

WELLS LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

MEMBERS NEWSLETTER No. 22 - JANUARY 2003



**YOUR COMMITTEE WISH ALL MEMBERS
A HAPPY AND SUCCESSFUL NEW YEAR**



CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

On behalf of the committee I apologize for the delay in producing this newsletter. The only excuse I can offer is that time ran away with us once again. We are aware that members like to receive a newsletter, but unfortunately very few contribute to its content. The last edition contained an article, submitted by a member, about the Buttlands, which was a very interesting read. The editor would welcome any offerings for future issues, and it is only by getting a variety of copy that interest in the newsletter can be maintained. Please put your thinking caps on and then put pen to paper.

Membership this year is holding up well, and our meetings have been well attended. Due to the first Wednesday in January falling on New Years Day, it was decided to cancel the January meeting. The February meeting will be held in the Congregational Chapel, on the corner of Mill Road and Clubbs Lane. I will talk about the first hundred years of the Chapel and its activities. I had no idea when I began researching the subject, of what it would entail, and how long it would take.

The Committee is still, as I write this in early December, trying to decide on the best audio system to use for our meetings. Various alternatives are being considered and we hope to have purchased something that we have up and running early in the year ahead.

We have now moved into our storage facility, adjacent to the Congregational School Room. The roof and windows have been repaired, new lighting and power points installed, and

we have a dry and secure place to store our displays and other material. It has taken a lot of time and searching to find a place to fill this need for storage, and we are very lucky to have found something to fill our requirements.

Our micro film reader is now situated in the library, together with films and other archive material. The latest addition on film is John Fryer's narrative of his journey on the *Bounty* and in the open boat following the mutiny. It has been copied from the original held by the Mitchell Library in Sydney. Also on film are the letters that Fryer wrote to his wife after arrival in Timor, and other information about his career, all of which I selected when I was recently in Australia.

Members may have read in the press of the grant given to the W.L.H.G. by the Carnival Committee. Our grant application was to help in the purchase of a permanent pull down screen in the Maltings, on which to project slides etc. at our presentations. When it is installed this screen will be available for other interested groups to use for their activities, and we have already received contributions from a few of these.

Brian Scott has almost completed the draft of the last of the of the four Walk Round Guides, this one covering the West End. It is hoped to get it into our sales outlets by Easter.

On behalf of the Committee I would like to wish all our members a belated Happy New Year, and encourage all to explore and research the history of our town.

Mike Welland

Heritage

A Wells Mystery

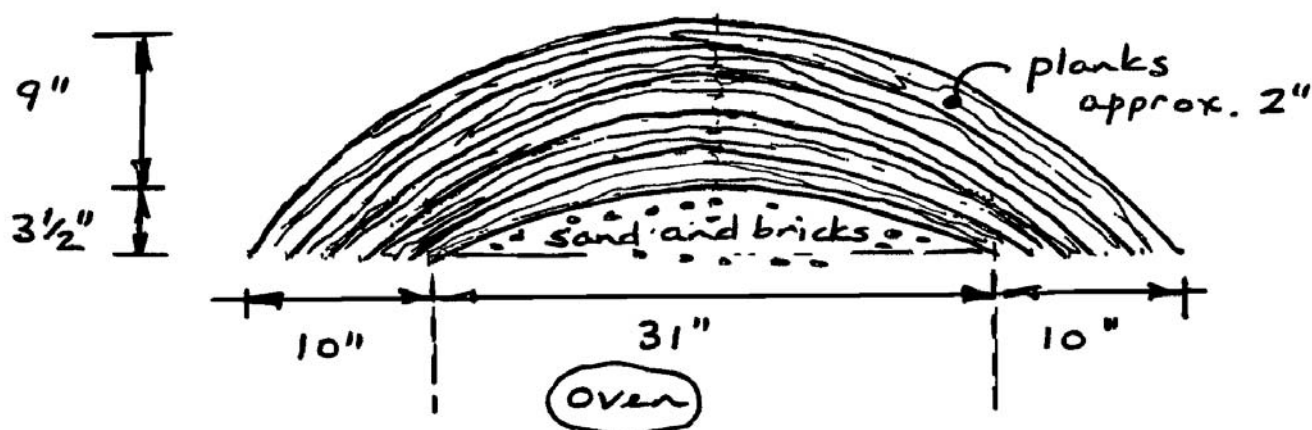
Mill Cottage, now numbered 2A, in Northfield Lane was formerly, I believe, the "Mill Bakery". This would appear to be so as a large oven is built into an inner wall.

A number of oak planks were found stacked under some bushes in the garden of the property. It would appear that they had been cut out of large bent branches. They would seem to have grown in this shape and not be straight timbers steamed into shape.

It has been suggested that these bent planks were part of the insulation over the oven being placed over sand and bricks. The planks are now blackened. Is this blackening a result of former heat or by weathering?

Have members any ideas or comments?

Clearly these planks are historical in some way but in what way and at what time?



Sketch showing possible use
of mystery planks.

Bob Huntington

Times Past

Extracts from Wells Herald March 1888

1. Mr. R. Spicer complained of groups of men and boys using obscene language near the "Globe". It was decided to have notices printed and posted, cautioning offenders, and Serg't Haylett was instructed to take proceedings against such offenders.

2. (From Impressions of Wells by an outsider.)
On leaving the shop I passed through a narrow entry, which brought me into a broad open space, locally known as the Butt Lands. This appeared to be quite the aristocratic part of the town, and I leisurely sauntered through. One of these days I suppose it will be laid out

as a people's park, for it is eminently suited for the purpose and would certainly improve the very comfortable residences which surround it. Quite an imposing hotel stands at one end, and recently trees have been planted round the space, but to people of my time of life a few seats would be a great boon. The Salvation Army barracks are located at the back of one of the hotels, and on a summer's evening the music produced by the army band must have a soporific effect on the neighbours. There is an annual fair held here on Shrove Tuesday, which is called "cock fair" indicating that at some remote time cock fighting was the principle attraction. Now this fair consists of a couple of sweet stalls and a shooting gallery, and it is to be hoped that another year will see the farce die a natural death.

**Extract from Wells Herald March 1889
(From Wells Reminiscences)**

Wells is a terminus, the Hunstanton and Norwich lines uniting just outside the town, and the Station Master, (generally wearing a smile, in addition to wearing a uniform more military than civilian) gives patient heed to the wayfarer's enquiries and sometimes lamentations. It is a post that must be filled by a man of genial disposition, for sometimes erratic passengers have alighted at the station whose proper destination was Wells by the Sea in Somerset; suavity is needful to assure them that they are not more than 250 miles out of their course, and to explain that the digression cannot be laid to the charge of the Great Eastern officials. Not a few parcels also reach Wells which should have found their way to the little ecclesiastical city under the Mendips.

The air of repose that pervades Wells predominates the station. It is peaceful on weekdays and closed on Sundays. Trains only approach or go out in one direction, so that the gaze of the officials instead of being distracted by glancing Janus-like in two directions, can be concentrated on a single focus. "Festina lente" might be properly engraved on the Staff carried by the engine drivers, for the pace on the single lines in Norfolk is not excessive, and this, and the wind-mills and the general contiguity of land and water everywhere make one fancy that the

surroundings are Dutch and not English.

The Station possesses two platforms, one sheltered for the more delicate passengers, and the other left open to the free air of Norfolk. But there is no invidious placard on either, "Wait here for third class" compelling the indigent to expose their pitiable status and herd together before they enter the train, so noticeable on the Metropolitan Line. We observed one announcement describing the Station Master as a "Collector", but the only curiosity he pointed out was a truck bereft of two wheels, and supported by wooden legs in their place, perhaps this semi-vehicle formed part of what the railway would term "mixed" trains. Like all things in Wells it indicated repose. It could move, but it was more disposed to remain quiescent.

From The Wells Herald August 1889

A Coroner's Jury investigating the circumstances connected with a fatal bathing accident at Overstrand the other day, added a rider to their verdict to the effect that they thought that there always ought to be a rope and life-buoy kept on the beach so as to be ready in case of emergency. Did it ever strike our readers that Wells is almost the only port in England where no life saving apparatus is available on the Quay or Wharfs.

Mike Welland

Occupations of Persons living in High Street as entered on 1841 Census

Hairdresser	3	Painter		Plumber	
Tailor	4	Draper	3	Dressmaker	
Shoe Maker	12	Ind. Minister		Auctioneer	
Watch Maker	2	Whitesmith		Farmer	
Sailor	2	Inn Keeper	3	Hatter	
Dealer	2	Basket Maker	2	Post Mistress	
Rope Maker	4	Printer	2	Agricultural Lab.	13
Parish Clerk		Carpenter	4	Gardener	2
School Teacher	5	Baker	3	Joiner	
Silk Merchant		Shovel Maker		Excise Officer	
Glover		Builder		Ironmonger	2
Sieve Maker	1	Bricklayer		Brazier	3
Dyer		Weaver		Chimney Sweep	2
Grocer		Lodging Hse. Keeper			

Mike Welland

Meetings Comment

A DIFFERENT FORM OF PRESENTATION

You may say that a speaker who cannot easily be heard does give a different form of presentation, but as our chairman, in his notes leads us to hope for a better sound system, I will comment no further. For our November meeting Christine Hiskey used the Powerpoint programme on her computer. This enabled her to take photographs for her presentation, put them onto her computer, link them with words and background effects, and apart from the spoken words she was ready for our meeting! Of course I conveniently omit to mention how long this takes. I don't tell you about the skill of taking suitable photographs, or the knowledge of computers which is needed, or the hassle to get size and shape and order correct. Many of us were delighted that Christine took this leap into modern technology and I for one hope that we will see other presenters use it at future meetings.

The title "Secrets from the Holkham Archives" seemed to be somewhat ambiguous. Did we expect to hear about the tasks of an archivist, of the contents of boxes and chests, or of Coke family skeletons? Perhaps I missed the latter, but we were certainly treated to a tantalising glimpse of deeds, account books, letter books and maps. Many of the items shown and spoken of related to Wells or to Wells families so I suspect that some of us are itching to know and see more!

Maureen Whiddett

Horse Hire

Fees for Conveyance & Horse Hire

Mr Richard Parker

To Robert Chalher

	£	s	d
1807			
March 26th Attending on you at Wells and taking Instruction to Prepare Conveyance From Mr V.B. Dennis to you of the Jolly Sailor & Attesting the Execution thereof including Horse Hire & Expenses & Stamps & Parchment.	4	14	6
	3	2	6
	7	17	0

1807 March 29th Settled
Robert Chalher

Archives

DON'T THROW THEM AWAY!

The archivist has recently been given an envelope full of receipts and invoices from Mr and Mrs Flint via Rodney Crafer late of Manor Farm, Wells. They date from 1946 to the late 1960's and give a wonderful insight into

everyday life on the farm in those days and are a delight to compare with modern day prices. For example -

In 1948 18 ½ pint mugs were purchased from Thurgur's at 1/2d each a total of 21/-.

In 1950 1 pair of Lotus shoes were £5. 5s. 0d.

In 1954 the monthly bill at Pechey and Sons for the EDP and Farmers Weekly came to 8/4d. That was 5/- for the EDP and 3/4d for the Farmers Weekly.

In 1960 2 bottles of sherry cost £2. 0s. 0d and 2 galvanised pails were 14/-

We talk of inflation but some of those things seem to me to have been quite an outlay!

Another interesting item that came to light were bills from the Norfolk War Agricultural Executive Committee charging Manor Farm for the supply of P.O.W and other labour

1st November 1947 Gang labour (E.V.W) piece work - cutting out Kale 11 acres @ 50/- per acre

1st November 1947 W.L.A labour piece work - to hoeing cabbages 8.3 acres @ 45/- per acre

3rd November 1947 P.O.W. labour - to planting greens 5 acres @ 70/- per acre

Although logic will say that these people had to be fed and housed and that cost had to be found from somewhere, I personally, had not realised that farmers were charged in this way and was surprised to find these invoices.

Lists of donated items are tabulated on separate pages.

C. Jackson

EDITOR'S SOAP BOX

The chairman has been kind in his explanation for the lack of a December Newsletter. The plain fact is that Members failed to submit anything for a Newsletter. Committee Members have again come to the rescue so that a Newsletter is possible. I need articles such as that on The Buttlands from the Archives of the late Dorothy Terrington. A dozen or so titbits can provide enough material for a very interesting Newsletter!

I know what I was doing on 31st January 1953, can you remember where you were? Let me know. Are there any memories of February 13th (or was it 12th) 1938? This was another date of a spectacular high tide.

D. A. Perryman

Acquisitions 102 of Wells Local History Group

Item No	Donated By	Item	Type		Location
		0.numbers were found in the library filing cabinet			
0.1		Voters lists, various parishes 1986,87, 88, 1990, 92	A\$		Elections
0.2		Port and Harbour brochures 1996, 97, 98	A5		Port
0.3		Wells group of parishes Parish magazines some months of 1996, 97, 98, 99	A5		Churches
0.4		APHS school magazine 1993	A4		Education
0.5		Wells Carnival and Regatta programmes 1972, 1977	A5		Carnival
0.6		Wells-next-the-Sea souvenir guide	A5		Tourism
0.7		Aspects of life by N. Nicholson	A5		Reminiscences
0.8		Wells and Walsingham railway guide and history 1996	A5		Railway
0.8a		New steam locomotive by N. Simkins	A5		Railway
0.9		Photographs of John Fryer gravestone	A6		Bounty
0.1		Elevation plan of Tudor Cottage + rubbing of panelling	A3		Buildings
0.11		Plans for Sackhouse Plan and Elevation views	A3		Buildings
0.12		Fisher Theatre - Exhibition leaflet	A4		Entertainment
0.13		J. F. Temple and Sons Farm and livestock information	A3/A4		Farming
0.14		Wells carnival programme 1996	A5		Carnival
0.14a		Pinewoods brochure 1988	A5		Tourism
0.14b		Wells Tourism Assoc leaflets various	A4/5		Tourism
0.14c		Lifeboat service programme 1998	A5		Lifeboat

0.15		Pechey and Sons bag	A5	Trade and Industry
0.16		APHS leaflet c. 1988	A4 folded	Education
0.17		Wells W. I. History 1919 –1955	A4	Entertainment
0.18		Press cuttings Mobile library 1987	A4	Library
0.19		Lifeguard Club 1978/9 photograph	A4	Lifeguards
0.2		Last of the Drovers 1975 photograph	A3	Farming
0.21		Wells Town Appraisal 1990	A4	Town
0.22		Dredger Walbrook's final voyage 1999	A4	Port
0.23		Inside views of mobile library – Photos	A5	Library
0.24		Port and Harbour by D. Case	A5 extracts	Port
0.25		Floods 12 th Jan 1978	A5 23 photos	Floods
0.26		Jickings Yard	A5 Photograph	Buildings
		Original list of donations		
1.1	Mr. G. Perkins	Heroes and Fighting Men	Book	WW 1 & 2
1.2		Wells-on-Sea	Book	Photographs
1.3		When I was a Lad	Book	Reminiscences
2.1	Mrs M. Smith	Wild Flowers – interim report	Book	Flora and Fauna
3.1	Mrs. Watson	Certiñes and Poster of Mr. T. Powell's horticulture	Certificates	Display boards
4.1	Mrs. Kerr	Photographs of the replica 'Bounty'	Photographs	Display boards
5.1	Mrs H. Howell	Poems	Spiral bound	Reminiscences
6.1	Mr. J. Porter	W. Parker's Cash receipts	Pad	Trade and Industry
7.1	Miss. J. Davies	Calendar 2000 – Alderman Peel High School Association	A4 calendar	Millennium 2000
8.1	Mr. P. Henley	Scanned copies of Photographs	A4 booklet	Photographs

9.1	Mr. C. Beales	Architects plans and photographs of the Crown Hotel 2001	Envelope	Pubs
10.1	Mr. F. Andrews	Military map of Greater London	Folded map	Maps
11.1		1953 calendar showing Thurgur's Corner/Church Plain	A4 Card	Trade and Industry
12.1	Mrs. B. Hawes	Carrier bag from 'A. A. Reeve and Sons'	Bag	Trade and Industry
13.1	Mr. B. Scott	Bligh by Gavin Kennedy	Book	Bounty
13.2		The epic open boat voyage — photocopy of exhibition catalogue	A4	Bounty
14.1	Mrs. C. Rolt	Wells coastguard Disaster 1898	A4 display	Lifeboat and Coastguards
15.1	Mrs A. Nelson	Saltmarsh and Sandunes by Pat Cringle	Book	Reminiscences
15.2		The Gamekeeper's boy	Book	Reminiscences
16.1	Mr D. Peryman	Service sheets of Annual Lifeboat Service 1988, 89, 93, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 2000, 2001	A5 sheets	Lifeboat/ Coastguard
16.2		Wells Carnival Programmes 1989, 90, 91, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 99, 2000, 2001.	A5 booklet	Carnival
16.3		Port and Harbour of Wells 1994	A5 booklet	Port
17.1	Mrs E. Hinson	Articles about Warham Camp	A3	Archaeology
18.1	Mrs A. Temple	Homewords forHeart and Hearth — Wells Parish Magazine 1891, 1892	Book	Churches
		Newly acquired materials		
19.1	Mrs. S. Beales	Education in Wells	2 A4 books 2 CD Roms	Education
20.1	Mr. M. Welland	Ledger from J. Arnold 1909	Ledger	Trade and Industry
21.1	Mr. & Mrs. C. Rattee	Photographs of Norfolk Historic Buildings Assoc. survey of Wells	6x4 photograph	Buildings
22.1	Mr & Mrs. Flint	Invoices and receipts from traders in and around Wells 1945 — 1960's	Various	Trade and Industry