

Glensford Local History Society

President: George Grover Chairman: Patrick Currie Secretary: Margaret King (Tel 01787-280996)

NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2008

FREE TO MEMBERS (50p where sold)

Welcome to the Autumn issue of the Glensford Local Historical Society Newsletter. With Autumn, comes a new season for the Society. By the time you receive this newsletter, this season's programme will be well underway. But I am writing this piece soon after listening to Clive Paine's fascinating talk on "Victorian Suffolk's Seaside Resorts."

Earlier this year, I was fortunate enough to spend a few days working in a house on the Marine Parade in Dovercourt. Splendid views of the Parade can be had from Landguard Common, Felixstowe. The 19th century development of Dovercourt New

Town, as it was then known, dated to the 1850's and was promoted by the local M.P., Mr. John Bagshaw. Despite the construction of an Undercliff Walk of over a mile in length with a staggering cost of £10,000 at that time, John Bagshaw's ambitious plans for Dovercourt were never fulfilled.

However, the view across the 'German Ocean' from the Parade is still pretty impressive. I hope you find the rest of this season's series of talks equally as enjoyable.

By Robin Ford, Editor

Glensford Frog Count - Map Update

Many thanks for contacting me with your sightings of frogs. I have received records from Flax Lane, Hunts Hill, New Cut, Long Pastures and Angel Lane. Our Chairman also informed me that he had seen many frogs in his garden in 2007 but just two youngsters in 2008. An additional record of a dead grass snake came from George Lane. The unfortunate snake, which no doubt, had been searching for frogs at the time had been probably killed by a cat.

The information you have provided points to a cluster of sites in the southern half of the village. Is this an accurate record of frog distribution in Glensford or is this recorder bias? Keep sending me your records of amphibians and reptiles including

toads, newts, lizards and slow worms spotted in our lovely village.



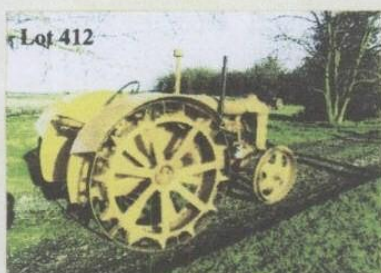
A big thank you to Ann Henson for the lovely picture of a frog she photographed in her garden in Long Pastures.

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VINTAGE TRACTORS,
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The Denis Chaplin Collection of Vintage Agricultural Equipment

The Auction at New Street Farm on the 5th of April 2008 gathered together locals and others from as far afield as Ireland for one of the largest sales of vintage agricultural equipment to be seen in East Anglia in recent times. Denis Chaplin was a village character who, with his mother, moved to New Street Farm, Glemsford many years ago. He previously farmed at Tydings Hill in Halstead. His main interests, as a collector, included tractors, threshing machinery and ploughs. The catalogue contained, however, many entries for equipment such as 'duck's foot hoe points' and 'whipple trees' that would only be recognised by those who have been linked to the land.

On a fine but cold and windy morning, the early miscellaneous lots were offered for sale in the old timbered barn. The bidding was fast and many items exceeded their estimates. After a welcome break for a cup of hot tea or a dram of slow gin from a hip flask, the auctioneer moved outside to sell the larger items, including threshing equipment, horse drawn equipment, ploughs, drills, hoes and harrows. This was followed by the sale of tractor drawn equipment, hay mowers, rakes, binders and sail reapers. It was good to see that some of these items found a home locally. A plough is not at Tye Green and a reaper and binder is residing at a small holding near Bures. Lot 251 was a Ransomes, Sim & Jefferies Ltd. Stationary

baler for use with a threshing drum. Bidding was brisk and a family from Ireland secured the lot for £3560.00. They then had to arrange for a low loader to transport their purchase home.

It was well into the afternoon by the time the tractors came under the hammer. Lot 408 was an Allis Chalmers model B which fetched £840.00. However, it was a Field Marshall Series 3A which, at £9900.00 attracted the highest bid of the day. This tractor, purchased privately from Bridlington, Yorkshire, was believed to have started life in France.

It was sad at the end of the day, to see a lifetime's collection broken up and spread far and wide. But it was pleasing to hear that the money raised by the sale was going to Denis' favourite charities. Not only was Denis an avid collector of agricultural equipment, but, for many years he held Country and Western dances in the old timbered barn. These dances were enjoyed by the folk from Glemsford and surrounding villages. With the dispersal of the collection and the transference of the land to a local farmer, it only remains for the farm house to find a new occupant. However, Glemsford people will always have found memories of a warm and friendly man.

By Roland Hill

The Mysterious Bottles of Glemsford – One Deciphered

The bottle from The Crown stamped with the name "Game", probably belonged to Walter Game who was the licensee of The

Crown at the time of the 1891 and 1901 Censuses. He was married to Anna Game. He was probably the son of William and Susannah Game of Fair Green.

Thank you to Steve Clarke who has given us a possible explanation to one of the bottles.

The Origin of the Glemsford Station

Everytime one ventures down the Pentlow Road, the remnants of a once vibrant railway can be seen. The Station house and attached Cottage still stand as well as the Goods Shed and what appears to be the gate.

In 1860, the Sudbury & Clare Railway Company were given permission to build a line from Sudbury to Clare via Long Melford which extended the line from Mark Tey. It was known as the Stour Valley Line. While permission had been granted in 1847, the line was never built but renewed interest was expressed in 1860. This paved the way for the Eastern Counties Railway to take over and the company moved into full swing. The company asked that an Act be passed to allow the line to extend from Sudbury to Shelford which was on the London-Cambridge line. At the same time, the Colne Valley Company also asked for similar permission and while these companies vied for the permission, ECR prevailed and these two companies were amalgamated to form what became known as The Great Eastern Railway.

The Glemsford Station was opened in 1866 to passengers. The line carried both passengers and freight.

By 1965, the British Railways Board announced that it would axe the entire line between Mark Tey and Cambridge and it would be completely closed by the end of 1966. While the Minister of Transport refused permission for the portion of the line between Sudbury and Mark Tey to be closed, the rest of the line was destined to go. Councils frantically tried to keep the line alive but realized that they were unable to fund the costs of doing so. The axe came down on the Glemsford Station in March 1967.

There is still ongoing speculation and talk that some form of railway service may be reinstated but to date, nothing is concrete.

BBC Channel 4 has been hosting many programmes on the Railways of Britain as of late. They are definitely worth watching and it is hard not to wipe a tear away from the corner of your eye when you see the drastic reduction in service.

For a more comprehensive history, there is a wonderful website that has pictures as well. It is www.subbrit.org.uk/sb-sites/stations/g/glemsford/index.html

Trivia Questions Answered:

What rock band featured the Glemsford Station on their album cover?

It appeared on the cover of the 1970 LP by the group "Gravy Train."

When the Glemsford Station was dismantled, where was the canopy re-used?

It now forms the canopy of the replica building at Castle Hedingham Station.

If you have any stories or photographs you'd like to share about the railway, the people who worked there and Glemsford Station let us know or alternatively you can email us at glemsfordhistory@gmail.com

What does the Dragonfly and the once Railway in Glemsford have in Common?



From the Comic Annual of Thomas Hood Esq. 1832

Find out in our next issue!!!!

GLEMSFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY NEWS

Since the last newsletter in the Spring, the Glemsford Local History Society has had some wonderful gatherings and meetings with some wonderful presenters.

Our summer evening's outing took the form of a guided walk around the Abbey Gardens in Bury St. Edmunds. The guides told us many interesting facts about the Abbey's origins and its turbulent history. We concluded the evening with a botanical tour of the gardens themselves when the head gardener showed us some unusual trees, and explained how the beautiful seasonal displays were arranged and managed.

Our last gathering capped off a wonderful year for the Society who gathered at Melton House, the home of our Chairman Patrick Currie and his lovely wife Paula, for an end-of-season social evening with food and drinks. An excellent scatter walk-cum-quiz had taken place during the earlier part of the evening down and around the Egremont Street area where groups tried to solve some intriguingly puzzling and deviously cryptic clues devised by Patrick Hemphill. The ones that answered the most questions right received a small prize and they were Sue and Brian Smith. Congratulations and what a wonderful way to end the year.

In September, the new season started to a large audience of both old and new members along with several visitors. The first meeting saw Clive Paine as a return speaker - this time to talk on the subject of 'The Victorian Seaside in Suffolk.'

Following the introduction in the 19th century of the railways in East Anglia, it became increasingly easier and popular to visit the coast, if not just for the healthy properties and the invigorating climate to be found there, but also for the vast range of entertainments from donkey rides, to the most ubiquitous collection of grotesque sideshows featuring 'not to be missed' phenomena in human form!

As ever, there were beaches and **beaches**, and it was not long before a certain amount of snobbery developed

Both Lowestoft and Felixstowe on the east coast benefited from the intervention of two far-sighted pioneers - Sir Samuel Morton Peto and a Colonel George Tomline respectively. Each, recognised their respective town's positions to accommodate harbours, set out to plan and build up the two centres into very attractive and appealing Victorian holiday resorts.

While Lowestoft developed hotels, boarding houses and a new church in the 1840-50s, it was not until the 1870s that Felixstowe received the attention of Colonel Tomline. In addition, Felixstowe had the good fortune to be visited by the German Emperor and Empress with their family of five princes for a long holiday in 1891, this being followed by the remarkable 'discovery' of spa water a very short time afterwards which further confirmed its popularity!

The October meeting found a large audience amused and interested by William Tyler's well-researched talk on the subject of 'East Anglian Poachers and Smugglers.' Using many humorous yet relevant quotations, plus a couple of Kipling's poems for good measure, he showed that the English have harboured a certain tolerant attitude and admiration towards both the poachers and smugglers. He traced the history of poaching back to Saxon times and how it stemmed from a deep-seated conflict with the Norman invaders who not only claimed Saxon lands, establishing vast estates abundantly stocked with deer, rabbits and game birds, but also reducing the sturdy Saxons to serfdom - an

award winning recipe to develop a class culture of 'them and us,' leading to Robin Hood-like pursuits of robbing the rich to give to the poor.

The 'haves' continued down the centuries to be poached by their less fortunate neighbours, but when it came to smuggling, they themselves, were heavily involved. Smuggling peaked during the 18th and 19th centuries when heavy taxation of essential commodities was deemed unfair, English sheer bloody mindedness took hold and whole communities throughout East Anglia became engaged in illicit night time activities. Following the 18th century war against France, it became almost a patriotic duty to smuggle in huge quantities of goods including brandy, gin, and tobacco. These were moved from the coast by large teams of muffled-hoofed horses and, before distribution, often stored in most unlikely hiding places - even once in the church nave at Frinton-On Sea - not the place one would immediately associate with smuggling.

Margaret King (Secretary)

Forthcoming events

Thursday, September 11 - Clive Paine: The Victorian Seaside in Suffolk.

Thursday, October 9 - William Tyler: Smugglers & Poachers in East Anglia

Thursday November 12 - A.G.M. - Members' Talks

Saturday, December 13 - President's Evening (members only)

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Thursday January 8 - Stuart Bowell: Suffolk Breweries - Past and Present

Thursday February 12 - Chris Miller: Suffolk Punch Horses

Thursday March 12 - Sarah Friswell: St Edmundsbury Cathedral - Past, Present and Future

Thursday April 9 - Pip Wright: Transportation of Suffolk Criminals

Thursday May 14 - David Possee: The 19th century Silk Industry in Essex and Suffolk

Thursday June 11 - A Summer Outing - to be arranged

Thursday - July 9 - A Summer's Evening Function - to be arranged.

Annual Subscription - £8.00 - Visitors £2.00

We meet on every 2nd Thursday of the month at Glemsford Village Hall at 7:30pm

New members and visitors are very welcome so please come and join us.

Printed and published by Glemsford Local History Society. Editors: Robin Ford and Val Huestis. The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Society as a whole.