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FRAM

This is the first issue of a newsletter intended as a means of maintaining contact between members of the Framlingham & District Local History and Preservation Society. Its success will however, be dependent on a flow of contributions from members on matters of local interest. See address at end.

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"FRAM" - that handy contraction of the longish Framlingham - is not exclusive to us. In this country it is the brand name of a motor oil cleaner and also of a cosmetic. The Fram Group is a firm of civil engineers. The ship of the polar explorer, Amundsen, was the FRAM, Norwegian for "Forward!" There is even a football team in Iceland of that name. Directly derived from the town name is 'Fram Eggs', and many exiles all over the country must have had their hearts gladdened by the striking 'Fram' on egg boxes, cartons and lorries. A special type of low bias bowl used in a variation of crown green bowls was termed a Fram - it is thought because it was made at Framlingham.

Has anyone any knowledge of this?

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The wind of change hits Framlingham: Wicks's canopy - feature of Market Hill for about a century - has at last gone a big improvement. The new owners - antique dealers - have given the building a facelift in excellent taste. It was formerly the Guildhall.

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So the Queen's Head public house next the 'rathole' has finally closed. What happened to the inn-sign?

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415 years ago, on a day in 1553, Market Hill must have been choc-a-bloc with soldiery, collected there by the Duke of Norfolk pending the proclamation of Mary as Queen in spite of the previous proclamation of Lady Jane Grey. How many, if any, of today's buildings would have been standing then? At a guess, Potter's, Steggall's and parts of The Crown. Has anybody any ideas?

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Treasure in your garden: keep a watchful eye when earth is turned over because very many relics of earlier inhabitants must still be there awaiting finding. Members of the Society would gladly assist in identifying any unusual object. From one Dennington garden the following have been found in the last few years:

- a cannonball, 17th century, damaged, possibly through contact with a tough East Anglian skull;
- candle snuffer, unpretentious, of iron;
- eel spritch, for spearing eels;
- 1810 halfpenny;
- puddingstone, brought by glaciers during the Ice Age;
- several fossil sea urchins;
- an ammonite, fossil seashell.

The Ipswich Museum most helpfully identified and discussed these objects. Of the last two one was said to be 180 million years old, but the other was a comparative youngster of 90 million. With regard to that cannonball, has anyone any theory as to how it got there? Is Maypole Green within cannon range of the Castle? Is there any record of a local gun battle?

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Framlinghamians have settled all over the world. Nevertheless only one daughter town is known and even that, Framingham, Massachusetts, has dropped the 'L'. Does anyone know of another Framlingham? Are there other features named after us? There is, of course, Framlingham Court (flats) on the outskirts of Ipswich, and a Framlingham Crescent in the Eltham area of London. Any more? In this country there are places with similar names, such as Framingham Earl in Norfolk and Framlington, Northumberland. Framfield, Sussex, is a town of similar size and character to our Fram.

TALL STORIES: During the 14-18 War, army horses were stabled where the Fairfield is now on Badingham Road. It was said that the cause of a local Zeppelin bomb was that the crew (thousands of feet up) had heard the jingle of the harness. 7

Another one: After nearly every well in our village had been condemned as unfit, piped water came. A year later, heads were being shaken "A lot of illness; it's that piped water."

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NEW MEMBERS WANTED: Every day, new residents are moving into our district. Many of these would probably like to know more about their new district and are possible members. People are usually pleasantly surprised by a direct welcome. Please invite any new residents to join our Society, or just give us their names and addresses and we will make the contact. Longer-time residents also react favourably to a direct and personal invitation to join.

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APPROPRIATE NAMES: We have a noteheading of an actual firm of solicitors in Northern Ireland named 'Argue & Phibbs'. It is doubted however, whether Ticks & Adam, accountants, is veracious. Fram, until recently, had in Double Street a sign 'A.C.PLANT - Electrician'. (Did he have a brother 'D.C'?)

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How many know that Fram has its own crinkle-crankle wall? (behind Steggall's) Opinions differ as to the reason for building in this way, but knowing our thrifty habits, we plump for it being the cheapest, *i.e.* one brick thick instead of the normal two. Other crinkle-crankles are at Easton and Bramfield.

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PROBABLY APOCRYPHAL: During the '39-'45 War, troops near Fram had difficulty in attracting girls to their weekly dances until the Sergeant-Major and a chemist in his unit thought up the idea of giving each girl an attractive carton of face powder, then in short supply. Unfortunately the chemist, a European refugee, was not sufficiently in command of the English language when ordering the ingredients and the face powder set like concrete. By this time however, the Sergeant-Major had awoken to the real possibilities of having a chemist under him. Copper piping etc. was discreetly acquired and soon poteen was being produced in woods not a million miles from Fram. "Sounds too good a story to be true, but our informant was the Sergeant-Major himself - in a remote Welsh town. What happened to the still? Did it go with the outgoing troops as essential baggage? Or did it remain as a local fitment? Or did the enterprise, by any chance, develop, acquiring respectability on the way, into one of today's giants in that industry?"

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They say that the real characters have died out - until the horrible thought strikes us that we are today's characters. There must however, still be memories of interesting characters and thumbnail sketches would be welcomed for Fram. Here, for example, is one. Willie Cattermole died a few years ago, in his late 80's, after a generous Christmas Day meal at his sister's home at Peppers Wash and a wintry stroll home to Sweffling. He had served his time overseas in the regular army, followed by a period running his own poultry farm in the Argentine. Later he became gardener to Rudyard Kipling at Burwash in Sussex. What tales he might have told but he was by nature quiet and reserved.

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Suffolkers tend to disguise interesting personalities beneath homespun exteriors. Many cottages give little evidence of their real age or interest, especially as a hundred or so years ago there was a craze for covering the traditional stud and plaster with a one-brick skin of red brick. Marke Shrimpton mentioned a local cottage of almost banal appearance as being, in fact, about 400 years old, *i.e.* truly Tudor.

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LOCAL SAYINGS (more, please): The Lord sends the food, the Devil the cooks. You don't need to be a good farmer in Suffolk, you can just look over the hedge.

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Contributions for FRAM are welcomed and should be sent to:

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