

Hawstead 2015: Local History Recorder's Review

Although there are periodical reports in the Bury Free Press (BFP) concerning weather conditions in the area (contributed by one Alan Messum) we do have Glyn Hammond in Hawstead (South View,



The Green) who has been recording the weather for many years. According to his report at the end of 2015, most of the year was unexceptional (though there had been virtually no snow at the beginning of the year, and September had been the coolest since 1986 with 130% of normal rainfall). However, November, and particularly December were unusually mild months with the mean temperature in December reaching 5.6°C above normal. So no snow at this end of the year either; in fact frost was only recorded on two nights, 22nd and 23rd November. Looking at the Meteorological Office's anomaly maps for 2015 East Anglia as a whole was warmer by 0.5+ °C and drier by approximately 95% of the norm, compared to the long-term averages 1981-2010



People

Dave Dawson (Bracklands, Whepstead Road) featured twice in the BFP in connection with Cancer Research UK: in February as captain of the Lark Valley Golf Society (2014) he was pictured with a representative of the charity presenting a cheque for £1000 which the club had raised. Then in December he became the representative himself and was pictured receiving a cheque of a similar amount raised by diners at The Manger, Bradfield Combust.

Henry and Hayley Brewis (Pinford End Farmhouse) own a light aircraft. An article in the BFP in January explained that since they had negotiated access to neighbouring land for an unofficial landing strip they can now keep the plane at home and have just completed the construction of a building to serve as both garage for cars and hanger for the plane.

South Lee School is on the way into Bury St Edmunds. In March 2015 their new Sports Hall, located opposite the school on land purchased from St Edmundsbury Council's Victory Sports Ground, was officially opened and Anthony Holliday (Larkfield, Bury Rd) was pictured in the BFP along with others, with the caption "Chairman of Governors".

The music group "Piper Ensemble" which includes Ros Alexander (Pipers Hall, Whepstead Road) (cello) and Fran Evershed (1, Manor Cottages, The Green) (flute) played in the Village Hall on Sunday 19th April, in aid of the Teenage Cancer Trust. They returned to the Hall in September (11th) as part of a larger concert, the now regular "Fizz on Friday", sponsored by Ashton KCJ Solicitors in town and organised by the Rotary Club of Bury St Edmunds Abbey. This event was held in aid of the Bury Womens' Refuge and Rotary Club charities and included drinks and a supper of lasagne, salad and dessert as well as the music. Then, two days later the ensemble was at the church in Ickworth Park performing "an hour of music for a late summer afternoon", including works by Debussy, Elgar and Sibelius (etc). Money raised on this occasion was for the continued restoration and upkeep of the church.

At the Suffolk Show in June Andrew Brown's (Hawstead Lodge, Horscroft Road) Aberdeen Angus cattle came away with no less than seven prizes – notably won by 'Benjamin', a "bull born on or after 1 Jan 2014"



In October, at the Suffolk Agricultural Association's Awards Dinner, Christopher and Rupert Brown of John Brown and Sons (Church Farm, Church Road) were again winners of the Suffolk Farm Business Competition (enterprises 501ha+). This was judged by members of the Hampshire Farmers Club who praised them for "excellent overall business management and attention to detail. Crops looked fantastic and are grown with very efficient use of labour and machinery with a focus on getting the most out of every acre." They also won the King George VI Memorial Challenge Cup. (Photo shows harvesting in Cook's Field 8th August 2015.)

Also in October the East Anglian Daily Times ran an article on the annual charity ploughing match at Hall Farm, Fornham St Martin. Pat Baker (Shepherds Cottage, The Green) took part with his restored 'grey Fergie': 65 vintage and classic tractors took part and £425 was raised for the E. Anglian Air Ambulance.

All Saints Church

Services are held in the church on the second Sunday (said Communion) and fourth Sunday (morning prayer) each month. During 2015 there was also one baptism (Santiago Auhiro Masters, 2nd August), two weddings (Jason Sidney and Harriett Randall, 9th June and Nathan Bird and Natalie Bond, 20th June), two funerals (Mary Tooke, 7th April and Donald Brinkley, 11th May) and two burials of ashes (Rosemary Gill, 14th April and Elsie Tooke, 11th August). All those who died were former residents in Wkepstead Road.

A Lent Lunch on 31st March raised £210 for Water Aid. Then on 9th May an 'Open Garden' at Church Farm House hosted by Lesley Carey raised £600 for Church Funds. Instead of the usual Harvest Supper there was a Benefice Harvest Service on 27th September followed by a Harvest Lunch in the Village Hall. The St Edmunds Way Benefice comprises the churches of Bradfield Combust, Great Whelnetham, Hawstead, Lawshall, Nowton and Stanningfield. It collectively organised a 'Victorian Evening' event, held at the Barn, Hawstead Place on 17th October.

As is the case with all Anglican churches, All Saints Hawstead pays a 'quota' to the local Diocese. In 2015 this was £7,456 and was paid in full. The church has other expenses of course, one of which is the maintenance of the churchyard. This is partly done by a group of offenders who are required to do unpaid work as 'community payback', but which now includes a charge to the church. The Parish Council contributes towards this; also to assist, a 'clean-up' day was held on 19th September when a number of villagers helped tidy the grass and hedges and clear the gutters of debris.

Hawstead Community Council

Within the confines of the year there were two village trips to the Pantomime in the Theatre Royal in town! Right at the beginning of January 44 villagers (including 27 adults) went to see Cinderella; then

on Boxing Day at the other end of the year it was the turn of Jack and the Beanstalk when 54 locals, including 34 adults enjoyed a convivial evening together.

Other events organised by the Community Council (and all taking place at the Village Hall) during the year were:

- Clive's Quiz Night, 14th March, hosted by Clive Robinson (Cullum House, Church Road) which included a fish & chips supper. The event was won by Simon Miller (Hillside, Whepstead Road with his U3A friends.
- For the second year running an 'Indian Supper' was on offer at £15 per head (25th April), provided by the Bury St Edmunds restaurant 'Valley Connection'.
- A village BBQ was held on 27th June – a glorious summer evening – and was very well attended
- A two-piece band called 'Blackheart' performed in the Hall on 18th July, playing a fusion of pop, folk and electronic music to brilliant effect. Everyone seemed to thoroughly enjoy Blackheart's music and the evening was deemed a success, so much so that they immediately asked if we would be interested in having them back in 2016. Of course we said yes!
- The sun shone again for the village Fete on 6th September. There were the usual stalls, a tea tent and a bar, a vintage tractor display, a silent auction and a performance by singer/songwriter Nik Lowe (Oaksmead, The Green). A new category in the Flower & Produce Show was 'Men's Cake' (Lemon Drizzle) and there were 10 entries – word must have got around! – of which John West's (Kellycroft Cottage, The Green) was judged the best. The day realised a profit in excess of £1100.
- In December there were several events: Mark's 'It's Nearly Christmas' Quiz Evening returned for another riotous evening on the 4th with Mark sporting a Christmas tree hat! On 6th there was a Craft Fayre with all kinds of Christmassy gifts on sale – and tea and cakes plus a barbecue to ensure that shoppers didn't go hungry or thirsty. Then on 17th. The annual 'Seniors Lunch' (which is actually open to non-seniors as well) took place, followed two days later by the now traditional Christmas Drinks event, free to all Hawstead residents.



Other Items Relating to Hawstead During 2015



In February James Carr (Cullum Cottage, Church Road) organised work groups on a couple of weekends to lay the hedge between the churchyard and the Millennium Field. Those taking part work for the Environment Agency and Natural England and hadn't done any hedgelaying before. (James is on the right of the photo.)

24th-6th April was a weekend of celebration for the Maglia Rosso Cycle Centre and Country Café, located in the former Metcalfe Arms Public House as they marked their first year of operation.

On May Day the Green Dragon Morris came to Hawstead as usual and danced on Bells Lane beside the Village Green at sunrise, followed by breakfast at the Evershed's house nearby.

A few days later on 7th May the Village Hall joined hundreds of similar locations across the land as a Polling Station for the local and national elections. As it was, those standing here for Parish and Borough positions were returned uncontested as there were only six candidates for the former (7 permitted) – Rosalind Alexander, Henry Brewis, Christabel Carr, Michael Harrison, Clive Robinson and John West - and one for the latter – Angela Rushen. Thus our local representation would continue as before – though one councillor, Jayne Robertson had not sought re-election. As regards the national election, we are within the Suffolk West constituency, and our sitting MP, Matthew Hancock (Conservative) was returned with 25,684 votes and a majority of 14,984.



In March it was announced in the Hawstead Journal that a community Public Access Defibrillator – a device which greatly increases the chance of survival of someone who has suffered a sudden cardiac arrest – would be installed on the outside wall of the Village Hall. The cost (approx. £2000) was borne by a) donations (c.£600) b) the £500 received last year as a result of winning the first round of the Suffolk 'Village of the Year' competition and c) the Parish Council. The equipment was subsequently installed and officially launched on 23rd May by Patrick Peal, CEO of East of England Air Ambulance (Shown here with Geraldine West (Kellycroft Cottage, The Green) and Martin Render of Community Heartbeat Trust) . It was followed by an 'awareness' event on 18th June and a request for about 12 volunteers to act as 'first responders'.

On a lovely summer evening at the beginning of June James and Christabel Carr led a 'wildflower walk' starting from their house and taking visitors firstly through their meadows which extend around the rear of neighbouring Hawstead House (including a no-longer used walled garden (see photo) which belonged to the old Hawstead House, destroyed in a fire in 1916). Participants then crossed over to the Village Green and were introduced to (amongst others) toadflax in flower and the Green's orchid.



Village artists Bill Crockford (Pound Cottage, The Pound) and Janet Watson (Fylett's Barn, The Green) organised a 'Hawstead Fine Arts Fair', held in the Village Hall between 5th-12th August. This was an exhibition of painting, drawing, photography and sculpture, some by villagers and some by folk from further afield. In total there were 85 items on show, most of which

were available for purchase. After expenses, £650 was donated to the 'Prince's Foundation for Children and the Arts'.



Khaki Devil made progress during 2015 at Brook Farm with their Great War Visitor Centre but their plans to open to visitors was put back for possibly two years when they discovered that, rather than having replica huts built, there were genuine World War One army huts available for dismantling, transport and re-erection on site! This is a more time-consuming (and expensive) way to go but one that they have chosen with great enthusiasm. They reported quite early in the year that possibly 8 of the 11 huts they are planning for had already been sourced; in September (11th and 12th) they took part in the national 'Heritage Days' when locations not normally open to the public are made accessible (photo above). By then the first hut was complete – a double span one which had belonged to Ipswich Labour Club for many years. Visitors had a tour of the site and were appraised on progress to date and future plans. There was a display of WW1 memorabilia – and refreshments. By the end of the year a second hut had taken shape and after a successful 'crowdfunding' exercise in the summer, shares in Brook Farm Camp Ltd. were being offered to Hawstead residents in advance of wider availability.



Macmillan Cancer Research runs the 'World's Biggest Coffee Morning' and in Hawstead this is promoted by Joyce Dainty (Old Forge Cottage, The Green). It was held in the Village Hall on 3rd October and there were many cakes and preserves donated by villagers as well as coffee. £1436 was raised for the charity. (Photo shows Joan Baker (Shepherd's Cottage, The Green) and her sister Glenis Gorbould.)

Very sadly, an accident involving a single car (with a male driver and female passenger) driving into a tree occurred at The Pound at 11.20am. on 14th May. The road was closed and the driver had to be cut from the wreckage: he died in West Suffolk Hospital on 9th June.

The road at the Pound was closed later in the summer for two days for water main work. At about the same time the very narrow Hawstead Lane was re-surfaced.

Village Groups

'Breathe Easy' combines Tai Chi, Yoga and Pilates and aims to help our minds as well as our bodies to function effectively, has been going for several years now in the Village Hall on Tuesday mornings, with Sam Reid as instructor. Also on Tuesdays (evenings) the Carpet Bowls Club has continued to meet. In 2015 there were 17 members and in addition to the regular sessions in the hall, eight friendly matches were played against neighbouring villages including Rougham, Cockfield, Stanningfield and Lavenham.

A village group not mentioned in last year's report is the Craft Group. Under the leadership of Jo Butt (5, The Pound) this became well-established during 2015, meeting on the last Monday of each month to pursue various individual projects over part or all of the day.

Hawstead Appreciation and Tasting Society (HATS)

The wine club met 10 times during the year (the last Thursday in the month), except for December and the annual club dinner in June (held again at the BSE Golf Club). The following themes were hosted by members:

- A Tale of Two Grapes (Chardonnay & Cabernet-Sauvignon) (David & Judy Carter)
- Off the Beaten Track (Nikki Browne & Lucy Titheridge)
- An Iberian Evening (Bill & Margaret Crockford)
- Richard & Penny Barham's Favourite Wines
- Languedoc Wines (Andy & Angela Parrett)
- An evening of wines brought along by members (turned out as Champagne + various reds)
- Sparkling Wines supplied by Laithwaite's (Richard & Jacquie Milns)
- Wines Suggested by the Domestic Bursar of an Oxford University College (Andy & Janet Taplin)
- Gisela Oram's German Wines (part 2)
- Classic v. New (France v New World – same varieties) (David and Maggie Fletcher)

The Hawstead Book Club also meets once a month, (first Wednesday each month), but in members' homes rather than the Village Hall. These are the books read and discussed during 2015:

- The Last Runaway by Tracy Chevalier
- Elizabeth is Missing by Emma Healey
- Walking Home by Clare Balding
- The Shoemaker's Wife by Adriana Trigiani
- The Other Hand by Chris Cleave
- Gone Girl by Gillian Flynn
- Wake by Anna Hope
- The 100 year old Man Who Escaped Through a Window by Jonas Jonasson
- Funny Girl by Nick Hornby
- Room by Emma Donoghue

The best-liked book was 'Wake'; least-liked was 'Funny Girl'

Property in Hawstead



No. 11 The Pound (a bungalow) had been demolished in 2014: for the remainder of that year and for the whole of 2015 a new detached house was in the process of being constructed and fitted out (now renamed 'Penny Cottage'). Also, barns at Bryers Farm, Whepstead Road had been converted to a dwelling; and stables across the road from Pinford End Farmhouse were converted for a holiday let.

In 2015 the following houses are known to have been sold:

- 4, Whepstead Road £245,500
- Cooks Farmhouse, Lawshall Rd £422,000
- Martins, Whepstead Road £320,000

However, information available publicly on websites like Zoopla and Nethouseprices is incomplete and it is thought that several other properties in the village changed hands during the year.

Planning applications affecting 12 properties in Hawstead were submitted to SEBC in 2015. Six of these were still pending at the end of the year, including one involving a Tree Preservation Order and one for the construction of a new dwelling. The others had all been approved or in one case, decided as being unnecessary.

Parish Council

Hawstead Parish Council met on a bi-monthly basis as usual in 2015, starting in January. There were also meetings in February and December to consider Planning Applications from within the village.

Throughout the year the inadequacy of the Internet Broadband service was highlighted (following the location last year of the fibre-optic cabinet outside the main part of the village at the bottom of Bull Hill) and it was pleasing to see in the November Minutes that it looks like a new location on the Village Green for the cabinet would shortly be agreed. Meanwhile the village website, www.hawstead-parish-council.co.uk continues to be administered (and gradually developed) by Andy Parrett (Meadowview, Lawshall Road) whilst a separate one is kept for village hall bookings: www.hawsteadvillagehall.co.uk

Numbers of the public attending Parish Council meetings are recorded in the Minutes. The average during 2015 was 15. This figure was influenced by a Public Forum item in March which concerned complaints about gunfire at a private property which was disturbing residents (subsequently taken up by our liaison Police Officer); and by the fact that the May meeting was the AGM. At this latter meeting (which closely followed the General Election) officers were confirmed in their existing roles with John West as Chairman and Clive Robinson as Vice-Chairman – though it was noted that in the absence of Jayne Robertson, who had not sought re-election, there may be a need to co-opt a seventh person to the Council.

In the interests of transparency, at the March meeting it was agreed that, for an unspecified trial period, meetings would be filmed (subject to the availability of Andy Taplin, a professional filmmaker (Fylett's Barn, The Green) and made accessible, unedited, to all via the village website. The January meeting had already been filmed as a 'test-bed'; subsequently the March and November meetings were recorded. On the same principle of transparency the Standing and Financial Orders (and financial data) and the Parish Council Code of Conduct were to be published on the website.

The Parish Council does nevertheless retain the right to hold 'closed' sessions (which are not filmed and from which the public is excluded). During 2015 all meetings except the November one did indeed include a closed session at the end of the meeting, noted as being either relating to the Almshouses carpark or 'work on the Green'. The latter was clarified in the November Minutes as having concerned access by Maglia Rosso to their field via a strip of Village Green land (referred to as an 'easement'.) Temporary one-day licences for non-agricultural purposes will be considered by the Council in future, given the provision of relevant details.

During the year work progressed through to a draft document concerning a revised set of Byelaws for the Village Greens. It was noted that in addition to the main Green (sometimes referred to as 'Great Green'), there are several other small greens: Brook Green, either side of Bells Lane beyond

the bridge over the stream, but now completely wooded; Pound Green at The Pound; Bull Green at Pinford End; and the Millennium Field by the Churchyard. The whole of Great Green is a County Wildlife Site and benefits from 'Environmental Stewardship' grant payments from Natural England and further grants under the 'Basic Farm Payment' scheme.

When possible, Parish council meetings are attended by our St Edmundsbury Borough Council (SEBC) representative, Angela Rushen (Cauldwell, Whepstead Road) and Suffolk County Council representative Terry Clements, both of whom have a number of parishes to support. Angela has an annual 'locality budget' to be distributed evenly through her 'patch': this year, at the suggestion of the Community Council, she funded a projector screen for the Village Hall (£185) and a circular picnic table, located just outside the Hall (£315). Ominously, at the end of the year she forewarned that, as there is no financial assistance at higher levels, the free collection of compostable waste from households will cease in April 2016 and owners will in future have to subscribe at around £40 p.a. for this service. There are currently three waste bins per household: compostable (brown bin), recyclable (blue bin) and others (black bin), all collected by SEBC on a fortnightly basis.

Postscript

It came to your correspondent's notice during the year that in 2013 a 400+ page book was published entitled "The Painted Closet of Lady Anne Bacon Drury" by H.L.Meakin of the University of S. Florida, USA. This 'painted closet' (about 7 feet square) was originally in a 'bedchamber' at the old Hawstead Place and the paintings were 41 rectangular 'emblems' with mottoes and are associated with themes of meditation. The closet is thought to have been made for Lady Anne Drury who died in the early 17th Century: it was later moved to Hardwick House and when the contents of that House were sold in 1924 it was purchased by Ipswich Museum for Christchurch Mansion. See also Hawstead Journal Sept/Oct/Nov. 2007 and Cullum's History of Hawstead 2nd ed. p. 159-65.

A.J.Parrett.
History Recorder for Hawstead