

A New Season



It has been a summer of uninterrupted fine weather during which members of the Society have been treated to three events. I missed the trip to Ely, but thoroughly enjoyed the guided tour of the Great Churchyard, Bury St Edmunds. The knee-high vegetation surrounding the monuments proved quite challenging! However, just listening to Dr Pat Murrell discuss the occupations of those buried beneath my feet enabled me to gain an insight into daily life of 18th and 19th century Bury.



Back in July 2012, the weather had played its part in the postponement of John Suttle's guided tour of Egremont Street, but it turned out to be well worth waiting a whole year just to hear about the colourful characters who lived in this part of Glemsford. We then repaired

to Melton House where the hospitality, provided by Patrick and Pauline, was second to none.

After a couple of years of searching for a suitable venue to house its increasing membership, the Society has settled for the main hall of Glemsford Primary School in which to hold its winter meetings. The facilities are excellent, and the Society looks forward to a long association with the school. The new season of lectures has already begun, and I shall particularly look forward to chatting with members around the refreshment table at the conclusion of each talk.

Robin Ford



Your Committee

At the social gathering, held at Melton House on a damp July evening in 2012, Sid Watkinson called the committee members to one side for a photoshoot.

To aid future generations of local historians with the problem of trying to

identify us, I have added our names as a caption to his excellent photograph.

At the following AGM, Anne Edwards joined the committee. We therefore need Sid to bring us all together again for another “shoot”.



Back row: Margaret King (secretary), Rowland Hill (treasurer), Robin Ford, Patrick Hemphill, Patrick Currie (chairman). Front Row: Anna Watkinson, George Grover (president), Jenny Wears.

Postscript to Glemsford street names

The first headmaster of the “new school” on Hunts Hill (now the Old School) was a Mr George King. I suspect Kings Road was named in his memory as it was built too many years after the Coronation of George VI.

Jenny Wears

A Glance at the Churchwarden Accounts St. Marys, Glemsford 1671-1692

1671

Feb. the 3rd	Pd to Ambrose Biggs for 14 loads of gravell	£0/7s/0d
	Pd for digging and spreading and for work about the casey ^[1]	£1/1s/6d
	Pd to Peter Jobson for 1 day work about the casey	£0/1s/0d
	<i>Churchwardens William Abbott and Ed. Redmore</i>	

1673

Aug:4:	for stateing A Complaint against Mary Wright 6 & for A warrant Against hur 12d	£0/1s/6d
	for Another warrant for hur removal	£0/2s/0d
Sept 2nd	Paid to 20 Travelars that weare burned out of house & home in London	£0/3s/6d
October 8	Paid to Seamen that were prisoners in hollon	£0/0s/6d

1674

Feb 28	to Michell Plouton, bills for mending bell Clapers	£2/6s/4d
June	expenses in binding out Riseings boy	£0/0s/9d
	<i>Churchwardens Ambrose Watkinson and Gyles Middleditch</i>	

1678

Aug the 3	paid to the stone cutters for mending of church windows	£0/11s/0d
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1689

28 Mar	Gave to the Ringers for ringing when King William was crowned ^[2]	£0/7s/0d
Dec 19+20	Gave to the ringers for ringing when King William came from Holand	£0/5s/0d
	<i>Churchwardens Ambrose Watkinson and Joseph Midleditch</i>	



“paid to the stone cutters for mending of church windows ... £0/11s/0d”

Churchwarden Accounts *continued*

1691

June 24	For washing and mending the old surplis	£0/2s/6d
29	Paid to Hen. Biggs for his quarters pay	£0/11s/3d
30	for oyle for the Bells ½ a pound	£0/0s/4d
Aug 9	Gave to the Ringers for ringing for the victory in Irland ^[3]	£0/7s/0d
Nov 3	paid to Henry Biggs for making cleaner the church and windos and for A day work about the steeple ^[4]	£0/1s/6d £0/1s/0d
Jan 1*	For 2 bushells of coals For the Glazer	£0/2s/0d

1692

May the 26	Paid to the Ringers for Ringing After victory at Sea ^[5]	£0/7s/0d
July 11	Gave to 13 Travlers with an order to travell ^[6]	£0/1s/6d
the 19	Gave to a Widd woman and children	£0/1s/0d

The spelling and punctuation are as the original document.

*Until 1752, when the Gregorian calender was introduced to the UK, New Year's day was the 25th March (which is why the January in this list comes after November but before the change of year!).

Notes: **[1]** The footpath. The Casey/Causeway, is said to predate this by centuries. **[2]** William of Orange. **[3] The Jacobites had surrendered, leading to the signing of 'The Treaty of Limerick'. **[4]** This refers to the tower of the church – not an absent steeple! **[5]** A sea battle that prevented the invasion of England by Irish/French troops, hoping to restore James II to the throne. **[6]** The poor could obtain a certificate/pass/order from a JP to beg for alms, then go to the 'Parish' or ask the churchwarden for permission to stand at the back of the church and ask for alms. The latter was the faster, as the overseers of the poor might only meet monthly. The 1/6 or 1s would be the sum paid out.**

Jenny Wears



Silk Mill in peril?

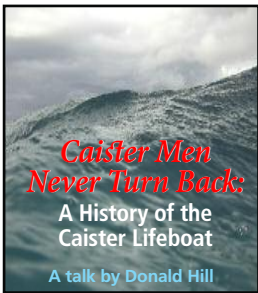
In 2009, the Glemsford Silk Factory closed its doors and a housing development is now proposed for the area. Among the industrial buildings on site, a part of the original early 19th century mill still survives. Nikolaus Pevsner visited Glemsford in the late 1950s and for the Suffolk edition of his *Buildings of England* (1961), he described a two storey brick building of nine bays in width (see photo). All that now survives is the gable end which is not 'listed' and could be demolished at any time.

Several years ago, I watched a television series in which celebrities drove around the country, their 'Pevsners' at the ready, searching for buildings mentioned in the text. This is a pastime still enjoyed by many visitors to Suffolk. Indeed, just owning a property mentioned in 'Pevsner' carries with it a certain renown.

Perhaps the remaining section of the mill could be incorporated into the planned development, thus retaining an important link with Glemsford's silk weaving heyday as well as delighting tourists with a 'Pevsner' in the glove compartment of their vehicle?



GLEMSFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY News



Our April meeting featured a very interesting talk given by Donald Hill on the history of the Caister lifeboat. A beach company – established in 1794 – consisted of a group of about 40 old fishermen, who with their great knowledge of the seasonal moods of the sea and the danger of shifting sandbanks lying off the coast of East Anglia, were well equipped to save lives. A small headquarters with a lookout was built and a cargo ship known as a yawl was used when emergencies arose.

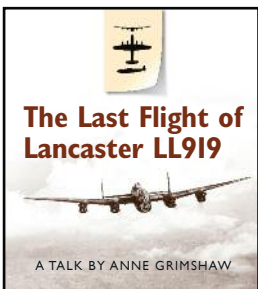
In 1845 the Mariners Association took over the organisation of the first true lifeboat station. Then, from 1859 it was run by the RNLI, who closed it down in 1969, since when Caister has manned the only fully-operational independent lifeboat station in Britain.

During this time, well over 2000 lives of many nationalities have been saved although there have inevitably been some tragedies. One stormy night in

1901, seventy-eight year-old skipper "Old Jimmy" Haylett managed to save lives from a ship stranded on the sandbanks, but lost nine men including two of his sons.

The First World War also necessitated many rescues. Another notable hero was skipper Jack Woodhouse who, adopting the local motto that "Caister men never turn back", led many a crew into turbulent seas. Jack was later to receive the OBE and to appear on *This Is Your Life*, in addition to having a boat-shed named after him.

Successful fundraising by such names as Jim Davidson, Bernard Matthews and many others has ensured that Caister now boasts one of the most modern, technically-advanced lifeboats in Europe. Today, working in conjunction with the coastguards, who identify potential problems at sea, and the helicopter services, the lifeboatmen do all they can to avert possible disasters.



Our May speaker, Anne Grimshaw, proved very popular, attracting both members and a large number of visitors, all of whom were riveted to her story. Having some previous experience with historical research, Anne was approached by a friend and asked if she could discover anything about his relative, one Alan Pickstone, who died in 1944 and is buried in Landeville, a tiny French hamlet. Using a detective's instinct, Anne was soon hooked and attacked the necessary research with a passion.

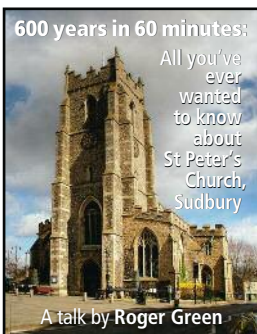
She discovered that Alan had been a member of a Bomber Command seven-man crew of Lancaster LL919, which left Dunholme, a Lincolnshire airfield, on a night mission on 26/27 April 1944 – later to be shot down over France, leaving just one survivor. Anne located not just the survivor, Jack Mills, but also an eye-witness and rescuer, Mariette Coutret, now (in the 1990s) an elderly woman, still living in Landeville. Both supplied her with fascinating details, while visits to see the site and admire the six graves – now cared for by locals and the War

Graves Commission – further fuelled her investigative spirit.

She entered an actual Lancaster, discovering the very specific tasks of each crew member (two of whom were Canadians); their relatives were traced and interviewed; artefacts, including an Omega wristwatch were unearthed. Even the name of the German fighter pilot probably responsible for the shooting down was discovered (living in Brazil) and interviewed.

In France, a 50th anniversary attended by descendants was held in 1994: a cross now marks the crash site, and a memorial service takes place each year. In England, there now stands a memorial, featuring part of a Lancaster and erected by local farmers, where once stood the old Dunholme airfield, and in a nearby school a book of remembrance is kept.

As Anne said in her conclusion, the Lancaster's crew not only greatly enhanced her life, but had also "given their today for our tomorrows".



Roger Green paid a welcome return visit as the first speaker of the new season when he told us all we'd ever wanted to know about St Peter's Church, Sudbury and its 600 years of history.

The present church stands on a site which would have been a distance beyond the medieval town and probably dates back to the 14th or 15th centuries, possibly built by plague sufferers. The church was surrounded by ramshackle timber-framed houses which were not demolished until the mid 19th century. It therefore has an asymmetrical aspect; its crowded position thwarted even the grandiose plans of Elizabeth de Burgh to construct something more inspiring and Italianate. However, St Peter's does boast a magnificent tower, a finely carved altar, vibrant Victorian stained glass, beautifully decorated ceilings, eight bells, and a unique organ.

Evidence of medieval scratching and witches' marks support the fact that this was the last stop for pilgrims from the

south travelling to the mighty shrine of St Edmund. Likewise, Cromwell's henchman, William Dowsing, left his more destructive mark. A number of memorials bear witness of past worshippers, amongst them one Henry Watts Wilkinson, a "faithful pastor" whose long life was full of incident. Roger's talk kept us all entertained with a myriad of other humorous events and eccentric characters.

By 1959 it was evident that St Peter's would become a redundant church. A Restoration Trust was set up in 1969, followed by major tower repairs and eventual closure in 1971. Six years later, the Friends of St Peter's was established, and during the intervening years with the help of fundraising and lottery funding, much has been achieved, including a new kitchen, staging and lighting, making it an ideal venue for shows, exhibitions, festivals, and music concerts. St Peter's Church is now a success, used constantly, and a great asset for the community.

Horse Hair Offer

Our Chairman, Patrick, recently received this email:

Dear friends,

We have obtained your information from the website, and we are writing to enquire whether you would be willing to establish business relationship with us.

We are the Anping Julong Animal By Product Co.,Ltd., we have exported animal hair products for many years. We wonder if you are interested in the horse hair, goat hair and other animal hair for your products. If you have any requirements, please don't hesitate to tell us at any time, we are pleasure to sever for you.

Looking forward to your early reply.

Best regards, Mahuanhuan

Company: Anpillg Julong Animal By-product Co.,Ltd
ADD:NO. 75 Yucai North Road Anping Country, Hengshui City Hebei,
P.R. China 053600
TEL:0086-318-7516566
FAX:0086-318-7527232
E-mail:salesl@animalhair.com
WWW.animalhair.com

PROGRAMME 2013 / 2014

2013

Saturday **President's Evening**
December 14th at 'Chequers'. (Members only)

2014

Thursday **Tessa West:**
January 9th Bury St. Edmunds' Jail

Thursday **Sarah Doig:**
February 13th Victorian Village Schools

Thursday **Dave Steward:**
March 13th Anne Boleyn, Queen of a Thousand Days

Thursday **Len Manning:** The Experiences
April 10th of a Rear Gunner in France, 1944

Thursday **Ashley Cooper:**
May 8th Rural Rebellion: the Tithe War in Suffolk

Thursday **A Summer Outing –**
June 12th to be arranged

Thursday **A Summer Social Function –**
July 10th to be arranged