

Ringling the changes



Glemsford Local History Society has become the proud custodian of the telephone box near Fair Green.

The picture above was taken in November 2009 – around the time the box was decommissioned.

Successful negotiations between the Glemsford Local History Society and British Telecom resulted in the Parish Council acquiring the box for just £1.

During the past year members of the Society have taken on the task of restoring the box. The broken panes of glass have been replaced while the structure has been repainted with the assistance of Ingilby Paints.

The telephone box will now remain as a landmark, reminding future generations of how people kept in touch with each other throughout much of the twentieth century.



Robin Ford, Editor

PROGRAMME 2013

Thursday, May 9th : **Anne Grimshaw: The Last Flight of Lancaster LL919**

Thursday, June 13th : **A Summer Outing** – to be arranged

Thursday, July 11th : **A Summer's Evening Function** – to be arranged

Glemsford Street Names

Old and New – part 2



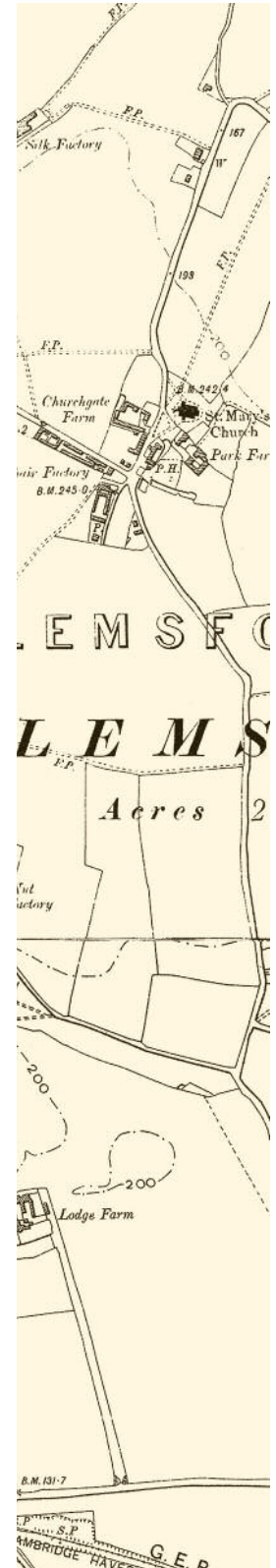
Jacques Close	George Jacques was an 18thc. landowner, listed in Manor Records of 1729.
Kebbles	This road was possibly glebe land, that is, owned by the church.
Kings Road	Built too many years after George VI's coronation, and no 'King' of historical significance found. Does anyone know?
Lion Road	From the Black Lion, a 15thc. public house.
Lodge Lane/ Lodge Farm Lane	The way to Lodge Farm, which in 1840 was described as 'Glemsford Lodge Estate'. <i>From the Bury and Norwich Post 26th August 1840: '180 Acres, residence of ample dimensions, carriage drive with lawn and fish pond in front and a newly built cottage. In occupation of Mr John Harris Esq. (an opulent respectable tenant who has offered to take the lease for 8yrs at £315 p.a.)'</i>
Long Pastures	Simply, a long field and the 1841 Tithe shows a 'Long Pasture' but running alongside the lower end of Flax Lane.
New Cut	A 'new cut' into the fields, made approx 1870.
New Street	This is mentioned in records of the 1800s, but not in the 1600s. Perhaps it was once part of Freeman Street (see previous list).
Orchard Way	An area of houses and barn conversions on the site of an orchard, once part of Skates Hill Farm.
Pannells Close	Site of a farm called Pannells, owned in 1807 by John Firmin of Bulmer.
Park Lane	Possibly a boundary of the medieval parkland owned by the Bishop of Ely.
Parklands Close	Runs almost parallel to Park Lane.
Patticroft	There is an old fieldname 'Petty Croft', but this is roughly the site of the skate park, not near Crownfield!
Pearsons Close	A cul-de-sac named after the haulage business that occupied this area until the early 1990s.
The Pippins	A modern name that seems to have no local history.
Plum Street	One of the oldest streets in Glemsford, in 1628 it was recorded as Plumstead.
Rectory Close	A home, or Rectory, for the vicar of St Mary's, was built here, Coldhams, near Tye Green being the previous vicarage.

School Field	This long, looped road runs through what was once a field surrounding the primary school on two sides.
Shepherds Lane	Quite possibly after Ambrose Shepherd, who farmed land in this area.
Skates Hill	The name of the large farm that once stood on the west side of the hill, with its farmhouse opposite.
Slades Close	A slade is a flat piece of low moist ground. A field called Great Slade existed on the village boundary with Cavendish (1839/41).
Spring Meadow	There was such a meadow in this area but to the south of Crown Field.
Stanway Close	Stanley Slater built these houses and wanted the road to be called Stanley Road. This wasn't allowed, so Stan(way) Close was the compromise.
Weavers Drive	Remembering Glemsford's cloth industry of the 15th and 17thc.

A couple of 'lost' names:

Podelstrete/ Puddellstreete	Mentioned in Manor Rentals of 1628 and also the Terriers for 1806 and 1846. The description of a field, and the owner, in the latter, matches the 1841 Tithe description, proving that this is now Flax Lane. It is called Workhouse Lane in both documents.
Workhouse Lane	This was previously Puddellstreete, and became known as Workhouse Lane when the rent from two fields abutting the Lane went towards the support of the village workhouse. (There were advertisements for staff and parish record entries for the workhouse particularly in the second half of the 1700s). The workhouse would have been closed in 1834, when the New Poor Law instigated the centralising of the poor in Unions, Glemsford coming under Sudbury.

Jenny Wears



VERNON BODE – The West Drayton Druid



The Vernon Bode Cup

The playing of Cribbage is a long-held tradition in the hostelrys of Glemsford, and indeed the numbers of pubs in the post war years that could put up a team was such that Glemsford was able to form its own League, which still lives on in a more expanded form even to this day.

During all the years that the league has existed, many great characters have come to the fore, and some of them are still remembered in the various competitions and silverware that are still being played for today.

One such is the trophy awarded annually to the House Champion at the Angel Inn, which is played for on one evening at the end of each season, and which clearly bears the inscription *The Vernon Bode Cup*. To a newcomer like me, the obvious question needed to be asked, and so far the profile of a most interesting character has emerged...

It seems that Vernon was indeed one of those larger than life characters that Glemsford has in the past, and perhaps still is, playing host to.

Vernon's time in Glemsford came around the 1960s when he was already well into late middle age. Prior to his retirement to the Suffolk countryside he had already lead a spectacularly unconventional life, mainly in the pre-suburban villages to the west of London. He was apparently very well read, highly opinionated, and politically radical. However this was all presented with the style and panache of Bertie Wooster!

This is an extract of an account by his nephew Peter Thornton:

"Eventually Vernon and Nell moved to Glemsford for a quieter time, and Vernon worked in the less demanding Suffolk offices of the Ministry of Labour. Gable Cottage in Glemsford was right opposite the Angel pub and Vernon made himself at home there right away.

"He was a skilled card player and was recruited to the pub's cribbage team. All seven Glemsford pubs and a few others were in a league, and Vernon soon became its Chairman.

"Another leading character in all this was Charlie Gooch, landlord of the Crown. Contests involving Vernon and Goochie were legendary spectacles in Glemsford, eagerly awaited by all that knew them. You had to watch Goochie all the time because he was very sharp at counting his points and marking up his pegs. However, he met his match in Vernon who could talk him to distraction during play with "Well I'm dashed" and memories of escapades in wartime Gibraltar.

"On top of all that, Vernon was Druid. He didn't go to Stonehenge and all that stuff. These Druids were an ancient Friendly Society on the lines of the better known Freemasons. Of course, Vernon claimed that the Druids were older and wiser than the masons, whom he described as parvenus. For myself, I guess they were a club of drinkers and card players who just liked to meet together.

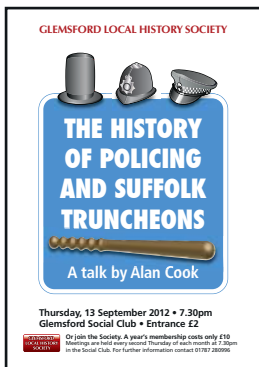
"In the end, the years of moderate and immoderate drinking got to him and he died in his early 70s."

As we said already, the Angel dedicated a cribbage cup to his memory, and now not far off 50 years later, it is still being played for today.

Patrick Currie

*If you knew Vernon and would like to add or correct anything here, please make contact with any GLHS Committee member. Even more than this, if you could tell us or write anything about any other of the great characters of Glemsford, we would love to hear from you. **NB** We'd better limit that to just those characters who have already passed away as our funds can't quite stretch to defending libel suits.*

GLEMSFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY News

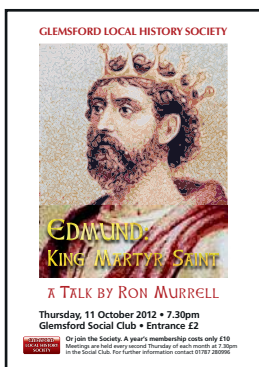


OUR FIRST MEETING of the new season was again well attended. Alan Cook, a serving Essex Police Officer gave us a very interesting talk about policing in Suffolk and brought along a selection of finely decorated truncheons from his large collection, the oldest being nearly 200 years old, and including some clearly marked as from Melford, Hadleigh, Assington and Bury St Edmunds.

In 1750 the first organized Police Force, the Bow Street Runners, was formed, but it wasn't until 1829 that Robert Peel formed the Metropolitan Police. Parish Constables would be appointed by local Magistrates Courts and usually held the position for one year. As they did not wear a uniform they were instead given a decorated truncheon as a badge of office. This was then passed down to the next constable, who in turn swore allegiance to the Crown.

In 1856 more local forces were formed, such as Ipswich, Bury St. Edmunds and Sudbury. Tipstuffs were also used about this time and were said to be hollow to carry the Warrant. Suffolk Police were the first to use a truncheon in a carrying case strapped to the waist by a belt, as the first uniforms were introduced. From 1950, truncheons were gradually phased out in favour of a baton.

Mr Cook also brought interesting displays of cap and helmet badges worn in East and West Suffolk over the years, and was able to answer many questions not only about how Policing has developed over the years, but extending into advice of how to build a specialist collection such as this, including how to spot the inevitable forgeries.



EDMUND – KING, MARTYR, SAINT was the subject of historian Ron Murrell's very interesting and informative talk in October. It is hard to imagine just what East Anglia would have been like in the latter half of the 9th century but Ron described a very sparsely populated area of small settlements ruled over by a young British-born king, Edmund. The land was heavily wooded but good and fertile which explains the attraction for the first waves of invaders from Scandinavian zones who came quite peacefully seeking new lives and land expansion.

While Christianity had reached East Anglia by the 6th/7th centuries it received only token recognition alongside pagan beliefs held by both the Saxons and the new settlers. However by 865 AD Saxon chronicles affirm that Christianity had taken hold and that Edmund was an ardent believer; also by this date many new invasions had occurred although the Norsemen/Vikings now were bent on plunder and destruction, overpowering the Saxons

and eventually employing a system of Mafia-like extortion or blood money known as Danegeld.

The manner and location of Edmund's death on 20 November 870 AD remains open to conjecture but it is clear that a pact, which the king had made with the Danes, went dangerously wrong resulting in a battle in which Edmund was taken prisoner somewhere near to the present day Bury St. Edmunds (a very strong contender appears to be around Bradfield St. Clare). He was tied to a tree, used as arrow practice by his captors and then finally beheaded because his continual affirmation of Christianity enraged them still further (the Danes were well aware that a mutilated body would fare badly in the Christian afterlife).

The cult of many miracles began soon after. Firstly with the discovery some months later of Edmund's head being guarded by a wolf, quickly followed by the reuniting of the head with the body

which then over the centuries was said to have remained uncorrupted. Edmund, martyr, was declared a saint. A shrine which became ever more elaborate as the money rolled in was erected; a place of pilgrimage – Bury St. Edmunds – was chosen and the faithful came in their thousands to worship at what eventually became the enormous, beautiful and fabulously wealthy Abbey Church of St. Edmund until in 1539 when King Henry VIII put a stop to it!

The Dissolution of the Abbey saw all its money and treasures vanish almost overnight! However the whereabouts of St. Edmund's bones remain an enduring mystery. It would indeed be comforting to think that they still rest under the altar area of that remarkable church.

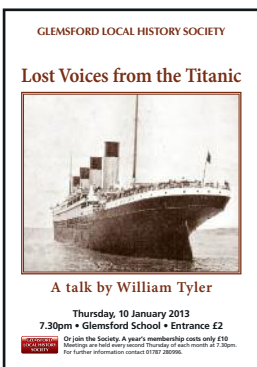


OUR CHRISTMAS SOCIAL was once again held at 'Chequers' and well attended by members. All enjoyed the festive atmosphere which was aided and abetted by good wine, delicious food and a roaring log fire in the inglenook.

One Medieval king looks very like another after all! The winner following a tie-break was Sheila Willmoth – very well done. A well supported raffle and a selection of seasonal readings concluded the evening.

Entertainment included an optional picture quiz identifying all the monarchs from William I to Victoria which provided a number of laughs and some very ambiguous answers to say the least!

Our thanks, as ever, go to our President, George Grover and his wife Ann for their generosity and hospitality; also to all the members who willingly contributed to the buffet.



OUR JANUARY MEETING, held for the first time in Glensford Primary School hall, proved to be very successful with an audience of nearly 50 who all appeared to appreciate the new venue.

William Tyler held all spellbound with a partly dramatized version of his subject 'Lost Voices of the Titanic' – commencing with the 1907 dinner party in Belgravia when plans were laid to build a ship which would not only rival Cunard liners but would surpass them in size, being able to carry all classes of passengers from the super-rich, down to hundreds of European immigrants desperate to start new lives in America. Appropriately named *Titanic*, built in the Harland and Wolff shipyard, fitted with luxurious and expensive furnishings and owned by the White Star Line, she was launched in Belfast in May 1911.

the list of disastrous decisions and incompetence began. Lifeboat numbers were slashed from the original 64 to just 16 (after all she was unsinkable – she would not hit anything and certainly not ice!); substandard cheaper iron rivets, instead of steel, were used in the ship's sides; warnings were ignored and the Captain was a man of 62 years.

On 14 April, just two days into her maiden voyage, travelling too fast and failing to acknowledge at least four warnings of ice, *Titanic* struck the iceberg which sealed her fate. In the ensuing panic, while strict hierarchical class rules continued to prevail, lifeboats left half-empty.

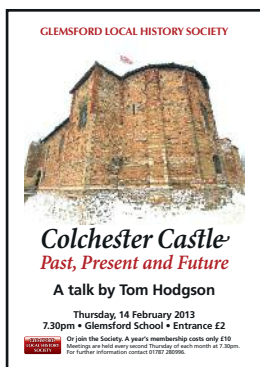
When finally it became clear that all hope was lost, many showed great courage. Lord Astor, the world's richest man, behaved like a true gentleman; one, Molly Brown, took control of a lifeboat crew; the stokers and musicians

However, the budget was overdrawn so savings had to be made and at this point

carried on working and playing; and a large Newfoundland dog swam through the night barking to warn the rescue ship Carpathia to avoid the lifeboats before sinking under the waves.

More than 1500 people drowned that night – a great tragedy which shook the

long-held beliefs and certainties of the new century. And yet an even greater tragedy was shortly to unfold, the horrors of World War I epitomized in just one day, 1 July 1916, when 58,000 men were killed and injured. The firm structure of British society would be changed for ever.



OUR FEBRUARY SPEAKER, Tom Hodgson, the Project Manager of Colchester Castle, kept a packed audience entertained with a most informative talk on the castle's past, present and future.

Dating back more than 2000 years ago when an Iron Age chieftain built fortifications at Grimes Dyke, it was not until the Roman invasion in 43AD that Colchester's strategic position was really recognised. The occupied Britons were ordered to build a splendid temple dedicated to the late Emperor Claudius, now a sanctified god.

However, by 60AD the oppressed British had fought back, and led by Boudicca, the Iceni tribe destroyed all Colchester leaving the temple a smoking ruin. It was rebuilt and stood for 400 years until Roman power faded and the temple fell into decay largely ignored or misused by the many hoards of invaders.

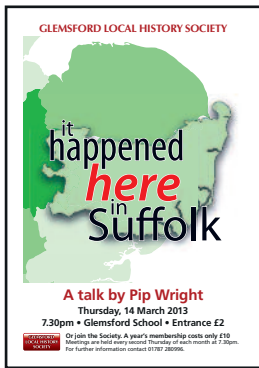
In 917AD Saxon king Edward the Elder decided to re-fortify the town; then, following the 1066 conquest, the Normans built upon this plan constructing an enormous castle on top of the Roman

podium which, with its great hall, strong walls and chimneys would dominate the town for years to come.

The castle saw only one military action during the reign of King John, but for much of the next 800 years was used as the Essex County Jail. It was during this period that many prisoners met a variety of gruesome ends including hangings for witchcraft, cruelty, starvation, death by firing squad plus the inevitable burnings at the stake of Protestant martyrs.

In 1860 the museum was transferred to the castle but it was not until 1933 following serious water damage to the foundations that concrete walls were erected and finally the open quadrangle roofed over, thus giving much greater space.

To fast-forward to the present – following a gradual decline in visitor numbers in the 90s, the castle displays, exhibits, etc are undergoing updating in both technology and design made possible by grants totalling £4.25 million. The 'new' Colchester Castle was opened to all from Easter 2014. Don't miss it!



OUR MARCH SPEAKER, Pip Wright, held the attention of a large audience with a most stimulating talk entitled 'It Happened Here in Suffolk'. He described a myriad of anecdotes spanning some 400 years, many strange, funny or crazy, others scandalous, some downright odd, but all engrossing.

These stories about Suffolk's eccentric inhabitants, its poverty-stricken families and what today would doubtlessly be termed as 'vulnerable' individuals abound in ancient documents, newspaper cuttings and often in tatty bits of paper to be found in parish registers and church chests.

We heard of Thomas Cawston who covered himself in biblical texts and travelled on the River Orwell selling fish until he disappeared, presumed drowned; of an 1861 bank worker who died having misappropriated £70,000; of a man buried standing up; of another who made his own sepulchre ready for burial; and of John Noyes, a Catholic martyr, who waited a lengthy time tied to the stake until a source of fire could be brought from a village three miles

away! Many hilarious tales survive about the smuggling fraternity outwitting the excise men.

Also a constant problem was the poor. In Suffolk's isolated, rural communities the best solutions were to get rid of them – transport them, send whole families off to Canada or apprentice them to tradesmen a good distance away! However compassion was often shown to the villages' collections of bastard children and when possible fathers were made to pay for their support.

Whites Directory offers more wonderful stories such as that of the argumentative vicars in side by side churches; the Coddendam postman still delivering letters aged 95 and the son born to a 58-year-old woman! And finally, another woman, Millicent Almond, last landlord of the Three Mariners near Aldeburgh, defiant for years against the encroaching waves, forced to yield at last when not only pub but the entire village vanished under the sea; the only remaining artefact being a 'decorative' whalebone! It certainly did all happen here in Suffolk!



Newsletter | Spring 2013 edition

Annual Subscription: £10.00 **Visitors:** £2.00 per time

We meet on every 2nd Thursday of the month in Glemsford School at 7.30pm.

We welcome your continued support and that of others. Please encourage your friends and neighbours to join us.