



WALBERSWICK

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

NEWSLETTER NO: 67

October 2021

Newsletter Editor's report

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

At last we are able to mention dates for your diary – it's been a long time.

Tuesday 9th November 2021 - AGM and new Constitution: We are now able to hold an AGM. Please take this as official notice of this meeting (we are required to give you 2 weeks' notice). The AGM will take place at 7:00 pm in the Village Hall. While it will be no more or less exciting than previous AGMs it is your chance to have a say about WLHG. One important agenda item will be approval of the updated constitution. There is nothing much to note about this new document compared to the current one (apart from length). However, it now includes items missing from the current one and brings us in line with how these things should be written. We are not attaching it to this newsletter (due to its length) but you can read it on-line by going to <http://walberswick.onesuffolk.net/walberswick-local-history-group/constitution/>. If you have received a hard copy of this newsletter and would like a hard copy of the new constitution please phone Pat Lancaster and we will get one to you.

Saturday 4th December - The return of the Christmas do: Charlie Haylock will talk to us about "Charlie and The Dig". This will be a brilliant way to return to live meetings. To quote "*Charlie Haylock is an historian of spoken English, a dialect specialist, an authority on his native Suffolk and a bestselling author. He has a regular spot on BBC Radio Suffolk*". For those, like me, who enjoyed "The Dig" and Ralph Fiennes Suffolk accent then you will want to see and hear the man who helped Ralph perfect it. This will start at 7:00 pm in the Village Hall. The talk will be followed by drinks and nibbles. This is free to members and £5:00 for guests. So for an extra £2:50 why not join for £7:50 and get a whole year's benefits?

Dates to be announced - The Heritage Hut and exhibitions: WLHG along with WPC, WCLC and the scroll group is a prime user and stake-holder in the newly-refurbished Heritage Hut. We would like you to be able to see what the building has to offer you as members and as Walberswick residents and householders. To help this we are planning two exhibitions:

– firstly of the George Charles Haite charcoal sketches of Walberswick dated 1895. WLHG is fortunate to own 13 beautiful sketches of late 19th century Walberswick and copies of two more. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Charles_Haite for general background.

– secondly of Jessie Browton's paintings of Walberswick from the 20th century. WLHG holds high quality copies of the original held by Southwold Museum.

The dates have not been fixed yet so watch out for notices. However, if you would like to view the HH before that there is an open day for potential "Friends of the HH" starting 10:00 am on **Sunday 9th October**.

Sunday 24th October - Showing of the Walberswick Scroll and a dip into the WLHG archives: While not a WLHG event, some of us on the committee wear several hats – WLHG, Scroll Advisory Group and Heritage Hut Management Committee – and would like to “plug” the next showing of the scroll in the HH. There will be three hourly showings starting at 10:00 am. Come early if you want to be sure of getting in – there will be WLHG archive documents on display if you have to wait (or examine after viewing the scroll). This will be another opportunity to view the interior of the HH. We will also be thinking particularly of Richard Scott who died since we last showed the scroll.

Our first article is from the pen of Edward Wright and continues his expert writing on the people and houses of Millfield Road. It comprises largely of transcripts of letters from a young wife to her husband written during a holiday in 1929. We only have half the correspondence, assuming the husband ever wrote back to her. She wrote every day!

The writer of the letters was visiting friends and family in the area and she and her companion were staying at a guest house on The Green. The letters were written from Dunwich View, The Green, rather than Kuruman, Millfield Road as her family had by then moved away. The reference to the electricity at Dunwich View only working downstairs may be of interest to the current occupants. I need to ask our chairman if this is still true.

On first reading I thought how little has changed since 1929. They could have almost been written now – collection from Darsham Station, walks to Dunwich, crossing the river by ferry, walks on the beach etc. Now it would be phone calls and emails not daily letters but the activities essentially the same. This is what so many visitors still come for.

Then the date, October 1929, struck me. By the end of that month the world would witness the Wall Street crash followed by a decade of austerity leading to WWII. Whether or not Dorothy had any exposure to the worsening economic climate I do not know. Maybe the reference to the “Scotch fisher girls” and the diminished fleet of smacks was a sign of the times.

I was then taken back to the Millfield Road of 1929 when Dorothy notes about another resident of Millfield Road – (they) *“have a house here and run it themselves, when they are on holiday, without a maid”*.

This now gives me an opportunity to slip in a personal recollection of Millfield Road from the 1960’s. This concerns a house once called KYNGESHOLME, now Bittern House. During a summer holiday each morning I would sit in the kitchen of that house while my uncle would fire-up the boiler for the then occupant, a Mrs Lunn. I recall Mrs Lunn inviting my parents to afternoon tea. Looking back maybe this was an indication of the change two world wars had brought to the order of things. Having mentioned this to Edward Wright he thinks “Mrs Lunn” was perhaps Mabel Lunn who was known as Lady Mabel because she was a granddaughter of the Earl of Iddesleigh. She was married to the Arnold Lunn, son of the founder of the travel agent. Edward was also able to find a picture of Mrs Lunn in her younger days in 1937.



© National Portrait Gallery, London

I once stayed as a holidaymaker in that house long after Mrs Lunn had gone. This would have been about 20 or more years after my parents took tea there. By then it was offering B&B. I will not say who was running it but the breakfasts were superb and taken with opera played in the background. I leave you to guess.

John English - Newsletter Editor – email johnrenglish@tiscali.co.uk

Letters from Dunwich View - Edward Wright

Dorothy Ball recently visited Walberswick; her great-great-grandparents had built the large house in Millfield Road then called Kuruman and now called Millstones. Dorothy kindly shared some photographs of the house when it was new in 1901 and a charming collection of letters written by her grandmother, Dorothy



Windmill Cottage on the left and Kuruman (now Millstones), probably 1901.

Turner, on a visit to Walberswick in 1929. We are very grateful to Dorothy Ball for allowing us to publish extracts from them and to Jan Etherington for putting us in touch with Dorothy.

In October 1929 Emily Goulty and Dorothy Turner stayed at Emily List's guest house, Dunwich View on the Green. Emily, then fifty-nine, was the daughter of Wallis Rivers Goulty who, with his second wife Fanny, had built Kuruman. Emily lived with them until Fanny's death in 1915.

Dorothy Turner was Emily's niece; she had last visited Walberswick in 1911 at the age of nineteen. In 1929 she was thirty-seven and married to Ralph Turner, later Professor Sir Ralph Turner the Director of the School of Oriental and African Studies at London University. Dorothy had left their three daughters, aged eight, four and two at home. She wrote to Ralph almost every day when they were apart.

Full transcripts of the letters are now in the Archive; the footnotes are mine.

C/o Miss List, The Green, Walberswick
Oct 12. 1929.

Dearest,

I had an easy journey changing at Witham and Ipswich where I had lunch. There was a lovely baby in the train from Witham, so I got in and made friends with his mother.

Auntie Emily met me at Darsham with a motor and we got here before 4. Just had tea and now to post before it goes, I must send you a line.

The place seems very little changed. Aunt Emily and I are going to go lots of walks, taking sandwiches for midday refreshment.

There is electric light in the sitting room here: candles upstairs. We both have front rooms with a view over the Green to the sea.

I am going to enjoy myself so much and do, do take care of yourself and go easy till you feel better. Do you think I'm a great pig to leave you? Being away from you always makes me realise how supremely fortunate I am to have your love and devotion. Sweetheart, I am a very happy woman- even if I haven't got one thing I want!

Dorothy

Note: Based on other letters, what Dorothy wanted was a son - in which she succeeded four years later.



The author of the letters: Dorothy Turner with her brother-in-law. Dartmoor, June 1928

C/o Miss List, The Green, Walberswick, Suffolk.
Oct 15th 1929

Dear Ralph,

After writing to you on Saturday I went out with Auntie Emily onto the shore. It was just the same as I remember: high ridges of pebbles and a steep slope down to the water showing more sand near the edge. It was too dark to look for cornelians. The marsh lies between the beach and the land proper and a small tributary of the Blyth takes its rise there and flows along more or less parallel to the sea until it reaches the main river and joins the sea almost at once. The fields rise steeply from the marsh – we went across them behind Kuruman garden, but the trees have grown so and it was so dark, we couldn't make it out very well.

Instead of coming home we went up the village street and turned off into the road where the nicer houses are. Here we saw the front of Kuruman. A garage and outbuildings have been added and the garden made even more beautiful. We called on the Alexanders who live in London mostly, but have a house here and run it themselves, when they are on holiday, without a maid. He makes copper trays etc – one of the daughters does initials and illuminated work. New Peers have their titles and descriptions emblazoned by her. He made the tray we have our coffee cups on.

On Sunday we went to Church here in the old ruin, part of which is restored and made fit for use. I want to go another time and explore the ruins. You couldn't very well after the service. The old original vicar Mr. Wing has long since retired. He was the oddest and most eccentric person and there are all sorts of tales about his funny remarks. But he was kindness itself and we have heard one or two genuine tributes from the cottagers, most of whom Aunt Emily taught as children and who come flocking round her. He is still alive and lives here on the Green.

In the evening we crossed by the pontoon ferry to Southwold and went to see Mr. and Mrs. Harry Foster and their daughter Dorothy. Mr Harry was my step-grandmother's favourite brother and he is very like her both in looks and character. His wife is a very pushing person who rather looks down on her husband as a poor thing and devotes herself to her daughter. She, extraordinarily, after such a bringing up, is quite a nice girl – rather older than I am now – very musical. I had always heard so much of the airs Mrs. Harry put on and how Grannie's maid once remarked 'Should I take up water to Lady Foster and knock at the Honourable Dorothy's door?' So I was rather surprised to see how ordinary and middleclass she looked beside Mr. Harry, a very handsome and distinguished looking old gentleman.

Yesterday Auntie Emily and I took sandwiches and set off at 10 o'clock along the shore. We walked to Dunwich and it was still so early we went on to Minsmere to where the cliff ends in sandhills. Then we made our way up along the cliff for a bit and had dinner. Then inland through woods and lanes to Dunwich again where I saw a ruined monastery and the present church with a ruined leper's hospital in its precincts now used by the local squires as a family vault.

We then walked across the moor to Blythburgh where I revisited the interesting old church.

Then tea in an old inn and home across the moor to Walberswick which we reached 6.20. We went about 14 miles or so altogether.

Auntie Emily wants me to stay to Thursday morning so that we can share a motor to Darsham. I should then go to L'pool St. and catch the 11.50 out and be in time for lunch.

I have mended your other pyjama jacket and am making my night dresses now....

Darling, if you can manage a line I should so like to get it.

Love from

Dorothy

Note: Dorothy mentions calling on the Alexanders at Far End (now Aldebaran) in Millfield Road. Philip was a silversmith in the Arts and Crafts style and his wife Francis was a painter. Their daughters were both

highly talented; Margaret was a renowned calligrapher and Catherine was an artist. Catherine married Noel Carrington, the brother of Lytton Strachey's companion Dorothy Carrington and thus became a junior member of the Bloomsbury Group.

Dorothy and Emily visited the Fosters in Southwold, Harry Foster was the brother of Fanny Goulty and Amelia Leather. Amelia had built Windmill Cottage on Millfield Road, opposite Kuruman.

C/o Miss List, The Green, Walberswick
Oct 17. 1929

Darling,

Rather amusing this morning. We ought to have begun breakfast at 8.30. But having omitted to give any orders last night, and Miss List considerably not waking us, there was no breakfast. So Miss List has now gone out to buy it and Auntie Emily to do her morning shopping.

On Tuesday we went to Lowestoft to see the Scotch fisher girls and all the boats. The few smacks which are left among the fleets of steam trawlers have the most vivid red sails. I touched one and it felt as thick as thin linoleum with red ochre plastered over the waterproofed sailcloth. We went by bus from Southwold and spent most of our time on the pierhead at the narrow entrance to the harbour. We got to learn the meaning of the letters on the boats. I jotted them down till we found a solution. LT for Lowestoft and BF Banf, INS Lossiemouth, PD Peterhead, KY Kincardine. They didn't all follow the same rule for abbreviations which made it more puzzling. Some of the names were very curious. Hawthorn Bud, Peace Wave, Carpe Diem, Present Help, Reflect, Justified, Budding Rose and so on.

The girls aren't so picturesque as they used to be, but they make rather a feature of the place, strolling about in groups, short skirted with long boots and bright aprons, jerseys and coloured handkerchiefs. The smell was rather overpowering on some of the quays, so we judged the pier would be a better place to camp on.

Yesterday we went over to see an old maid of Grannie's who is married and settled inland. And we have been into many cottages where Miss Goulty is welcomed and where they apologise for having called me Miss.

Today we sat on the common overlooking the marsh, sea beyond and the Dunwich cliffs at one side, woods rising behind us. It was so hot we couldn't bear coats on. Not a soul in sight – human I mean. Two dragonflies married themselves on my skirt. I was shocked to find Aunt Emily knew what was happening!

Mrs. David Kerridge whom we visited today (by the way everyone in Walberswick is either an English or a Kerridge or related to one) has given her children 4 names each. Boytie David Henry Walter, Evangeline Geraldine Josephine Louisa, and Ivy Victoria Eva Elma.

What do you think we are going to do tonight? Go to a village Whist Drive! Our landlady and all the cottagers are going, so it is sure to be very amusing.



Wallis Rivers Goulty and his nurse outside Kuruman (now Millstones) with his wife Fanny and, second from right his daughter Emily who accompanied her niece Dorothy on the Walberswick holiday in 1929.

This photo dates to soon after the house was built in 1901.

Love to my three D's.

Dorothy

Could you post my cheque book to me? It is in my cash box just under the lid.

Note: The reference in this letter to everyone in Walberswick being either an English or a Kerridge will resonate with many of our readers.

Walberswick

Oct. 20. 1929

Darling Ralph,

To-day we do not propose to go to church till the evening and are now sitting out on the marsh where we came on Thursday. It is much colder than it was then.

Friday we explored the harbour and the old pier now hopelessly broken. The tide flows over most of what remains of the middle part. There is much more sand at that part than I remember. In the afternoon Mary Hammond whom we visited on Wednesday, came over for tea. We had a walk round and looked over the hedge at the Kuruman garden. She told us how she used to look out of the spare room window for her young man. He used to walk 6 miles from Covehithe and back again twice a week to see her and once she was cross and told him to go back as he was late! However she relented. It has been a very happy marriage though the middle part was not when they lived next door to a pub and he got into drinking habits. Two girls are out in service together; a boy nearly 15 working a chemist's round and a dear little chap of 6. She looks wonderfully young and bright at 45, certainly not older than middle thirties in appearance.

Yesterday we walked to Covehithe and saw the old church and ruins and back by the shore at low tide. 12 miles or so. I have picked up quite a number of carnelians.

We had our lunch by Easton Broad only separated from the sea by a ridge of pebbles. The gulls were so beautiful flying over the blue water and the rushes behind. There were woods rising behind and slightly undulated grassland. Then besides the beauties of nature, I have had other excitements. On Thursday I went to the village whist drive. It was so amusing. At first we both thought we should never survive, such a crush and such heat. They had a roaring fire and half the company smoking. Ten tables and two to stand out in turn. The tables were all odd – borrowed from various cottages – at one there were two games being played. At the end the M. C. announced that Miss Goulty would give away the prizes! She hadn't a chance to refuse and really was rather pleased though she didn't think the lady of the Manor as represented by Mrs. Benham was any too pleased. But we met her next day and she wasn't at all offended.

Love from

Dorothy

Mary Hammond had been in service at Kuruman. The window through which she looked for her sweetheart is still there, in the gable at the North end of the house. Emily was clearly admired and respected from her time in the village and her work teaching local children. The whist drive was probably held in the Gannon Room, the old village hall. Emily was worried that Mrs Benham would be offended by the invitation to Emily to present the prizes; Annie Benham was the widow of solicitor John Benham.

Walberswick

Oct 23. 1929

Darling,

I couldn't get a letter off yesterday as I meant to. We rose early and went by bus to Yarmouth to look for poor old Susan Mrs. Leather's old servant. Mrs. L. was Grannie's sister.

We found her but she was very wretched.

Home via Reydon where we alighted to visit Mr. West and hear the troubles of his daughter and back here – two other visits on the way after 7.

It poured with rain on Sunday afternoon but we made our way nevertheless to St. Felix and had tea with Pixie's housemistress, Betty Greenfield, niece of Grannie, Mrs. L. etc.

Monday was gloriously fine again. We walked to Wenhaston and back in the morning. There were two people to visit there so we couldn't help being late back, no bus being available. We got back about 2.15 and were due at Mrs. Foster's to hear Dorothy sing at 3.15. However we didn't hurry and it didn't seem to matter arriving late, as they weren't ready for us.

How lovely it will be to feel your arms and kisses once more. Till then

Your lover,

Dorothy

Dorothy and Emily spent much of their time in Walberswick visiting old friends and former servants. Poor old Susan was probably Susan Buck who had worked for and lived with Amelia Leather at Windmill Cottage. The two ladies maintained a rapid pace; Dorothy describes a day when they walked to Wenhaston and back and made two calls. They then had to go over to Southwold to the Fosters' to hear their daughter sing.

Land Army in Walberswick WWII

Holly Brega, with roots from Walberswick, is creating a documentary film about the Land Girls who were part of the Women's Land Army (WLA) in Suffolk, with a particular focus on any ladies who worked with horses. If you know of anyone who was in the WLA and would like to share your story, Holly would love to hear from you. You can get in touch here: hollybrega.com/land-girls-documentary, or email: holly.1991@live.co.uk"

Back in 1998, when many of these people were still alive, David Shirreff and Arthur Sharman managed to capture the story of one local Land Army girl, Kathleen Fisher (née Tipple) for their book "Suffolk Memories". Interestingly they record the names of a number of others – Dulcie Rogers (née Goodwin), Elsa Hopewell (also née Goodwin), Joyce Hambling, and Marjorie Davis (née Cross). The area manager for the Land Army was Josephine Shepherd, once of The Lodge. Perhaps we can add to these stories?

Holly is descended from the once-large Cross family. She tells me she has lots of photographs and has offered to write something especially for WLHG. We will hopefully put this in the next issue.

It's a small world. To the right is a photograph of me (editor) with Holly's great grandfather, Sonny Cross. Apparently he lived to 104. No prizes for guessing one of his jobs.

