

April 2026

Box River News

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Mark Aldridge is author of 'Learning to hear God's Voice'.	Simon Baddeley loves to train and equip people to hear the voice of God.	Richard Fothergill is the overall Director of the Filling Station network.	James Nickols loves to equip Christians to overflow with the presence of God.

More info at ...
www.thefillingstation.org/station/south-suffolk/




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Boxford Parish Council Update

On 4th March, representatives of Suffolk Highways Department met with residents of Stone Street hamlet and members of the parish council. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the large number of vehicles and their excessive speed as they travel on Brick Kiln Hill and Stone Street. It was evident that few drivers recognise that the road through the hamlet is very narrow, with poor visibility at the pinch point in the centre.



Above: Traffic becomes stuck at the Stone Street pinch point, where limited space and poor visibility create risks to property and road users.

No allowance appears to be made for meeting other traffic, residents exiting or entering their driveways, or pedestrians walking along the side of the road. Could I respectfully remind all drivers that the 30 mph speed limit is not a target, and their speed should be adjusted to suit the road conditions, perhaps aiming for 15mph as they

approach the pinch point.

The meeting was very useful, as the residents were able to explain their concerns and suggest ways in which a safer environment could be achieved. The highways representatives were very supportive and agreed that measures will need to be put in place to reduce the speed of traffic. The position of the various signs needed to show the new speed limit was agreed, and the traffic calming measures likely to be needed were also discussed.

The next step is for the highways department to submit a plan and work out the costings involved. This process is likely to take some time, as it involves a legal process to ensure the location of signage complies with current regulations. Once the costings and the plan of action have been received and reviewed, a public consultation will be arranged.

The new double yellow lines along Church Street at the pinch point by the churchyard wall, along with repainting the other yellow lines in the village, are scheduled for July, although the parish council requested that this be completed earlier.

When potholes are repaired, adjacent potholes are ignored. This system of work is counter-productive and ultimately results in more paperwork, delays in repairs, and the potholes getting larger, posing a hazard to all road users. Our county councillor has agreed to take these concerns up with the highways department.

Steady progress is being made with our enquiry as to the availability of the land behind the village hall for use as a village car park. It is hoped we will receive a final decision from the diocese shortly.

Grass cutting will commence across the village soon, including the cemetery and churchyard, along with a general tidy-up of footpaths, verges and hedges. More tree work is planned for the cemetery and churchyard, which will include pollarding the yew trees along the boundary of the churchyard and the school, pruning the yew trees in the cemetery, and pollarding trees along the boundary with Rectory Park.

The Boxford Volunteer Strategic Planning Group has been working for some months on the implications of the Government's plan to build a large number of houses in the county. They have identified several areas which are likely to be of concern to the village. It is planned to discuss this with the strategic planning groups at Suffolk County Council and Babergh District Council, with the aim of putting our concerns forward and suggesting alternative options where possible.

Your parish councillors are all volunteers and freely give their time and energy for the benefit of the village. A lot of their work is carried out behind the scenes and is normally straightforward but nevertheless can take weeks to get everything in place. For the larger projects where research is needed, additional help is provided by the Boxford Volunteer Management Group, who then assist the council in determining the best way forward. The parish council still needs one more councillor, so if you are able to help in any way, please contact our parish clerk, Ms Zoe Rumsey, at clerk@boxford-pc.gov.uk

David Warren

Chairman, Boxford Parish Council

Box River News

Trudi Wild
Editor

01787 210946

editor@boxrivernews.com

Twin View, 18 Stone Street, Boxford CO10 5NR



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This month's cover image

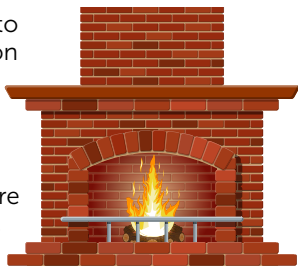
Spring and Summer Flowers by Sir Cedric Morris. A co-founder of the East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing, Morris taught artists including Lucian Freud, Maggie Hambling and Joan Warburton. This radiant work features in *Come into the Garden, Maud* at Hadleigh Old School this April. See p21 for details.



The copy deadline for the May issue is Wednesday 15th April at midday.

Newton Fireside Club

Shrove Tuesday saw us tucking in to our traditional pancakes with lemon and plenty of sugar. In total we cooked a towering 80 pancakes, and such a feat comes with a not -insignificant number of technical challenges, but such problems were easily overcome and the pancakes hugely appreciated.



Our next session was a talk on the history and gardens of Markshall. Peter Hickling, who is a volunteer there, gave an extremely interesting talk and we learnt a lot about the families who have owned the hall since 1163. Unfortunately the hall is no longer there (it was demolished in 1950) but the gardens are still open to the public. It includes a 200 acre arboretum - a collection of trees from around the world, an 18th century design wall garden, two large historic lakes, likely originating from 17th-century landscape changes and WWII remnants that are evidence of the former airfield. Having heard so much about the estate, and that there's a tearoom, we plan to visit and have a guided tour later in the year.

We're looking forward to some Easter crafting next time and are sure the talk about medical detection dogs will be fascinating.

SPRING & SUMMER PROGRAMME

Tuesday 14th April	Fish & Chips at the Golf Club, 12:30
Tuesday 28th April	Wine & Cordial Tasting
Tuesday 12th May	Sudbury Guided Walk
Saturday 16th May	Fireside Coffee Morning
Tuesday 26th May	Plant Growing Competition & Quiz
Tuesday 9th June	Trip to Markshall

All meetings are held in the village hall and start at 2pm unless otherwise stated and anyone is welcome. Subs for members are £25 this term and must be paid in advance. This includes refreshments, activities and subsidised events.

Non-members are welcome to come along to any session. The fee will be between £5 and £10 depending on the activity. We are excited to say that we now have a card reader, so payments can be made by card.

New members are always welcome. Usually, the first session is free.

Please contact Moira on **01787 374652** or Sue on **07881 383 998** if you would like more details.

Newton Open Gardens

Sadly it has been decided **NOT** to hold our open gardens event this year.

Unfortunately some of last year's gardeners are not available this year and not enough volunteers have come forward to offer their gardens for the day.

We felt it was very important to maintain last year's standard as the feedback was very positive.

We will therefore 'rest' this year and hope that we can recruit more gardens for 2027.

Many thanks to all of you who did volunteer your gardens or to help on the day. Watch this space for further updates.

Sue & Paul

Newton Village Hall Matters

COFFEE MORNING: Our first coffee morning of the year was held on 21st February. We didn't have a huge turnout, but the atmosphere was great and thanks to everybody's generosity £188.06 was raised. Many thanks to all who attended, donated and spent!

TREASURER: Unfortunately our treasurer, Fergie, has had to resign. As you can imagine this is a key role without which the village hall cannot function. None of the current trustees is able to take on additional responsibilities, so it is vital that somebody steps up. If you feel you can help, please call Janet on **07955 199 000**. We are constantly trying to recruit new trustees to the village hall committee to ensure it continues to be managed to the current high standard. We only hold four meetings a year and with more members the workload could be lessened for everyone. Please do have a think.

VILLAGE HALL AGM: This will take place in the village hall on **Wednesday 15th April 2026 at 7.30pm**. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Bookings: The number for bookings is **07955 199 000**. Please visit www.yourhall.co.uk/hall/newton-green where you will find a detailed description of the hall, along with photos and a diary of bookings.

Next Coffee mornings:

Saturday 18th April - St Nicholas Hospice

Saturday 16th May - Fireside Club

Saturday 20th June - Newton Trust

All coffee mornings are in the village hall and start at 10am. Donations for raffles and cake stalls and good quality bric-a-brac would be much appreciated. Raffles are usually called at about 11:15. Please do come and support these charities and village organisations.

Readers' Letters

Jeremy Osborne

With much sadness we inform BRN readers, many of whom will have known him well, that Jeremy died peacefully in hospital from cancer on 25th February, aged 84.

During the 25 happy years we lived in Groton, Jeremy was for some time Chair of Groton Parish Council. He was also a Trustee of the Groton Winthrop Mulberry Trust, the committee



organising many great events on the Croft. More recently he was a Trustee of Boxford and Groton United Charities.

Passionate about ITFC he would travel long distances to away matches, as well as going to home ones. There was always a spirited discussion afterwards - win or lose!

He was a keen golfer at Stoke by Nayland where his brother Anthony was a founder member, and then latterly at Newton Green.

His funeral will be at Boxford Church at 11am on **Friday 10th April** and will be followed by a gathering to celebrate his life at Dove Barn in Groton.

Rosie Osborne

Citizens Advice

This article is about Carer's Allowance for those of state pension age and their entitlement to claim it. Carer's Allowance is a benefit for those who provide 35 hours or more of care for someone each week. This can include:



- helping with washing and cooking
- taking the person you care for to medical appointments
- helping with household tasks, like managing bills and shopping

The person you care for must receive a disability benefit such as Attendance Allowance or the Personal Independence Payment (PIP) daily living component at either rate.

To claim Carer's Allowance, you must have lived in the UK for two out of the last three years and meet the relevant residency rules. It is worth £86.40 from April 2026, but pensioners cannot receive it if their state pension is above this amount, and this is where confusion can arise. Pensioners should still claim when they have been informed they have an "underlying entitlement". Having this could mean that you qualify for benefits that you could not get before, such as Pension Credit. Being able to claim Pension Credit may lead to further entitlements including:

- reduced Housing Benefit (if in rented accommodation)
- Council Tax Support
- free TV licence
- Warm Home Discount (£150)

The first purpose of this article is to draw attention to the many State Pensioners who are caring for someone and who do not realise that they may have an 'underlying entitlement' to Carer's Allowance.

The second is to invite those pensioners who are caring for someone to contact your local Citizens Advice in Sudbury. Our advisers will welcome a call from you and will quickly be able to advise you on any "underlying entitlement" to this benefit. They can also assist you with making an application.

The third purpose of this article is to invite anyone living within the Babergh local authority area who seeks information on benefit entitlements to contact Sudbury Citizens Advice on the details below.

Sudbury & South Suffolk Citizens Advice
We are only a phone call away.
 01787 321400
www.citizensadvice.org.uk

The Butcher's Wife

The Butcher's least-favourite sort of lock-in

Do you remember the story about the Butcher's failed train journey home from London? A quick reminder - he had too much to drink in London, fell asleep on the train and woke up at the wrong station. The top quote of that night from him was 'this isn't the Colchester I know'. Still makes me laugh now! Well, you'll be pleased to know he's outdone himself!

Last month we went on holiday to Budapest with the Butcher's best friend, Ben, and his wife. My eagle-eyed readers will know that I rarely name people; the Butcher is always 'the Butcher', the kids are 'the mini Leeders' etc. But naming Ben is crucial to this story. So here's to Ben - possibly the first person to be named in my article!

Let me set the scene - it's our first night in Budapest, we've had a few drinks and have retired to the hotel bar. It's nearing midnight and the Butcher decides he needs the toilet. Ben's wife gives directions: "Go down the stairs and turn right". Off he goes. Two minutes later Ben's phone rings - it's the Butcher. Ben listens, then says, "what do you mean you're stuck?" and the Butcher says, "I can't get out". Ben and I go to investigate. We check the toilets - no sign of the Butcher. There is a door on the left marked 'service'.

Ben tries it. It's locked. We then hear a little voice say, "Is that you, Ben?"*. It takes us a second to realise the voice is coming from behind the service door. "I'm in here". I manage to yank the service door open and there is the Butcher. When he walked down the stairs the service door was open and instead of turning right (as per the explicit instructions he had received), he turned left and started walking down the corridor. It was only when he saw washing machines and cleaning equipment that he realised he was in the wrong place and by that point the door had closed and he was locked in. He might still be there now if he hadn't taken his phone with him! From then on we made sure that he was either escorted to the toilet or had his phone on him.

As much as I love writing about the Butcher's embarrassing moments, it's only fair I share one of my own. So for the sake of equality, here you go. Pre-mini Leeders I commuted to London and was constantly embarrassing myself on the train. I used to get an early train from Stowmarket and go straight back to sleep. I never set an alarm because I knew I'd wake up at Liverpool Street. I did the same on the way home but, after waking up in Norwich a few times, I started

setting one so I wouldn't miss my stop. On more than one occasion I got woken up by a stranger alerting me to the

fact that I was sleeping through my alarm, with everyone glaring at me (this always seemed to happen in the quiet carriage too). Almost every day I would doze off and bang my head on the window. I think I had a permanent bump on the side of my head for the whole time I worked in London. One day I dozed off and was woken up just as the train was leaving Ipswich by someone singing really loudly. I looked around the carriage to see who the singer was and for some reason everyone else was staring at me. It was then that I realised I had been the one singing. I sang so loudly in my sleep that I woke myself up. They must have thought I was insane. Perhaps it was all the bumps to the head?

**Note: it's this line that wouldn't have had the same impact if I'd anonymised Ben!*



Pork Noodle Soup

We were inspired by the youngest mini Leeder for this month's recipe. As is often the way with teenagers doing Food Tech, he declared on a Sunday morning that he needed ingredients for the next day. Luckily, we knew a good butcher who would be 'open'!

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 600g pork fillets, trimmed
- 2 tbsp hoisin sauce
- 2 tbsp oyster sauce (or fish sauce)
- 270g dried ramen noodles
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 3 spring onions, sliced (plus extra to serve)
- 1 small red chilli, sliced
- 8 cups chicken stock
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 2 tbsp sesame oil
- 2 baby bok choy, trimmed & separated
- 2 soft-boiled eggs, halved
- Black sesame seeds, to serve

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 220C/200C fan. Combine the hoisin and oyster sauce in a bowl, add the pork and toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate for 15 minutes.
2. Place the pork onto a baking tray and roast for 15-20 minutes until it is just cooked through. Transfer to a plate and set aside to rest.
3. Cook the noodles according to packet instructions, then drain and set aside.
4. Heat oil in the saucepan over a medium heat, add garlic, spring onions and chilli and cook, stirring, for about 1 minute.
5. Add the stock, soy sauce and sesame oil, cover and bring to the boil over high heat. Reduce the heat and cover, leave to simmer for 10 minutes.
6. Add the bok choy and cook until just wilted.
7. Divide the noodles between bowls. Ladle over the hot stock and bok choy, then top with sliced pork, spring onions, egg and a sprinkle of sesame seeds.



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BOXFORD BOUNTY

The winners of the latest Boxford Bounty prize draw are as follows:

January - February 2026		
1 st	£250	H. Phillips
2 nd	£125	R. Ranson
3 rd	£75	S. Whittaker
4 th	£50	D. Meekings

Congratulations to all!

*Boxford Community Council
Registered with Babergh District
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Gambling Act 2005.
Registered Charity No 304862*

Boxford Primary School

It has been a very busy and productive term at school, with pupils working hard and making great progress across all areas of learning. We were delighted to welcome many parents and carers to our recent Parents' Evening. It was a valuable opportunity for teachers to share updates on pupils' achievements, discuss their progress, and talk about the next steps in their learning. Thank you to everyone who attended and for your continued support.

Farewell to Mrs Kent and Mrs Miller (School value: Respect)

This term we said a fond farewell to Mrs Kent and Mrs Miller, two much-loved members of the Boxford



Primary School team, as they embark on exciting new chapters after an incredible 25 years of dedicated service each as Teaching Assistants.

Between them, Mrs Kent and Mrs Miller have given half a century of care, commitment and kindness to the children, staff and families of Boxford. Over the years, they have supported countless pupils in their learning, offered reassurance on wobbly days, celebrated achievements big and small, and played a vital role in shaping the warm, nurturing environment that makes our school so special.

Both Mrs Kent and Mrs Miller have very fond memories of their time at the school. Mrs Miller said, *"Over the past twenty-five years, I have enjoyed working at the school assisting the children in their learning and development. This has been made even better by being part of an amazing team!"*

Their impact cannot be measured simply in years of service. It lives on in the confidence they helped build, the friendships they supported, the challenges they helped children overcome, and the memories shared in classrooms, corridors and playgrounds. They have been colleagues, mentors, listeners, problem-solvers and friends.

We wish Mrs Kent and Mrs Miller every happiness, success and enjoyment in all that lies ahead; we hope they know they will always be a part of the Boxford Primary School family.

New IT Equipment (School value: Kindness and Creativity)

Children and staff were excited to take receipt of new laptops in school; these are now being used across the curriculum and are preparing children for the digital age. We would like to thank Boxford Parish Council for their generous donation. In addition, we like to extend our thanks to FoBS (Friends of Boxford School) for hosting a variety of fundraising events which have allowed us to purchase these new devices. Without parental support and engagement, the purchase of this new equipment would have not been possible.

Would you like a school tour?

If your child is looking to start school in September 2026, or move mid-year, please contact Mrs Clarke in the office on 01787 210332 or email office@boxford.suffolk.sch.uk. We would be more than happy to arrange a school tour for you to see our exciting curriculum.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

*Mr. S. Reynolds
Assistant Headteacher*

Strong Opening for Pulling Prints

Mill Tye Gallery and Arts Centre welcomed a steady stream of visitors on Saturday 14th March for the opening of Pulling Prints, a new exhibition showcasing the work of emerging printmakers aged 18-25.



The exhibition is the culmination of a creative programme developed by Gainsborough's House in collaboration with Mill Tye Gallery, giving young artists the opportunity to explore traditional and experimental printmaking techniques through a series of artist-led workshops.

Visitors enjoyed meeting the artists and discussing the ideas and processes behind their work, with many taking time to learn more about the techniques developed during the project, which began in September 2025.



Among those attending the opening were Calvin Winner, Executive Director of Gainsborough's House, Katie Chappell, Development Manager, and Emma Boyd, Keeper of Art and Place. The project was developed in collaboration with Jilly Roberts, Learning and Engagement Curator at Gainsborough's House.

With bright spring weather and extended gallery opening hours, the day created a lively and welcoming atmosphere as visitors explored the exhibition and celebrated the achievements of this new generation of artists.

Pulling Prints continues at Mill Tye Gallery and Arts Centre until Easter Monday, 6th April 2026.

www.milltyegallery.co.uk



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Sundried tomatoes, pesto and mozzarella in a toasted panini served with salad and crisps.	
CHILDREN'S MEALS	£7
Choose from any of the meals or panini's.	
BACON ROLL *	£6
Three rashers of bacon with a choice of ketchup or brown sauce.	
BACON & EGG ROLL*	£6
Two rashers of bacon and an egg with a choice of ketchup or brown sauce.	
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Reflections from the Ministry Team

Dear Friends,

I wonder if you have ever waited anxiously for something to arrive. Maybe it's a gift you have ordered for someone for a special occasion? Maybe it's a significant day in your calendar like a holiday or a birthday or a concert for which you have tickets? Maybe it's a wedding or the birth of a child and there's a sense that when this day arrives things will never be the same again.



As Christians journey through the season of Lent, it can seem like a long season. Although the days are getting brighter, the weather is often cold and wet. You perhaps miss those little creature comforts you may have given up for Lent. You long for the day you believe to be significant, the dawn of Easter and all that the day means and symbolises in human experience. As we look forward to that day, I wonder what it means for you or to you? Is it about an opportunity to get together with family and friends? Is it about hope breaking through after a season in the wilderness? Is it about light breaking through the darkness or about Jesus rising from the dead? What difference does this make to our ordinary everyday lives in 2026? What impact might it have on our children or grandchildren?

Easter is a special time to reflect on the love of God for His people, but what is even more wonderful is that his love is personalized, his love is for you and that is something to really get excited about. After Jesus was crucified, his disciples felt lost, without a purpose in life and so many people now-a-days feel like that as well. Only through the resurrection power of Jesus did the disciples find hope for the future and that same resurrection power is available to us today. There are so many people who are living in fear and oppression without experiencing the love of another human being. Jesus brings hope into lives full of despair, he renews and he heals broken hearts and he usually does it through the love and obedience of people like you and me. Please remember this Easter those who are in desperate need of the love of Jesus. Please pray that they will find his love and compassion in whatever situation they are in and that as we pray, God will reveal to us how we can help those who are suffering.

Each evening during Holy Week (30th March – 2nd April), there will be special services and liturgies at all our Benefice churches. These will not only reflect on some of the key moments in that week for Jesus of Nazareth and their significance, but they will also offer an opportunity to think about our own lives.

Tom Wright says, "Easter is about the new creation beginning at last, once death has done the worst that it can do."

Enjoy the chocolate and hot cross buns. I know I shall.

With every blessing to you all,

Maggie

Lay Minister

April

Dates for your diary

Tuesday 7th 10am

Drop in for Coffee, Mary's House

Friday 10th 10:30am

Coffee Morning, St Lawrence's, Lt Waldingfield

Tuesday 14th 10am

Drop in for Coffee, Mary's House

Saturday 18th 10am

Coffee Morning, St Mary's, Boxford

Tuesday 21st 10am

Drop in for Coffee, Mary's House

Wednesday 22nd 10am

Coffee Morning, All Saints', Newton Green

Tuesday 28th 10am

Drop in for Coffee, Mary's House

EASTER DAY SERVICES

9.30 AM - EASTER DAY EUCHARIST AT ST MARY THE VIRGIN, EDWARDSTONE

9.30 AM - EASTER DAY EUCHARIST AT ST BARTHOLOMEW'S, GROTON

9.30 AM - EASTER DAY EUCHARIST AT ST LAWRENCE'S, LT WALDINGFIELD

11.00 AM - EASTER DAY EUCHARIST AT ALL SAINTS', NEWTON

11.00 AM - EASTER DAY FAMILY EUCHARIST AT ST MARY'S, BOXFORD



EXPERIENCE EASTER WITH US IN THE BOX RIVER BENEFICE



Contact Information

Benefice Office:

Mary's House, 5 Swan Street, Boxford, CO10 5NZ

01787 828046

email: boxriverbenefice@gmail.com

Perfect Peepers

Make the most of your eyes this Spring, with longer-looking lashes and beautiful brows. They're the window to your soul, after all!

Achieve that professional, polished look this month with our shaping and tinting combo: Have your lashes tinted and your brows tinted and shaped for just £25 (usually £30) with our **Essential Eyes Package**. Your brows will look neater and more defined and your lashes will look darker and longer, without the need for makeup - great for no-mascara days or an early getaway!



This month, our Essential Eyes package is just £25!!

Lashes - Springtime Special

Our Essential Eyes Package*
(eyelash tint and eyebrow shape & tint) just £25

Call: 01787 211 000 to book

* Offer valid once per person, until 30/04/2026
If new to tinting, you'll need a patch test at least 24 hours prior to treatment.

Suffolk Medical & Beauty Clinic, 6 Broad Street, Boxford.

Tel: 01787 211 000 www.suffolkmedicalclinic.co.uk



Service Schedule for April 2026

Wednesday 1st April <i>Wednesday of Holy Week</i>	10:00	<i>Holy Week Communion & Coffee</i>	Mary's House, Boxford
	19:45	<i>Compline</i>	St Mary's, Boxford
Thursday 2nd April <i>Thursday of Holy Week</i>	11:00	<i>Chrism Eucharist</i>	St Edmundsbury Cathedral
	19:30	<i>Maundy Thursday Liturgy & Foot Washing</i>	St Mary's, Boxford
Friday 3rd April <i>Good Friday</i>	10:00	<i>Good Friday Reflection</i>	St Lawrence's, Lt Waldingfield
	14:00	<i>Good Friday Liturgy of the 3rd Hour</i>	St Mary's, Boxford
Sunday 5th April <i>Easter Day</i>	09:30	<i>Easter Day Eucharist</i>	St Mary the Virgin, Edwardstone
	09:30	<i>Easter Day Eucharist</i>	St Bartholomew's, Groton
	09:30	<i>Easter Day Eucharist</i>	St Lawrence's, Lt Waldingfield
	11:00	<i>Easter Day Eucharist</i>	All Saints', Newton Green
	11:00	<i>Easter Day Family Eucharist with Choir</i>	St Mary's, Boxford
Wednesday 8th April <i>Wednesday of Easter Week</i>	10:00	<i>Communion & Coffee</i>	Mary's House, Boxford
Sunday 12th April <i>Easter 2</i>	09:30	<i>Sunday Eucharist</i>	St Bartholomew's, Groton
	11:00	<i>Sunday Eucharist with Choir</i>	St Mary's, Boxford
	17:00	<i>BCP Evensong</i>	St Mary's, Boxford
Wednesday 15th April	10:00	<i>Communion & Coffee</i>	Mary's House, Boxford
Sunday 19th April <i>Easter 3</i>	09:30	<i>Sunday Eucharist</i>	St Mary the Virgin, Edwardstone
	11:00	<i>Sunday Eucharist with Choir</i>	St Mary's, Boxford
Wednesday 22nd April	10:00	<i>Communion & Coffee</i>	Mary's House, Boxford
Sunday 26th April <i>Easter 4</i>	11:00	<i>Sunday Eucharist</i>	All Saints', Newton Green
	11:00	<i>Family Worship</i>	St Mary's, Boxford
Wednesday 29th April	10:00	<i>Communion & Coffee</i>	Mary's House, Boxford

All our churches across the Benefice are **OPEN EVERY DAY** for Private Prayer.
If you need support, please contact the Benefice Office in the first instance,
all enquiries will be treated in confidence and passed on to the appropriate person.

PALM SUNDAY 29th March 2026

9:30am Palm Sunday Procession - St Mary the Virgin Church, Edwardstone

5:00pm Palm Sunday Liturgy - St Mary's Church, Boxford

As we step into Jesus' triumphant entrance into Jerusalem and the start of Holy Week

Easter in the Box River Benefice

This Easter, the Box River Benefice warmly invites you to share in the hope and joy of Christ's resurrection. Throughout Holy Week, our churches will offer opportunities for quiet reflection, meaningful worship, and shared community. Together, we will walk the journey from the cross to the empty tomb, rediscovering the message of renewal, forgiveness, and love at the heart of Easter. May this sacred season draw us closer to God and to one another, strengthening our community and filling us with the promise of new life. We look forward to celebrating with you.

Palm Sunday: The King Who Comes in Peace

Holy Week begins with Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, greeted by crowds waving palm branches and crying "Hosanna!" There will be a procession at St Mary the Virgin, Edwardstone, at 9.30am. Palm Sunday invites us to reflect on the contrast between public praise and the path of suffering Jesus chose, reminding us that true kingship is found in humility.

Maundy Thursday: Love in Action

Maundy Thursday commemorates the Last Supper, when Jesus washed his disciples' feet and gave the commandment to love one another. An evening service at 7.30pm at St Mary's Boxford will include foot-washing, followed by the solemn stripping of the altar and a time of watching with Christ in Gethsemane.

Good Friday: The Cross and the Silence

Good Friday marks Jesus' crucifixion, the most solemn day of the Christian year. We will gather for meditative worship, readings of the Passion, and silence. Join us at St Lawrence's, Little Waldingfield at 10am and St Mary's, Boxford at 2pm.

Easter Sunday: The Joy of Resurrection

Easter Sunday bursts with light and celebration as we proclaim, "Christ is risen!" Each of our five churches will hold an Easter Eucharist, rejoicing in the victory of life over death. The Easter season is a time to live into the joy and renewal that resurrection brings.

Mary's House, Sale

Groton Parochial Church Council has reluctantly taken the decision to put the much-loved Mary's House, Swan Street, Boxford on the market.

This is for two reasons: firstly, the rising ongoing maintenance costs of Mary's House are proving ever more difficult for the GPCC to meet, and secondly, the mounting fabric repair needs of St Bartholomew's Church in Groton.

The use of proceeds from the sale of Mary's House for maintaining the fabric of St Bartholomew's is consistent with the terms of the very generous bequest from the late Mary Every.

GPCC realises the sale will be a source of sadness for many who regularly use Mary's House and we would like to take this opportunity to thank Pauline Lamming and her dedicated team of volunteers who have ensured such a warm welcome to all Mary's House visitors throughout the years. Alternative venues for the meetings Mary's House variously hosts are being explored. David Burr, Leavenheath, are handling the sale.

Little Waldingfield Coffee Morning

We are delighted to share that our recent Little Waldingfield Coffee Morning was a great success, raising over £160 for church funds. It was wonderful to welcome around thirty people, filling the room with conversation, laughter, and the familiar warmth that makes these gatherings such a valued part of village life.

Please note an important change for April. As Friday 3rd April falls on Good Friday, there will be no coffee morning on that date. Instead, we will meet the following week, on **Friday 10th April**, at the usual time. We look forward to welcoming you on 10th April for more refreshments, friendly faces, and community spirit. Thank you once again for your continued support.

Little Waldingfield Open Gardens

We are looking forward to opening our lovely gardens again on **Sunday 21st June 2026 11am - 4pm**, and welcoming you to our friendly village. Admission is £6 which includes a programme with map, obtainable from the Parish Room in Church Road, where we will be serving refreshments including delicious homemade cakes. There will also be plants and produce. Plenty of parking on our playing field, about 150 yards from the Swan Inn.

All proceeds will benefit our beautiful St Lawrence Church. Go to www.opengardens.co.uk for more information.

Newton Green Open Gardens

We wanted to let everyone know that Newton Open Gardens will now return in 2027, rather than in 2026 as previously advertised. This change allows our wonderful gardeners a little more time to prepare and ensures the event can be as welcoming, colourful, and enjoyable as ever. Thank you for your understanding and continued support. We look forward to opening the gates again in 2027 for a truly special day.

**BOXRIVER BENEFICE
COFFEE MORNINGS
APRIL 2026**

**DROP IN FOR COFFEE AT MARY'S HOUSE, SWAN STREET,
BOXFORD BETWEEN 10.00 AM TO 12.00PM
EVERY TUESDAY**

**FRIDAY, 10TH APRIL
10.30 AM - COFFEE MORNING
AT ST LAWRENCE'S, LT WALDINGFIELD**
(PLEASE NOTE DUE TO GOOD FRIDAY, THE COFFEE MORNING AT
LT WALDINGFIELD THIS MONTH WILL BE A WEEK LATER)

**SATURDAY, 18TH APRIL
10.00 AM - COFFEE MORNING
AT ST MARY'S, BOXFORD**

**WEDNESDAY, 22ND APRIL
10.00 AM - COFFEE MORNING
AT ALL SAINTS', NEWTON**

GROTON VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
PRESENTS



QUIZ AND CURRY EVENING

At
Groton Village Hall

On **Friday 17th April 2026 7:30 for 7:45 start**

£16.00 per head (entry plus choice of curry & dessert)

Teams of up to 6

B.Y.O. Bar

Raffle - Cash only on Evening please

Phone Joanna: 210619 or Jayne: 211360 to book your place

GROTON HISTORY SOCIETY

APR

23



'Reggie and the RAF'
A pilot's story in WW1

David Hearn

Former head teacher, military and aviation history researcher and enthusiast

@ **Groton Village Hall: 19:30 - 21:30**

£5 entry, includes Glass of Wine (Students free)

To celebrate 100 years of Boxford Village Hall, Boxford Drama Group presents:



The Ghostlight Club

A new comedy/drama by Mike Keith

In 1926 an abandoned theatre stirs into life as the long silent troupe of The Ghostlight Club, gather for the play they were never able to perform due to a mysterious fire...

**Thursday April 23rd, Friday 24th and
Saturday April 25th at 7.30.**

*Tickets £10.00 (available from 16th March)
at Boxford Post Office or boxforddramagroup.com*



**BOXFORD
GARDENING SOCIETY**

**Brian Carline
Overcoming pests & diseases in
the garden,
from fungi to badgers**



**Tuesday 7th April 7.30pm
at Boxford Village Hall**

FLEECE JAZZ 2022
Fleece Jazz at
Stoke-by-Nayland Hotel presents

The Ed Jones Quartet
Wednesday 8th April 2026 8pm - Tickets: £20



"The vigorous, sometimes downright volcanic tenor sound of Ed Jones has long been one of the great live delights of British Jazz" – Jazzwise

Joanna Eden – Keys/ Vocals
Guillermo Hill – Guitar
Andres Lafone – Bass
George Double – Drums

The Wonder of Stevie
Wednesday 29th April 2026 8pm - Tickets: £30



Featuring Derek Nash alongside the mesmeric vocalist Noel McCalla, celebrating the genius of Stevie Wonder throughout his entire career.

Noel McCalla – Vocals
Derek Nash – Saxes
Tim Cansfield – Guitar
Neil Angilly – Keys
Jonathan Noyce – Bass
Nic France – Drums

Stoke by Nayland Hotel, Keepers Lane, Leavenheath CO6 4PZ
Ample parking; fully accessible. Directions: www.fleecejazz.org.uk
Tickets: 01787 210796 or via **WeGotTickets** (booking fee applies);
or on the door (cash or cheque only; sorry no debit/credit cards)
***Friends of Fleece Jazz discount**

**SPECIAL OFFER: A double room with breakfast and two tickets
from £129 (subject to availability) Phone: 01206 262836**

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SUFFOLK**

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PERIOD HOMES
EVENT**
SUNDAY 26TH APRIL
2026



- Meet with experts and gather information from specialist exhibitors
- Interesting live demonstrations
- Packed programme of auditorium talks

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SUNDAY 26TH APRIL 2026

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For further information see
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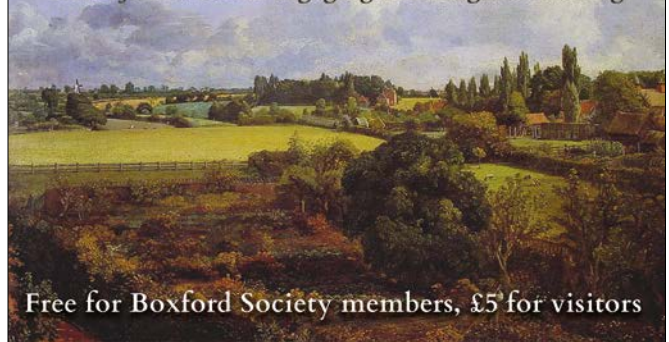


BOXFORD SOCIETY

250 Years!
John Constable, The Man & His Landscape

**7.30pm on Friday 17th April 2026
in Boxford Village Hall**

In recognition of the 250th anniversary of the birth of John Constable, we have invited Patricia Hodgkins, National Trust guide at Flatford Mill, to give a fascinating talk exploring the artist's life and the landscapes that inspired his work. Please join us for an engaging and insightful evening.



Free for Boxford Society members, £5 for visitors

Scary Stories

Step into the shadows of St Mary's, Kersey, on **18th April** for an evening of spine-tingling storytelling, accompanied by a glass of wine in this historic and atmospheric setting.

St Mary's has witnessed events throughout history for close to 700 years. The church has had 32 monarchs, seen civil wars, European wars and world wars. The walls have seen everything, so come and soak up the atmosphere and feel the goosebumps as you listen to some ghostly stories.

Suffolk has a unique culture of stories. The tales are rooted in the landscape and culture, with creatures that emerge from the rivers and creeks that thread their way through our land. Tales of wild dogs and even wilder humans that leap from the mist, and stories of vicars who are no better than they ought to be and perform weird rituals with cheese... what? OK, that last one is a bit strange, but to hear some of Suffolk's scary stories, come to St Mary's Church to hear celebrated storyteller CB Jackson.

From Southwold to Saxmundham, Ipswich to Ixworth, and Nayland to Nedging, CB Jackson has performed to thousands of people. His one-man shows are full of energy and intrigue as he performs the tales that shape our culture. Oh, and that vicar and the cheese? You will have to come along to find out...

Little Waldingfield Pop-Up Pubs

Our next 'Pop-Up Pub' night will be on **Friday 24th April**.

These relaxed and friendly events run from 6:30 - 10:30pm in the beautiful setting of the pavilion at the Little Waldingfield playing fields, and everyone is welcome to join us for an evening of great company and a range of reasonably-priced drinks (both alcoholic and non) watching the sun set over the countryside.

Great Acton Book Sale

The popular Great Acton Book Sale returns on **Saturday 25th April** at All Saints Church, Acton, near Sudbury CO10 0BA, from 10am to 2pm. Entry is free, and all are welcome to browse.

With thousands of books available at bargain prices, there is something for everyone - from popular fiction and classic literature to non-fiction, war, history and biography. You will also find books on gardening, hobbies and children's titles, alongside collectibles and retro finds.

Whether you are searching for a specific title or simply enjoying a leisurely browse, it is an excellent opportunity to pick up a few good reads while supporting a good cause. Contactless, card payments and cash are all accepted. All profits go towards the church.

Family Fun at Bridges Farm

Saturday 4th April at Bridges Farm, Kersey Tye IP7 6HB
11am - 3pm

We are looking forward to welcoming visitors to the farm. Bulls, cows and calves, ewes with their lambs, chickens and ducks will all be on show along with some tractors and machinery. There will be a chance to touch and even to feed some of the animals. BBQ and cream teas available.

Price £5 per person or £20 per family - cash only please!

All proceeds to Friends of St Mary's for the upkeep of the fabric of Kersey Church.

www.kerseylivestock.co.uk

St Mary's Church Kersey

Scary Suffolk Stories

A gorgeous evening of gripping grown-up stories & fantastic tales told by **CB Jackson, Storyteller**



Saturday
18th April
7.30pm
Doors open 7pm



Tickets £12 from **Linda Newbigging**
Not for under 10's!

lindanewbigging@btinternet.com
07905731431

BOXFORD COMMUNITY MEETING

 **28th April**
 **6:30pm**
 **Boxford Village Hall**



Residents are invited to attend a **community meeting hosted by Boxford Parish Council** to learn more about current and future projects in the village.

Topics include:

- Car parking improvements
- Tree planting initiatives
- Proposed 20mph speed restrictions
- Upcoming village projects

This is a great opportunity to **hear updates, ask questions, and share your views about the future of Boxford.**

Representatives from other organisations in the village will also be present to share their upcoming activities.



Everyone is welcome.

For more information please contact:
 clerk@boxford-pc.gov.uk

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by Morgan Lloyd Malcolm

12th May – 16th May 2026

sudbury dramatic society Box Office 01787 374 745 Online www.quaysudbury.com

MILL TYE GALLERY AND ARTS CENTRE

Mill Tye Gallery and Arts Centre

Thirza Kotzen Landsongs (a dreaming)

April/ May 2026/

Bringing together work created across Africa, Europe, the USA, the UK, as well as her own garden, this exhibition reflects the breadth of Thirzas journeys—geographical, emotional, internal and highly personal.

Exhibition Preview on **Saturday 18 April**, 10:30am to 6:00pm

To find out more and to register your interest go to:
www.milltyegallery.co.uk/exhibitions

Mill Tye Gallery and Arts Centre
3 Cornard Mills, Mill Tye, Great Cornard, Sudbury, CO10 0GW
Open: Thursday to Sunday 10:30am to 4pm. Free Admission.

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An Evening of
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Edwardstone Church Concert
Saturday, 6th June 2026 | 7:00 PM
featuring music from:
 The Beatles, The Carpenters, Flanders & Swann, Cole Porter

Tickets: £10 – Includes a glass of wine & canapés

☎ Marlene Clarke: 07884 312953
 ☎ Ineke Morris: 07765 098864
All proceeds go to support Edwardstone Church

Little Cornard
 All Saints Church
Flower Festival Weekend
9th & 10th May 2026
11am ~ 4pm

FULLY STOCKED PLANT MARQUEE
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 WAR MEMORIAL EXHIBITION

Evensong
 Sunday 10th May 4:30pm

FREE Entry & Parking
 All Saints Church, Kedington Hill, Little Cornard,
 CO10 0PE
www.littlecornardchurch.org.uk

THE FLEECE HOTEL
Charity Quiz

Wed 15th	Apr	8PM
Wed 13th	May	8PM
Wed 17th	Jun	8PM
Wed 15th	Jul	8PM
Wed 12th	Aug	8PM
Wed 16th	Sep	8PM
Wed 14th	Oct	8PM
Wed 11th	Nov	8PM
Wed 9th	Dec	8PM

Free to enter, please donate on the night to the charity of the month!
 Up to 6 per team | 01787 211 818 to reserve a table

LITTLE WALDINGFIELD
OPEN GARDENS
Sunday 21st June 2026
11am to 4pm
Admission £6 per Adult
 Includes programme with map from
 Parish Room, Church Road
 Children under 16 Free

Refreshments
Plants and Produce
Parking on Playing Field
Proceeds go to our St. Lawrence Church



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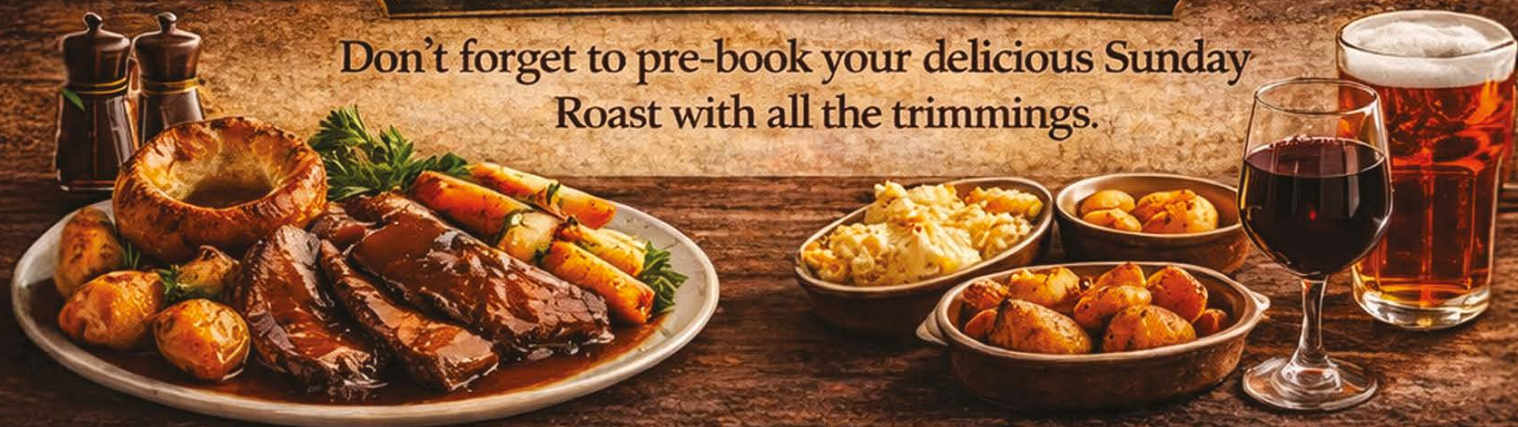
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Thirza Kotzen at Mill Tye Gallery

Mill Tye Gallery in Great Cornard, Sudbury, is delighted to welcome internationally acclaimed artist Thirza Kotzen back this spring with her new exhibition, *LANDSONGS (a dreaming)* - a powerful and deeply personal collection of watercolours exploring landscape as memory, mapping and lived experience.



Bringing together work created across Africa, Europe, the United States and the United Kingdom, as well as her own garden, this exhibition reflects Kotzen's journeys - geographical, emotional and internal.



"I have lived my life in many places, and I found that early on landscape became my language for describing, in paint, where I have been," she says. "My work tells the story of my life, the experiences I have had and how this has affected me. I am not a panorama painter. My works are assimilations of feelings, visual excitement and a need

to record something that can be just moments in time."

Born in Johannesburg in 1953, Kotzen studied painting and printmaking in Johannesburg, London and Eugene, USA. Now based in London, she has exhibited internationally, and her work is held in public and private collections worldwide.

Her paintings are not literal depictions of place but emotional cartographies - mappings of story, relocation, rhythm and belonging. Each work becomes a visual record of lived experience, layered with memory and imagination.

Exhibition Preview Day

Saturday 18 April 2026, 10:30am to 6pm. Join us for drinks and nibbles to celebrate the opening of *LANDSONGS (a dreaming)*. The artist will be present throughout the day and available to discuss her work. To register your interest, RSVP at www.milltyegallery.co.uk/exhibitions

Workshop Opportunity

Who Are We? Mapping Our Stories Through Mixed Media led by Thirza Kotzen. **Thursday 14 May 2026, 10am to 3pm,** Mill Tye Gallery Art Studio

To accompany the exhibition, Kotzen will lead a rare one-day mixed-media workshop exploring personal storytelling through artistic mapping.

Building on the themes of *LANDSONGS (a dreaming)*, participants will reflect on their own journeys - domestic, internal, emotional and experiential - and explore how these narratives can be translated into visual artworks.

This is a unique opportunity to work closely with an internationally recognised artist who has taught extensively in the United States and London. Kotzen's workshops are known for their depth, encouragement and thoughtful exploration of creative process.

Places are limited and booking is essential. Book your space at: www.milltyegallery.co.uk/book-online

Mill Tye Gallery & Arts Centre
3 Cornard Mills, Mill Tye, Great Cornard CO10 0GW
www.milltyegallery.co.uk

Maudie Warburton at Hadleigh Old School



The art exhibition *Come into the Garden, Maud* opens this Easter at Hadleigh Old School. The show promises the largest ever display of work by Joan 'Maudie' Warburton (1920-1996), as well as work by her friends at Benton End, including Sir Cedric Morris, whose work is shown on the cover of this publication.

Warburton lived in Stoke by Nayland for many years and regularly painted the countryside and flowers of the Box, Brett and Stour valleys. Her work was exhibited several times at the Boxford gallery on Swan Street.

Doors open at 10am on Friday 3rd April 2026 (Good Friday), with hot cross buns for the first visitors to the gallery.



The show continues daily from 10am to 4pm until Sunday 19th April (open Wednesday to Sunday, closed Monday and Tuesday). Tickets are £7 on the door, including a booklet. Visitors are welcome to return multiple times, and there will be a mid-show refresh from 15th to 19th April. Many works stay on show for the entire duration, including *Cat Among the Plants*, pictured here.

Pictures have been loaned from many private collections, museums, and galleries. There will be a selection of works for sale in person, and via www.comeintothegardenmaud.com

The paintings will be displayed in themed areas to demonstrate how Maudie developed her style and the many successful strings to her bow. For example: early portraiture in pen and ink of her fellow student at the East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing, Lucian Freud. Our garden room becomes a jungle to showcase tigers and exotic succulents. *At Home* invites you to rest a while on the chaise longue and enjoy delicate work in pastel. Our mid-20th century kitchen becomes a space to celebrate illustrative work commissioned by chefs Elizabeth David and Robert Carrier.

There is a large free car park located next to the Iron Bridge, IP7 6BY. The Hadleigh Old School entrance is on Bridge Street, just before the turning for the High Street. Co-curators Lindsay Fulcher and Ian Grutchfield look forward to welcoming you to the show.

www.hadleigholdschool.co.uk

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Scan the QR code to view our menus and book your table online



Life at the Shelley Centre

A national 'first' in the world of Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) is being celebrated at The Shelley Centre for Therapeutic Riding. Carol Jones, who has been part of our volunteer team for around eight years has become the first RDA coach in the country to qualify to work solely with riders who use a mechanical horse.



Alexander riding Ebony with Carol Jones the UK's first RDA coach specifically working with a mechanical horse.

Carol, who is a retired physiotherapist, had RDA experience elsewhere before joining the team at Shelley, but it was here that she developed her interest in working with riders who ride Ebony, the mechanical horse. Ebony is used for a variety of reasons but there are a number of regular riders - some of whom may have previously ridden our horses and ponies - who now only ride Ebony because their conditions mean their balance and mobility make this the safest way for us to deliver therapeutic riding.

For riders who use a wheelchair, a hoist is available to assist with mounting and dismounting. Ebony has different 'paces' to mimic those of a real horse and some riders are able to control it using their hands and heels.

One of the regular riders Carol coaches is Alexander (pictured). Although he's been attending Shelley for some years and had previously ridden one of the ponies, he now only rides Ebony, supported by volunteers and family members. Carol said: "The benefit of this therapy has meant that his core strength has improved, leading to a greatly improved posture and more hand and arm control."

To qualify, Carol had to undertake the same training as RDA coaches who work both with Ebony and the horses and ponies - but without some of the modules relating to horse care. She added: "I'd certainly encourage more people who perhaps are not as confident around real horses but want to use their skills to help riders to consider this coaching qualification. It's so rewarding and I'm delighted that RDA HQ recognised what a valuable addition to their coaching pathway this is. I'm very proud to be the first person to achieve it."

Our 2026 season of fundraising events has recently been launched. We have our annual quiz at Stratford St Mary on **Saturday 2nd May** and we're grateful to everyone who supported our Race Night at Whatfield on 28th March. You can find out all about our events, buy tickets and find details of our work by visiting www.shelleyrda.com or find us on Facebook Shelley RDA Centre.

www.shelleyrda.com
01473 824172



Polstead Gardening Club

Our next meeting is **Tuesday 21st April at 7:30pm**: A talk about 'Garden Design' by Francesca Green, Green Eye Garden Design

Meetings are held at Polstead Village Hall on The Green in Polstead (CO6 5AL). Free to members.

Non-members are welcome £5 (cash or cheque please). Entrance includes a drink and nibbles. Membership Single Membership - £20, Joint Membership - £35 and we very much welcome new members.

Queries: gardeningclubpolstead@yahoo.com.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

Polstead Films

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"Ralph Fiennes leads the choir in an impressively un sentimental Alan Bennett fable."

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Tickets £5. Email: polsteadfilms@gmail.com to reserve or buy in Polstead Community Shop. The film starts at 7:30pm.

All proceeds in aid of Polstead Village Hall Charity No. 304933





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The Lindsey Rose Raises over £8,700

The Lindsey Rose is part of the Nedging Hall Estate and is one of Suffolk's most charming country pubs, with over 500 years of history and heritage. In the heart of the village and the Suffolk landscape, The Lindsey Rose prides itself on being the hub of Lindsey and puts community first. They run a free fireworks party each year, an annual beer festival, a 5-a-side football tournament, a car boot sale and various children's activities.



This year, the team at The Lindsey Rose have raised a total of over £8,700 for charity.

The Beer Festival in August was a sell-out, raising £900 for Red Rose Community Farm. Our monthly quizzes are always popular and have raised £1,500 throughout the year. Red Rose Community Farm is just a few hundred metres from The Lindsey Rose and offers a safe and supportive outdoor learning environment for vulnerable individuals and groups.

In September, The Rose 5-a-side football match was held with a phenomenal £3,300 raised for East Anglian Children's Hospices. The charity cares for children and young people with life-threatening conditions across Cambridgeshire, Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk and supports their families.

In November, the fundraising continued as the popular annual fireworks event raised £2,200 for Kersey School. Parents from the school sold glow sticks and took donations at the gate.

Maintaining their momentum, The Rose then held their first Macmillan Coffee Morning and raised over £800.

Tracy Martin, General Manager at The Lindsey Rose commented: "We're proud of what we achieved for charity last year. It's good to be able to get people together for some of our larger events and raise money for causes close to our heart. Our team go above and beyond to make these events and fundraising special."

French's Care Haven

For our photo this month we have two of our lovely donkeys, Badger and Frankie. They are wishing everyone a Happy Easter.



At the moment we are struggling to find hay, as supplies are short and those who have hay are asking ridiculous prices. One quote for a long hay bale was £200 per bale, and they would not deliver less than six, with a £200 delivery charge on top of that. Crazy money when you're a charity depending on donations. The hay was only coming from Sudbury. Let's hope we get plenty of grass this summer so we do not run short next year. If you know of someone who has any hay we could have, please call me.

As some may already know, we have been working with Essex University students for over a decade now. They started with us when we were based in Hadleigh. They have been coming on a Saturday morning since we moved to the Boxford area, and the students do well helping with jobs. At the moment they are helping us pack and sort out things that we no longer need, and before they leave they give the horses a groom and some TLC. Thank goodness we have a lot of spare wellies, because even though they are told they are coming to a farm in winter, in mud, a lot of them turn up in white plimsolls, which makes me laugh.

Recently one of the students has been filming us all working with our horses and donkeys and interviewing me, ready to put it on screen for a film night at the University, showing our mammoth project and all the work that is involved, in the hope they can do a bit of fundraising from the students to help us.

I am still in need of a company who does groundwork when we do move, so if you own or know of a business that would sponsor or help with our

move, that would be brilliant. I will be going back on BBC Radio Suffolk and in the *East Anglian Daily Times*, as well as our website and Facebook page, when we have our land in place. I would be happy to promote your business in return for your help.

We have opened a GoFundMe page to try and raise some much-needed funds for the move, as it is going to be a huge financial challenge and we really need local support. Go to: <https://tinyurl.com/frenchs-relocation-fundraiser>, or go onto our website and click on the GoFundMe link, or go through our PayPal.

We need an army of volunteers and professionals to help with the move and new set-up. As yet, not one person from our community has come forward, which is really upsetting. Please call me.

Jann

07747 755 556

jann.turner@hotmail.co.uk

www.frenchscarehaven.org.uk

Boxford Gardening Society

On the 3rd March Bill Gardiner, Chairman of Suffolk Orchid Society, brought along a stunning display of amazingly colourful orchids, detailing their special growing conditions and talking us through their very special requirements for light and warmth. There was a very lively and helpful question time enjoyed by all members and guests.



Our next meeting will take place on Tuesday 7 April, when Brian Carline will be sharing practical advice on overcoming pests and diseases in the garden, from fungi to badgers. New members and visitors are always welcome.

enquiry.boxfordgardeningociety@outlook.com




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Natural Boxford

How our rivers have changed & how they can recover

Back in February both Natural Boxford and Boxford Society organised a collaborative meeting at the pavilion. After hot drinks, homemade cakes and a bit of socialising, a capacity crowd settled in for what proved to be a very interesting and enjoyable presentation. Darren Tansley, Wilder Rivers and Protected Species Manager at Essex Wildlife Trust, treated us to a rich and detailed talk.

He began by posing the question: "What is a river?" Obvious, you might think - however what we think of as rivers these days are an immensely

modified version of what they once were. Human attempts to control and utilise rivers over the centuries (for mills, canals, agricultural drainage and building) have tended to reduce multi-channelled and meandering flows with extensive flood plains into single-channelled, straightened flows between banks or walls we would rather they stayed within. In doing so, we have greatly reduced the carrying capacity of rivers and their ability to spread sideways during the natural floods of the winter season. By draining and building on what used to be flood plains, we have increased our risk of flooding as water drains off surrounding land and goes up and over the artificial banks.

Did you know that only 3% of rivers in the British Isles are free flowing - unobstructed by weirs, dams, sluices and culverts? What does this mean? In effect, our rivers are a series of static lakes, apparently showing high water levels as the water backs up behind obstructions, but in fact with much lower true flow. You might have seen a few years ago when the sluice gates in Hadleigh were left open and the

naturally much lower river level was revealed.

Rivers are the arteries of the ecosystem, crucial for biodiversity, hosting 3,000 species, of which at least 200 are rare or endangered. Yet they are facing critical challenges, not least an ever-increasing pollution load: plastics, pesticides and fertilisers, DDT, lead and sewage, not to mention common or garden rubbish, household chemicals and more.

Above: Beavers create wetlands that slow the flow of water, increase biodiversity and help reduce flooding.

Left: The River Box in flood - higher flows like this are a natural part of river systems, but can be made worse when rivers are constrained.

Opposite page: A "leaky dam" on the River Box, installed by Reclaim the Rain to slow the flow of water and reduce peak flooding downstream.





Climate change, coupled with our interventions to the structure of rivers and the land around them, has placed us in our current situation of alternating between too much and too little water; these dramatic fluctuations are also damaging for wildlife. Water vole and kingfisher burrows routinely

flood, killing young - there is evidence of water voles adapting and starting to block their lower-level burrow entrances with mud!

Plastic particles are being found in otter and water shrew droppings and are being fed into seas and oceans. There is now widespread media attention on the sewage problem our rivers are suffering, but even so many do not realise the full extent of it - both sanctioned and illegal. Here is a shocking statistic: in Essex in 2022 there were 1,973 spills, totalling 9,790 hours of sewage pouring into rivers. Suffolk is no better unfortunately.

Invasive species are deemed the second biggest threat to our biodiversity. Not all non-native plants and animals are a problem, but some are. For example, American signal crayfish, introduced for the restaurant trade, have completely killed off the native white-clawed crayfish. Floating pennywort, likely introduced via garden centre pond plants, kills river life by cutting off light.

The common desire to 'tidy' is also to the detriment of our wildlife. Dead wood and lushly vegetated banks provide valuable habitat for many species, including fish, which spawn, feed and hide from predators in woody debris.

“Dead wood and ‘untidy’ riverbanks are vital habitats for wildlife.”

It all starts to feel rather hopeless, and yet there is much to celebrate, as innovative approaches are being developed with astoundingly positive results, whilst some massive misconceptions are being recognised: dredging is disastrous for the ecosystem and wildlife, it is not wise to build on a flood plain, expensive engineered flood defences are not effective long term - to name a few.

So, what are the up-to-date natural solutions that are having such remarkable impacts across the country?

River restoration: taking place on smaller and larger scales, this is where the more natural course of rivers is reinstated - sometimes removing false banks that have been determining flow, sometimes re-engineering original meanders from the remaining traces in the landscape. This has the effect of vastly increasing river capacity, reducing flooding downstream.

Mitigating barriers: adjusting or taking weirs out, undertaking some huge dam removal projects, and re-establishing old channels so at least some of the river flow bypasses an obstacle such as a mill race. These measures reconnect habitats and allow migration upstream for spawning and re-population if pollution events occur, as well as allowing natural water levels to re-establish.

Holding water on the land: the creation or leaving of 'shelter belts' on either side of rivers allows rainfall and field run-off to be absorbed rather than ending up in the river, along with precious soil and nutrients (which are detrimental to river life). Corridors of at least 5 metres should be left along each side of a watercourse, which then provide crucial wildlife habitat as well.

Slowing the flow: beavers are being carefully introduced in more locations. The presence of a single pair of beavers quickly creates valuable wetlands, which they maintain with great efficiency and speed when we humans would not be able to get near, as well as increasing biodiversity as species are drawn to the rich habitat and drastically reducing flooding. Our nearest are currently at Spains Hall, where in the course of just two years their activities have halted the regular flooding of the centre of Finchingfield. Another method of slowing the flow is the installation of leaky dams - we have some on our own River Box tributaries, which so far, from my observation point at home next to the river, seem to be doing a good job at ironing out peak flows - the river has only broken its banks once this winter, despite at least 70% more rain than average.

Overall, a highly informative and much-enjoyed talk - thank you, Darren.

*Much love,
Louise, on behalf of the
Natural Boxford group.*

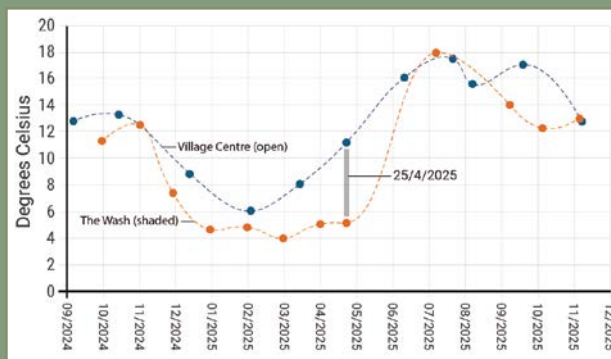


Temperature differences along the River Box

The graph shows two sites along the River Box. The blue line represents readings we've taken behind the Old Gaol in the centre of Boxford, while the orange line shows readings from the ford at The Wash, a few hundred metres downstream under tree cover. The cooling effect of this shade is clearly visible, particularly in spring.

Note the 25th of April, readings were taken within a few hours of each other, yet the ford is around 6 degrees cooler.

This graph highlights some of our regular water testing results. We are aiming to collate more of our data into to share with you in future issues.



Boxford WI

Our guest speaker for March was Andy Strange who gave us a very interesting talk on Women at War



during WW2. Women, including the WI and WVS, played an essential part in the war, not only on the home front, but in all branches of the services and civil defence. They enabled men to be freed to fight and shaped the post war world to challenge both gender stereotypes and roles in private life and in the workplace.



The WI worked hard making jam for the war effort. In fact, in 1939 there was a glut of plums and the WI (who became known as 'The Jambusters') was asked to step in due to farm labour shortages. They made plum jam and sold it with other produce on market stalls and donated many tons to the Forces NAAFI organisation. WI's headquarters secured sugar supplies direct from the Ministry of Food.

In rural areas they also baked pies for farm workers, called the 'Rural District Pie Scheme'. Along with the WVS they took these out to the fields and for a modest sum farm workers could have a shorter lunch break to help the war effort and increase food production by not having to return home for lunch. It started in 1942 and was quite successful so that, in one week of 1944, 1.3 million pies were sold through the scheme for a shilling each.

On the home front almost all WI branches started knitting and sewing circles. They repaired garments for clothing exchanges, created new items – all these activities helped save shipping space and directly helped the war effort.

The photo is of some memorabilia that the ladies from WI brought along.

If you are interested in joining the WI why not come along come along to the Village Hall on the first Wednesday of the month at 2pm where you will

receive a warm welcome.

Once you are a member you will be able to enjoy the following interest groups which we hold on a regular basis:

- Dining Divas (lunch group)
- Chatterbox (afternoon with tea and cake)
- Knit and Natter
- Book club

For more information please contact our Secretary, Lyn Beer on **07961 357526** or email lyn@the-brook.net.

Boxford Friendship Group

Hi everyone, hopefully you are all enjoying the lovely spring sunshine. We are well into the new year - it's really moving along at pace.



As usual at the BFG, we have been enjoying ourselves, ending last year with a Christmas-themed party for our November meeting. Dare I mention mince pies?! We were entertained by the talented Hadleigh Ukulele Band, who donate their fees to charity. December saw us having a lovely meal at the fabulous Hintlesham Hall Golf Club, where we raffled a glitzy bottle of champagne on behalf of French's Care Haven, a local animal charity which is such a worthwhile cause. Fingers crossed somebody will kindly come to their aid soon in finding a new home for their family of animals.

January 2026 saw us decamp to the cosy pavilion for our meeting, which made us all feel nostalgic, reflecting back to the beginnings of our group there. The meeting was mildly riotous - you remember the first day back at school! A serious game of bingo, followed by a mind-boggling quiz and definitely an 'unusual, hilarious raffle', followed. We really needed our tea and cake after all that laughter! Our thanks go to the Box Cleaning Team, David Burden and John Weiland, who gallantly cleaned and tidied before our arrival. Thanks, chaps x.

Back to the village hall in February, with a group meeting in the new kitchen, marvelling at how immaculate it all looked. Thanks to the village hall committee for all their hard work.

Julian Fincham-Jacques presented a talk on the East Anglian Air Ambulance, along with a moving film. It was news to all of us that the EAAA is supported mainly by charitable donations, running two helicopter crews and cars, fully equipped to A&E standards, helping to save lives on the spot. A fantastic resource to have in our community. Thank you Julian for a very interesting talk. The BFG members raised a generous £115 - thanks to all of you.

On March 23rd we will be having a talk from the Hadleigh Men's Shed about their work in the community. If there are any "chaps" out there who would like to come along and listen, you would be very welcome - we are not too scary! Some of our members attended The Fleece charity pub quiz in March to help raise money for the Ansell Centre in Hadleigh, and I have to say we are most certainly going up the league. Must be getting the hang of it!

April will come in with our AGM and another year notched up for our group. We will also be fitting in a light lunch at Hollow Trees in April - you know, just a top-up!

Amongst all our happenings, I am sorry to say that we recently lost one of our younger members, a sad loss for her mum and family. Both mum and daughter were regular, enthusiastic, supportive members right from the beginning. Our thoughts and sympathy go to the family. We will miss seeing the girls and their lovely smiles and chatter. May we also extend our thoughts and sympathies to one of our retired members, who has also lost a daughter recently.

As always, thank you to our members for your continued support and friendship to the group - it wouldn't be the same without you. Also to Evie, the gold standard bearer for crocheted blankets, for making more blankets for palliative care patients at the West Suffolk Hospital. Last but not least, my thanks to the sterling committee members - Wendy, Shirley, Cynthia, Jean, Pauline, and Dave the Gofer - who keep me on my toes and put up with all my directions, most of the time!

Why not try a free taster session at the BFG on **May 18th**? You would be very welcome to come along. BFG dates are always in the back of the BRN, our brilliant local magazine, thanks to Trudi.

Enjoy the summer!
Alison, BFG Chairperson



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Cecil Hughes MBE 1926–2018

*Boxfordian, builder, soldier & community champion.
A life recorded in the **Boxford Society Archive**
Part 2: *The Race to the Baltic**

In this second instalment of the life of Cecil Hughes MBE (see BRN March 2026 for Part 1) we continue with him as an 18-year-old foot soldier, as he crosses the Rhine in daylight on 24th March 1945 as part of Operation Varsity. He was a member of B Company, 9th Platoon in the 9th Parachute Battalion, part of the British 6th Airborne Division. The British and US Parachute Divisions incurred more than 2,700 casualties killed or injured, and Cecil was fortunate not to be one of them. The war in Europe was rapidly reaching its finale. The successful crossing of the Rhine allowed for a decisive sweep through German territory by British, American and Canadian troops.

The British 6th Airborne Division was told to make an immediate and very rapid advance across Germany to the Baltic Sea. The Soviet Red Army was closing in from the east. This was to be an important military success, in which

Cecil played his part. It deserves to be much better known and celebrated. They moved at an average speed of 11 miles per day across enemy territory, with some units covering up to 350 miles during the six-week advance, mainly on foot. They reached the Baltic at Wismar on May 2nd 1945, and secured the town only a few hours before the Soviet Red Army arrived, cutting their advance westwards!

The British advance or 'Race to the Baltic' was not simply a column of men pressing forward along a single road. Units were not standing shoulder-to-shoulder; they moved in armoured columns along roads where possible, leaving 'gaps' and remaining resistance that were mopped up by those behind. At times the advance was up to 12 miles wide, with battalions resting and leapfrogging each other and dealing with German resistance as they went. Each step was reconnoitred by tanks and scout teams which identified the

best route and where the greatest resistance might be found. The main body of men marched on foot, hitching a ride on a bicycle, truck or tank whenever they could. The map above shows the broad path they took with dates.

The 'race' was to cut off the German army to the west so that the British could take their surrender. More important though was the need to stop the Soviets moving along the Baltic coast to take Schleswig-Holstein and Denmark, which would have placed the Communist Iron Curtain further west. Denmark would have been part of East Germany after the war!

Above: Map with dates and names of places showing the Advance of the 6th Airborne to the Baltic 24th March to the 2nd May 1945.



This is Cecil's memory of that journey:

24th March. "Once we were across the Rhine, we had our orders to go in all haste to the Baltic coast. The 15th Scottish Division joined us and took over as lead division. We rested up for a bit in farms as the Scottish Division went through. Before we set off, there were still parachutes on the ground and hanging in trees alongside Operation Varsity."

They met sporadic pockets of resistance and sometimes fierce resistance from retreating troops and civilian militias. Occasionally they had a good night's sleep.

26th March. "We rested at a farm, the family moved into a barn and we got into their beds as they got out. Into white sheets with boots and uniforms on in case we were needed at short notice! I felt sorry for the farmer who had got shot going through the woods. He had not replied when challenged and was shot. He was lying in his coffin on the table. I was glad to move on from there."

"Early on we saw German soldiers getting out of ditches in the meadows and retreating, as well as bodies everywhere. We went on mile after

mile and one day, going through a farm area, we came to a house. We were in front of everyone at this point. It was full of German troops upstairs, and downstairs they were eating a meal. They were surprised as they did not realise we were so close. They all surrendered. Sometimes we got a short ride in a tank and sometimes we spread out across the land wading through river water, meadows and woods. A German farmer told us 'die Decke' had gone. (meaning the German military cover). Two days later we attacked German troops in a churchyard. They were taking cover behind gravestones. I thought: what a place to have a battle!"

27th March. "We marched on towards Coesfeld and on to Brünen. We were moving forward with a Canadian unit ahead of us on a narrow road. Suddenly a Tiger tank appeared with guns blazing. The platoon took cover in ditches and the Sergeant called up a PIAT crew which attacked the tank. It withdrew at high speed and we marched on through Coesfeld and Münster. Patrols went ahead of us through Brünen in the night and found it deserted. We had secured our objectives, so the next objective was Greven and the Dortmund-Ems Canal."

(PIAT was a British man-portable anti-tank weapon developed during the Second World War. There was little



Left: Cecil aged just 18 as he joins his regiment in France in February 1945

Centre: The British in North Africa had found their previous anti-tank gun useless against the new heavily armoured German tanks. This picture shows the new Projector, Infantry, Anti-Tank gun Mk 1 – the PIAT – in use.

Below from Left: Cecil 2nd from the right with his unit resting in a farmyard having just crossed the Dortmund-Ems Canal on 31st March 1945. Notice the parachute wings and King's crown on the cap badges.

Men of the 6th Guards Tank Brigade on the western bank of the Rhine, enjoying the spectacle of the airborne glider armada passing overhead. Within 24 hours, their tanks were across the Rhine supporting the 6th Airborne Division.

or no resistance as places like Coesfeld had been reduced to rubble by aircraft attacks.)

31st March – 1st April. Cecil's 9th Battalion had arrived in Greven on the tail of the Canadians, intending to cross the bridge and secure the far bank, but finding that the main bridge had been blown, they settled into the western suburbs for the night. In the early hours of 31st March, however, a footbridge was discovered across the Ems, and by 06:00 they had put two platoons on the other side with the idea of the remainder of the battalion following after





them. The troops forced their way over and captured the remainder of Greven within a few hours. At about this time, a German troop train arrived in Greven, oblivious that the town had fallen, and all aboard were taken prisoner.

They then secured a firm footing over the Dortmund-Ems Canal. This was a wide German industrial highway and, unlike British canals was able to take substantial vessels which were used to move war material.

"We had covered 23 miles in less than 24 hours and fought several engagements on the way to Greven and the Dortmund-Ems Canal. A small bridge had been captured although the main bridge had been blown up by retreating Germans. German snipers were firing at anything that moved all day and night. Air bursts were going off overhead sending shrapnel everywhere. The next day, at dawn, we had orders to assault the Dortmund-Ems Canal and went along it walking on the old bridge wreckage lying in the water. As I got to the top of the bank, I dropped down and observed what was happening (as trained to do), but my Sergeant's big hand grabbed me by the collar and yanked me to my feet and said, 'No, straight over as fast as we can.' After we had captured the ground on the far side the engineers started

to build a Bailey Bridge over the canal. We kept guard over them and the 15th Scottish Division crossed and we carried on with the advance."

"One day we crossed a farm and the wife had cooked a lovely meal. They sat with us and it was so much better than what we were used to. I was in such a hurry, I left my rifle outside the door. A good job my sergeant did not see it. We gave her chocolate. What a nice gesture from the enemy and a break from war. If Hitler had known she would have been shot at dawn!" (There was much worse to come for this 18-year-old.)

2nd - 4th April. *"Over the Dortmund-Ems Canal and on to Osnabrück and the River Weser. Our battalion passed through the Canadian position during the night and we were ordered to take the village of Wissingen. After a fierce battle the place was a shambles and we were sent on to help take Minden where the Canadians were by then fighting significant resistance with heavy artillery. The 1st Canadian Para went up front with their pounder anti-tank gun. Our 9th para moved up and came across the scene of the battle. A battlefield of slaughter. The Canadians had lost much life and a lot of their jeeps were blown up. The dead and injured were lying everywhere. There were dozens of German troops lying in the road too. We were riding on tanks now, the tanks just drove straight over the dead Germans. I thought why could the tank not go round the bodies, that was an awful scene. We moved on and relieved the 1st*

Canadian Para. Minden fell at 4am."

"The River Weser was next, what a big river, it looked a big obstacle but the army brought up the Buffalo boats and we crossed in them."

On the 4th April, the Reconnaissance Regiment of the 15th (Scottish) Division was briefly attached to Cecil's 6th Airborne Division to assist with scouting operations. Although casualties had not been so bad during the rapid advance, the vanguard units continued to suffer heavily, especially in terms of tanks. By this time the 6th Airborne Armoured Reconnaissance Regiment had lost so many vehicles that it could no longer scout effectively for the whole division. Despite the difficulties that the troops faced in maintaining a rapid advance with very little transport to hand, the Scots were nevertheless extremely impressed with 6th Airborne's speed in comparison to a standard infantry division. They observed that the Division was able to move at an average speed of 15mph, including halts to deal with opposition.

It had been intended that the consolidation of the River Weser bridgehead would be the final act of Cecil's 6th Airborne Division as a front-line unit, at least for the next phase in the campaign. The 15th (Scottish) Division was to pass through them and take over the lead, giving the 6th Airborne troops a much-needed opportunity to rest and re-equip, before following in their wake to mop up any pockets of resistance that the Scots had sidestepped. Delays, however, had prevented the Scots from arriving at the appointed time, and so the 6th Airborne troops pressed the advance forward, in order to cross the River Leine. To keep the enemy on the run, units advanced with little regard for their flanks or proper consolidation of their rear. This could, at times, make life very dangerous for the troops pushing forward along unknown roads.



Above: A column of the 9th Battalion 6th Airborne Division in the race to the Baltic. Notice the loaded barrow pulled along by the man in front and the bicycles.

Right: A Buffalo boat carrying British infantry across the Rhine in this picture, but used by Cecil's unit to cross the River Weser on 4th April. This was an American-designed amphibious, armoured Landing Vehicle Tracked (LVT-4). It could carry 25-30 men or jeeps.



Left: The 6th Airborne Division crossing the River Elbe on April 30th, 1945 into the town of Lauenburg. Notice the large vehicles and careful spacing on this long pontoon bridge.

7th - 11th April. At 06:00 on 7th April, the tanks began to move off, men riding on their sides, and a squadron of the 15th (Scottish) Reconnaissance Regiment scouting ahead of them. Cecil's 9th Battalion ran into some opposition in woodland. After fighting for two hours, 26 prisoners had been taken and the advance continued, albeit on foot, but fragmented pockets of resistance still prevented rapid movement. Once this enemy had been cleared, however, the battalion mounted its vehicles once again and pushed on. They then found a large number of German troops in possession of a village, but the German hearts did not appear to be in the fight, and they were quickly dispersed.

From here, there were two routes to the bridge over the Leine at Bordenau. The northernmost passed through several villages with likely resistance. Lieutenant-Colonel Darling (Yes, really Blackadder!) opted for the other southern route, which, brushing the airfield at Neustadt, probably sped the advance. The airfield was rapidly taken.

Cecil recalls: "We had orders to take a bridge over the River Leine at a town called Neustadt, but our orders were changed and the 7th Battalion took it instead of us. When they were crossing the bridge, the Germans blew it up and the 7th Battalion suffered 36 men injured or killed. We went on to the second airfield at Neustadt and had some casualties, but not as bad as the 7th Battalion suffered."

Time was slipping away and it was vital that a bridge over the Leine was taken without delay. As the forward troops came to within sight of a bridge, there was more resistance, but the bridge was taken. This opened it up for Cecil's company and others to cross the River Leine, while others crossed at a second bridge.

Cecil's reporting of his experiences with German soldiers and civilians varied as Cecil travelled east. Feeling sorry for those he encountered lessened a little as behaviour by both

sides shocked him. However, he maintained his honourable behaviour.

"One day my mate and I went to a farm and got some eggs in exchange for our issue of hard chocolate. I was carrying them in my red beret as we walked back to our battalion when two military police ordered us to get in their jeep. I said 'What is this all about? We did not pinch the eggs, we gave the farmer's wife chocolate in fair exchange.' They said 'It's not about the eggs, it's much more serious.' We drove into a farmyard. The Red Cap said, 'Get out and stand in front of the barn.' They brought out two young girls who looked us up and down. They shouted Nein! Nein! The Red Caps told us the girls had been raped and that we were not who they wanted. They did not mention the eggs again, but sent us back to our unit. Just think how terrible it would have been had they said 'Yes', but they were honest too."

14th April. "We were advancing to a river (River Aller) into the town called Celle. Just before we crossed this bridge our platoon spotted a cafe on our side, so they all rushed in to raid it and said to me 'Why are you not coming we can help ourselves to the wine.' I said no, you don't know if they have poisoned it. I will wait out here until you come out. Five minutes later there was a big explosion on the bridge and debris flew everywhere. I dived into a slit trench at the side of the road and a Canadian Para jumped in on top of me. We were showered with debris. He said 'say feller some poor god damn sod has stood on a mine'. I said no its Jerry. He has blown up the bridge. It was a German plane that had dropped a bomb. My mates came running out and said 'What's happened'. I said its a good job you went into that cafe or we would have been blown up on the bridge."

"Now we had to find another bridge to cross the river into Celle. Before we found it, a German troop train arrived at the station and one of our supporting Typhoon aircraft blew it up

and did a lot of damage. I heard later that it was taking soldiers on leave from the front."

"On we went into the town following the main street. Another platoon was going forward on our right to clear the Germans out of the houses. I saw our Bren gunner setting up in the street and wondered what he was going to fire on. Looking out of a side window, I saw a German self-propelled gun with the barrel pointing down the street. He fired. The house opposite was a mass of flames and our Bren gunner just in front of it was killed. His tin helmet lay in the street with a big hole in it and his number two was injured. My friend, Sergeant Len Daniels, following us up, buried him."

That was two close shaves for Cecil and his colleagues in a few hours.

"We were then given a jug of rum and on through Celle."

While near Celle, Cecil reports a strange sight. "Crossing through a wooded area, we came across a camp which was encased in barbed wire etc. enclosing people in blue and white striped pyjamas. We did not go in because we had orders to keep out and keep marching. Others dealt with this. We soon learned it was the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp."

What most of the soldiers did not know was that a few days before the bombing of the troop train in Celle on the 14th, witnessed by Cecil, a similar bombing had occurred on 8th April. In the Celle marshalling yard was an explosive train which blew up. The train next to it, was carrying concentration camp victims from other camps. It went up in flames and many died. They were being evacuated from all over German occupied territory to try to prevent the Allies from discovering their crime.

Three train loads were moved out from Bergen-Belsen to make room for those from further east e.g. Auschwitz. Those new arrivals who survived the bombing were forced to disembark and walk to Bergen-Belsen about 25km away. Of the approximately 4,000 prisoners who had been in the Celle trains on 8th April, only 487 survivors reached Bergen-Belsen on the morning of 10 April. In the aftermath of the explosion, survivors were hunted down by SS

guards, Gestapo, firemen and Nazi Party officials, as well as members of the public. When British troops first entered Celle on 12th April they did not find a battlefield, but the aftermath of the massacre and approximately 300 injured survivors unable to walk the 25km. They had been abandoned in the barracks in Celle to die, with no food or water.

Cecil reached Celle on the 14th April. Bergen-Belsen was liberated on 15th April as he moved rapidly on to cross the River Elbe. The concentration camp had been discovered by the 15th (Scottish) Infantry Division, British 2nd Army, on 10th April. Two German officers notified the British forces of infectious disease in the camp. A truce was agreed in order to contain the disease. A 48-square-kilometre area around the camp was to be evacuated and placed out of bounds to combatant units of both sides, other than those engaged in relief work with those inside. 60,000 prisoners were still alive. Many will know of Anne Frank, who died of typhus in the camp. She and her sister Margot perished shortly before British troops liberated it.

16th - 21st April. *"The next was Uelzen and skirmishes with the enemy and then Lüneburg. We were all riding on three-ton trucks now and ordered to put our yellow triangles on our backs as the Russian aeroplanes were flying above with hammer and sickle signs on the wings. There were no Spitfires in sight now."*

However, there were also pockets of fierce resistance between Celle and the River Elbe. The 6th Airborne Brigade moved on through Rätzlingen, with Cecil's B Company capturing the bridges to the rear of the village, whilst others attacked through it and cleared the enemy away. The first units arrived on the western bank of the River Elbe on the 19th. The 'race' was on, and a crossing was to be made here immediately, but it was the 30th before Cecil's unit could cross. (The day Hitler shot himself in his bunker.)

"Our engineers had erected one pontoon over the Elbe. We just went over in our trucks and straight on to Wismar. On the way, the Germans had surrendered in their thousands and were walking back to the west the way we had come. The German army had lined all their lorries, tanks and everything up in fields either side of the road and were marching back to be taken prisoner safe from the Russians. All the houses and everywhere you looked had white flags flying. As we drove through Wittenburg, the pavements were filled with German



troops waiting to become prisoners of war."

2nd May. Cecil and his unit arrived in Wismar on the Baltic at 1200 hours, having won the race, arriving only four hours before the Soviet Red Army. They quickly established themselves around the town as the remainder of the division arrived.

"My platoon took over a doctor's house and went to sleep rolled up in carpets on the floor. We took it in turns to guard each other. The next day I went out to look at the house and saw SS flags flying on the roof next door. Inside were six Gestapo guys all dead. They still had a Luger pistol in their hand that they had shot themselves with."

"The Russians put on a show for us - Cossack dancing and singing and plenty of vodka. They said, 'Our orders are to go on to Denmark.' But we got there first and stopped them. The next day we were friends again. The 6th Airborne Division then held a service of thanksgiving in the local German church."

Amongst the lower ranks there was a good deal of handshaking, incomprehensible but friendly dialogue, and heavy drinking fuelled by vodka and the timely discovery of a series of wine cellars. The British



6th Airborne Division, with the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion and the Royal Scots Greys, had raced roughly 30 miles in a single day, and had covered over 300 miles since crossing the Rhine.

On 8th May Germany surrendered. The war in Europe was over. By this time, however, the situation was beginning to sour. Tensions escalated when Soviet commanders demanded the Allies withdraw from Wismar so they could proceed to Lübeck. The Canadian and British commanders refused to budge, leading to a brief but dangerous diplomatic stand-off. Politics were taking over, and the barely restrained fraternisation of the first days stopped. The Russians forbade British soldiers to enter their territory. Then they established roadblocks and, ominously, brought up tanks behind them to reinforce the point. The Iron Curtain was being drawn across the Continent.

Cecil's unit remained in the Wismar area until the 17th May, when they were relieved, in stages, by the 5th Infantry Division. They began to make their way back home, retracing familiar ground.

To be continued next month: Cecil's contribution in peacetime.

Tina and Roger Loose

Above: The British 6th Airborne Division accepting the German surrender at Wismar on May 2, 1945, having raced and overcome local resistance to secure the Baltic coast before Soviet Army arrived.

Left: A Canadian soldier greets a Russian counterpart at a roadblock in Wismar Germany on May 4 1945. On this day they were still fraternising.

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Paws in the Garden

Creating a safe & stimulating outdoor space for pets this spring

April is undoubtedly a busy month for our gardens. Spring has sprung, and many of us will be getting outside to tidy up the chaos from winter, sow seeds, and plan our gardens for the coming year.

For our pets, our outdoor spaces are more than just somewhere to stretch their legs and do their business. They are entire worlds of scent, texture, sunshine, and adventure. Creating a garden that is both beautiful and pet-friendly does not require any grand designs – just some careful planting, introductions of safe textures and smells, and perhaps the acceptance that your dog will always believe the flowerbeds were created specifically for their excavation practice.

Naturally, safety first. A secure boundary is essential; not only to keep our pets safely inside it but also to prevent them from wandering into neighbouring gardens, where the plants and neighbours may be less forgiving. A quick check of fences, gates, and hedges each spring is a simple habit that can prevent a great deal of worry later on.

Artificial grass deserves a mention, as it can be deceptively hot under even mild sunshine. Unlike natural turf, which cools through

moisture and airflow, artificial grass absorbs and holds heat, sometimes reaching temperatures that can be uncomfortable or even painful for our pets. Check its temperature with the back of your hand before letting pets onto it; if you cannot hold your hand on it for more than a few seconds, it is too hot for their paws.

“Gardens are entire worlds of scent, texture, sunshine, and adventure.”

Dogs adore having a variety of surfaces to explore, from soft grass to shady soil. Allowing some areas of lawn to grow a little longer can create wonderful scent zones. Shade is another important feature, especially as the weather warms. A tree, a pergola, or even a strategically placed

parasol can offer a cool retreat, and placing water bowls in these shaded spots helps keep them fresh for longer. Our senior pets will also thank us for not having large steps or slippery slabs to walk across.

Cats, meanwhile, appreciate height, hiding places, and plants that are safe to brush against or nibble. Rabbits, whether free-roaming in the garden or enjoying supervised outdoor time, have their own particular needs. They are natural grazers and will happily sample almost anything within reach, so safe planting is essential. They appreciate areas of long grass, tunnels, and sheltered spots where they can dart in and out, as well as secure fencing sunk deep into the ground to prevent any great escape attempts.

Thankfully, there are many beautiful, non-toxic plants that suit cats, dogs, and rabbits. Calendulas, cornflowers, sunflowers, jasmine, echinaceas, fuchsias, and zinnias all bring colour and structure without posing a risk to curious mouths. Catnip and cat grass are particularly good additions for feline households, offering safe alternatives to the more questionable greenery they might otherwise investigate.

Herbs are another lovely way to

enrich a garden while keeping it pet-friendly. Basil, coriander, dill, fennel, rosemary, sage, and thyme are all safe choices, and they add fragrance and texture to the garden.

Of course, not all plants are so accommodating. Some common garden favourites can be toxic to pets, and it is worth familiarising yourself with the main culprits. Daffodils, tulips, lilies, bluebells, foxgloves, ivy, yew, and laburnum are all best avoided or carefully fenced off. The bulbs or berries are often the most dangerous parts, but it is safest to assume the entire plant is off-limits. And for cat owners, lilies deserve a special mention: even a tiny amount of pollen can be extremely dangerous. If you share your home with a cat, it is best to avoid lilies altogether, indoors and out.

Beyond plants, there are a few other garden hazards worth keeping in mind. Compost heaps can harbour moulds that are harmful if eaten, and grass cuttings left in piles can ferment surprisingly quickly. Mushrooms and fungi often appear after rain and should be removed promptly. Pesticides, weed killers, and fertilisers can also pose risks, so if you must use them, keep pets away until the area is

completely dry and safe. And as many dog owners know all too well, grass seeds have a knack for lodging themselves in paws, ears, and armpits, so a quick check after outdoor play in longer grass is always worthwhile.

Despite our best efforts, pets sometimes manage to eat things they should not! If your dog or cat has nibbled an unknown plant or is showing signs of illness, it is important to contact your vet promptly. Symptoms of plant ingestion can include drooling, vomiting, diarrhoea, lethargy, increased drinking, rashes, pale gums, twitching, or even collapse. Cats may also show breathing difficulties or sudden agitation. Taking photos of any plants they may have access to can be extremely helpful in guiding treatment.

The joy of creating a pet-friendly garden is that it does not require sacrificing beauty or creativity. With thoughtful planting, safe materials, and a few enrichment ideas, your outdoor space can become a haven for every



member of the family. Whether your dog is a sunlounger, a digger, or a self-appointed garden inspector, and whether your cat prefers to stalk through the borders or simply supervise from a sunny wall, there is immense pleasure in watching them enjoy a space designed with their wellbeing in mind.

As always, if you are unsure about a plant or have concerns about your pet's health, your vet team is here to help. We wish you and your companions an enjoyable spring in the garden.

*Dr. Jessica Hudson BVMedSci (Hons)
BVM BVS (Hons) BSAVA PGcertSAECC
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Hadleigh Patient Participation Group (PPG)

Anima update: Over 80% of patients have registered with Anima and are successfully using it when they need to.



This has made a huge difference to the number of incoming telephone calls. In turn, this has helped patients who are not able to use Anima. They no longer have to wait in a long queue before they are connected. If you are able to access Anima, not only will you be surprised how efficient it is, but you will also help others who are unable to make use of this online triage system. Have you registered yet? Why wait until you are poorly and need to make an appointment? Visit www.hadleighhealth.co.uk/anima or www.nhs.uk/nhs-app. Calls are still an option: 01473 822 961.

IT Help: Once a month, Communities Together offers helpful IT advice in the upstairs room of Hadleigh Library. The next session will take place on **Tuesday 7th April** from 10am to 12noon. Booking is essential as places are limited. Contact Tracey at info@communitiestogether-ea.org or 01449 707031.

Covid jabs: Invitations for Covid vaccinations are due to be sent out at the end of March, via Anima, to those aged 75 and over and the clinically vulnerable. Patients will be asked to book their own appointments using the online system. Those without Anima will be called. The plan is that, from 15th April, Covid vaccination clinics will take place on Wednesday afternoons within practice hours.



RSV jabs: Respiratory Syncytial Virus is a common cause of coughs and colds. From 1st April, the RSV vaccine will be available for all patients aged 80 and over. This is a one-off vaccine. To avoid clashing with the Covid vaccinations, eligible patients will be contacted in May. They will be invited to attend a weekly

clinic every Wednesday morning until all appropriate patients have been called.

Pharmacy First: The Pharmacy First scheme is an NHS initiative designed to offer professional healthcare advice and treatment for seven common illnesses, for example shingles, sore throats, ear infections, impetigo, sinusitis, UTIs (under 70s only), and infected bites.

First Contact Physiotherapist: This month we consider the role of another member of the practice, the First Contact Physiotherapist. A trained clinician working within a GP surgery, they are the first port of call for musculoskeletal problems, for example back pain, sciatica and arthritis flare-ups, to name just a few. Their specialist skills enable appropriate patients to be assessed, diagnosed and managed in one visit, rather than being referred following an earlier, often unnecessary, visit to a GP. After careful assessment, they can give exercise programmes, provide manual therapy advice, suggest self-management strategies and, in some cases, offer joint injections.



Zero Tolerance Policy: Sadly, it is necessary to draw attention to the practice's zero tolerance policy towards abusive, aggressive or threatening behaviour. As the practice is committed to ensuring a safe environment for

staff and patients, any unpleasant behaviour may result in the perpetrator being asked to leave the premises. It could also lead to their removal from the patient list. Happily, most patients treat the practice team and other patients with the kindness and respect they deserve.

Out & About 1: The sentiments of the earlier 'Legs Matter' campaign were demonstrated by Nurse Practitioner Kate Brett during her recent visit to the Black Cat Club. Here, Kate showed members the value of wearing compression hose each day to reduce ankle swelling, minimise leg injuries and generally prevent common lower limb problems. The Legs Matter initiative continues.

Out and About 2: Practice Manager Tracey Squirrel, Patient Services Manager Sarah Chapman and PPG Chair Jan Devey recently visited the Memories Café. With the aid of a large screen, Sarah gave a step-by-step guide to booking an appointment via Anima. All attendees were also reassured that the telephone option is still available if they are unable to access the online triage system.

Out of Hours Doctor: Need a doctor when Hadleigh Health Centre is closed, including weekends? Call 111 for advice and details of your nearest 'out of hours' duty doctor or visit www.111.nhs.uk



Boxford Community Car Scheme:

This service is available for patients needing transport to hospital or Health Centre appointments. Contact Jen Eastwood on 01787 211853 or jen.eastwood8@gmail.com.

Art Display: For the next few weeks, patients can enjoy the artistic endeavours of Hadleigh resident Shani Burgess. Our thanks to our previous exhibitor, Nanette Ward, for the loan of her colourful pictures. All pieces on display are for sale, with 10% of the proceeds going towards the practice's charitable trust. Contact Jan Devey if something catches your eye and you are tempted to buy.

Website: www.hadleighhealth.co.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/HadleighHealthCentre

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A New Chapter

With a new Show Director at the helm, the Hadleigh Show 2026 blends long-standing tradition with fresh ideas & attractions

The Hadleigh Show returns on Saturday 16th May 2026, celebrating not only the very best of Suffolk's countryside, farming and rural life, but also the strong family traditions that sit at the heart of the show itself.

This year's event will be directed by Will Pratt, who becomes the third generation of his family to take on the role of Show Director. Will follows in the footsteps of his father Martin, who held the position 20 years ago, and his brother Oliver, who led the show in 2019.

At the same time, Will is also one of the youngest Show Directors in the event's history, highlighting a new generation helping to guide one of the region's best-loved rural celebrations.

The theme of family heritage is particularly fitting for the Hadleigh Show, where many local farming and rural families have been involved for generations - a tradition that reflects the wider agricultural community across the county.

"It's a real honour to follow both my father and my brother in directing the show," said Will. "The Hadleigh Show has always been about bringing the community together and celebrating the traditions and people that make rural Suffolk so special. Seeing families return year after year, often across several generations, is part of what makes the show unique."

Adding to the sense of continuity this year is the return of a familiar crowd favourite after a break of 20 years. The Kangaroo Kid will headline the Grand Ring displays - a special moment for the show as Sam, the current Kangaroo Kid, takes over from his father, who performed the same role when Martin directed the show two decades ago.

Visitors will also be able to enjoy an exciting new stage, showcasing local talent throughout the day with music, drama and even a community sing-along, offering something for all ages.

Alongside these new features, the show continues to celebrate the

much-loved attractions that visitors return for each year, including:

- The Art Show, Horticulture and Flower Show with Garden Theatre
- Traditional rural crafts and shopping for everyone
- The Food Hall showcasing local produce
- Sold-out sheep, cattle, donkeys, heavy horses and light horses
- A wide range of countryside displays, competitions and family entertainment

With deep roots in the local community, support for local charities, and an exciting mix of tradition and fresh ideas, the Hadleigh Show 2026 promises a memorable day for visitors of all ages.

Tickets are available online only as in previous years and must be purchased in advance of attending the show.





The History Behind the News

Groton History Society look at the historical relationship between the United States & Iran

Do the United States and Iran have 'history' leading up to the current conflict? Can it explain why this current war is happening or provide some clues as to the future? Is it about oil, regime change, and/or simply a dish best served cold?

We need to look at key events in modern Iran's 20th century history, starting with the Constitutional Revolution (1905-1911). For the whole of the 19th century and into the early years of the 20th century, Iran was ruled by the Qajar dynasty, following on from a long line of other imperial families, each overturned by the next new despot in town. It had also been a 'playing field' in the Great Game between Great Britain and Russia, who demanded economic and corporate concessions from the Shahs and sliced

up spheres of influence. This resulted in Russian influence in the north and British influence in the south.

By 1905, domestic unrest, led by merchants, tradesmen and mullahs, was increasing in opposition to widespread corruption and over-concessions to foreign interests. Peaceful protest, non-violent actions, boycotts, sit-ins, etc. resulted in some significant reforms. Promises were made and then broken by the Shah. Thousands of students, along with groups of clerics, took to the streets. Pressure mounted on the ailing Shah. The result was the Iranian Constitution, in which an elected parliament (majlis) was installed in 1907. However, by late 1911 the big foreign players stepped in, with Russian troops storming the majlis, which was subsequently

dissolved. Whilst the new constitution was retained, its spirit was severely diminished.

A British-backed coup in 1925 replaced the Qajar Shah with an authoritarian new dynasty, the Pahlavi Shahs. Reza being the first, turning the majlis into a rubber stamp for his executive decrees (sound familiar?) Reza, who had pro-Axis sympathies, was forced to abdicate in 1941 by Russia and Britain. He was replaced by his 21-year-old son, Mohammed Reza Pahlavi. The post-war liberal environment allowed the democratically elected majlis to reassert its position, bringing to centre stage Mohammed Mossadegh in 1950.

Now let's talk about oil.

It was first struck in 1914 under the Iranian landmass. Britain, through

the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, was given concessions to exploit the newly found black gold, much needed by the Royal Navy post-WW1. Mossadegh's National Front Party was pushing hard to nationalise Iran's oil industry, to retake control of its natural resource and its significant wealth. Mossadegh was appointed Prime Minister in 1951. The Anglo-Iran Oil Company, as it would then be known (but later would become British Petroleum, or BP for short), was the culmination of the nationalisation.

Long story short, in 1953 Mossadegh was toppled in a coup d'état, orchestrated by the CIA, possibly with MI6 support, stoking popular protests and uprising once again (CIA involvement has been acknowledged by the CIA and US government; MI6 involvement has not been acknowledged). Operation Ajax, led by Kermit Roosevelt Jr (best ever name for a CIA operative?!), re-established the Shah's power over the majlis. He was strongly supported by the United States under President Eisenhower, in a world that was mired in Cold War mentality and obsession with the spread of communism, e.g. the Korean War.

The Shah announced his White Revolution, quite liberal and reformist actually, including granting women the right to vote. However, enter once again the clergy, and in particular Ayatollah Khomeini, who opposed many of these liberal reforms. Khomeini led an uprising in 1963 opposing the Shah and his White Revolution. He failed, was exiled from Iran in 1964, to return in 1979 as we will see! The Shah reacted harshly, doubling down on internal security, installing an American-trained secret police, SAVAK, as well as building one of the most powerful armed forces ever seen in the Middle East, supplied



with mass American arms transfers. Brutally crushing intellectual and political opposition reduced it to 'ineffective' status.

The clergy was another thing and not so easily dismantled. Open resistance, led by the mosques and mullahs, began in 1977, when exiled Ayatollah Khomeini called for public opposition. Once again the demand was for popular, widespread, non-violent actions and protests, as twice before. This was countered with more brutality by the Shah's regime. Massacres of protesters were met by larger protests in response. Oil workers went on strike in late 1978, impacting Iran's \$60m-a-day income stream. A general strike followed, paralysing the country. The US, under President Carter, continued to support the Shah. More protesters were killed, replaced by even more, with up to 9 million taking to the streets! The Shah had no choice but to flee to Egypt in January

1979. The Iranian Revolution followed - a theocracy led by the very popular returning hero, Ayatollah Khomeini.

The Shah was ill, however, and eventually, in October 1979, was permitted to seek medical treatment for cancer in the US. Extradition was quickly demanded. It was refused by the US. Two weeks later, on 4th November 1979, Iranian students, protesting for the Shah's extradition, stormed the US Embassy, taking 90 people hostage, including 66 Americans. President Carter froze Iranian assets, and Iran cancelled military contracts with the US and the Soviet Union. Khomeini released all women and non-white hostages on 19/20th November.

The Shah left the US for Panama in December. At the same time, six embassy staff, who had slipped out of a side door as the siege was unfolding, finally escaped on 27th January, disguised as a Canadian film crew,



Opposite page: Demonstrators in Tehran hold a poster of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini during protests against the Shah, January 1979.

Above: Iranian students climb the gates of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran during the takeover that sparked the hostage crisis, 4 November 1979.

Left: Six U.S. embassy staff who escaped Tehran disguised as a Canadian film crew, in a CIA-led operation with Canadian support, January 1980. Iran, in military uniform, c.1931.



Left: A convoy of buses carrying former U.S. hostages and their families passes through crowds on Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington DC, 27 January 1981, following their release after 444 days in captivity.

Below: President Ronald Reagan and Nancy Reagan honour victims of the U.S. Embassy bombing in Beirut at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland, 23 April 1983.

Opposite Page: View of northern Tehran from the Tabiat Bridge, with the Alborz Mountains in the background.

orchestrated and exfiltrated by the CIA with Canadian Embassy support. See the film 'Argo' for the story. The 'stand-off' continued. On 25th April an attempted US rescue mission failed, leaving behind eight servicemen dead, resulting in public humiliation seen across the world and particularly in the 'yellow ribboned' United States.

Maybe you remember the yellow ribbons tied around trees, lamp posts and anything to hand?

“Its history demonstrates a cycle of popular ‘hope’ being followed by oppressive ‘despair.’”

Carter could not win the November presidential election with the unresolved hostage crisis. Reagan won, and in January 1981 the remaining hostages were finally released after 444 days in captivity and probable torture.

The next significant event was the truck bombing of the US barracks in Beirut, causing 241 American marines and sailors to lose their lives. Islamic Jihad, an affiliate of Hezbollah, an Iranian proxy, was responsible. Despite this, the Reagan government looked to sell arms to Iran during the Iran-Iraq War (1985-87), culminating in the Oliver North 'Iran-Contra Affair'. Money from Iran arms sales was to fund Contra rebels in Nicaragua, off

the books, so to speak. This was an aberration in the relationship, but money talked.

Then, back on track, in the 2002 George W Bush 'State of the Union' speech, Iran was formally outed by the United States as being a member of the 'Axis of Evil', alongside Iraq and North Korea. Throughout this whole period Israel was also centre stage left, embroiled in its wars with Iran's proxies and its mutual existential conflict with Iran itself. I won't go into this further other than to say that the US has been and certainly still is a 'sine qua non' pillar of support for Israel and a current co-combatant. As a possible lead-up to the current conflict, Qassem Soleimani, head of the secret elite Quds Force, the foreign operations wing of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), was assassinated by the US in 2020 on President Trump's orders. Such an action had been considered by previous presidents but had been rejected. Despite this, Trump denied that the assassination was an

act of war, stating instead that "I want to have peace.....I like peace".

So, what do we learn from this look back at modern Iranian history?

Britain is probably very wary, given its early involvements in Iran, let alone with Iraq later. The Iranian regime, and a sizeable chunk of the population, feels anger with the US for its involvement in the 1953 coup d'état, the enabling support of the brutal and authoritarian Mohammed Reza Pahlavi Shah, its continued support for Israel's wars and threats to Iran and then the assassination of Qassem Soleimani. In return, the US has never got over the humiliation of the 1979 Tehran hostages, nor the 241 killed in the Beirut barracks truck bomb attack. This is an open wound in the US political and military psyche. One can easily see a possible 'cold dish of revenge' being served up with the assassination of Ayatollah Khamenei and his regime's leadership group. Payback?

Over the 20th century history of Iran, at the centre of British, Russian





and then US interest has been Iranian oil. Looks like it still is? Watch to see who ends up controlling Kharg Island? Iranian oil plus Venezuelan oil makes a lot of oil wealth and power.

A consistent feature throughout this story has been multiple internal popular non-violent actions taken by the masses, protesting against the ruling government of the time. Whilst millions have taken action or taken to the streets, at the centre of the uprisings has been the clergy, via the mosques and mullahs. They orchestrated and fired up the masses to protest non-violently. Oppressive regime (Reza Pahlavi Shah) after oppressive regime (Khomeini then Khamenei) have brutally neutered political opposition parties. The clerical leadership took centre stage instead. On the one hand, any external desire for the Iranian masses to rise up against its latest oppressive government clearly has history on its side - another new 'Revolution' to follow on from previous

popular revolutions. However - and it is a big however - these were invariably led by the mosques and mullahs. This time they are the oppressive regime! There is currently no structured opposition for a popular uprising to lean on or to lead it. The Pahlavi Shah dynasty is probably fatally tainted and hugely unpopular with those who have long memories. One feels that this bit of Iranian history has not been read by those who have suggested passing the buck over to the Iranian people - well, on that day anyway. It does seem, though, that the Iranian people's sad and brutal story throughout the history of modern Iran will really struggle to change for the foreseeable future. Its history demonstrates a cycle of popular 'hope' being followed by oppressive 'despair'. What will 'hope' look like in the coming months, and how long before 'despair' returns?

Nigel Chapman
nigeljchap@gmail.com

Upcoming Events

Reggie and the RAF: the Air Force's Part in WW1 and a Pilot's Short Story

Thursday 23rd April

This is brought to us by David Hearn, former head teacher, military and aviation history researcher and enthusiast.

A History Tour of Harwich

Friday 21st May

Presented by Andy Schooler, chair of Harwich Society. Harwich has a fascinating history. Andy is also keen to host a tour of historic Harwich later in the year.

Victoria and Abdul

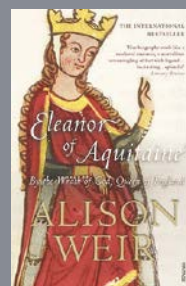
Thursday 25th June

Hosted by Shrabani Basu, journalist and author of the book, that was adapted to produce the 2017 feature film of the same name.

Recommended Reading, Listening & Viewing

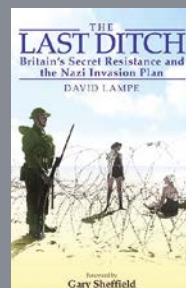
'Eleanor of Aquitaine: By the Wrath of God, Queen of England' by Alison Weir

Very good read. If need more forensic go to Sara Cockerill's book.



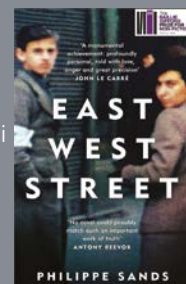
'The Last Ditch: Britain's Secret Resistance and Nazi Invasion Plans' by David Lampe

Suffolk had 28 cells and hideouts!



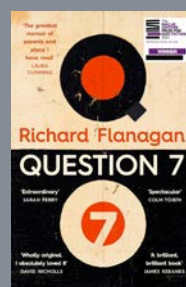
'East West Street' by Phillippe Sands

Interweaves stories of two Nuremberg prosecutors and a Nazi Governor.



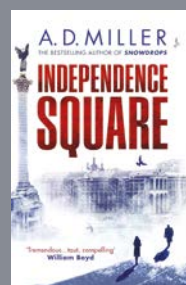
'Question 7' by Richard Flanagan

Brings together the affair between H G Wells and Rebecca West, with the history of the atomic bomb.



'Independence Square' by A D Miller

A political thriller set against the backdrop of Ukraine's Orange Revolution



'Argo' Film on Amazon Prime

The story of the 6 US Embassy staff who escaped Tehran in January 1979, with the help of the CIA and the Canadian Embassy.





Notes from a Beekeeper's Diary

From winter survival to the threat of varroa, Tony Rand reflects on the season just passed

By all accounts, this has been not only one of the greyest winters in living memory, but also among the wettest. The rain started in mid-November and didn't seem to stop until early March. It hasn't been particularly cold, but strong winds have certainly kept temperatures low.

The bees were still flying in early November, but it's only now that they are starting to emerge for serious foraging. These are the winter bees, the longest-living of all worker bees. Young bees are covered in a coat of thin, down-like hair which over time wears away. The bees we are seeing now are bald as a hen's egg.

Beekeepers are obsessed with the weather. When the air temperature is below ten degrees, it's too cold for the bees to leave the hive. If it is too windy, the bees will simply be blown away. Bees don't fly in the rain because they will be washed away.

So, even though the blackthorn and cherry plum, and the garden viburnum, have been in full flower for some time now, the bees have been able to take

little advantage of their nectar and pollen. There were a few foraging days while the yellow winter aconites were in flower, but that didn't last for long. Beekeepers have to keep a careful eye on the hives to make sure the bees have enough food now they are becoming more active.

Still, optimism is always a good thing, and the forecast through to the end of the month is generally fair and sunny, with no rain, gentle winds, and daytime temperatures well into double figures. Fruit trees certainly are of the opinion that spring is just around the corner. Flower buds are swelling, and once they burst into bloom, the bees will soon find them.

No matter how experienced a beekeeper may be, or how carefully they look after their hives, it is a sad fact that not every colony survives the winter. Large, strong colonies have the best chance of making it through to the spring, although it is not unknown for relatively small colonies to do well.

The most widespread and severe threat to the bees is the varroa mite.

Unknown in the UK up to the 1990s it migrated from Asia via continental Europe and quickly spread across the country. The mite feeds on the fat reserves of larvae and adult bees, weakening them so they become more susceptible to diseases and viruses.

The varroa mite was originally identified by the Dutch zoologist Anthonie Oudemans on the Indonesian island of Java in 1904. He named it after Marcus Terentius Varro, a renowned Roman scholar, author and philosopher who lived from 116-27 BC and famously documented beekeeping practices in his treatise *De re rustica*. I suspect that Marcus Varro would have

Above: A honey bee at work on cherry blossom as the new foraging season gets under way.

Opposite page: Close-up of honey bees on a brood frame, showing a varroa mite attached to a worker bee (circled centre)



been less than delighted to learn that his name was to be immortalised in such a voracious pest.

The varroa mite is, of course, susceptible to most miticides and insecticides, but unfortunately so also are the honey bees. Some beekeepers advocate a form of varroa management rather than a direct chemical assault against the mite, and it is said to have been locally eradicated after bees have built up their own resistance or strategies through natural selection. Results are inconclusive and possibly not long-lasting.

The mites attach themselves to the soft connective tissue between the abdominal segments on the underside of the bee. As they are only one to two millimetres long and hidden by the overlapping plates, they are difficult to spot. However, they favour drone larvae and can be readily spotted against the milky white skin, particularly just before the larvae spin their cocoons.

There are many different types of active remedies. Dusting the bees with icing sugar encourages rigorous grooming that can detach the mites. How effective this could be is not widely recorded. Large-scale beekeepers use portable apparatus to vaporise oxalic acid crystals. However, oxalic acid is an extremely toxic substance and can cause serious damage to eyes and lungs, so protective masks and clothing are required.

Other treatments derive from formic acid and thymol, the substance that flavours culinary thyme, and a range of synthetic pesticides specially formulated for honey bee use. These are not always effective, and treatments have to be timed carefully for when the mites are most vulnerable. Mites can build resistance to chemical treatments, and potential contamination of the honey crop is another factor to be taken into consideration.

Bees can be infected by other parasites, including the tiny nosema spores. Infestation by some strains can be identified by streaks of liquid bee faeces on the front of the hive, others only by microscopic examination with a powerful lens, which of course requires killing the bees. There is no treatment for nosema other than destroying the hive and its contents.

So, with the vagaries of the English climate and the variety of natural parasites ranged against the bees, it is a wonder that any survive at all. Every winter we lose a small proportion of our colonies, but come the warmer weather, those that do survive will quickly grow and produce an abundance of honey for us to enjoy.

Tony Rand
07503 164823



Elaine Carpenter
N.R.H.P., C.H.P., Dip Psychology

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The Americans in East Anglia's Skies

*Don Mobley recounts the history of US military aviation
in the region from the First World War to the present day*

Little Waldingfield History Society was delighted to welcome Don to the Parish Room to share his expert insights into the history of US military aviation in East Anglia, from its inception in 1942 to the current day, when once again things seem to be ramping up to counter the threat from Putin. With 29 years in the USAF, including three tours at Lakenheath, Don was absolutely the perfect man for the job.

He began by quoting the famous phrase *"Two cultures separated by a common language"*, which perfectly encapsulates the marriage of Britons and Americans. It is often attributed to Winston Churchill, who undoubtedly popularised it, but was actually coined by George Bernard Shaw. Alongside Don's many anecdotes, this was warmly received by our capacity audience.

Don then referenced the American Air Museum at IWM Duxford, which he highly recommended for a visit. Leading to the museum entrance is a glass sculpture - *Counting the Cost*

- which is dedicated to all US airmen from operations in Britain who lost their lives during the Second World War. It comprises 52 panels engraved with the outlines of American aircraft in 1:240 scale, one for each aircraft lost during the war. In total there are 7,031 aircraft depicted, organised by wartime unit, for example the 91st or 96th Bomb Groups. USAAF aircraft losses comprised 6,346 from the Eighth Air Force and 692 from the Ninth Air Force. As each bomber had a crew of ten, this resulted in a very large number of personnel losses during the conflict. The US Navy also lost a further 24 aircraft.

Don next told us that he would cover four eras of US military aviation in his talk, being The Great War, The Second World War, The Cold War and Post Cold War.

The Great War

Don admitted that he had previously known nothing about the participation of the US Army Air Service (USAAS) during the Great War, but had since learned that they actually did rather a lot. Following Germany's resumption of submarine attacks on passenger and merchant ships in 1917, the US declared war on Germany on 6 April that year. The USAAS primarily conducted reconnaissance, artillery





spotting and combat air patrols. While initially disorganised, by 1918 the Air Service had got its act together, and by the war's end they claimed 756 enemy aircraft and 76 balloons shot down.

The Second World War

To set the scene Don began by mentioning the following dates:

- 1 September 1939 - *Germany invades Poland*
- 3 September 1939 - *The UK and France declare war on Germany*
- 7 December 1941 - *Japan bombs Pearl Harbour*
- 8 December 1941 - *The US declares war on Japan*
- 11 December 1941 - *Germany and Italy declare war on the US*
- May 1942 - *The pivotal Battle of the Coral Sea, the first naval battle fought entirely by aircraft*

The US aviation story began in January 1942 in Savannah, Georgia, when the United States Army Air Corps assigned seven men, without a single aircraft, to a newly formed Eighth Air Force. Over the course of the war, the Eighth was to become the largest air armada in the world, capable of sending more than 2,000 heavy bombers and more than 1,000 fighter planes on a single mission. In less than three years, the Eighth accomplished its twofold mission to destroy the German Luftwaffe and, in conjunction with the RAF, cripple Nazi Germany's war-making capabilities. In doing so, the Mighty Eighth gave the Allies air supremacy, paved the way for the D-Day invasion, and contributed significantly to the liberation of occupied Europe. By the end of the war in May 1945, the Eighth had flown more than 600,000 sorties and dropped more than 670,000 tons of bombs.

Just two heavy bomber aircraft formed the backbone of the Eighth: the Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress and the Consolidated B-24 Liberator, of which many thousands were built and flown across the Atlantic. A

number of fighter aircraft were used to protect the bombers, including the Lockheed P-38 Lightning, the North American P-51 Mustang, the Republic P-47 Thunderbolt, and the British Supermarine Spitfire.

“By the end of the war in May 1945, the Eighth had flown more than 600,000 sorties and dropped more than 670,000 tons of bombs.”

The cost of ridding the world of the scourge of the Nazis was just as staggering - 26,000 airmen of the Eighth were killed in action, whilst another 28,000 were captured. Their valour was unparalleled - as the young men of the Eighth battled the enemy at 25,000 feet, their bravery earned them:

- 17 Medals of Honor - the highest US military decoration awarded by the President, in Congress's name, for conspicuous gallantry and risk of life



Opposite from top:

Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress – the backbone of the US Eighth Air Force bombing campaign from bases across East Anglia.

North American P-51 Mustang – a long-range escort fighter that proved a game changer for the Allied bombing campaign.

Left:

Consolidated B-24 Liberator in RAF markings. Thousands were flown by the US Eighth Air Force from bases in East Anglia.

Below:

Republic P-47 Thunderbolt – a heavily armed fighter used to escort bombers and attack ground targets.

- above and beyond the call of duty
- 220 Distinguished Service Crosses - the second highest US military decoration
- More than 420,000 Air Medals - a military decoration awarded for meritorious achievement or single acts of heroism while participating in aerial flight

Flight personnel initially had to complete 25 missions before going home, but this was subsequently increased to 30 in March 1944 and then to 35 from July 1944. Initial attrition rates were high, often exceeding 5 percent per sortie, and sometimes reaching nearly 30 percent on particularly intense raids. Such high losses, driven by unescorted daylight raids, made the required 25-mission tour statistically improbable for many. The Eighth was also technically and tactically immature early on, with missions often struggling with formation integrity and navigation. Overall, the Eighth suffered a roughly 20 percent fatality rate among aircrew. More than 350,000 personnel served

in the *Mighty Eighth* during the Second World War, and at its peak in mid-1944 it had a total strength exceeding 200,000 people operating the largest air army in history. On D-Day alone, the Eighth flew 2,300 sorties in support of the invasion.

Concluding this section of his talk, Don referred to *Masters of the Air* by Donald L. Miller, subtitled *How the Bomber Boys Broke Down the Nazi War Machine*, a book well worth reading. Quoting Winston Churchill from *Closing the Ring*, Volume V of his treatise on the Second World War: *"In the spring of 1944 ... we were masters in the air. The bitterness of the struggle had thrown a greater strain on the Luftwaffe than it was able to bear ... For our air superiority, which by the end of 1944 was to become air supremacy, full tribute must be paid to the United States Eighth Air Force."*

The 100th Bombardment Group featured in *Masters of the Air* was nicknamed the *'Bloody Hundredth'* because of the exceptionally heavy losses of aircrew and aircraft. Operating from Thorpe Abbots, between June and October 1943 they earned a reputation for being cursed with bad luck after losing 27 of 35 crews in their first 109 days - an attrition rate hard to comprehend today. Their immense casualties - losing 12 out of 13 planes on a single mission to Münster in October 1943 and a high percentage of aircraft on other disastrous missions - created the *'Bloody'* moniker, even though other groups sometimes had higher overall loss rates. They suffered high losses during major raids, including Bremen (June 1943), Regensburg (August 1943), and multiple raids on Berlin. Despite their losses, the 100th continued to fly, with Major John Bennett famously stating that what they lacked in luck, they made up for in courage. By the end of the war, the



Bloody Hundredth had lost 177 aircraft, with 732 airmen killed or missing.

The 100th used a 'Square D' (a white letter D inside a black square), an iconic geometric tail marking used for identification in assembly and during missions over Germany during the Second World War. The 100th ARW (Air Refueling Wing) is the only modern USAF unit authorised to wear this Second World War symbol instead of a number. Located at RAF Mildenhall, the 100th ARW is the only US tanker wing assigned to Europe and Africa, refuelling US and partner-nation aircraft over a span of more than 20 million square miles using the KC-135 Stratotanker. The wing also provides critical air bridge, aerial medevac, and cargo transport capabilities to enable US forces to deploy around the globe at a moment's notice.

The Cold War

During the Cold War, a term first coined by George Orwell, the USAF (created on 18 September 1947 under the National Security Act) operated a wide range of fighters, bombers, and reconnaissance aircraft from UK

bases to deter Soviet aggression. This marked a transition from wartime bomber campaigns to a permanent strategic Cold War presence, with key airfields transformed to house strategic bombers, fighter wings, and later nuclear missiles. Key aircraft included the F-4 Phantom, the F-111 Aardvark, the B-52 Stratofortress, the U-2 spy plane, and the SR-71 Blackbird reconnaissance aircraft.

The F-4 Phantom, which first took flight in 1958, was one of the most important military aircraft in US history, quickly setting 25 world records in categories such as speed (Mach 2.6) and altitude. Due to its impressive performance, the US Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps all used it. The B-52 needs no introduction, with the US currently conducting significant upgrades to keep this venerable old lady flying for many decades more - it has already been in operation for more than 60 years. Likewise, the U-2 spy plane will be familiar to many, though perhaps less well known is that four RAF pilots flew it from 1958 to 1960, primarily to give 'plausible deniability' to the US for their spy flights. The Lockheed SR-71 "Blackbird" remains the world's fastest and highest-flying manned air-breathing jet aircraft, developed by Lockheed Martin's Skunk Works in the 1960s for reconnaissance. Capable of exceeding Mach 3.3 (over 2,100 mph) at altitudes around 85,000 feet, it used speed and altitude to outrun missiles, and no aircraft was shot down during its service from 1964 to 1998.



Above: Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird – the fastest operational jet aircraft ever built, used for high-altitude reconnaissance during the Cold War.

Left: 'Square D' tail insignia on a Boeing KC-135 Stratotanker of the 100th Air Refueling Wing at RAF Mildenhall.

During the Cold War, five key USAF bases operated in East Anglia:

RAF Lakenheath - Reopened in 1948 to host B-29 Superfortress bombers, later becoming a major permanent base hosting the 48th Fighter Wing.

RAF Mildenhall - Became a significant US Strategic Air Command and Military Air Transport Service hub in the 1950s.

RAF Bentwaters and Woodbridge - Developed into a premier fighter wing (81st Tactical Fighter Wing) from 1951, housing F-84 Thunderstreaks and later A-10 Thunderbolts.

RAF Sculthorpe - Used during the Berlin Crisis of 1949, later housing the 47th Bombardment Wing and becoming one of the most important US bases in the region.

RAF Shepherds Grove and Tuddenham - Operated as Thor intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM) bases between 1959 and 1963.

From 1946 to the 1960s, these bases fulfilled four main operational roles:

Cold War strategic deterrence - Bases were upgraded to support long-range bombers and later Thor nuclear missiles.

Fighter operations - Providing fighter escort and air defence capabilities for Europe.

Intelligence gathering - In 1956, CIA U-2 spy planes operated briefly from RAF Lakenheath before moving to Germany.

Support and logistics - Bases such as RAF Honington served as maintenance depots for Strategic Air Command (SAC).

Post Cold War

After the Cold War, USAF operations in East Anglia underwent significant consolidation and reduction, shifting from a forward defence posture to one focused on rapid response, special operations, and tanker support. The major bases at Bentwaters and Woodbridge closed, while RAF Mildenhall and RAF Lakenheath continued as the primary hubs for US air power in the region.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the USAF significantly reduced its footprint. RAF Mildenhall became a central hub for European tanker operations, with the 100th Air Refueling Wing assuming responsibility



there in 1992. RAF Bentwaters and Woodbridge closed in 1993 and the 81st Tactical Fighter Wing was inactivated.

In 1995, the 352nd Special Operations Group moved to RAF Mildenhall, introducing MC-130 Combat Talon (a heavily modified C-130 Hercules variant) and MH-53 Pave Low (a long-range special operations and combat search and rescue helicopter) capabilities to the base. RAF Lakenheath continued to host the 48th Fighter Wing (the Liberty Wing), operating F-15E Strike Eagles and later transitioning to F-35A Lightning IIs. In 2015, the Department of Defense announced plans to move operations out of RAF Mildenhall, but in July 2020 this decision was reversed and the base remains open.

As of 2026, RAF Lakenheath and RAF Mildenhall remain the largest USAF installations in the UK. Lakenheath functions as the primary F-35A Lightning II base for the USAF in Europe, supporting

NATO missions, with recent reports indicating continued high-security, nuclear-capable, and special mission operations. Mildenhall continues to operate as the European tanker task force hub and supports Special Operations Command Europe (SOCEUR). RAF Feltwell remains in use, primarily for support functions.

Don's talk was an absolute tour de force, and despite our enthusiastic audience demanding more, yours truly simply had to bring the talk to an end some 30 minutes or so beyond its scheduled time, to a thunderous round of applause. Rather than go straight into questions, of which there were many, reflecting the great interest of our members in such local history, these were instead held less formally over tea, coffee and biscuits - overall it was a truly great evening.

Andy Sheppard
www.littlewaldingfieldhistorysociety.wordpress.com

Above: F-15E Strike Eagles of the 48th Fighter Wing, based at RAF Lakenheath, flying with an F-15C and two F-16 fighters over Kuwait.

Next Little Waldingfield History Society Talks:

The History & Natural History of Spices with Ian Anderson

Wednesday 22nd April, 7:30pm (please note this a week later than the previously publicised date).

The dramatic search for spices through history, and how the pursuit of rare flavours changed and opened up our world.



Two Short Talks with Anne Grimshaw

Wednesday 13th May, 7:30pm

Sudbury's Saddest Day, when a US bomber crash-landed in October 1944; and Making a Difference, the connection between the Long Melford Heritage Institute and the Co-op.





The Blooming Garden

Roses are Red, Violets are Blue...?

Have you ever seen a blue sweet Violet? Of course not, there is no such thing. As Derek Jarman, who created a wonderful seaside garden at Dungeness said: *"Poor violet, violated for a rhyme."* But they do come in a wonderful range of colours including violet, purple, lilac, pale pink, deep pink, white and apricot-yellow and they are all totally irresistible. Some violets are even double or speckled.

Sweet violets can be invasive but I allow banks of them to flourish under hedges and in neglected corners so that I can capture that elusive scent as I roam round the garden in spring. Violets release the chemical ionone which binds the receptors in the nose

and then shuts them down so you only get a tantalising whiff and then it is gone. Shakespeare knew all about this, he compared them to music in *The Winter's Tale*. *"...the sweet sound that plays upon a bank of violets; stealing and giving odour"*.

Violets were used extensively in medieval times for medicinal purposes but by the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries they were loved for their beauty. Violets were grown commercially, especially in France where Josephine Bonaparte was particularly fond of them. She had violets embroidered into her wedding dress. She had a huge collection of them in the royal gardens at Malmaison. When he died in exile on St. Helena, Bonaparte was wearing a locket containing dried violets picked from Josephine's grave. Their popularity grew during the nineteenth century and by the 1880s around 6 million bunches of violets were sold annually in Paris.

Here in the UK, Queen Victoria adored violets and Victorian men and women bought them as nosegays and

to wear on their lapels or to decorate hats. Violet mania was rather like the tulip mania of the Dutch Golden Age, but without the crazy prices. Violet was the most popular fragrance, and used extensively in toiletries and even in tooth powder. Extracting the scent was a costly business; it took 33,000kg of flowers to produce 1kg of pure violet oil. Eventually, a cheaper alternative scent was made from orris root which comes from *Iris florentina*. But their popularity as cut flowers lingered in



Above, from left:

Viola 'Coeur d'Alsace'

Viola sulfurea

Viola 'Clive Groves'

Right:

A box of Groves violets



Left:

Violet posy

Below, left:

Viola 'Comte de Brazza'

Below:

Cut and washed violets

Crystallised violets



into the early twentieth century and in the 1930s farms in Devon and Cornwall sent boxes of violets by special trains making overnight deliveries to Covent Garden. It is a shame that by the 1950s they had lost their popularity and so many beautiful varieties have now been lost. Groves Nursery in Bridport, Dorset has the National Collection of violets; they have been a nursery since 1866 and over the years they have bred many beautiful varieties. For me, a box of Groves violets was always a wonderful spring treat. This year they have cut back on their violet sales but Shire Plants in Buckinghamshire have a good selection.

concentrate on these. I love the wild white ones and the deep pink *Viola* 'Perle Rose' or 'Coeur d'Alsace'. 'Diana Groves' is an unusual raspberry red. 'Queen Charlotte' is another favourite as it is so long blooming and makes a lovely cut flower. *Viola sulfurea* is pale apricot or buff rather than yellow. It is not scented and may be a distinct species. You sometimes see it listed as *Viola odorata* 'Sulphurea' and only pedants like me object. *Viola sororia* 'Freckles' is a North American violet which is a little later flowering than sweet violets but it is worth growing for its delightful purple spotted flowers.

I love to pick posies of violets in different colours for a little vase and sometimes I eat them. They are lovely crystallised. To do this you wash them and put them on kitchen paper to dry. Whip up the white of an egg until it is foamy, then holding each violet by the stem coat them in egg white. I use a cocktail stick to sort out the petals which stick together. Coat each violet in castor sugar, snip off the stems and put them on greaseproof paper to dry.

When they are crisp and brittle you can store them in an airtight tin for a couple of months. They make lovely cake decorations. I have to admit this is very fiddly and time consuming. If, like Shirley Conran you think: "*life is too short to stuff a mushroom*", you probably won't want to spend hours crystallising violets. The last time I did it my Beloved said he was surprised that I didn't have anything better to do with my time. He then said rather crushingly that he thought that the violets looked like dead flies; sugar coated flies. Personally, I have never seen pink and purple flies and anyway, I like them. If you like the idea of eating them; (violets, not flies) then do try crystallising them. But even if you don't want to eat them, they bring joy and a delightful, elusive perfume to the spring garden.

Chloris

"Poor violet, violated for a rhyme."

The violets that were so fashionable in France and England in the nineteenth century were actually Parma violets. There are not many varieties of Parma violets available today because they are not hardy. I just have one called 'Swanley White' which dates from 1880. I was tempted to start a collection but rarely for me, common sense prevailed and I realised that providing heat and care throughout winter for a large collection of Parma Violets is best left to stately homes. Besides, there are so many varieties of our native *Viola odorata* which are perfectly hardy that it makes sense to



Feedback From James Finch

County Councillor for the Stour Valley

New SEND school and centre of excellence to be built in Bury St Edmunds

Run by Eastern Education Group and funded by the Department for Education, the school in Glastonbury Road will provide 90 places for students aged 14 to 19-years-old with special educational needs and disabilities

In a first for Suffolk, the new school will also become a centre of excellence and hub for SEND guidance, offering expertise to mainstream schools. Examples of this approach include providing outreach staff to work with mainstream schools and offering specialist expertise and training opportunities.

This hub model is increasingly encouraged by the Department for Education and is reflected in guidance from Ofsted around inclusive practice and system leadership. It launches Suffolk County Council's ambition to implement this model across the county with a number of other education settings.

This news comes just a week after it was announced that Suffolk County Council and Unity Schools Partnership will open a new SEND school in Saxmundham for 126 students with severe learning difficulties.

Both new provisions have been agreed by Suffolk County Council in line with its SEND sufficiency plans, which outline how specialist provision should be delivered across the county.

This new special school in Bury St Edmunds will share a site with Chalk Hill School special school which is due to open in Easter 2026. Chalk Hill will occupy the former Horringer Middle School building, while the second school will be built by the Department for Education on a field on the site. Eastern Education Group will run both schools.

Suffolk County Council's chief executive, Nicola Beach to step down

Nicola Beach will leave at the end of March 2026 and the process to appoint a new chief executive will begin shortly.

Reflecting on her decision, Nicola said: *"Serving the people of Suffolk has been a great privilege and I am immensely proud of what has been achieved together over the last eight years. Leaving this job has not been*

an easy decision, and I have thought long and hard about it. However, I believe this is the right time to hand over leadership to those who can steer and support colleagues through local government reorganisation over the next two years, whatever option the Government decides to implement."

Cllr Matthew Hicks, Leader of SCC, said:

"Nicola has led the council through an important period of change and achievement. Under her tenure and with strong political leadership, SCC is well positioned to rise to the challenge and opportunity of local government reorganisation. Her legacy will be enduring and deeply felt. I want to thank her for her outstanding leadership and dedication, and I wish her all the best for the future."

New Suffolk Exhibition Shines a Light on Disability

Beyond Labels explores themes of visibility, independent living, discrimination, and making change happen.

Understand how national campaigns, and social and political changes have impacted lives in Suffolk. As well as discovering the histories of organisations, schools, and charities that work with and support local disabled people.

Made possible by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, this exhibition is co-curated by local community groups and Suffolk Archives and has enabled communities to share and celebrate their lived experience. *Beyond Labels* celebrates disability while sparking conversations about accessibility, equality, and the work that's still needed.

The exhibition will explore local stories such as the actions taken by parents after their children were labelled 'uneducable' following the Education Act 1944.

Lived experience of disability is more and less visible in the historical record at different points in time. Wartime experiences are highlighted in a range of archival records, covering topics such as shell shock, or PTSD, long term health conditions, and individual stories such as that of Frederick Pigeon. Frederick was wounded during World War One, had his right leg amputated and was later fitted for an artificial limb. After the war he settled in Blythburgh where he married Ellen.

Coming up to present day the exhibition will explore hidden disabilities which are not always visible but have an impact on an individual's day-to-day life, promoting awareness and understanding.

Beyond Labels: Celebrating Disability in Suffolk runs until 30 May at The Hold in Ipswich,

Public's chance to try the ADASTRA trial driverless shuttle

Residents across Suffolk were invited to see how self-driving shuttle technology could shape the future of local travel - and to have their say on how it should work for their communities.

The council has been working with design experts Smart City Consultancy to assess the technical, operational, and regulatory requirements of incorporating autonomous shuttle services into a potential future network of mobility hubs across the county.

Shuttles could potentially link future residential developments with strategic bus routes, improve accessibility, and support sustainable transport especially in rural areas.

Shuttles could travel shorter routes to feed main bus and train service corridors where the frequency of buses and trains could be increased, and journey times can be shorter.

Councillor Chris Chambers, SCC Cabinet member for Transport Strategy, said: *"Autonomous vehicles are not trying to replace cars, they are a means to fix specific, expensive gaps in transportation."*

Adam Buxton shines a light on the need for more Foster Carers in a new documentary

Adam Buxton said: *"I didn't really know very much about fostering before I spent time with Gary, Shannon and Catherine. We've got 3 children and a dog at home, and the thought of adding another child or more children into our family life blows my mind. What they do, for kids who haven't asked to be brought into care, amazes me. And Shannon's reflections as a young person who has helped her parents to foster were just incredible. I'm full of admiration and respect for them and their families."*

The 19-minute documentary can be viewed on the Foster East Youtube channel: www.youtube.com/watch?v=M6uiWmxiCRU

Fostering is a flexible role with options for short term care from a weekend a month to longer term opportunities, all providing life-changing support for local children. If you want to find out more about what it's like to foster or adopt with us, please call a member of the team on 01473 264800

James Finch
james.finch@suffolk.gov.uk
Tel: 01206 262993
Mobile: 07545 423796

Feedback From Bryn Hurren

Babergh District Councillor for Box Vale Ward.

At last we have sunshine and our lovely area is beginning to drain and dry out from one of the wettest winters on record - six months' rain in six weeks in some areas, and not too much less here, normally the driest area in the whole UK - we may well still be despite our own deluges.

At least the gales have dried out the waterlogged fields now and spring tilling and sowing is at last underway. We must hope and pray that we have better farming weather this year, otherwise I feel that many of my farming friends will not make it through to another growing and harvest season, with politicians and government remaining clueless as to the value our agricultural industry has upon our food security, wellbeing and health as a nation.

Napoleon said that an army marches on its stomach and, although he met his Waterloo, he was correct at the time. A diet of junk food and regurgitated pap is no good for anyone, young or old.

No industry can invest millions, work for little or no return and just keep going indefinitely.

Certainly at the council, our main task at this moment is to implement the new government 'Better Recycling Initiative'. We are doing this a couple of months later than we would have liked but are now on schedule for launching the project in early to mid June.

The financial burden of doing this has been quite crippling for many councils, including Babergh Mid Suffolk, but we seem to be there now with a good team and management in place, and once more good, trained operatives to help us get the right stuff in the correct bin. There will be teething problems to start with, I am sure, and we are having to think on our feet and put new things in place as we go along.

As well as better recycling, we are also aiming for more recycling and less going into the Power from Waste project, even as important as that is in the quest for net zero. By next month everything will become a little clearer and I can be a little more firm on where we are with this.

The main problem for us is a serious cut in funding inflicted upon us as we finalised this year's budget, just as we had agreed purchase of two specialist vehicles for split collections.

Not a great decision or piece of thinking from our Whitehall masters. While appreciating that the previous administration has cleaned the financial cupboard out for themselves, we now more than ever have to live within our means and not promise what we cannot deliver.

As most will now know, we do once again have elections this May 7th and the return to democracy is something that should be welcomed. It is not a good idea to try to dodge the verdict of the people on the past five years.

I hope that the two political parties who seemed to be colluding together here in Suffolk are punished at the ballot box and receive nil points. That sort of gimmick can shake our democracy and let in extreme politics along with its masters and shady backers with deep pockets.

These folk are sometimes so desperate to get your vote at any cost that they can be very economical with the truth - how else can they pay back the piper who calls the tune? Please check you have a vote and question the candidates if they come to visit you!

At this moment in time, I am reflecting on the number of funerals I have attended this year. So many friends and colleagues have finally come to the end of their personal road and leave this world and its keeping to others left behind. It is hard to lose the ones you love, but those I knew have all left their mark in a good way, so we should celebrate the life they had and the good they left behind.

I felt quite vulnerable at the end of last week and began to doubt my own invincibility, but I am feeling recovered now, and six hours on the allotment and a good win for the Super Blues have steadied the wobble and set me

up for the challenges ahead.

Are we wiser as the new generation take up the reins? I think we are, but the world still seems to be run by older has-beens, or those who never were anything to begin with. It is just like crazed old men who should have been imprisoned long ago having a last hurrah and firing missiles at each other without a care for normal people or even the world itself. The lunatics have truly taken over the asylum and much more besides.

It was nice to see the Public Realm road sweepers out in the rural villages in the spring sunshine last week. Regrettably, they are somewhat hampered by parked cars quite often now. This means that it is difficult to get to the edges of the road or sometimes sweep at all. If you spot the sweeper coming by, please move your car to a different place and he will catch up on your bit on the return sweep.

Also, a major problem now is the condition of the roads. In some places they are so potholed and neglected that we are sweeping on dirt, and it harms the brushes. Hopefully the elections will bring a new coalition of councillors in charge to manage this and all other functions of the county much better. Where is your money going?

I will be at a parish council near you this month for questions and also at all the annual parish meetings throughout next month, so just stop me and ask one.

*Kind regards and love to all,
Bryn
bryn.hurren@babergh.gov.uk
Tel: 01787 210854
Mobile: 07771 508348*



**Report a
Pothole**

 <https://highwaysreporting.suffolk.gov.uk>

BOXFORD

Summary of Council Meeting 24th February 2026

Public Forum: Cllr Finch was asked for an update on the new yellow lines to be installed in Church Street. It was confirmed that the matter is in the process of a Road Traffic Order; it is in the hands of the lawyers. It is likely to be completed early summer.

A resident asked about the repainting of the faded yellow lines in the village. Cllr Finch advised that they will be done at the same time as the new lines to utilise resources. Cllr Parr commented that they need to be done as soon as possible - Cllr Finch will take away.

District Council Report: DCllr Hurren's full report can be found on the BPC website.

County Council Report: Cllr Finch's full report can be found on the BPC website.

Finance: The finance report was accepted and can be found in full on the BPC website.

Planning: The full planning details can be seen in the minutes on the BPC website

To agree an action to install railings at the crossing point of the A1071: It was resolved that this would be raised with the Highways engineer during the meeting regarding the 20mph speed limit.

To agree a date for the Annual Parish Meeting: It was resolved that the meeting will be held before the full council meeting on 28th April. The PC will take the opportunity to show residents ongoing and upcoming projects in the village and will invite local groups to make a brief presentation.

Date of Next Meeting: 24th March 2026 at 7pm in the village hall.

parish council (PC) meetings are on the 4th Tuesday each month except in August and December. They are held in the village hall starting at 7pm All are welcome to come along and observe and there is a regular item to allow residents a short time to comment and raise items.

Full minutes and other documents mentioned above can be found at: <http://boxford-pc.gov.uk>

Zoe Rumsey

01787 739317

clerk@boxford-pc.gov.uk

NEWTON

Summary of Council Meeting 11th March 2026

26/046 Public Participation

The councillors reviewed James Finch's previously submitted report, and he updated councillors on a new SEND school in Bury St Edmunds, the resignation of SCC's chief executive and the fact that he [Cllr Finch] is not standing in the forthcoming elections after 17 years' service. The councillors thanked James for all the support he has given Newton during his years of public service.

26/048 Clerk's Report (Appendix A)

Following a review of the clerk's report, there were no further actions requested of the clerk. The clerk further updated councillors that Babergh has extended the Asset of Community Value status on the Saracens Head until 10th March 2031.

26/050 Saracens Head

On 4th March 2026, the council facilitated a village meeting, attended by 40 residents, to discuss the sale of the Saracens Head. The pub is designated as an Asset of Community Value because of its importance to the village. The freehold sale price is £700,000 + VAT and the selling agent is Christie & Co.

Everybody at the meeting agreed they would like to see the Saracens Head continue trading as a pub offering food and drink and owned or managed by people experienced in the hospitality sector. However, should no offers come forward, the local community would then have the option of raising the funds to purchase the premises. At the end of the meeting, residents gave their email details to the clerk so that they could be kept up to date with developments.

26/052 Walking infrastructure project

The councillors reviewed the progress of applications for grants towards the cost of the walking infrastructure improvements. SCC Transport has agreed to pay for the costs (£25,956) of relocating the bus stop and shelter on the Green; Babergh's CIL team has agreed that the project is eligible for a grant up to £100,000, subject to a successful application; Newton Green Trust has donated £80,000 towards the project and NPC has allocated £20,000 of its CIL receipts. Whilst Sport England has judged that the scheme does not

meet its criteria, responses are awaited from SCC's Active Travel, Awards for All England and a local charity.

James Finch confirmed that SCC was going to support Newton's walking infrastructure scheme and cover the shortfall between the scheme costs minus the £225,956 raised by NPC's fundraising efforts. He will arrange for NPC to receive written confirmation of the offer from the directorate concerned. The councillors thanked James for all his efforts in gaining the support and looked forward to receiving the detailed plans of the scheme from Suffolk Highways.

26/053 Neighbourhood plan

Cllr Presland updated councillors on the meeting with Chris Bowden, which covered the strategic direction that the review of the NNP could take. It is planned to give residents an update on the plan for the review at the coffee morning on Saturday 28th March 2026 starting at 10am.

Full minutes can be found at:

www.newton-pc.gov.uk

Dave Crimmin CILCA, PIALC, PSLCC

01787 375085

clerk@newton-pc.gov.uk

Parish Council Contact Details

Edwardstone PC

Clerk: Richard Jones

01473 828246

edwardstoneclerk@outlook.com

<http://edwardstonepc.onesuffolk.net/parish-council/minutes>

Groton PC

Clerk: Richard Jones

01473 828246

grotonclerk@yahoo.com

<http://groton.onesuffolk.net/parish-council/documents>

Little Waldingfield PC

Councillor & Clerk: Mark Freeman

07554 592425

clerk.littlewalingfield@hotmail.co.uk

<https://bit.ly/LW-parish-minutes>



Boxford Bowls Club

What a lovely picture of Boxford Bowls Club. It won't be long now until our outdoor season starts in the middle of April. If you fancy coming down to see what it's all about and to 'have a go', check the next BRN for more information.

Until we get bowling outside, many of our bowlers play at Sudbury Indoor Bowls Club in leagues and competitions throughout the 'winter' season. We must also congratulate the Sudbury Ladies Green Team, who became winners of the Western Region in this competition and will now go on to compete against the Eastern Region winners at the end of March in the final. Good luck to our Boxford ladies in this team - Cynthia Hollingsworth, Roz Mortlock and Yvonne Pears.

Roz Mortlock

Milden Cricket Club

As I write this in mid-March, the sun is shining, the evenings are getting lighter (and will be lighter again, too, when the clocks go forward an hour on 29 March) and, with the warmer weather, the grass is beginning to grow. Nathan Williamson has given the cricket square its first cut of the year and we can look forward to starting to play cricket again at the end of the month.

The first match, on Sunday 26 April, will be an 'intra-squad' game, to give all club members and those interested in playing this season an opportunity to get in a bit of practice 'in the middle'. Meanwhile, pre-season indoor nets continue, held on Thursday evenings, alternately at Sprotts Farm Indoor Cricket Lane, Holt Road, Polstead CO6 5BT and at the sports hall at



Wattisham Airfield, IP7 7RA. If you are interested in playing for the club or, in the first place, coming to nets, or would just like more information, please contact club captain Alex Cunningham: info@mildencricket.com.



Jim Ferguson bowling against Worlington (top) and Felix Elgar bowling for Milden (bottom), 3 August 2025.

The full 2026 list of league fixtures was published in the January BRN (page 55), with additional friendly fixtures listed on page 55 of the March issue. Details of social events being planned are to follow, so 'watch this space'.

At the club AGM held at The Fleece Hotel, Boxford, on Friday 6 March, Richard Robinson, who was elected club chairman (in succession to Martin Roffey) reported a very successful season in 2025, with the club just missing out on promotion to Division 4 of the Hunts County Bats League. Emma Holm (Nathan's mum) was elected as secretary, and Alex 'Boris' Cunningham was re-elected as treasurer. Alex was also re-appointed as club captain, with Alex Lomax and Nathan as vice-captains. Joe Nevitt (to whom the club is indebted for enabling the indoor nets at Wattisham) is club safeguarding officer, and I will continue as Media Officer. In recognition of his service to the club over many years, members agreed to appoint Martin Roffey as an honorary life vice-president.

The AGM resolved to apply to register the club as a Community Amateur Sports Club, which will allow the club to benefit from Gift Aid on donations.

The outdoor nets at the Milden playing field are being renovated, and the club is particularly grateful to the Pavilion Committee for its financial support. A reminder that spectators are welcome at all our matches.

*David Lamming
Media Officer*

Boxford Rovers

Boxford Rovers Youth Football Club were delighted to receive £200 worth of footballs from Court Knoll Lodge at their most recent meeting, held at Boxford Village Hall.

The generous donation will help support the club's ongoing activities and its work with young players in the village.

Melvyn Eke



Top: Melvyn Eke, Chairman of Boxford Rovers, alongside Court Knoll Lodge Master Tony Scales and Wardens Ken Howard and Alan Leeder, with the footballs arranged in 'BR' formation for Boxford Rovers. Bottom: Personalised footballs provided for the club.

Halls & Facilities to Hire

Boxford Pavilion	<i>Natalie Woods</i> 07772 916 135 nataliewoods25@gmail.com
Boxford Spinney	<i>Mark Miller</i> 01787 211596 www.boxfordspinney.co.uk mark.miller@talktalk.net
Boxford Village Hall	www.boxfordvillagehall.co.uk booking@boxfordvillagehall.co.uk
Brent Eleigh Village Hall	<i>Karen Marshall</i> 07946 209103 karenmarshall6@gmail.com
Edwardstone Parish Hall	<i>Daphne Clark</i> 01787 210698 daphne.clark@btopenworld.com
Edwardstone Millennium Green	<i>Marijke Morris</i> 07914 767 013 marijke_e@yahoo.co.uk
Groton Village Hall	<i>Joanna Roberts</i> 07845 940 008 jgant87618@aol.com
Little Waldingfield Parish Room	<i>Sue Bowen</i> 01787 249473 sd.bowen@btopenworld.com
Little Waldingfield Pavilion	<i>Jennie Jordan</i> 07522 352 558 52Jennie1@gmail.com
Marquee Booking	BoxfordMarqueeBooking@gmail.com
Milden Pavilion	<i>Pearl</i> 01449 741 876 info@mildenspavilion.co.uk
Newton Village Hall	<i>The Secretary</i> 07955 199 000

Scouting

1st Boxford Beaver Scouts	<i>John</i> 07966 690317 johnaves@hotmail.co.uk
1st Boxford Cub Scouts	<i>Susie</i> 07843 280396
1st Boxford Scouts	<i>David Talbot-Clarke</i> 07946 550519
1st Boxford Explorer Scouts	<i>Neil Barkham</i> 07734 108257
1st Boxford Rainbows	<i>Janice Macmillan</i> 07779 303690
1st Boxford Brownies	<i>Janice Macmillan</i> 07779 303690 janice.macmillan@yahoo.co.uk
1st Boxford Guides	<i>Bethany Ireland</i> bethanyireland11@gmail.com

Charities

Boxford & Groton United Charities	<i>Guy Godfray</i> 01787 211378
Edwardstone Millennium Green Trust	<i>Alison Barlow</i> 07765 401 952 crossways.jemali@gmail.com
Edwardstone Charities	<i>Nick Raymond</i> 01787 210461 ncraymond@hotmail.co.uk
Groton Educational Foundation	<i>Kate Wilson</i> 01787 211658 kate.wilson100@hotmail.co.uk
Groton Winthrop Mulberry Trust	<i>James Wills</i> 01787 210484
Little Waldingfield Charities	<i>Mary Thorogood</i> 01787 247658 littlewalingfieldcharities@gmail.com
Newton Green Trust	<i>Philip Taylor</i> 07775 777 598 philiptaylor433@gmail.com

Volunteers Make Our Villages Thrive

Our village halls, clubs, charities, and youth groups don't run themselves. Almost everything listed on these pages is organised by volunteers - neighbours giving a little time to keep things happening.

For anyone considering getting involved, help doesn't have to mean long-term or specialist commitment. Many groups need:

- occasional help at events
- someone to cover a role for a few months
- behind-the-scenes admin or publicity
- fresh faces with new ideas

Getting involved is one of the easiest ways to meet people and feel part of village life.

Additions or corrections

This guide aims to be as complete and accurate as possible. If a group is missing, details have changed, or you spot an error, please email editor@boxrivernews.com.

Clubs & Groups

Boxford Bellringers	<i>Richard Gates</i> 01787 210432
Boxford Bible Study Group	<i>Peter & Margaret</i> 01787 211077
Boxford Bike Club	<i>Kevin Bridge</i> 07876 798 617 www.boxfordbikeclub.co.uk
Boxford Bowls Club	<i>Ian Clark</i> 01787 211133
Boxford Carpet Bowls	<i>David Warren</i> 01787 211067
Boxford Drama Group	<i>Janice Macmillan</i> 07779 303 690 janice.macmillan@yahoo.co.uk
Boxford Friendship Group	<i>Alison Warren</i> 01787 211067 or <i>Wendy Hills</i> 01787 210342
Boxford Gardens Open	<i>Audrey Zuck</i> 07852 102 455 audrey@a2zrisksservices.com
Boxford Gardening Society	<i>Elizabeth Wagener</i> 01787 210223 elizabeth.wagener@btinternet.com
Boxford Literary Group	<i>David Jones</i> 01787 211104 audav@hotmail.co.uk
Boxford Rovers Youth FC	<i>Melvyn Eke</i> 07873 971 701 m.eke@btinternet.com www.boxford-rovers-youth.com
Boxford Tennis Social	<i>Sue Moore</i> 07808 481 447
Boxford WI	<i>Lyn Beer</i> 07961 357 526
Fleece Jazz	<i>David Gasson</i> 01787 210796
Groton History Society	<i>Nigel Chapman</i> nigeljchap@gmail.com
Highway 12 Western Dance	<i>Chris</i> 01787 371006
Little Waldingfield History Society	<i>Diana Langford</i> 01787 248298 dianalangford765@gmail.com
Little Waldingfield Over 60s & Friendship Club	<i>Tricia Eddington</i> 01787 247932
Local History Recorders	Edwardstone <i>Daphne Clark</i> 01787 210698 daphne.clark@btopenworld.com
	Groton <i>Joanna Roberts</i> 01787 210619 jgant87618@aol.com
Madrigalia Choir	<i>Sue Price</i> 01787 210913
Milden Cricket Club	<i>Richard Robinson</i> 07807 229447 or <i>David Lamming</i> 07968 791 135
Milden Singers	<i>Pearl</i> 01449 741876
Natural Boxford	<i>Louise Carpenter</i> 01787 211862 louisecarpenter@proton.me
Newton Arts & Crafts Club	<i>Carole Langley</i> 01787 373548
Newton War Games Club	<i>Brian Lawson</i> 01787 312160

Clubs & Groups

Newton Fireside Club	<i>Moira Evans</i> 01787 374652
Pilates (Edwardstone)	<i>Claire</i> 07772 074 750
Primrose Wood Volunteers	<i>Evan Flockhart</i> 07968 336 883 obliquewoodland@protonmail.com
Swing Jive & Lindy Hop Dance	<i>Sarah Boldock</i> 07956 614 824
Yoga (Boxford)	<i>Marianne Marshall</i> 01787 210323
Yoga Paper Kite (Newton)	<i>Sophie</i> 01787 313662
Yoga with Lindsey (Newton)	<i>Lindsey</i> 07971 800 540

Children Families & Learning

Boxford Primary School	01787 210332 www.boxfordprimaryschool.co.uk office@boxford.suffolk.sch.uk
Friends of Boxford School (FoBS)	talktofobs@gmail.com
Sunflowers Childcare	<i>Moira Grant</i> 01787 211363 www.sunflowers-childcare.co.uk info@sunflowers-childcare.co.uk
Boxford Baby & Toddler Group	facebook.com/Boxfordbabyandtoddlergroup

Community Groups

3PR Boxford 1st Responders	<i>Alistair Horne</i> 07887 716453 alistair.horne@eastamb.nhs.uk
Boxford Allotments	<i>David Burden</i> 01787 211926 d.burden379@btinternet.com
Boxford Bounty	<i>Mark Miller</i> 01787 211596
Boxford Community Car Scheme	<i>Jen Eastwood</i> 01787 211853 jen.eastwood8@gmail.com
Boxford Community Council	<i>Ward Baker</i> 07850 941 831 boxfordcommunitycouncil@gmail.com www.boxford.me.uk
Boxford Playing Fields	<i>Craig Needham</i> 07970 733 934 craig.needham@me.com
Boxford Society	<i>Jen Eastwood</i> 01787 211853 jen.eastwood8@gmail.com boxfordsuffolk.com/boxfordSociety
Boxford Tennis Courts	<i>Nick Moore</i> 07977 241229
Lt Waldingfield Playing Field	<i>Jennie Jordan</i> 07522 352 558 52Jennie1@gmail.com

MARCH 2026

29 SUN	French's Dog Walk Castling's Heath, CO10 5EU	11am
31 TUE	Fireside Club - Medical Detection Dogs Newton Village Hall	2pm

APRIL 2026

1 WED	Boxford WI - Papyrus Boxford Village Hall	2pm
4 SAT	Family Fun Day Bridges Farm, Kersey Tye, IP7 6HB	11-3pm
7 TUE	Boxford Gardening Society Boxford Village Hall	7:30pm
14 TUE	Fireside Club - Fish & Chip Lunch Newton Green Golf Club	12:30pm
15 WED	Newton Village Hall AGM Newton Village Hall	7:30pm
15 WED	Charity Quiz Night The Fleece, Boxford	8pm
17 FRI	Polstead Films: The Choral Polstead Village Hall	7pm
17 FRI	Quiz & Curry Evening Groton Village Hall	7:30pm
17 FRI	Boxford Society - John Constable Talk Boxford Village Hall	7:30pm
18 SAT	St Nicholas Hospice Coffee Morning Newton Village Hall	10am
18 SAT	Scary Suffolk Stories St Mary's Church, Kersey	7:30pm
21 TUE	PGC: Garden Design Polstead Village Hall	7:30pm
22 WED	LWHS: The History of Spices Little Waldingfield Parish Room	7:30pm
23 THU	GHS: Reggie & The RAF Groton Village Hall	7:30pm
23-25 THU-SAT	Boxford Drama: The Ghostlight Club Boxford Village Hall	7:30pm
24 FRI	Little Waldingfield Pop-Up Pub Little Waldingfield Pavilion	6:30pm
25 SAT	Great Acton Book Sale All Saints' Church, Acton CO10 0BA	10-2pm
26 SUN	Boxford Tornado Sportive Boxford Playing Fields	TBC
26 SUN	The Spring Period Homes Event The Athenaeum, Bury St Edmunds	10-4pm
27 MON	Boxford Friendship Group Boxford Village Hall	2-4pm

APRIL 2026

28 TUE	Fireside Club - Wine & Cordial Tasting Newton Village Hall	2pm
28 TUE	Boxford Community Meeting Boxford Village Hall	6:30pm

MAY 2026

2 SAT	Who Wants to be a Millionaire Quiz Stratford St Mary Institution Hall	2:30pm
5 TUE	Boxford Gardening Society Boxford Village Hall	7:30pm
6 WED	Boxford WI - Annual Meeting Boxford Village Hall	2pm
9-10 SAT-SUN	Flower Festival Weekend All Saints' Church, Lt Cornard CO10 0PE	11-4pm
12 TUE	Sudbury Guided Walk Newton Village Hall	2pm
12-16 TUE-SAT	Sudbury Dramatic Society: Emilia The Quay, Sudbury CO10 2AN	7:45pm
13 WED	Charity Quiz Night The Fleece, Boxford	8pm
15 WED	LWHS: Two Short Talks Little Waldingfield Parish Room	7:30pm
16 SAT	The Hadleigh Show Holbecks Park, IP7 5PE	8:30-4:30pm
16 SAT	Fireside Club Coffee Morning Newton Village Hall	10am
18 MON	Boxford Friendship Group Boxford Village Hall	2-4pm
21 FRI	GHS: A History Tour of Harwich Groton Village Hall	7:30pm
26 TUE	Fireside Club - Plant Growing Comp Newton Village Hall	2pm

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