

## Reepham Society History Group

Exhibition 2001

### History Exhibition Report.

#### Chairman's Report.

Dates: May 10<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>. 2001-05-17

Venue: St. Michael's Church, Reepham Society

By: History Group of Reepham Society.

Organiser: Kate Nightingale

Design & Layout: Chris Peakome.

Contributors : Joyce Cox, Jennifer Roberts, Ann Middlemass, Jan Henry, Tom Kirk

Catering & Bar: Pat & Tony Large & Jan Henry

Shop; Pat & Brian Austin. Pat & Tony Large

Flowers: Ann Middlemass

And all others who contributed on and before the day, especially those members of the Reepham Society Executive Committee not mentioned above.

I want to make a special thanks to Chris Peakome whose artistic experience contributed so much to the overall appearance and appeal of the exhibition.

Special thanks are due to those members of the community who loaned items for display especially Sir John White for the loan and transport of the Bryant map, map table and display case and the financial support in providing protection for the map; to Paul Hovesen for organising the support we received from Salle and to Richard Saunders for the loan of his metal detector finds and his work in transporting and displaying the items from Salle;

to Pat Perry-Warnes for the loan of the Wood Dalling tithe map and schedule;

to Nick Bundock, Nicola Johnson, Lorna Gray, Clair Buxton, Sarah Birtles and Simon Tebbut for the loan of other items for display.

To Howard & Margaret Blandford-Baker for their help with stewarding.

Thank you also to the Rector and PCC for use of St, Michael's for four days.

Preview,

The preview evening for members on the Thursday evening was a great success both socially and in the response to the displays. The floral display which Ann brought were magnificent and added to the general effect throughout the whole three days.

#### The Exhibition.

1. A series of displays taking a walk though the history of the area and its agricultural past, culminating in the visually excellent display on Hackford with the model threshing machine. This display included the photographs of Park Farm Salle, reconstructed as a C18 farmhouse for the filming of 'Mill on the Floss'.
2. The Whitwell display focused on the history of Whitwell Common and included the books belonging to the Trustees

3. The graveyard display with copies of the death records from NRO and the details so far on computer to date about the graves in the old graveyard round the churches.
4. Modern Reepham - a display of the plans to modernise Reepham to stimulate an interest in the present and future possibilities for development
5. Large display cabinet with metal items discovered on the Salle estate.
6. Bryant's 1826 map of Norfolk – an original and not cut u[p into sections.
7. Aerial photographs of Reepham. Two large b/w OS photographs have some very interesting crop marks on the water-meadows between Bar Lane and the Sewage Works as well as being a big draw of general interest. Also some nice colour blow-ups.
8. The chancel was kept open and church tours were offered . There was some interest in looking at the churches but very little take-up on the tours.
9. The 'Fifteen Pubs' display drew many local people and lots of chat. This and the Band display were probably responsible for pulling in some local people who would perhaps not have, otherwise, attended.
10. Reepham Town band display. Another display of local interest which drew more reminiscences.
11. There were also two last minute editions – a small display of medieval pottery and glass and two 1949 woodcuts by an unknown artist of Kerdiston Barns.
12. The Shop was busy all the time. We sold many back copies of the magazine as well as many cards.

#### New Publications.

The Millenium edition of the Reepham Society Magazine and 'Fifteen Pubs' both sold exceptionally well. The Magazine sold about 120 copies and the 'Pubs' were virtually sold out of their short run.

The exhibition was a great success, probably due to its broad appeal in providing something of interest to everyone. The history of the local pubs and the Reepham Town band drew many older Reephamites and gave Joyce Cox who organised this much extra information. She has written a paper, 'Fifteen Locals', to go with the pub history which was more or less sold out by the end of the exhibition. All of this was a good demonstration of the value of and interest in oral history.

There were also some slightly more academic displays to appeal those with an interest in historical or archaeological research and to those with a more genral interest in finding out about the past of their community and the past of this agricultural area.. Tom Kirk's diplay on the graveyard survey was of interest to those researching their family history. Ann Middlemass's display on Whitwell Common drew on the latest research being carried out by Sarah Birtles into Norfolk Commons and was balanced by a general interest item on the Whitwell murder of the last century,

The Bryant Map and the archaeological finds were of great interest as were the aerial photographs. All of this stimulated reminiscences and curiosity in finding out more. Quite a lot of people came back on more than one

occasion. As well as asking for information people were giving it. A great example of how an event such as this can bring people together.

Much of this exhibition was based on research carried out at a variety of levels by members of the History group so does have considerable .... A number of historians and archaeologist, some of considerable standing, came through and all were impressed by the quality of the event. We have received many congratulations on the exhibition and I think we can be well pleased with the results.

#### Finances.

We have certainly covered the costs of the exhibition. We now need to sell the Magazines to get the cost of printing back on those. Ideas for sales outlets would be much appreciated.

#### Publicity

Advance publicity could have been better in the locality. Press releases were sent out to all the Norfolk media and we did get a slot in the EDP the week before. The exhibition was sent to all 'What's On' slots but I had no time to check on these. We did draw visitors from distant parts of the county some of whom heard about the exhibition from the EDP.

We need more impact in our posters for the future as many local people said they had not seen them though posters had been up for weeks. Also distributing flyers at the last moment or house to house delivery would help.

#### Press Cover.

In addition to the short paragraph before the date, Charles Roberts responded to our press release and visited on the Saturday. He spent a couple of hours with us and gave us full coverage in his column. This was very positive and gave good publicity to the Reepham Society and Reepham.

#### Follow up.

We have already had a request for research into the Dack family history which Howard Blandford Baker has expressed an interest in. HBB has considerable knowledge of genealogy and wishes to pursue this once more esp. for local families who wish to follow up their family past – the Dacks are particularly suitable, being one of the oldest Reepham families.

Edwin Rose from Gressenhall(NAU) has written to the Norwich Museum who said they have no record of the Cardinal's hat wall painting but will search. A second letter followed, tracing the wall painting to the Bridewell where it has now 'crumbled into a pile of dust'!

Debriefing meeting. 23. 5. 01 Hideaway Cottage.

## **Comments from De-briefing meeting on 23. 5. 01.**

General agreement on most of above.

### **Local Advertising**

The general advertising around the county via media worked but there was not enough impact in local advertising esp. last minute. In future :

- Large posters at last minute in obvious positions
- Possibly flyers
- House to house delivery of flyers
- Car stickers on parked cars
- Don't forget to cover outlying villages

Ask June Betts to hang out banner on Bircham centre.

### **Venue**

Other venues discussed and rejected

### **Lighting**

Lighting in the evening was poor. Also possible have power sources to provide overhead lighting on each stand for future displays. ?Mike Cooper as contact.

### **Timing**

Should we have considered synchronising with the Antique fair at the Old Brewery

### **General feedback**

We learned a lot about size and layout

When should we repeat? When we have something new. Probably about 2- yearly?

### **Storage and re-use**

Chris Peakome is scanning the displays for a permanent record. We should not dismantle yet as we could be asked to repeat of present a stand as part of other group exhibitions.

### **Where to store?**

Get boards from DIY to create folio to store sheets flat. ? in Jolyon's garage. This raise a question of permanent storage not in a member's house and a room for a permanent exhibition.

KN asked to take this issue, which is not new, back to the Committee for referral to Bircham Centre Trustees