

FRAM



Newsletter no. 5 March 2022

Victoria Mill c.1890. This tower mill was built in 1843 by John Whitmore of Wickham Market. It was to replace an earlier post mill that had collapsed when the miller attempted to keep it working while jacked up for building works. No Risk Assessment forms in those days! Thomas Twiddel Buckmaster bought the mill in 1863, and later built a separate steam mill on the site, which is on the far right of the photo. That building still exists as The Granary (Framlingham Historical Archive)

Contact Details

John Bridges	President	framww2@gmail.com	01728 723557
David Ransom	Chairman	cransom@btinternet.com	01728 720145

Once again our President John Bridges, ably supported by Alison Bowman, as its producer, and Annie Heining who has taken notes at this seasons Winter Lectures, has taken the lead in preparing our Newsletter for March 2022. I say 'once again', because we would love to receive contributions from other members of the Society instead of continuously relying on those same folk for the content every time. Whilst in no way undermining the quality of material produced so far, we are not necessarily looking for learned treatise of solid academic worth but comment from, or the experiences of, Framlingham people. For example, if you remember the Voodoo plane crash (see below) let us have your memories, or would you consider writing a piece about Fram's experiences of Covid? The latter topic is not exactly History with a capital H yet, but in due course it will be, and it will be a fascinating read for future members of the society.

Work is under way arranging this year's Summer Visits, and you will receive invitations to take part in them very soon. At the time I am writing there are two more Winter Lectures remaining in this season's series. The number of people attending the talks has been very encouraging and we hope to offer an equally absorbing range of topics next season from October 2022 to April 2023. Your Society is flourishing again!

David Ransom

Chairman

VOODOO CRASH

John Bridges



During the Second World War there were many aeroplanes that crashed on Suffolk soil, with many of those being from the American 8th Army Air Force. In the post-war period, we were only too aware of high-performance fighter jets suddenly making their very noisy appearance. Any malfunction with the plane could lead to catastrophe. The centre of Framlingham was just over a mile from such an incident which occurred on Saturday 22 February, 1964. The Voodoo F-101C from the 78th Tactical Fighter Squadron based at Bentwaters, took off on a test flight, never to return.

The plane piloted by Major Ross Watt, suffered an in-flight explosion which crippled the controls leaving no option but to eject.



The aftermath with US personnel clearing debris

The Voodoo crashed into a field at Lampard Brook, next to the Framlingham to Kettleburgh Road. It slid about 50 metres before exploding in a fireball, showering fuel and debris across the road. Despite major damage to adjacent cottages, there was no loss of life. Major Watt suffered leg injuries, but had the benefit of Suffolk hospitality when he was taken to a nearby farmhouse in a wheelbarrow. Our fire services and those from Bentwaters were soon on hand to control the flames. One of the J-57 jet engines was found over a mile away.

The area was cordoned off for three days while the wreckage was removed. I recall, with other boys, visiting the scene on our bicycles looking for souvenirs. The cottages had broken windows, with damaged roofs and plasterwork. Mrs Chinery was hanging out her washing when the jet crashed about 50 yards away. She was thrown to the ground and later treated in hospital for shock and cuts.

The Americans were very good at providing assistance to all concerned, but ultimately it was our Air Ministry Works Department that was responsible for the building repairs, which led to weeks of frustrating delay.



The crash site on the Kettleburgh Road. The road to the right leads to Lampard Brook and Red House Farm.

Thanks to Simon Gladas and Karen Haynes of Bentwaters Cold War Museum for their assistance and photos.

THE WAGON AND HORSES, FORE STREET (TAVERN HOUSE)

This was a public house for many years, but would later become a butchers shop, run in later years by the Brownsord family. The shop had been unused from around the mid 1950s, but has recently been the subject of a major renovation. The work is covered in a forthcoming episode of *George Clarke's Remarkable Renovations* on Channel 4. There may even be a fleeting glance of someone from our History Society. It is likely to be screened sometime this summer. A more extensive article will follow in the next newsletter.

VOICES FROM THE WORKHOUSE

A Talk Given to the Framlingham History Society by Janette Robinson on 17th November 2021

This talk refers to Plomesgate Union Workhouse in Wickham Market, now known as Deben Court. It is based on the memoirs of two sisters, along with surviving ledgers of life in the workhouse and census records.

Background to the Poor Law

Historically, paupers were cared for by family, church and/or charity. The Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 16th century; enclosures in the 17th and 18th centuries coupled with bad harvests caused an increase in

paupers over time. Each parish was responsible for their own poor. It was the responsibility of those who owned their own property or who rented property to the value of £10 p.a. that had to pay a tax, known as rates - and therefore became known as ratepayers. This meant that everyone had to belong to a parish and outsiders were not welcome. While some parishes offered accommodation or Houses of Industry, most support was given in the form of goods rather than money. This was known as out-relief.

Between 1800-1815 this system started to break down with a massive increase in costs. People resented paying and often went for the cheapest option. There was, at times, a sense that the poor were idle, and responsible for their own poverty. Some parishes managed to keep rates down through combining resources and achieving economies of scale.

In 1834 the Poor Law Amendment Act was passed. This included provision of purpose-built workhouses, with a small number of staff and able-bodied inmates carrying out much of the work. Many workhouses were virtually self-sufficient.

The new poor laws were unpopular, particularly the cessation of out-relief. If help was needed, it now had to be in a workhouse. These were designed to be no better than life outside for the poorest of the poor. This was not a soft option.

However, workhouses did provide medical assistance, inmates were clothed and shod, they were in a secure, dry environment, had regular food and, children were educated. This was a world without a social care system.

Dora born 1905, Framlingham

Dora was the fourth of nine children. She spent most of the first eighteen years of her life in the workhouse. The family self-referred. They were interviewed, bathed, given clothes, and then segregated. After the age of three children were separated from their mothers. From age three to seven they were in a children's ward

and from age seven they were segregated by gender. Families only saw each other on Sundays (the authorities did not want them breeding!)



Plomsgate Workhouse as it is now as a housing development

Workhouse buildings were similar in design to prisons – the panopticon allowed for maximum visibility. They were situated on the outside of the village but near enough to remind people of their fate if they didn't work hard. Entry was controlled and they were surrounded by walls. They were perceived as prisons, controlled by gates and bells, however inmates were allowed to leave with permission, and Dora's mother often took the children out to see family in Framlingham.

Dora's father drank, causing him to lose his job, he frequently deserted them which meant they had to go back to the workhouse.

Meals at the workhouse were adequate and probably consisted of more calories than on the outside. However, for Dora, her time in the workhouse was full of "misery and emptiness".

From 1908-1922 Mr and Mrs Balls were master and matron of Plomesgate. Dora did not like Matron Balls, although she seemed fair overall. Dora speaks highly of Nurse White who cooked for the inmates in the infirmary. Dora had a long, one year stay in the infirmary as a child. She was lame and ended up in leg-irons and a wheelchair for a while.

In 1914 Matron advised Dora and her siblings that their mother was dead, aged 41 years. Dora reports that the parish, in this case Framlingham gave her a nice funeral, paying the expenses to collect the body and bury her in a pauper's grave. Matron Balls did what she could to support the children by sewing black arm bands on their coats and making a moss covered cross emblazoned with daffodils. Dora's father signed up when the First World War started. In 1915 he was sent to France. He visited the children when he could during the war years. He was wounded and gassed but remained in active service to the end of the war.

Christmas Day bought something different from the usual drab routine. The children received stockings containing an orange, apple, nuts, and sweets. The hall was decorated in the segregated dining room and there was Christmas dinner and pudding. Then there were games and back to the hall for tea. Each child had a Christmas tree present. There were songs, poetry, and a speech and then it was over.

The rest of the year was dreary – up at 6.00am, breakfast at 7.00am and school at 8.00am. Furniture was sparse with a peg by each bed for clothes.

After the war the children were split up and fostered. Dora did not like her foster-mother, who never spoke to her, although the dinners were good. Dora was told nothing when she was taken away, not even allowed to say goodbye to her sisters. She was taken to Hope House Orphanage in Ipswich. She hated it, was lonely and missed her family. She became ill and was taken back to the workhouse.

At 14 years Dora left school and looked after the remaining children at the school. At 18 years she asked for her discharge. She left Plomesgate Workhouse within two hours, quite alone with £1. 16s. She came back to Framlingham where she had relatives and got a job.

Dora's sister, Irene was fostered out and kept away from her sisters. She also wanted to go back to the workhouse. Leaving school at 14 years, the next two years were most unhappy. Her foster-mother was physically abusive and made her work hard. Unexpectedly her life changed when a couple came to the door. It was Helen and Henry, her brother and sister. They took Irene home without telling her foster-mother. Days later her foster-mother found her and demanded her return. Her brother refused to let her go. Irene then obtained a job in a convalescence home in Essex and received kindness for almost the first time in her life. She met a soldier based in Colchester and they married in 1937, despite her sense of shame at being brought up in a workhouse.

Dora subsequently moved to London and found a job she loved. She and her siblings met up frequently in London and Dora also met her future husband there. Dora wrote her story down but was never able to talk about it.

It is not known what happened to Dora's father, Henry. Interestingly, he came from a middle-class family of veterinary surgeons. It is not clear why he became destitute, why he drank or where and when he died.

GET TO KNOW YOUR LOCAL WOODWOSES

Alison Bowman

Stories of wildmen of the woods proliferate across all of northern Europe, linked with those of the Greenman and Herne and the Wild Hunt, indeed back in 1980 there was a major exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art NY entitled '*The Wild Man Medieval Myth and Symbolism*' accompanied by a book by Timothy Husband (sadly out of print).

The wild man, a purely mythic creature, was a literary and artistic invention of the medieval imagination. In physical appearance he differed from man mainly in his thick coat of hair, which left only his face, hands, feet and, with wild women breasts, bare .

The woodwose can be considered an East Anglian sub-set of the group being found in many churches in the area. There are many variant spellings – wodewose, wodewese, and woodwyse being just a few. The word

is usually interpreted as meaning wild man of the woods. However 'wode' is Early English for 'wild' or 'mad' and 'wose' means 'being' – so woods do not actually feature in the meaning despite what now appears in many dictionaries!

E.g.

(*'wɒd, wəʊz*) noun mythology obsolete

a hairy wildman of the woods (Collins English Dictionary. Copyright © HarperCollins Publishers)

In Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight, one line refers to 'Wodwose that woned in the knarrez' (dwelt in the rocks) so initially they seem to have had a wider range in the imagination than the woods and forests but the habitat narrowed over time. It would appear that they died out in the 16th century with their heyday being in the 14th century, although there are accounts (unsubstantiated) of more recent sightings! One such account was in 2011, near Sweffling. The mythology surrounding their existence seems to have extended over time into the abducting of women and the eating of children even though they appear on many fonts.

On the basis of the mythology it seems odd that most depictions of wodewoses are found in religious settings but are obviously mythical/profane in origin. In this sense they present evidence of the medieval mind set and the almost seamless intermingling of the holy and profane. They can be found on porches, fonts, pinnacles of buttresses and, albeit rarely, misericords.

There are many examples of woodwoses across Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. They are mostly male but some females are represented such as the one on the font at St. Catherine's church Ludham.

At least for the local examples, woodwoses over church porches appear to be about to fight wyvern (basically a bi-pedal dragon). Thus we have one mythological creature defending the Christian population against another mythological creature!



The Porch at St John the Baptist Badingham (Simon Garrett)



The carvings from St. Michael's Church, Peasenhall are a particularly fine example of this woodwose variant and in a much better preservation than the one at Badingham (Simon Garrett)



We also have very good examples of woodwoses on the font at St Michael's, Framlingham. Given that all woodwoses carry large clubs which may be a euphuism for another part of the male anatomy, it is possible



that in some way they represented fertility associated with babies and the font. Or were they there to protect the infants from the wyvern, analogous to those on church porches?

From this distance in time it is difficult to interpret the medieval perception as to exactly why these hairy (or sometimes foliage covered) creatures took such a hold on East Anglia. The images are visual and thus meant to be interpreted by all at the time not just the literate (similar to some stained glass).

Whatever their interpretation they are a great curiosity. When you visit a church in our area, look out for them and try put yourself in the mind-set of the people who created them. How did they view them and what did they see and fear that was not covered by conventional religious beliefs?

One of several woodwoses on the font at St. Michael's Framlingham (Simon Garrett)

Bibliography:

Hubbard T. (1980) *The Wild Man: Medieval Myth and Symbolism* [Metropolitan Museum of Art

Ellis H. D. (1912) *The Wodewose in East Anglian Church Decoration* Suffolk Institute of Archaeology Vol.XIV part 3

Salisbury. M. (2014-2016) *The Woodwoses of Suffolk* originally in the Fortean Times (don't hold that against it !) 318

Some other Woodwose sightings locally:

St. Andrew's Walberswick (font)

St. Peter's Sibton (font)

St. John the Baptist Saxmundham (font)

St. Mary's Cratfield (font & porch)

EAST ANGLIAN ART FROM THE NORWICH SCHOOL ONWARDS

A talk given to the Society by John Day on 15th December 2021

John Day founded the **East Anglian Traditional Arts Centre** based in Wickham Market. Details of the work of the Arts Centre can be found on www.eatac.co.uk

In his talk to the Society, John focused on life in East Anglia as seen through the eyes of artists during the 18th, 19th, and early 20th centuries. He discussed the following artists: -

John Moore 1820 – 1902

Edward Robert Smythe 1810 – 1899

Thomas Gainsborough 1727 – 1788

John Duvall 1815 – 1892

Arthur James Stark 1831-1902

Eloise Harriet Stannard 1829-1915

George Thomas Rope 1846-1929
Thomas Smythe 1825-1906
Frederick Brett Russel 1813-1869
George Frost 1754-1821
Harry Becker 1865-1928
Anna Airy 1882-1964
James Brook Pulham 1791-1860
Harry Philip Day 1850-1921



Anna Airy (1918) *Women Working in a Gas Retort House - South Metropolitan Gas Company, London* (Imperial War Museum)



Edward Robert Smythe *The Shoeing Smith* (Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service: Ipswich Borough Council Collection)

Frederick Brett Russell (1841)

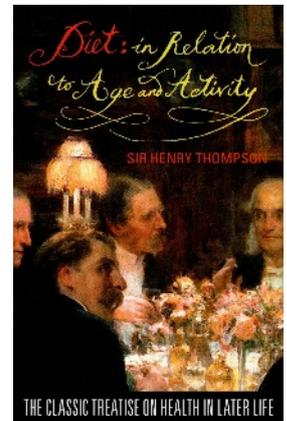
Westgate Street Ipswich

(Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service:
Ipswich Borough Council Collection)



DIET IN RELATION TO AGE AND ACTIVITY by Sir Henry Thompson

This is the title of a book that would not be out of place in any modern home or bookshop. Yet, it was written in 1886 by Sir Henry Thompson, our town's most famous son of the 19th century. He had always wanted to be a surgeon and went on to great success, being knighted by Queen Victoria. See the blue plaque on the St Elizabeth Hospice shop on the Market Hill and the display cabinet in the Lanman Museum. This most relevant and interesting book has been reprinted, with an introduction by Tom Jaine a distinguished food writer. Copies of the book are available from Victoria's bookshop (01728 723046) on the Market Hill, price £10.95.



FRAMLINGHAM CONSERVATIVE CLUB AND THE ASSEMBLY HALL

John Bridges

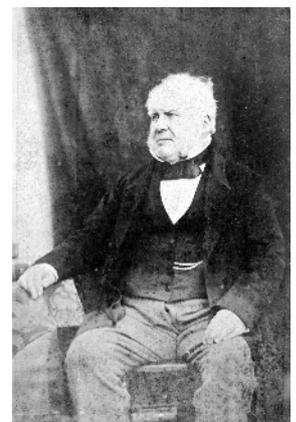
These two institutions in Church Street had long been central to the social life of Framlingham. It is so good to see the former coming alive again as a community hub and the Assembly Hall in the early stages of re-birth. The following is a brief history.

The Conservative Club

The Conservative and Unionist Association were well aware that in rural areas, the agricultural labourers' vote was most important, and none more so than in the Eye Division which included Framlingham. It was against this background that the Framlingham Conservative Working Men's Club was formed in April 1910 as part of the British Council Working Men's Club movement. Around 50 people were present at the opening of their first premises, which were in Mrs Webber's schoolroom (approximately where the Coop car park is now located). It was noted that 'in addition to the working men themselves, a number of influential Conservatives were present'.

By the early part of 1911, membership had increased to over 250 and it was clear that larger premises were needed. At the first AGM it was announced that splendid premises in Church Street belonging to Dr F.S. Edwards had been acquired and the move was made before the end of the year. To establish the earlier history of the building, we need to go back in time.

Charles Clubbe (1787–1876) was a prominent barrister who became an attorney of the Queen's Bench in 1806. He had 'the commanding residence' built for him (*FWN*, 6 January 1894). At some point he moved from there to a house on the Market Hill (now Darcy B, Hill House). The new incumbent in Church Street was another barrister, William Edwards, who carried on his profession there for many years along with his very large family. He is noted there on the Tithe map of 1842. When he retired, two of his sons, George and Lewis carried on the Church Street business for a while but they found more profitable work in their London practice.



Charles Clubbe



The 1881 and 1891 census show George Octavius Edwards (1826 – 1902) to be a barrister in practice at 10 Bedford Row, St Andrew, Holborn. By 1901 he is retired and living back in Church Street, Framlingham, age 74, along with his spinster sisters Margaret age 73, Louisa age 70 and two servants. George never married. Margaret died in 1904 and Louisa in 1909 age 78.

Thought to be George Octavius Edwards

Her will was proved on 18 June 1909 with Frederick Swinford Edwards and F.G. Ling as executors. F.S. Edwards was a very accomplished surgeon, and the son of Lewis Edwards. This explains why the property was bought from F.S. Edwards when there had been no record of him living there.

The Conservative Club appointed Mr Scheuermann, an architect from Ipswich to oversee the conversion and the building of the new billiards room. The works were carried out by Frank Baldry, a local builder. By the middle of 1912 membership had increased to 366. It had been anticipated that a larger hall would also be needed, but that was put in abeyance until further funds were available.

The Club was officially opened by the Duchess of Hamilton on 30 March 1912, in attendance with the Marquis of Graham who was President of the Club. The billiards room was decorated with flags and mottoes. Mr W.T. Brunger who was heavily involved with the promotion of the new club, was presented with a silver salver in an oak case. Following the speeches there was much political discussion. A flag staff and flag with the Club initials had been erected over the entrance.

This seems to have been a predominantly male occasion, because a week later invites were sent to 400 wives and lady friends for a social evening which included inspection of the Club and the illuminated grounds, followed by a whist drive.

The social side of the Club was most important, with a bar along with billiard tables and many events insuring an increasing number of members. The third annual outing saw a party of over 100 catching a train from Framlingham, with saloons specially provided for the journey to Yarmouth.

FRAMLINGHAM DISTRICT Conservative Working Men's Club.			
No.	1917		
NAME	W. Brunger		
Date of Payment	Amount Paid	Next Subscription Due	Secretary's Signature
26-10	4/-	1918	J. S. Brunger

1st The Secretary must sign opposite each Quarter the payment covers.

In 1913, the Ministry of Works took over responsibility for the castle, which caused some difficulties as the castle hall was used for public gatherings and was also the HQ of the 4th Battalion of the Suffolk regiment. Proposed works at the castle meant it would not be available for other uses for some time to come. This brought forward the need for a new hall to be built. By the end of the year much of the capital had been promised, and the new hall would be available for both public and Club purposes. It was called the Assembly Hall and its life is more fully covered in the second part of this article.

From then on, the Conservative Club and the Assembly Hall were both under the same umbrella and would play important roles in the good and difficult times that lay ahead. The Club would become the most important social venue for miles around. The membership fees and bar takings ensured a healthy income for the years ahead.

However, as the 21st century unfolded, social attitudes towards drinking and entertainment were changing. The cost of building maintenance was ever increasing against a falling income. It was in 2016 that the premises were sold to the Association of Conservative Clubs for £300,000, with the money going towards a new roof and rewiring of the electrics. The additional funds could not address the underlying problems and it was in 2018 that the Club closed.

The Town Council's planning committee agreed that the building should become 'an asset of community value'. In 2019, Mark Hoare and Ted Ridge formed Paper House Properties and purchased the premises, with the commitment to determine what people would like to see in the refurbished community space. Planning permission was received for the changes to the listed building, funds were in place and building work commenced only to be curtailed by the Coronavirus restrictions from March 2020. Easing of these restrictions allowed the work to continue, and by September the Town Council offices had relocated there, and the Common Room café opened. The refurbishment has been to a very high standard, and in 2021 the building was awarded the prestigious Diaphoros Prize in Georgian Group Architectural Awards

The Assembly Hall

In February of 1914, Frank Baldry's tender of £660 had been accepted for construction of the new building. Mr Scheuermann was again the architect. Work started, with one condition of the contract being that it had to be completed in three months! The membership by this time had increased to 507. The new hall was opened by the Marquis of Graham on 1 April 1914.

Soon after there were social evenings with whist drives and a conjuror, but with war clouds gathering, the 4th Suffolk Battalion (The Territorials) took over the hall as their new H.Q. It was on 5 November that over 90 men marched from the Assembly Hall to the station, with much waving of flags and applause from the large crowds along the route.



G Co. 4th Battalion Suffolk Reg. Aug. 5th 1914

Social activities in the Hall over the ensuing years would be many and varied. The following is a brief list:

- Whist drives. Very popular pre WW2
- Cinema. Regular film shows up to 1939, when the Regal cinema opened in New Road.
- Travelling theatre companies.
- Variety entertainment shows.
- Location for AGMs and general meetings.
- Concerts.
- Military boxing displays.
- Framlingham Amateur Dramatic Society (FADS). See below.
- Children's entertainment parties.
- Lectures on agriculture matters.
- Dances were regular feature throughout.
- Flower and veg. shows.
- Jumble and general sales.
- Xmas parties.
- Military parades.
- Musical 'At Home' evenings.
- Auctions.
- Choral Societies.
- Annual dinners.
- Meetings in WW2 to discuss air raid precautions etc.
- Mills Grammar School pantomimes and classes.
- Wrestling matches.
- Gala Queen Contests and dances.
- Regular Saturday night dances with local and some well known groups playing live in 1960s and beyond.

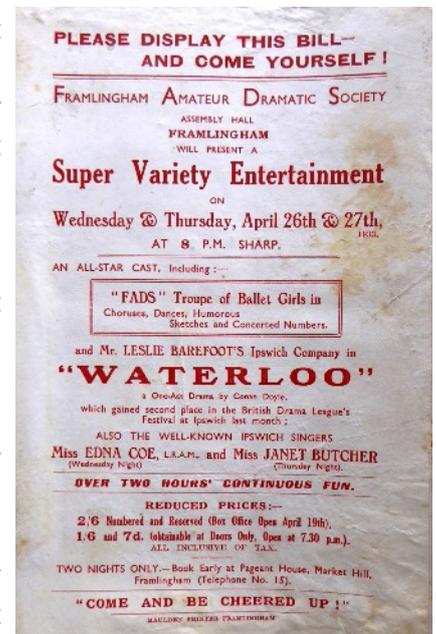


Gala Queen Dance

These dances were very popular, and there was usually one in Framlingham or a nearby town every Saturday night. They were a magnet for young people who would descend on the town by car, motorcycle or bicycle. In the pre-breathalyser days, they could be quite riotous affairs. The most popular group in the 1960s was a local one called *The Wild Oats*. Other famous names from further afield were *The Swinging Blue Jeans* and Eric Burden of *The Animals* fame. A name that would be very well known in later years was David Bowie. This had little effect at the time as he was known then as David Jones and was lead singer of *The Riot Squad*.

Framlingham Amateur Dramatic Society (FADS) has been an important part of Framlingham life since it was formed in 1878. The First World War had a serious effect on the Society and it was wound up in 1916. It was later reformed, and put on its first production in the Assembly Hall in 1922. Apart from the Second World War period, it carried on productions in the Hall until May 1993, with the final play being *Somewhere Lies Land* by Philip Barker. The hall no longer met regulations for public performance, and a move was made to St Michael's Rooms and then to the Athlone Hall at Framlingham College.

The Hall was sold to Wig Darby in November 2001, who opened it as The Theatre Antiques Centre which traded until 2020 when it was bought by Paper House Properties. The future of the hall is being considered in depth and will hopefully become a vibrant part of Framlingham life as it was in years gone by. An Open Door event was held in September 2021 when many visited to discuss the future of this important Framlingham building. Whist drives are unlikely to make a big comeback but there are certainly activities which could bring life back into the Assembly Hall.



FADS 1933