

# GLEMSFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Free to members,  
50p where sold

SPRING 2017

## Spring has sprung!

The May meeting when you receive this newsletter, online or paper, will bring our indoor season to a close.

Thanks to Margaret King, our secretary, we have enjoyed a wide variety of speakers, a Christmas function at Chequers and a recent coach outing to Chatham Dockyard/ Rochester.

For the end of our year we have an evening visit to Bulmer Brick Works on June 8th (numbers limited) and a summer function, details of which to be announced.

Membership fees will rise in September, but another excellent selection of speakers are booked for the 2017/18 programme.

A new GLHS publication *Memories of Glemsford 1866-2016* is now available.

Enjoy your summer and if you make any interesting local discoveries or historical connections, please share them, via your Newsletter.

**Jenny Wears**, Editor  
e: [glhsnews1@hotmail.com](mailto:glhsnews1@hotmail.com)



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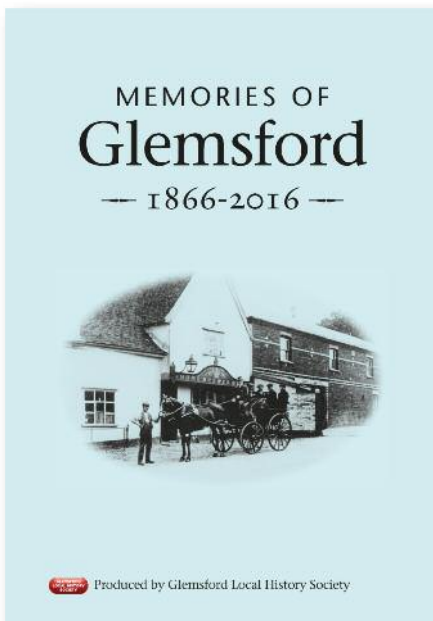
## Remembrance:

9th April 1917. Albert Twinn, a private of the 2nd Battalion, Duke of Edinburgh's (Wiltshire) Regiment. He was killed in action, aged 39, in France and Flanders and is commemorated on the Arras Memorial, Pas-de-Calais.

Born in Glemsford, October 1877, he also enlisted here, leaving at home in Egremont Street, his wife Ada, a young son and daughter. Albert had been a matting weaver.

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## New Book – Memories of Glemsford 1866-2016



A compilation of research, oral history and written memoirs, from members of Glemsford Local History Society and other village residents, both past and present.

Available from Hunts Hill Stores, Glemsford Library, Willow Tree Farm Shop and Sudbury Tourist Centre (Sudbury Library).

Price: **£5**

# Suffolk Local History Council Societies Day

This took place on Saturday 4th March at Blackbourn Community Centre, just up the road from Elmswell, West Suffolk. An excellent day of half hour talks on a wide variety of subjects – all relating to Suffolk of course, and displays of local memorabilia, activities and publications from a good number of societies from across the county.

The speakers were 'hands on' members from some of the participating societies, organisations and a museum.

The day started at 9.45 with a talk on behalf of the Bawdsey Radar Trust, given by Miriam Stead, about the world's first operational station at Bawdsey, its importance in the 2nd World War, primarily the Battle of Britain, and the renovation work now in progress to save the station – once Bawdsey Manor. Phillip Tallent and Roy Whitehead from Wickham Market Area Archives Centre spoke of the years spent organising the town's enormous archive collection, from parish magazines, photographs and maps to family histories and public records. Slides demonstrated the scale of that venture and the organised folders and shelving, all colour coded for recognition of the contents.

Following a break for coffee, there was a talk on the early days of electricity in Suffolk given by John Bridges, on behalf of

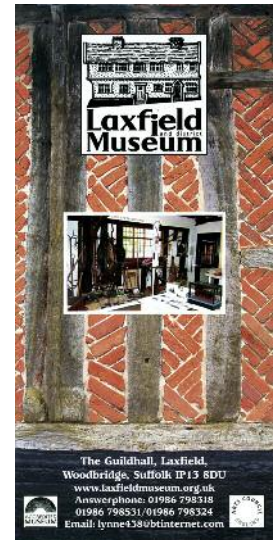
Framlingham & District Local History and Preservation Society. The penultimate talk of the morning was by Lynne Ward from Laxfield & District Museum. Well illustrated with slides showing various aspects of the museum which is a lovely old building, once known as the Town House then the Parish Rooms. Although the museum has a few permanent displays areas – an old shop and kitchen, fresh artefacts are put on show each year from their very large collection and special events are organised each year. It sounds worth a visit! Open Saturday and Sunday afternoons and Bank Holiday Monday afternoons.

A talk about the River Gipping Trust, by Spencer Greystrom was the last of the morning. Viewing of the exhibitions staged by the societies, and a chance to buy their various publications or simply have a chat and ask questions, led into the break for lunch.

The afternoon had one talk, 'Nuclear War Warning Post' by John Insley and Peter Gibbs from Bacton & Cotton Local History Group, and a film 'A Walk around East Anglia' presented by Geoff Clarke for Mendlesham Local History Group.

We could only stay for the morning but recommend a visit next year.

**Jenny Wears**



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## A Financial Connection

1659 is thought to be the date of the earliest known surviving cheque – hand-written, and it is 300 years since the Bank of England introduced printed cheques, in 1717. There is a property in Glemsford, near Tye Green, known as The Old Bank House.

In the early 1900s, Barclays Bank opened a branch in the village, (the first Directory entry being 1908), although only open on a Thursday, 10-11.30, it was still in operation in the early 1990s.

**JW**



# The Brook Street Nissen Hut/ Romney Hut



'Fair Green House stands slightly back from Brook St and Mr & Mrs Barker lived here, it is now owned by Mr & Mrs Stephen Perkins. We next come to an open fronted space, further back from the road, where there used to be a wooden structured building. The external walls were clad with weather-boards and painted or stained a yellow colour. It belonged to Down's foundry at this time and many years later it was used to assemble and test out large machines. They were only allowed to use the electricity at certain times in the day and a maximum demand meter was installed so if one used the electricity outside the permitted time, an excess payment had to be made.

'During the war years (1944) it was used by the Blackwatch Regiment. The officers were billeted in the old building at the rear and in the front they put up a temporary kitchen, this served all the soldiers that were billeted in Brook St and indeed Fair Green. As a boy of 9 or 10 I was returning home after visiting one of my friends up in the village, it was dusk and as I passed the cook house a soldier stepped out and said "Halt! who goes there? Friend or foe" Oh bor, I was clever enough to say "friend", I'm not

completely daft you know!! Then the soldier said "Pass friend".'

All that remains of this time in Brook Street is a large hut. At first this was referred to as a Nissen Hut, but because of its size and the fact that it has an asbestos roof, it is felt that it is in fact a Romney hut, although these would normally have a tin roof.

Nissen huts were usually used for accommodation and it is felt that the Romney hut being much larger would be a storage hut or canteen. The latter makes sense as this was the support area for both local troops and military activities.

Last summer, Stephen and Julie Perkins opened their garden so members of the Glemsford Local History Society could examine the structure and record details prior to its demolition. The area was scanned with a metal detector, but little was found connected to WW 2, simply a button and a few empty cartridge cases.

From **John Suttle's** memoirs with additional notes from **Rowland Hill**



# The Manns – a Family of Soapboilers

Just occasionally the same name crops up in several unrelated records when searching for other subjects, weeks or months apart. This is how Daniel Mann came to my attention. The first ‘sighting’ was an entry from the London Gazette, 1813, while looking for a Thomas Mortlock. ‘...and are requested forthwith to pay the same to Mr Daniel Mann of Glemsford, Soap-maker...’. I recalled a Daniel Mann listed as a church-warden of St Marys’, here in Glemsford, 1816.

Some months later I saw his name listed in the Quarter Sessions for Bury St Edmunds, 1805, among those appealing against rate increases. Ironically he was given as an example of someone who was, according to most of the others, paying lower rates considering the amount of property and land he owned! He seemed a fairly well-off man with an unusual occupation so I looked for and found his probate details, ie. his will, at the Record Office in Bury St Edmunds.

This is an abbreviation of his will, dated 1837.

“ I Daniel Mann Soap Boiler, bequest to my mother Elizabeth and my brother William, the trade and business carried out at Glemsford, by me and my brother William Mann and also my share of the coppers, vats, tubs, tools, implements and other things used in and about the said trade. My dwelling, bedding, household goods, plate, linen to Deborah my sister. Also I give to the said William Mann, all my messuage, tenement and dwelling house with soap office, outbuildings, yards, gardens, lands and heridiaments to the same, belonging with their appurtenances, situated in

Glemsford. And also all those, my cottages or double Tenement near or adjoining to the above mentioned premises now in the several occupations of William Watkinson and the Widow Brown.

I bequest to my brother George Mann fifty pounds and to my brother Thomas forty pounds and to my journeyman or manservant William Watkinson, the sum of ten pounds.”

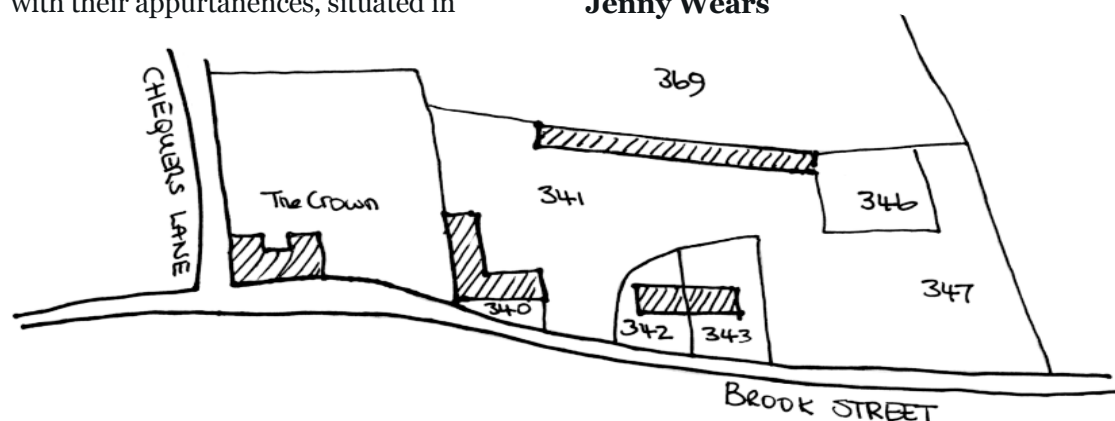
The site of the dwellings and work buildings can be identified on the Tithe Map (1839/40). The owner/occupier listed in the apportionment book is William Mann, brother of the deceased Daniel.

Owner	Occupier	No	Description
William Mann	himself	340	house & garden
”	”	341	yard & building
”	”	346	garden
”	”	347	orchard
”	”	369	Natts orchard
”	Sarah Brown	343	cottage & garden
”	William Watkinson	342	cottage & garden

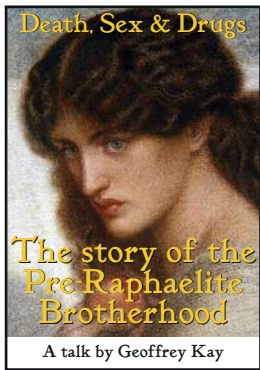
The soap boiler/maker was a skilled tradesman. He required knowledge of the ingredients, oils, fats, quick lime, potash and soda as well the correct proportions.

By 1844, William Mann was described as a soap boiler and tallow chandler. (Whites Trade Directory).

## Jenny Wears



# GLEMSFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY News



WELL DONE EVERYONE who braved a cold, snowy January evening to come and hear Geoffrey Kay's erudite talk on *Sex, Drugs and Death – the story of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*. We were well-rewarded with a veritable feast for the eyes when shown their paintings – many intricate and beautiful, some cryptic, others unusual, but all fascinating.

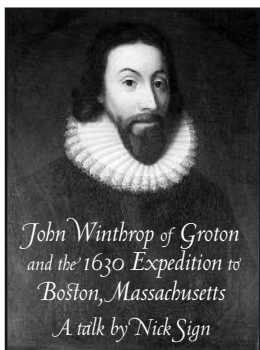
In 1848, the charismatic Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Holman Hunt, Ford Madox Brown and John Everett Millais were all young art students looking to find new ways of expressing themselves in their work. They shunned the Renaissance style typical of Raphael and his contemporaries, adopting instead the earlier look of Piero della Francesca, and it was this preference that led Rossetti to coin the name Pre-Raphaelites for his Brotherhood.

Prominent in the paintings were female models, the favourite being the red-haired Lizzie Siddal (married to Rossetti), Janey Morris (wife of William Morris) and Effie

Gray who, following a disastrous, unconsummated marriage to the eccentric critic John Ruskin, obtained a divorce and subsequently married Millais, who had always wanted her! In a time when illness and death were ever present, Lizzie, always sickly, became addicted to laudanum and, following her early death, left Rossetti utterly distraught.

Little wonder that death and turbulence featured so heavily in many of the paintings – Ophelia, Chatterton (by Henry Wallis) and The Lady of Shallot by John William Waterhouse, a latecomer to the Brotherhood.

Other paintings showed controversial depictions of religious and industrial themes, thus the Brotherhood gained popularity and hostility in equal measures. However, by the onset of World War 1, the Pre-Raphaelites had become deeply unfashionable and it was to be a considerable time before their talent was once again fully appreciated.



AT OUR FEBRUARY MEETING we welcomed a return visit from Nick Sign, speaking about the extraordinary life of John Winthrop, the first Governor of Boston, Massachusetts. Born in 1588 (the year of the Armada) and dying in 1649 (the year of King Charles I's execution), Winthrop's life spanned a turbulent period of political, religious and economical change.

The grandson of wealthy landowner Adam Winthrop, who bought Groton Manor from the church after Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries, young John accepted the 'polish' which Oxford University gave him, although as the son of a squire he had no need to graduate before pursuing a law career in the London courts.

As a committed Christian, Winthrop had long been disillusioned by the continuing Catholic doctrine still prevalent within the church and in 1629 when King Charles dissolved Parliament there was growing dissent and discontent. Believing they were living in 'evil and declining times', Winthrop and his followers decided to emigrate to the

New World following the 1620 example of the Pilgrim Fathers.

After recruiting those who could offer a variety of practical skills and leaving behind a large family, in April 1630 Winthrop sailed in a fleet of 1100 fellow pioneers aiming to obtain cheap land, develop a new colony and establish a purer church. The long and arduous voyage took two months through heavy weather and stormy seas, most passengers suffering from scurvy.

On arrival, although they made good relationships with the native population, it soon became evident that some malaria ridden areas were unsuitable for settlement, sporting also a selection of snakes and wolves. Eventually a settlement, which was to become Boston, was carved out near the Mystic River; successful trading, exporting fish and furs, was established and the new strictly run Puritan community flourished. John Winthrop was elected Governor, becoming an important man and as a contemporary called him a 'councillor of peace'.

THE SOCIETY WAS PLEASED TO welcome Gerry Baxter on March 9th, when he gave us a lively and very personal account on the origins and traditions of the Pearly Kings and Queens of England.

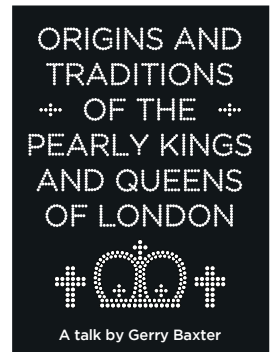
The association dates back to 1875 when Henry Croft, who having been brought up in an orphanage, was given a job of sweeping up and rat catching around a market. He decided that he might get some attention if he made himself a suit of buttons. The buttons were made of mother of pearl, a tradition which continues to this day, despite the difficulty in sourcing them. No Pearly King or Queen would be seen with plastic buttons on their costumes.

Henry Croft himself wore a top hat and tails, covered in buttons, but Kings wear only flat

caps, the hat of the working man. There are traditional patterns, invented ones to suit the wearer and completely smothered suits. Every button, of which there are thousands in a suit, are sewn on individually. One can only become a Pearly through inheritance or marriage and they are unique to London.

The Association holds many christenings and marriages in its church, St Martin-in-the-Fields, in the centre of London. In the crypt of the church can be seen the statue of Henry Croft, which ended up there, having twice been vandalised.

The evening provided us with a fascinating glimpse into a unique association which devotes itself to charitable fundraising.



WE WERE PLEASED TO WELCOME at our April meeting Ancestral Voices led by Sarah Doig and Tony Scheuregger, who gave us a very lively and authentic presentation on Queen Elizabeth I's Royal Progress through East Anglia. Employing the use of Tudor paintings, engravings, original source accounts and quotations, Sarah and Tony took us through the eleven week 'progress', bringing it to life still further by playing contemporary music on period instruments such as lutes and viols.

Elizabeth commenced her journey from Greenwich Palace on 11th July 1578, the dual objective of such a mammoth trip being to parade the sheer splendour and majesty of her court and at the same time, root out various Catholic supporters for either punishment or conversion to Protestantism. Endless months of preparation, 1000 horses, hundreds of attendants, vast sums of money and the accommodation of such numbers in 25 different areas – palaces, halls, castles, stately homes, manor houses, farms and inns – must have been a logistical nightmare! Some landowners, lucky enough (or unfortunate enough!), to have been

chosen as hosts undoubtedly viewed the financial implications with a degree of trepidation, but felt they were under virtual compulsion.

Conducting state business 'on the move', from Essex the Queen entered Suffolk and Long Melford where she was received by Sir William Cordell and given a gold chalice. Feasting continued at Bury St. Edmunds and on arrival in Norwich, then the second most populated city, she was met with more pomp and ceremony and lavishly entertained at the Bishop's palace; from here she indulged in deer hunting, a favourite pursuit. However, burial records for the time show a substantial rise in deaths indicating that plague was rife, possibly brought by the entourage from London. This could explain why Elizabeth's return trip was via a more tortuous route.

In conclusion the tour was judged to be a great success; some Catholics conformed, some did not and were imprisoned, while others remained the same – to these the pragmatic Queen turned a blind eye when it suited her diplomacy!







### Elsewhere in Suffolk: does Anne Boleyn's heart still lie in Babergh?

On the Shotley Peninsula, there is a small settlement called Erwarton. Anne Boleyn, Henry VIII's 2nd wife, was related to the Parker family of Erwarton and a story goes that she so enjoyed her visits to them, that she wished her heart to be buried there. A small heart shaped casket was found in the south wall of the church in 1836. It has since been buried inside the church, where the organ now stands. The church, St Mary the Virgin, can be found to the rear of Erwarton Hall, by following the narrow road past the house. The handsome Elizabethan Hall, with its unusual gatehouse, is privately owned.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, **Philip Crummy:**  
May 11th The Roman Circus in Colchester

Thursday, **A Summer Outing** to Bulmer Brickworks  
June 8th

Thursday, **A Summer Evening's Function.**  
July 13th Details to be announced

Fees to increase in September as follows;  
**Membership £12. Visitors £2.50**

GLEMSFORD  
LOCAL HISTORY  
SOCIETY

## Newsletter | Spring 2017 edition

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

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

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