance, is Bulmer

*(174). Borley and
Bulmer are more
easily seen in the late
afternoon with the sun
in the West.*

Thirteen churches -
an unlucky number so
we had better find a
few more!

Forthcoming events

- **Thursday 8th November - A.G.M. - Members' talks.**
- **Saturday 8th December - PRESIDENT'S EVENING - Hosted by Mr. George Grover - (Members only)**
- **Thursday 10th January - *Chris Trehella*: Bastardy and the Suffolk Village**
- **Thursday 14th February - *Leigh Alston*: Shops and Shopping in the Middle Ages**
- **Thursday 13th March - *John Walker*: Historic Timber Framing: a Medieval Carpenter's Art**
- **Thursday 10th April - *Barrie Stevenson*: Antiques Roadshow**
- **Thursday 8th May - *Chris Dobson*: The Hawk and the Lily (Local Boy Makes Good!)**
- **Thursday 12th June - A Summer Outing – to be arranged**
- **Thursday 10th July - A Summer's Evening Function – to be arranged**

For an update of events come along to meetings or, if you are a subscriber check the Glemsford pages of "Contact" magazine.

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