

# NEWSLETTER

Volume 8, Issue 1

December 2005

## Chairman's Report



I write this soon after the Christmas lights switch on and I think I echo many who feel this is one of the best attended in recent years. Well done to those organising and participating. With funding for the town manager, tourist information centre and the heritage officers being scheduled to finish towards the end of next year one wonders what events will be provided for the future. At present there seems no replacement funding available.

The town council have agreed to demolish the Carnegie Room and provide a function room on the same site. It is hoped some of the funding will be sought from the lottery, etc but one feels that there is an agenda to provide housing on the lower half of the site near the library. We need to keep a watching brief on the proposals that are put forward for a replacement, as I have this nagging doubt that we will be short changed with the replacement facility.

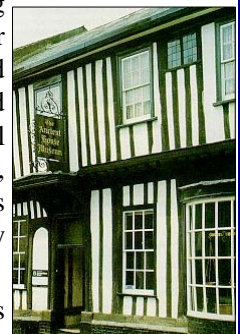
Breckland organised a Day Conference in November which I attended on the as a representative of the Society. The day was called as a result of the number of incidents that were hitting the press giving the town a bad name. One of the things discussed was the lack of self belief residents have in their town. This is something I feel very strongly about and if we could all be a little more positive about the town perhaps this would counter the constant negativity experienced from the media. I don't believe we should stick our heads in the sand and we know we have issues to deal with but let

us get on with solving them and not continually hanging our dirty washing out for all to see. The subject of young people was one that cropped up continually. Many things were put forward to address the antisocial behaviour and participants were informed of a number of projects that are already being undertaken. The thorny subject of migrant workers was also brought to the table. Concern was expressed about racist tendencies from the indigenous population and also about the cultural differences which hamper the integration of new residents. Whilst many will have viewed this as another talking shop, unfortunately we have to keep having these get-togethers to remind those who hold the purse strings that Thetford cannot keep being swept aside. It was pleasing that the day was well attended from all agencies involved.

Keystone's recent opening of the Abbey Community Centre and its open day for The Limes & the Enterprise Factory were a good shop window for the tangible achievements of the organisation. The Innovation Centre is on course for completion in Spring 2006. The adjoining Health Centre is starting to grow alongside and the PFI Project for the Sports Centre has finally been signed. With all this loss of managed recreation space Breckland will need to review the provision of facilities especially in light of the projected further housing the town is expected to accommodate in the near future. There seems little being provided on the ever growing Cloverfield estate.

The Ancient House Museum refurbishment continues but opening is now likely to be late summer 2006. The Burrell museum has had a program of regular openings and this encouraging news bodes well for 2006. I know Michelle Turner, the volunteer co-ordinator, is appreciative of all those Society members who have volunteered.

A reminder that there are still copies



of the Society's 2006 Calendar available. Price £5, contact Stuart Wright on (01842) 754166.

## Environment

The recycling bins have been removed from Tesco's car park and much debate has ensued. I do think a compromise situation should have been reached so that a facility could have been maintained without causing the problems that have been well reported.

The new Somerfield is progressing well and the site is a massive improvement. It does look however the store will be smaller than the Kwik Save predecessor. Preparatory work appears to have been started for new dwellings on the old used car lot in St Nicholas Street. Let us hope that this will put pressure on those responsible for the old Cosy Carpets warehouse to make the building good. One gets the feeling that this is being left to fall down so redevelopment can take place without having to reinstate the building to its original character. Also there is uncertainty with regard to the building across from the Burrell Museum.

New bins have been put along the Haling path and have been immediately vandalised. I do believe we need to get more people walking along this route and hopefully those responsible will be deterred by passers by. However with the constant poor lighting and the treacherous surface along side the river, for which nobody wants to take responsibility, this does not encourage an increase in usage.

The A11 dualling to Barton Mills is high on the Eastern Region's wish list and hopefully a decision will be made early in 2006. As we were informed at our December meeting Norfolk County Council Transportation Department are reworking the local transport plan for the town. One of the issues being considered will be the Bus Station. The southern link road to the south of the town appears dead and there are no large schemes earmarked. Smaller traffic management schemes and enhanced footways appear the best we can hope to get from the exercise.

## Activities Report

### Meetings

We have had a series of well presented and well attended talks since September. Susan Glossop and her consultants gave us plenty to think about when the plans for the centre of Thetford were put forward. In the absence of Stuart and myself the talk by the leader of Breckland, William Nunn and his Chief Executive, Becky Hellard was well chaired by Mike Brindle. Many pertinent questions were asked. For those interested in Archaeology the talk by Heather Wallis on the recent digs in Thetford including the one at Redcastle, which

the Society helped with, was very enlightening. Apparently everywhere they dig in Thetford they find graves! Jim Bacon, the weather man, gave a very professional and interesting talk on his time with the BBC and weather generally.

### Outings

The two proposed outings to the 'Marriage of Figaro' and the British Museum were cancelled due to lack of support.

### Future Activities

Meetings: United Reformed Church at 7.30pm unless stated.

January 6<sup>th</sup> – Xmas Buffet. Entertainment by David Freeman. Free glass of wine. Tickets £7 from Danny Jeffrey

February 7<sup>th</sup> – Keystone Update - Neil Stott

March 7<sup>th</sup> – Baroness Shephard on being a 'Lady'



April 4<sup>th</sup> – Keith Overton – St Nicholas Hospice

### Outings Proposed for 2006

February Evening visit to the EDP Printworks, for those members who have not yet been. Cost £2.50 Limited numbers.

March Visit to ILPH for those members who have not yet been. Cost £2.50 Limited numbers

April Heritage walk around Thetford

May Time & Tide Museum, Great Yarmouth  
Cost about £10

June Visit to Hadleigh and Felixstowe organised by the Civic Trust Cost about £10

July Visit to Lincoln Cost about £12

August End of Pier Show, Cromer & visit to Houghton Hall

Anyone interested please contact Danny Jeffrey (01842) 753770.

### Other Forthcoming Events in Thetford

18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> December – Synthetic Ice Rink - Market Place 11am - 9pm - Free

23<sup>rd</sup> December – Farmers Market, Carnegie Room.

