

LOOKS EAST

The Newsletter of The Rotary Club of Ipswich East
Edition 03-2021 : 9th February 2021

**Club Zoom Meeting
Tuesday 9th February starting at 7.30pm**

Guest Speaker: Norman Lloyd, "From Painter to Presenter"

Duty Rotarians: Norman Haines (VofT) Liz Harsant (notes)

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An Open Letter to All Members and Readers

Dear All,

Having gone through the excitement of being vaccinated myself against COVID, I have witnessed the euphoria from the other side when consenting patients for the vaccine. Most look into my eyes with the earnestness of an addict. The fear of saying anything that may prevent them from having the jab is touching. I get drawn into his conspiracy and believe him when he says, 'No I am not on any anticoagulants,' only to discover that he is taking *Rivaroxaban* which is a blood thinner! I reassure him that we ask this question to then forewarn that anticoagulants make it more likely for an intra-muscular injection to cause bruising. A smile breaks out on his face as he rolls up his shirtsleeve.

People are impressed when they attend the vaccination centre. Once vaccinated the time that the patient may leave their cubicle is inscribed on a whiteboard. I hear another man say, "Compared to having my 'flu vaccine this is in a different league!" The key is that those being vaccinated have confidence in safety of the process, since this will help to boost the number of people wanting the vaccine.

However, there is another pandemic which is frustrating the efforts being made to prevent people contracting COVID. This infection is a highly virulent strain, with an alarming ability to mutate, and is fuelled by misinformation and disinformation around COVID. With the imminent prospect of mass COVID vaccination there has been an upsurge in conspiracies, quacks and confusion.

The reality of the threat is hard to treat. This came home to me when it was disclosed by an elderly lady that she was told by her Radionics Practitioner not to have the vaccine as it was bad for her: my blood boiled. Fortunately, I was speaking to her on the 'phone as I am certain my facial expression would have given my feelings away. I accept that the person I am speaking to is not going to agree to be vaccinated and neither will her other like-minded friends, some of whom will inevitably contract COVID.

May I reassure you that the side effects that you can expect from the vaccine are minor, including a sore arm, headache and, potentially, a mild fever. But it is going to protect you from COVID!



Dr David Chittick, *President*



Our speaker Deb Johnson from Lighthouse Women's Aid told us on 5th February of the high increase of cases due to the current lockdown. Cases are now running at an 11 year high, with home isolation a big problem.

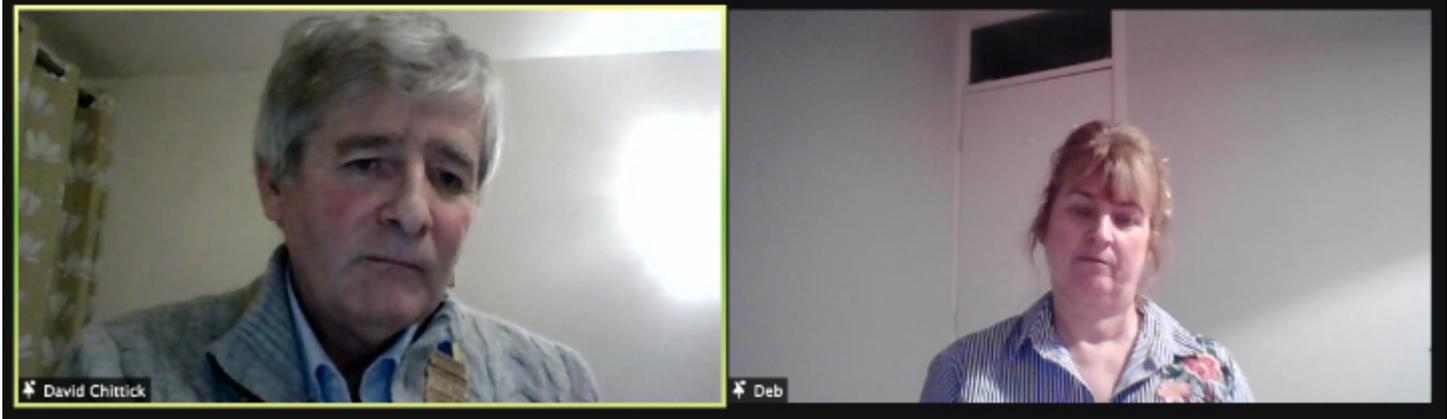
We were told how Lighthouse can give legal advice for those in need they also run training courses at workplaces and schools, to highlight problem solving regarding domestic abuse, mainly from men but it can come from women and also from children.

Lighthouse are having a difficult time at present at their refuge with Corvid rules, constant changes being difficult to deal with. They are now working on a wellbeing area in their garden and work is on going in all of their three kitchens. Many local trades people are involved but funds are still needed for this work.

Freedom programmes and abusive tactics are shared and told easily on zoom and has proven a good way to cover a greater area of Suffolk.

John Goodship gave a good vote of thanks to Deb Johnson.

Allan Gosling



If you were unable to come to the meeting and would like to see a recording, please let Alan Forsdike know and he will send you a link to the file.

It's the turn of Member John Goodship to relate a tale from his past.

John Goodship, aged 18 ½ years



In August 1962, I found myself out of school, out of a university place, and out of work. None of this was my fault of course, but I did blame London University for correctly realising that I was absolutely useless at Modern Languages. My late headmaster (or perhaps ex-HM, since he wasn't dead) suggested I look towards a Social Work type course based on the voluntary work I had done whilst with the school.

So it was that I spent many hours in the library (in those days books were kept in buildings not on-line) looking for a suitable (i.e. easy) course. Eventually Newcastle University accepted me with the bonus that the college was just next door to St James Park, home of the (then) mighty Newcastle United.

In the meantime, I needed a job to give me some income to subsidise all the 'Newky Brown' I would be drinking. My mother knew a primary school head who lived nearby, so I went to see him. This middle-aged man lived with his mother (*first warning sign?*) and after a light tea, he invited me up to his "study" (*second warning sign?*) to see his holiday snaps (*third warning sign?*). After about half an hour, we had not talked about teaching so I made some clearly offensive remark to which he replied "Oh well you had better go then."

So I went and realised I had been somewhat naive. Well, you are the first time, aren't you?

Anyway I thought that was the end of my teaching career. But some days later, in response to my application, Bedfordshire Education Committee, in their infinite wisdom, offered me the post of assistant teacher for one year at Flitwick Primary School. Flitwick (pronounced Flittick) was a large village midway between Bedford and Luton, and on the main line to St Pancras. So partly commuter belt, and partly homes for workers at the Vauxhall plant in Luton. My salary would be £400, a fortune to me then.

The school's headmaster was Mr Allen (called Father by the staff, but NOT by the pupils).

He was a short, very red-faced man who could look very fierce. But like many such people, he would do anything to make sure his pupils had a good start to their education. I heard him one day on the phone berating some poor soul in the Education Department because he wanted a tape recorder and, no, it had not been on his budget application. He got what he wanted.

He started each day with assembly when each class marched in to the record of the Huddersfield Children's Choir singing '*Nymphs and Shepherds come away*'. I can hear it still. A privilege for the older boys was to watch out for Father's Austin Cambridge, and open the playground gates to let him drive in.

The deputy headmistress was Miss Chatterton, again she could look severe, but was a hoot in the staff room with gossip about Bedford Drama society.

Most children stayed for lunch split into the classrooms and two teachers had to eat with them. One day I was sharing the duty with Miss C when a small boy appeared at the door and, as children do, he put his hand up. Miss C motioned him forward. He got to our desk, took a deep breath and said: "Please Miss Chatterbox....."

You could have heard a pin drop while Miss C did her best Miss Marple voice: "What did you call me? My name is Miss Chatterton."

I was having difficulty keeping a straight face and guessed so was she. By the way, all teachers knew their nicknames, children can be very indiscreet when talking amongst themselves. Mine was Daddy Long Legs.



While I'm on about lunches, in one room was an eight year old who always sat opposite the teachers. And I wished he didn't. He was ugly with a wide open mouth. The adult catering staff brought the food over and the senior girls served. And they always served big mouth first and he got second helpings. I'd rather not draw a lesson from that in case I upset anyone!!

The pupils at Flitwick were generally well-behaved and eager to learn. In fact, the only other male teacher told me he had deliberately moved from a Secondary School to a Primary School for that very reason.

I sat in on some of his lessons (to try and pick up teaching techniques) and that man never raised his voice and always had the attention of the class. I never managed that.

I did not understand how these children lived or what their interests were. One day I asked them to write an essay about where they had been on their holidays. Two children said they had never been on holiday. Oops - wrong question John: could have phrased it better and more inclusively.

One day I got really annoyed with one boy (can't remember why) and told him to go and stand outside the door. At the end of the class, I asked one of the girls to fetch him back. She came back horror stricken: "Sir, he's not there."

After a short look round, I reported this to the headmaster. "Oh don't worry, he'll be back after lunch." And back he came. I marched him to the HM's office who asked him why he had gone off. "Well, I didn't think Mr Goodship wanted me." Whether that was the truth or a cunning reply mattered not. It was my job to teach him. Can't do that if he's not there. After the headmaster had given him a ticking off, he told me that his father was in prison, his mother was a prostitute and his brother had lost a leg running from the police across a railway line. No excuse for bad behaviour and no excuse for poor teaching.

Because I was the junior teacher, I filled in when a teacher was off sick, and got the jobs the others did not want. In one class there were a pair of twins whose mother always dressed them identically. If I said something to Christine, I would get no response until this girl said to me "Please sir I'm Caroline. Christine is over there."

The next time, they would have changed seats. Luckily their teacher could tell them apart but I had no chance.



The winter of 1962/63 was one of the hardest since 1948. It snowed on Boxing Day and immediately froze solid. Councils managed to clear one lane on main roads but other roads were almost impassable. At the school, the caretaker had managed to clear a path to the front door. The rest of the playground was snowbound and therefore out of bounds, for almost the whole term. And I was the teacher charged with helping the children keep busy indoors. Looking back, they managed pretty well. Eventually the boys built a fantastic slide the whole length of the playground. I was dying to try it after the school closed but the headmaster decreed that as it ended in a low stone wall it was

dangerous and must not be used. And of course it was me who had to tell them. I was also put in charge of the weather station. We took readings throughout the winter for the Met Office with the final reading at the start of April.

I was asked to take a small remedial class of four boys to improve their 'Three Rs'. This was important work and I really felt that I was inadequate to the task. One boy was almost illiterate, but he could repair a tractor and drive it round the farm. His ambition, apparently, was to work as a farm labourer like his Dad. I still wonder if there were any suitable jobs for him when he left school.

A boy in the upper class came up to me one day. He was always dressed in perfectly creased shorts and a double vented jacket. (I hated him immediately.)

"Please sir, how does a tape recorder work?"

I had no idea but I wasn't going to let that show. "Why do you ask, Lester?"

"Well sir, my father knows two men who work in the wardrobe department at the BBC and they are going to show us round."
"Ah," I said "I think you should ask them as they will have the most up to date versions." Goodship retreats, honour intact.

Each winter a circus family stayed near the village. One of their boys could balance on anything. He was clearly destined to be a tight-rope walker. He walked along the top of the climbing frame with no problem until other boys tried to do it and fell off, so that was the end of that action.

I took the boys for football which was the blind leading the blind as I played rugby at school. The boys had little idea either. Positions meant nothing to them. As soon as I blew the whistle 20 bodies descended on the ball. It could have been rugby after all. One day I felt a tug on my sleeve: 'Please sir, Thomas's goal has fallen down.!'

I went down to see Thomas standing there grinning (he always was), completely oblivious to the potential disaster just behind him. The cross piece had parted from the uprights and dropped to the ground.

Some of the things I have described may seem small beer but that year taught me to listen, not to make assumptions, and feed the hunger of children to learn. I know I learnt at least as much in that year as the children.

And do any of them remember Daddy Long Legs?



Thank you John.

*Now, what tales of your youthful working life
do you recall dear reader?*

*Send them to the editor for inclusion
in a future newsletter.*

Ipswich East Rotary Club Swings into Action

It's been a long time coming but at last we have the opportunity to put *Service Before Self* and get stuck into a great community project.

George Woodward takes the credit for getting IE Club members mobilised. His 'round-robin' email calling for volunteers to help marshal at Trinity Park Mass Vaccination Centre was quickly met with a terrific response.

More than 20 members and an equal number of spouses and family members are now regularly wrapping up warm to meet-and-greet at 'TP' as we are calling it.

Rotarians flourish when they have something to do and that's what we've been deprived of for almost a year.



We asked some of them to tell of their experiences.

Here is what they said...



The perspective of a volunteer marshal...

"Hi there, do you have your booking reference? On that piece of paper, that's great. No, I don't need to see but that's the first thing they'll want to know. Won't be long now"

"Good morning! What time is your appointment please? 9.15pm, great; you're in good time. Park up over there and stay in your car please. We'll come and get you when the centre is ready."

These are just two of the common greetings we've been making. What we've heard back has been surprising.

'I live the other side of Ipswich; I've never been here before – didn't know it existed and I've lived here all my life.'

'This is the first time I've been out of the house since last March.'

'I've been awake all night chewing my arm off worrying about this.'

'My daughter booked me in and I think I've got it right. Where do I go?'

'I can't walk far or stand for long. Can you help me please?'

'My wife and I went in together and I've been out 15 minutes but I can't find her and she's got the car keys.'

[It took a team of three 20 minutes to reunite them!]

Then there was the joker who brought an old fashioned wooden telephone from the 19th Century in a huge bag just for fun. He said:

"The paperwork told me to bring me foone wiv me so I did but it's not me number on it."

Being a volunteer marshal is not just a case of waving people into a parking space and pointing them to the main entrance. There is the softer side of reassuring folk, getting the wheelchair, working the crowd and arranging the queue...

"It's 10am and they've called for the 10.15am appointments. Don't rush but make your way over now please."

We had one lady this week who was visibly shaking with nerves.

There was another who had been nursing a dying dog all night.

People are understandably worried about being out and what was going to happen to them. But they are also excited about the prospect of getting out and a return to something approaching 'normal' life.

Some come lightly dressed ready to bare an arm (and think the man on the door might be doing it). One lady came expecting to wind down her window to be jabbed and then drive on!

We listen patiently to stories and smile behind our mask (you have to show empathy in your eyes).

We gently reassure, we encourage carers and accompanier that, 'Yes, you can go in with Mum/Dad/Uncle.'

We negotiate with taxi drivers:

"Could you wait? He's only going to here for 10 mins and there's no where for him to wait for you to come back."

We negotiate with the bookers-in:

"I've a lady here whose appointment is not for an hour but she's unable to stand for long. Can you see her now?"

And when they come out and trot back to their cars they wave and say, 'Thank you very much. You're doing a great job!'

It's wonderful to be out in the fresh air doing some practical Rotary Service.

It's great to actually talk to people mask-to-mask.

It's good to be able to offer help and assistance and be friendly.

This is what we've missing all these months of incarceration
- true Rotary 'Service Before Self'.

Toby and Denise Pound are among the small army of volunteers.

Toby writes...

When the east wind blows, Trinity Park Ipswich is one of the coldest places in Suffolk.

Over the past 20 years or so, I have spent many days as a steward on the Suffolk Showground trying to keep warm - even in April for the School Farm Fair or in May and June for the Suffolk Show. So the prospect of being a traffic marshal on 31st January with a strong north-easterly blowing in from the North Sea made me somewhat apprehensive.

Would five layers of clothing be enough?

But there were three big enticements...

First, the tantalising possibility of the much coveted “first jab”. Secondly, the prospect of seeing, in the flesh, a few friendly faces from Rotary and thirdly, after many frustrating months of inactivity as a Rotarian, the wonderful feeling of doing something useful again.

There were only two of us on duty outside for my first shift. Sunday afternoon was obviously not a very popular time for the public to head out for a jab. Only a slow trickle of cars came in for each 30 minute appointment which meant that Emma Crellin (*or Lunney as she was before her recent marriage to Mat*) and I were able to cope easily without the need for anyone to control the car park. In fact, business was so slow that I was invited in at the end of the shift for my first shot of the Oxford vaccine.

I was rather glad to receive the English rather than the German version - despite the negative noises coming from the EU, I am sure it will give me good protection, with very little if any side effects that I noticed.

Wednesday morning’s shift was much busier - and warmer, with hardly any wind blowing. Time went quickly and I thoroughly enjoyed organising the car park on my own, with Denise doing the “meeting and greeting”. On both occasions, the response from the “jabbees” was overwhelmingly positive, appreciative and heartfelt.

Many went out of their way to come over on their way out to thank us personally.

Although our role as marshals is pretty insignificant compared to the army of doctors, nurses and clinicians, it is still a very good feeling to be part of something so vital to the country as a whole.

I am looking forward to playing my part for as long as it takes, by which time the wind should be blowing from the west again!

(Picture above, ‘Ipswich Star’)



Covid-19 vaccine - the view from a recipient

Chris Banham has been to Trinity Park. Not as a volunteer but as what Toby calls, a 'jabbee'. This was his experience...

Well, I have been waiting for the call for several weeks. Over 80's expected to be called first. I did not fall into this category! Followed by Nursing Homes, NHS staff, hospital staff and those coming into contact with COVID patients.

Taking my 'phone to bed so I could answer a call to say, "You're invited by your surgery to attend etc." to immediately to book my place.

Many other people around me were getting the call to book an appointment.

While watching TV the other evening at about 9.30pm, I at last had a text message to invite me to attend for my COVID vaccine.

The text had woken me from a short nap. Still sleepy, I called my daughter Michelle, to say a text arrived offering me the vaccine. "It's late in the evening and could it be the online 'con' that is doing the rounds."

"Give me the details" says Michelle, "and I will give it a go. Which centre, and if given a choice, would you like to attend? Tell me the website address".

I hung up hoping Michelle would get through.

Five minutes later she is back, "All booked - Trinity Park at 8.45am tomorrow."

So no "con" - thank goodness, but receiving a text that late, I was a little concerned.

Wow! that was quick. Having seen the queues on TV, I expected to wait a week at least. Another text soon arrives on my 'phone confirming the time and day Michelle had managed to book for me.

There was delight; I had not been forgotten after all!

Off to bed with alarm set to ensure I woke.

I had a good night's sleep - up next morning and off to Trinity Park.

Nice big signs advising where to go.

Welcoming party, George Woodward wearing hi-viz suit, who confirmed time booked.

Directions given to park left or right depending on time to go in for my vaccination.

No queues and straight into the centre. Instantly welcomed at desks occupied by those taking data required - a friendly face; George McLellan.

Personal data given. Then, without any waiting, I'm taken to my allocated cubicle.

Details and data checked again. My nurse, Helen - gloved up - administered COVID injection. Having confirmed possible side effects, she gave me a sheet of paper confirming same information. All done, thank you.

Out of the building by a well-signed exit. Thanked by car parking staff as I left.

Everything complete and I was out in 20 minutes start to finish.

Brilliant, efficient, welcoming, did not feel the needle, most effective operation to deliver Covid-19.

Thank you George and George and all the other helpers who I did not see, who were well masked and extremely helpful.



...and finally Ray Walters, who has been volunteering at both Trinity Park and Woodbridge centres, writes about the effect it's had on him...



I have nothing but praise for the organisation at both sites, both being run along with Stowmarket and Haverhill by the *Suffolk GP Federation*.*

Trinity Park, a much larger centre, is busier and keeps you on your toes whereas Woodbridge is less busy and becomes slightly more personal.

Both of the centres are run very efficiently in every stage from the marshals in the car park to the doctors and nurses administering the vaccine.

As marshals we welcome the slightly apprehensive, nervous customers on their way towards getting their vaccine. Wave them off on their return having had their jab.

It is very pleasing to see them after they have had their jab, full of smiles and thumbs up full of relief, gratitude and thanks for all concerned.

Throughout the whole shift you feel a sense of pride in being able to give Service Above Self in the true spirit of being a Rotarian.



**For the record, the Gainsborough Vaccination Centre (next to FIND) is run by the Ipswich and Colchester hospitals trust [ESNEFT].*

Future Club Meetings

We are unlikely to be permitted to meet in person for some time yet. That may change but in the meantime, this will help you to plan your diary.

Which weeks do we meet?

Ipswich East Rotary Club is going to continue to meet fortnightly for the foreseeable future. We are moving to the second and fourth weeks of each month.

We have been meeting on the first and third Tuesdays (and ignoring fifth Tuesdays) however, Ipswich East Inner Wheel Club has begun to meet on Zoom.

Since they began over 40 years ago, Inner Wheel have always met once a month on the first Tuesday and that's one of the reasons for the subtle change.

What time do we meet?

We are going to be meeting at 7.30pm.

Members who attended the first meetings of the New Year on 5th & 19th January will know that we held a poll to ask about the start time. The majority of members favoured a 7.30pm start.

Are meetings recorded?

Yes, meetings are recorded and if you want to see the recording, simply email the zoom team (alan.forsdike@gmail.com).

Recordings are not being posted on the website for confidentiality reasons.

A New Club Meeting Place

Full of enthusiasm, Friend Arglos, RC Bröckedde's newest member threw himself into club life.

His first initiative was suggesting an online benefit concert for local musicians, who had fallen on hard times due to COVID. However, as he presented the project his fellow members seemed rather distracted. "Did I do something wrong?" he later asked President Pröpke.

"No, not at all" came the answer, "but we are facing a real crisis at the moment; the Bröckedder Hof is on the edge of bankruptcy. We're going to have to find a new meeting place."

"Oh well, we're bound to find somewhere else", replied Arglos cheerfully. The ever placid President seemed rather hurt, "Young man, this is our home, the centre of the Club's life, where the Rotary flame burns brightest. It's a disaster. However, we are looking at two possibilities; the Grüne Laube (Green Arbor) and Gasthof Eulenburg."

Arglos was astonished at the effect on the club and how his fellow members split into two camps. Friend Donnerbarth, CEO of one of Bröckedde's leading companies, dropped merger talks with a major US competitor to campaign for Gasthof Eulenburg. Permanent Under-Secretary and fellow member, Molkenkur led the Grüne Laube faction and spent so much time doing so he missed a really important deadline for a meeting with the Chancellor. There was quite a bit of personal strife too, in fact rumour had it that these ex-bosom pals now only communicate through their lawyers.

Friend Arglos was at a loss, "What on earth is all the fuss about and what about our musicians? They're not going to survive much longer."

"This is the decision of the century," replied President Pröpke rather sternly, "in comparison, Brexit was just a walk in the park."

In fact, the split was also a generational one. The younger members were all for the Grüne Laube, which had e-parking places for their Teslas, a vegan menu with Tofu schnitzels as a speciality and the very cool "Greta Thunberg Lounge" conference room. "We can move on from this grotty Salon Hindenburg at last", declared Friend Molkenkur.

However, Donnerbart's traditionalists, also known as the "Rouladenistas" were equally vocal about Gasthof Eulenburg's charms with the "Ludwig Erhard Saloon" plus an unbeaten reputation for stew and dumplings like your grandmother used to make.

The campaign continued right up to the meeting where the vote was taken. The result was a draw; 33 members for the Grüne Laube and 33 for Gasthof Eulenburg.

"Well, that's the worst of all worlds", declared the President to Treasure Knödler, "it's quite likely that the Club will split in two."

"Don't worry," replied the wily Treasurer, "we have a nicely discreet contingency fund to deal with emergencies. We can offer it to the Bröckedde Hof's owners and rescue the place."

So that's exactly what happened and the old hotel survived. In order to please the young Grüne Laube fans, the Bröckedde Hof also put Tofu schnitzels on the menu and the Club's meeting room is now referred to as the "Greta Hindenburg Saloon". However, we have still to hear about the ever-enthusiastic and now more experienced Friend Arglos' benefit concert!

Bröckedde is located in the heart of Germany - where the Rhine and Danube flow into the beautiful Bröckeddeesee. This is where RC Bröckedde meets in the Bröckedder Hof - every Wednesday at 1 pm in the Salon Hindenburg.

Alexander Hoffmann 01.02.2021



Fictional romance enlivens 'The Dig', a film, released on January 29 and based on the discovery, at Sutton Hoo, of an Anglo-Saxon treasure ship. Diss Waveney Rotarian Don Black, who knew the hoard's discoverer Basil Brown, tells a truer story.

THE MAN WHO SHONE A LIGHT INTO THE DARK AGES

T rue love did, in fact, lead to one of the greatest rewards on (sandy) earth. Frank Pretty proposed to Edith Dempster in 1901, but her father, a wealthy engineer, thought that Frank, who made corsets at Ipswich and Stowmarket, was socially beneath his daughter. It wasn't until 1926, after her father's death, that Edith and Frank could marry. She inherited a fortune that enabled them to buy the Sutton Hoo estate and Frank died in 1934.

Following the discovery of the burial, an inquest, held in Autumn 1939, decided that the treasure was buried with no intention to recover it and therefore belonged to Edith. Generously, she gave it to the nation. After her death in 1942 the estate was sold to the Tranmer farming family and they donated it to the National Trust in 1998.

On a sunny day last summer, I walked through Sutton Hoo with Clifford Smith, the first chief executive of a united Suffolk since the Anglo-Saxon age (see separate panel on page 8). The National Trust complex is virtually a memorial to Raedwald, King of East Anglia. Happily, the beautiful estate and car park continues to be open to walkers who keep to the current rules.

Just over 80 years ago, Basil Brown of Rickingham, on the Suffolk-Norfolk border, located British archaeology's most valuable find of gold and other treasure in the Saxon ship burial at Sutton Hoo. He had been a tenant farmer, so he knew his soils and always dug carefully into them. "A good spade and patience worked wonders", he told me.

Basil, as everyone knew him, was content for Britain's top men in the field to look down on him professionally and socially, as well as physically from atop the mound. The archaeological establishment described him as being "rather smelly". But it wasn't the odour of sanctity that wafted around saintly hermits who never washed - His came from good honest sweat.



Above: The real Basil Brown photographed in his home village of Rickingham, North Suffolk

He had, moreover, earned the respect of Sutton Hoo landowner, Mrs Edith Pretty. Purely as a freelance and with no regular income, he had carried out surveys and test digs for the Ipswich Museum.

Mrs Pretty paid him 30 shillings (£1.50) a week to excavate the mounds that she could see from her bedroom window and where, she imagined, ghostly warriors appeared at night. She lent him a room in her chauffeur's cottage and, for those crucial pre-war summers of 1938 and 1939, Basil worked all the daylight hours.

Every week, he cycled 35 miles each way between Sutton Hoo and Rickingham, where he had given up trying to make a meagre living as a tenant farmer. In 1964, to mark the 25th anniversary of his discovery, I suggested that we re-create that journey on our bikes - We still had the energy but not the time to do so and, instead, I took him to Sutton Hoo by car. Although it was a warm day, Basil wore his jacket, tie, waistcoat and cap as usual and was not smelly at all.

He remembered that, in the first season (the summer of 1938) he explored three quite small mounds, finding that all

had been robbed. He found little other than pottery, minor forerunners of what he brought to light in 1939.

In the main mound it became clear to him that the grave had been undisturbed (if only by a few inches) and that he was tackling, almost single-handedly, a find of national, or even international, importance.

While, at that stage, Ipswich Museum was not formally involved, its Curator, Guy Maynard regularly visited Sutton Hoo. On seeing the ship emerging from the sandy soil, he called in Charles Phillips from Cambridge, who was later archaeologist to the Ordnance Survey. "Basil was to take something of a back seat during the later stages of the excavation", is how Angela Care-Evans of the British Museum puts it.

Mark Mitchels, who taught at Woodbridge School on the opposite bank of the Deben estuary, describes academic attitudes that surfaced when it was realised what Basil had achieved. "He was constantly aware of attempts to limit his authority and cast doubts on his conclusions", Mark says. "On one occasion he knew a power battle was going on about his future, but it took place across the fine dining table in Mrs Pretty's Sutton Hoo mansion while he was sweating in the ship trench. Basil was the amateur, getting grubby while his 'betters', socially and academically, looked down on him, literally, from the trench sides".

Professor Martin Carver told me, "Virtually everything he did has been vindicated. He started with his trowel in the right places, following the right lines. He was, first and last, a craftsman and he made it his business to know the nature of soils. Dimensions he recorded have been found to be absolutely accurate. We can do more than he did only because of the scientific knowledge at our disposal. I would not adopt his strategy of cutting down through a mound, which could be dangerous for the diggers and cause details to be missed. The modern preference would be to slice the mound layer by layer. Basil Brown, though, had flair and he was the pioneer here".

Valerie Fenwick, a British Museum specialist, explained, "When Basil Brown found a clench nail he dug carefully around it. He gradually widened his trench and picked up the main lines of the ship without damaging them".

Charles Green wrote one of the early books on Sutton Hoo. A second edition was revised by his daughter Barbara, who added: "Basil's ways were not the ways of later archaeologists, but neither were theirs when compared with what is done in the 21st century".

Ipswich Museum no longer has a Keeper of Archaeology. Dr Tom Plunkett redesigned a Saxon gallery when holder of that office. "Basil had the wit and skill to follow the ship's huge shape, which he did magnificently", Tom said. "His sensitivity to the challenge was remarkable. Sidelined by the arrival of leading people in the field, he kept clear of arguments among them. He just got on with the job".

Rotarians in District 1080 have supported Sutton Hoo, both financially and as volunteers, for many years, especially those in Woodbridge just across the Deben estuary. In 1939 they kept the secret of the precious finds until it could be told to the world.



Above: Edith Pretty, painted by Cor Visser and presented to National Trust by her grandson, David Pretty

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Basil held no grudges about the views of professional archaeologists who descended on the site from Ipswich, Cambridge and London. "We respected each other's knowledge and abilities", he told me.

His diary entry for July 8 1939 hints at anger by Charles Phillips, who had expected to be a guest at Sutton Hoo. "He is not staying at the mansion but at an hotel in Woodbridge", Basil wrote. He had not been told about this by Ipswich Museum and was a bit bellicose".

The inquest jury declared the gold and silver objects not to be Treasure Trove (hidden with the intention of reclaiming them later), in which case they would have gone direct to the State. They therefore became the property of the landowner, Mrs Pretty; she generously gave them to the British Museum a few days before war broke out.

Basil regretted that the treasure could not stay in Suffolk, although significant items now return to be displayed temporarily in the National Trust Visitors' Centre at Sutton Hoo. He was also sad that the trench was not roofed over before army tanks rumbled through on battle practice.

Born at Bucklesham, near Ipswich, he was there for only a few months before the family moved to Rickingham, where he left the village school at the age of 12 in 1900. Two retired clergymen gave him extra tuition. Other than this, he went straight into farming with his father at Church Farm. They were hard times in agriculture and both father and son took on part-time jobs as well.

Basil was a humble yet quietly sensible man who loved to delve deeply into the ground for evidence of human activity.

Clifford Smith

Suffolk (South Folk) and Norfolk (North Folk) of East Anglia sounds neat but, unlike Norfolk and Essex (East Saxons), Suffolk was effectively split in two. Abbots and monks at Bury St Edmunds looked after the west and tough Barons the east. The Church of England waited until 1914 for Suffolk to become one diocese and civil government until 1972 for one county council.

That was when Clifford Smith, former Planning Officer of East Suffolk County Council, was appointed Chief Executive of the whole county. He had long advocated its unity.

He was a founder of the East Suffolk National Trust Association and is delighted that Sutton Hoo helps to put all Suffolk on the map at national and international levels. The association has more than 300 members and works closely with Sutton Hoo, Flatford, Ickworth, Dunwich Heath and other National Trust properties.

I first met him in 1947 at Calke Wood, on the Rickingham boundary with Wattisfield and almost within sight of the Henry Watson Pottery.

Sponsored by the Pottery, Basil was excavating prehistoric hearths and Romano-British kilns in and around the wood. Potters had been using the local clay for two millennia before the Romans got there.

I knew Stanley Mole when he was a nonagenarian living in a bungalow in the wood and who remembered Basil when they were both young men. "He seemed to be after rabbits when I first saw him," said Stanley. "Only later did I learn that was looking for flint tools and fragments of pottery. We became friends and stayed friends while I kept to my woodcraft trade – making hurdles and gates and battens for tiling and thatching".

Basil's diaries were rescued from his garden shed and are now kept by Suffolk Record Office at Ipswich. He quoted a tradition that the River Waveney was navigable for ships as far as Diss and beyond and recorded that the copper and timber remnants of a boat were dug out of a Roydon gravel quarry. Unfortunately, the copper had been sold and the timber destroyed.

We now know that the ship he found at Sutton Hoo was already a veteran when it was turned into the final royal barge and resting place for Raedwald, King of East Anglia. His people had done the equivalent of burying the royal yacht Britannia with all the crown jewels on board.

Raedwald reigned from 599 until 625 and, after the death of Aethelbert of Kent in 616, was senior monarch for the English kingdoms south of the Humber. Only much later did



Gold is too soft for practical purposes, making it far less useful than stone or base metals for making effective, durable tools and weapons. It was often ignored until societies progressed to the stage where status and display became important, as they are today.

The Anglo-Saxons who lived in Suffolk appear to have accelerated that development. "The set of belt and sword fittings of gold and garnet from Sutton Hoo is a supreme example of the goldsmith's work", says Susan La Niece, Senior Metallurgist at the British Museum. "Each of the garnet and glass inlays in a pair of hinged clasps is precisely set into gold cell walls and each is backed by thin gold foil impressed with a design of cross-hatched fine lines which reflect the light through the inlays at every movement".

That craftsmen who produced such magnificence were home-bred in Suffolk is a probability, supported by finds at Rendlesham, an Anglo-Saxon settlement that made Sutton Hoo its special burial area.

Assuming that at least some of the gold found plentifully in Suffolk is British in origin, a likely source is Dolaucothi gold mine, in Wales and on about the same latitude. The Romans abandoned it but mining was resumed through the ages until 1939. Every known royal wedding ring, right up to the one given by Prince William to Kate, comes from that source. Like Sutton Hoo, Dolaucothi Mine belongs to the National Trust and relies on willing and knowledgeable volunteers for support and to look after visitors.

East Anglia become subservient to the Midlands kingdom of Mercia.

Basil Brown was also a keen amateur astronomer and won recognition at national level, though he was never able to establish a link between that hobby and his archaeological finds in East Anglia.

Dr Rupert Bruce-Mitford, of the British Museum, put in a word for him and, as a result, Basil received a modest Civil List pension until his death, aged 89, in 1977. Unlike Raedwald, whose body disappeared in acidic soil, he was cremated.



Left: Clifford Smith, first Chief Executive of a united Suffolk, with his wife June and a full-size steel symbolic replica of the Sutton Hoo treasure ship.
Above: Netflix's vision of Mrs Pretty

Editorial Note:

When I read this article in the excellent 1080 News, I immediately contacted Rodney Howell to see if he was aware of the connection with Ipswich East. He was delighted to know that Clifford Smith is a Rotarian and what's more, a member of our club.

All this talk of 'The Dig' took me back some many years to the early 1990s and my early days in Rotary when Eric Barnett organised a visit to Sutton Hoo just before the National Trust took it over and we were able to walk over the mounds. I have yet to see the film (it means taking out a Netflix Subscription - oooer!) But I did enjoy reading the book so maybe... (Alan F)

Editorial Note:



CLIFFORD & JUNE SMITH

Clifford has asked me to inform Members that whilst he is continuing to live at Clarkson Court in Woodbridge, June moved into 'Norwood' in Park Road Ipswich on Thursday 4th February where she is receiving excellent care and fortuitously, has the room right next door to Claire Lunney. Claire, who was 88 years old on Friday 5th February has settled in well to her new home. Sadly friends and relations are still unable to visit the home. Everyone at Norwood (both residents and staff) received their first Covid vaccination thanks to Ivory Street Medical Practice some weeks ago.



Brighton Bells

Gina Cooper is continuing to sort photographs and found this one from 1999. The 1080 District Conference fun theme was 'Brighton Belles & Beaus'. We took a liberty and Alan Forsdike made literal bells and bows which the Ipswich East team we wore on the fancy dress night.

The next conference Stuart and Gina attended was 2000 in Jersey where the theme was 'Cats'. Stuart recalls, 'The main guest was Tom O'Connor and we really enjoyed his company. Oddly enough for the last dance Tom asked Gina to dance with him and I danced with his wife Pat!'



Alan Forsdike, Claire Lunney, Dick Jeffery, Catherine Forsdike, Val Jeffery, Henry Lunney, Gina Cooper, Stuart Cooper

Photographic Memories of the Ipswich East RC UK 2012 visit to Ipswich Mass RC





Forward Programme of Meetings

Tuesday 23 rd February	Zoom Club Meeting: Richard Hems “Long in the Tooth” <i>Duty Rotarians: David Knights (VoT), Andy Lewis (notes)</i>
Tuesday 9th March	Zoom Club Business Meeting <i>Duty Rotarians: (not required)</i>
Tuesday 23 rd March	Zoom Club Meeting with guest speaker (tba) <i>Duty Rotarians: Ian Lord (VoT), Ross Lunney (notes)</i>
Tuesday 13th April	Zoom Club Meeting with guest speaker (tba) <i>Duty Rotarians: George McLellan (VoT), Ed Nicholls (notes)</i>
Tuesday 27th April	Zoom Club Meeting with guest speaker (tba) <i>Duty Rotarians: Bob Parker (VoT), Bill Pipe (notes)</i>
Tuesday 11th May	Zoom Club Meeting with guest speaker (tba) <i>Duty Rotarians: Richard Porter (VoT), Toby Pound (notes)</i>
Tuesday 25th May	Zoom Club Business Meeting (<i>grant distribution put to member vote</i>)
Tuesday 8 th June	Zoom Club meeting with guest speaker (tba)
Tuesday 22 nd June	Zoom Club meeting with guest speaker (tba)
Tuesday 13th July	Zoom Club meeting with guest speaker (tba)
Tuesday 27th July	Zoom Club meeting with guest speaker (tba)

This space is for you!

If you've anything to share let the Editor know.

The advantage of a digital newsletter is that it can be infinitely expanded to accommodate anything worthy of publication.

(Send to alan.forsdike@gmail.com and he will decide!)