



THE REEPHAM SOCIETY

Affiliated to the Council for the Protection of Rural England

Newsletter – January 1998

(Follows July 1997 Issue)

Introduction

This newsletter continues the Executive Committee's commitment to keep members informed about the Society's activities and proposed future events. The newsletter will be distributed by collectors at the same time as 1998 membership cards when calling upon members for their 1998 subscriptions, which we have managed to keep at the same level as last year - £4 per household or £3 if any member of the household is a senior citizen.

General

As a reminder and for new members. The society operates as a local amenity society within the parishes of Reepham, Booton, Hackford, Kerdiston, Salle, and Whitwell. It is a registered charity affiliated to the Council for the Protection of Rural England and is non-political and non-sectarian. The Society is also non-profit making and financed entirely by members' subscriptions, voluntary donations, and fund raising activities. Membership is open to all who are interested in the area covered. Objects are to:-

1. stimulate public interest in the area;
2. promote high standards of planning and architecture;
3. secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historical or public interest.

In addition to its own activities to promote these objects, the society cooperates and co-ordinates with other bodies such as the Parish Council, clubs and youth groups. The society also keeps a watch on activities and developments outside Reepham that are likely to affect the town.

Planning

After years of expert sterling service, Margaret Hemmings has stepped down as Chairman & Secretary of the Planning sub-Committee. Jan Henry is now Chairman and Jolyon Booth is Secretary.

In 1997 the sub-committee commented on 36 applications. Broadland District Council subsequently refused 3 of them and approved 26 leaving 7 outstanding at the time of going to print. The refusals were applications to set up businesses – a Pizza takeaway in Townsend Court and two successive applications to set up a Hair Salon in a house in New Road. Amongst the approved proposals was the conversion, to residential use, of stables at the Kings Arms with consequent improvement of a blank wall in Back Street by reinstatement of old windows. Further development of the Randall's yard site was approved to allow conversion of the old George and Dragon to two dwellings and addition of two more houses to the terrace on Norwich Road. The fate of the old wall at the bottom of Malthouse Lane is currently under negotiation.

Outstanding applications include the development of the old granary site in Stony Lane. Outline permission for 9 houses was granted in April but a specific application has now been made for 7 houses. An L-shaped belt of trees around this site is now protected. Also outstanding is an application to keep horses on a patch of ground next to Whitwell Common, which we opposed because we doubted its suitability for grazing and feared pollution risks to the Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Since last January's newsletter the restoration and repainting of the old Spar shop to become Echo Antiques and the conversion of The Chimes into Motts Chemists have both been completed with results that we hope most people will find attractive. The modifications to the Broadland Local District Plan have reached the final stage. They make very few changes in Reepham mostly to match the designated use of certain areas to their actual use and to preserve some patches of green.

Footpaths

The Parish Council have sub-contracted to us the responsibility for the twice yearly survey of footpaths within the parish. Volunteer members shared the work between them and completed the first survey in November. The fee of £150 is a helpful addition to our finances. The next survey is due in May – additional volunteers please contact the secretary.

The CPRE

We continue to support the CPRE through its County Branch, the Norfolk Society both by our corporate subscription and by participating in CPRE activities. In October we mounted a display and helped at the Norfolk Society's Silver Jubilee exhibition at the Assembly House, Norwich and we have sent representatives to the Society's General Advisory Committee and to its award ceremony at County Hall. We look forward to Martin Walton's talk about these awards at our meeting on 12th February.

Ralph Cox has completed an extensive planning research project, on our behalf, for the Broadland District Committee of the CPRE. We understand that the County Branch has now adopted Ralph's work as a model for use by other district committees.

The CPRE has now discontinued its product marketing but we shall still offer our remaining items at our general meetings.

RS Garden Competition

The Reepham Society's 1997 garden competition easily maintained standards set in earlier years, with the number of entries again topping 80. The awards ceremony on this occasion allowed time for each judge to explain how prize-winners were selected, and to make a few general remarks about gardening features which appealed to them. We were most interested to learn of the variations in approach by each judge. Unfortunately several prize-winners did not attend.

Winners, in order - 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and Highly Commended - were as follows.

The Stimpson Cup (Large Gardens). Mr. & Mrs. NT Wood; Mr. & Mrs. M Woodnut; Mr. & Mrs. DW Jones; Mrs. A Wyand. **Judge Laurie Riches.**

The Ewing Cup (Intermediate Gardens) Mr. & Mrs. HW Raffell; Mr. & Mrs. JR Lambert; Mrs. RM Attridge; Mr. & Mrs. RW Franklin. **Judge Brian Norbury.**

The Margaret Cameron Cup (Small Gardens) Mr. & Mrs. DW Everett; Mr. & Mrs. IW McGilvray; Mrs. E Plant; Mr. & Mrs. J Lay. **Judge Mike Allen.**

The Chairman's Cup (Vegetable gardens) Mr. W Roberts; Mr. WJ Tubby; Mr. HN Egmore; Mrs. NA Jinkerson; Miss. D Burton; Mr. S Tebbutt; Mr. M Jozefiak. **Judge Mr. EG Geater.**

The 1998 award ceremony will be further expanded by agreement with the judges so as to provide a period for questions from the audience along the lines of Radio 4's "Gardeners' Question Time". We extend a warm welcome to any interested gardeners, particularly members of the Reepham and District Gardening Club.

Other Support Activities

As already reported in the July 97 newsletter we continue to support the activities of various other Reepham organisations such as the Scouts Extravaganza, Charter Day and the Victorian Day, at which last we raised on the cake stall a record £50 for Ray's Hall. Once more our thanks go to Pat Large and her team of helpers who have provided cakes for stalls, refreshments and other assistance on our behalf.

Reepham Society Archive.

Over the past twelve months many new photographs have been added to the Society's archive. This was increased by a number of items from a member of the Beaver family who resided at Beaver House in Norwich Road. Some further items of memorabilia from the Gibbs family have now been included. One item of particular interest is a copy of a journal by J.P. Leeds who resided at The Oaks Farm, Kerdiston, and which gives a wonderful account of the day to day running of a farm and the lifestyle of his family and associates from 1823 to 1828. J.P. Leeds was a relative of Stephen Leeds who ran the Tannery at Whitwell.

The archivist has been able to help families who have been to Reepham during the past year with information on older relatives and has been able in many instances to provide copies of photographs of places where they lived. Six families have been assisted during the past year. We were able to help with information to the Television Company who made a film of the problems of adopted children who wished to trace their natural parents. This was broadcast on one of the "Matter of Fact" programmes which was seen late last year. Another family was helped in tracing their natural mother. This concluded in a happy reunion for all concerned.

To preserve good things and create better ones, it is vital to understand the past and learn from it. The archive is an important resource for everyone in Reepham and we are most grateful for the care and skill that Brian Hardiment has put in over a number of years to collect and organise it all. From time to time he mounts displays of special selections of our material which members and others find fascinating and informative. He is always looking for more, so if you have any photos, documents or other items of historical interest that you are willing to share please let him know.

Finance

In view of our healthy balance of around £2500, we feel we could accept a possible excess of expenditure over income in 1998 and have decided not to increase the subscription. The footpath survey fees (mentioned earlier) also improve our finances and there is always a possibility of some fund raising event during the year.

Membership

Additions and depletions have almost exactly balanced to keep numbers at roughly 250 households. This makes us one of the largest amenity societies, a fact that recently led the Aylsham Association to ask our committee's advice on how we had managed it! The truth must, we hope, have something to do with what we offer to our members. If indeed we are getting things right then, to make sure we continue doing so, we need to know what our members want. As a step toward that end we are planning to offer tea and biscuits after the AGM, which we hope will encourage members to stay behind and, amongst other sociable activity, have a "full and frank exchange of views" with committee members. We would welcome any offers of help with these refreshments so that the providers are not so busy they are left out of the talk. If we were to extend this practice to other meetings we should then have to make a small admission charge to cover costs rather than rely on a begging bowl at the door. Please tell us what you think.

Programme of events

The events for 1998 are listed on your membership card but this went to press too early for some events to be included. In particular we are hoping to arrange some outdoor event in the summer and would like to do something to draw in both new members and some of those existing members who don't come to our ordinary indoor meetings. Any committee member would be delighted to hear suggestions. In particular

the Secretary (Jolyon Booth) can be found at 50 Bircham Road, Reepham, NORWICH, NR10 4NQ
Tel: 871181 Fax: 8711111 email: Jolyon.Booth@btinternet.com

The Magazine

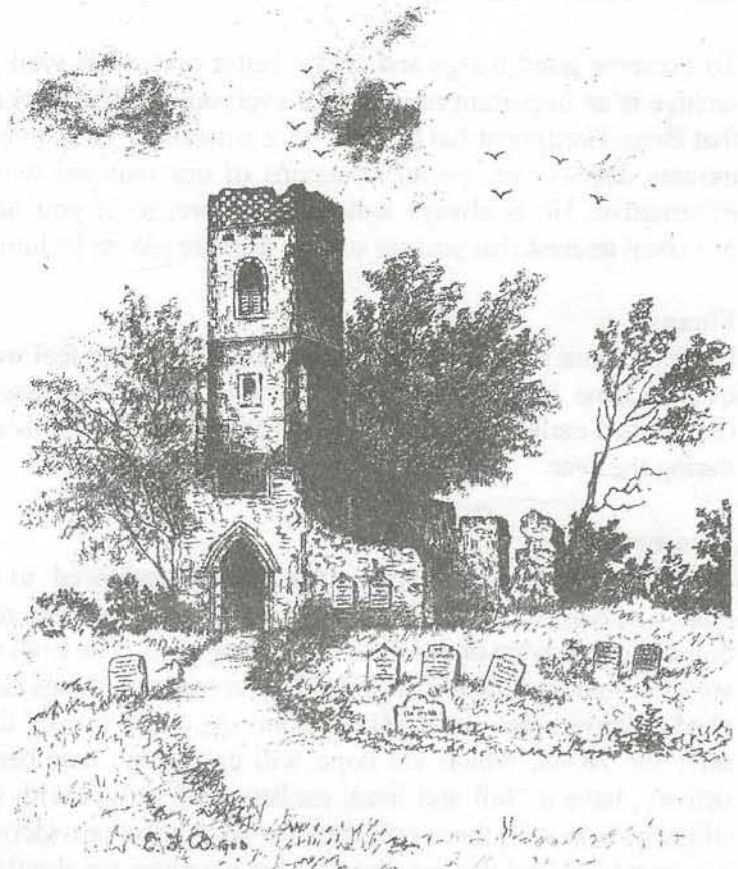
Members have expressed a wish for further issues of a magazine. We do have something in mind, which we hope to print during the year but our regular researcher and writer, Michael Black, has found it increasingly difficult to make the time for this work.. Any offers of help in this area from members would be most welcome.

Other Help Needed and Gratefully Received

Eileen Plant, who has been finding speakers for our meetings for some years now, has expressed the wish that someone else should take on this rôle. Any offers please?

It is long past time to thank Harry Bibby and Geoff Hemmings for their regular performance of the chore of setting out chairs for our meetings.

Members may or may not know that some years ago the society published a postcard showing All Saint's church Hackford - one of the three churches in Reepham churchyard - before it was demolished. A few copies of the card are still available in St Mary's but the society is in the process of reprinting and hope to have copies of the new version available soon. The illustration alongside is to give an impression only and cannot match the quality of reproduction of the new cards.



*Hackford Church in 1784
(Pulled down in 1796)*

We should like to take this opportunity to thank all our distributors and collectors and wish all our members a Happy 1998. **Don't miss the first meeting on 12th February – 8pm in St Michael's.**