



I often wonder why I find Local History so intriguing, but others seem to have little interest in stories of the place where they have chosen to live. I enjoy hearing and sharing stories about our local community, and pondering how our present has been shaped by our past. Part of my fascination comes from unexpected discoveries, especially when new facts reinforce my existing knowledge, but of equal interest is when my presumptions about the past are challenged.

I am writing this the day after our September meeting when we were treated to a talk by a newcomer to Stowupland. Most local people know the Suffolk landscape is dotted with old, disused WW2 airfields but Don gave us an insider's view of the American Air Force in East Anglia -past and present. I understand it brought back nostalgic memories for one local lady! Thanks Don, if you missed it Jerry will give you a taste in next month's Telstar.

Now looking to the future, our **October 4<sup>th</sup>** meeting will shed a different light on how the past can be studied. Anyone who has watched programmes such as Time Team will be familiar with the term **LiDAR**. In the Time Team era, although it was then a very innovative way of non-invasively looking below the surface, it also seemed quite a laborious and - dear I say it - appeared to be quite a Heath Robinson-*ish* way of proceeding. Well times have moved on, and as John Rainer will explain although modern LiDAR mapping is very hi-tech to do, the resulting images can be easily viewed and even interpreted by the layman using on-line technology. Though as with anything, the more you know, the more you can understand.

And now to return to the past, as Jerry explains our August get-together was a little different from most of our monthly meetings.

**Stowupland Local History Group August's Archive Evening** gave us a chance to look at village history through many different displays. It is surprising what arrives when you ask for people to turn out the various nooks and crannies in their homes. At our August meeting we had a change as we had no booked speaker and it was a *come and see* what has been brought-in kind of evening. Firstly, as I was setting up, I had a gentleman arrive from the other side of Ipswich with a framed certificate which had been donated in 1909 by the deputy head of our Primary School. At the end of the evening, he very kindly donated it to our group. Several other members and guests brought in lots of their own material to share with us.

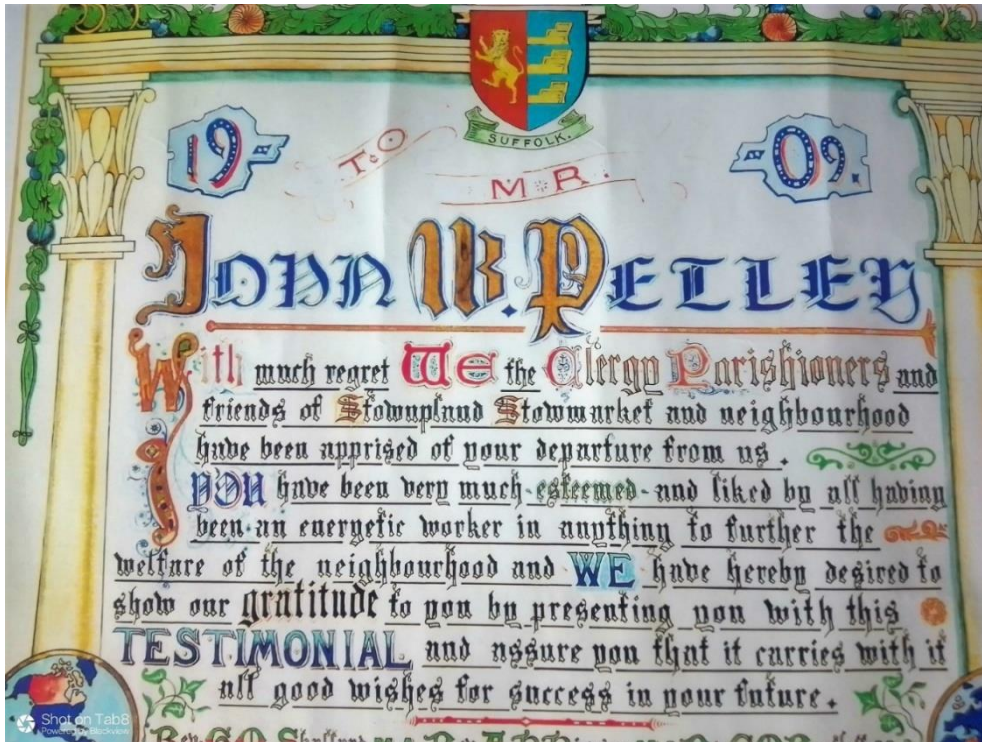
These included a fossilised dinosaur vertebra, some A3 scrap books relating to all things Stowupland, through 1930 to 1950's. Sandra was pleased to find a photo of Charles Gyford who was living in her house in the 1930's. Modern Technology was very much in evidence as our audience were able to take photographs of the many items on display at the event. For those who wanted to take a break from browsing around the display's there was a rolling film show of the 60 years of Telstar and how the village had celebrated the various coronations and Royal events over the last century. Annie and Liz were on hand to ensure tea and coffee were available throughout the evening, though cups were kept well away from the material on display.

The Stowmarket Local History Group were in attendance and Hannah Salmon was able to give us a few minutes on how they had to deal with their archives, after they suddenly had to find new storage space for their material. Several different collections that had been scattered round the town had to suddenly come into one location. This had involved the group in a lot of work but with the help of a number of volunteers, one of which was our very own Neil Langridge, Hannah said that this situation was now under control and space had been found

with help from the Town Council. Collating their archives had uncovered many items which had not been on display for many years, but necessity had shown what can be done when the situation arises.

As is usual with these events there is never enough time to see everything, and it is a very big thank you to all who contributed to make the evening a success.

As Jerry said the group were very pleased to receive a framed testimonial to Mr John Petley from 1909. This was a very ornately hand-crafted, illuminated certificate, about A3 size. This



small black & white image does not do it justice, and only shows the top section. In the lower half are inscribed the 112 names of the subscribers. Neil got digging to find out more and discovered that John Petley had been an assistant (maybe deputy head) master at Stowupland Council School (now known as Freeman Community School) at the time when Arthur Bramhall was head. Mr Petley seems to have only been here for 3 years before he left the parish to take the post of headmaster of 'Great Glemham Schools'. (It seems that whilst we might refer to a group of classes on one site as *a school* previously the plural was often used). As well as working with the youngsters in our school he was a supporter of Stowupland's football, cricket and quoits club as well as organising evening classes. Perhaps it is not surprising that he was deemed to be a sad loss to the community and in addition to the testimonial he was presented with an 'albert chain, and a purse of Money.'

The name Mr W. Phillippo appears at the bottom of the certificate, so assuming he might have had some responsibility for producing it, Neil wanted to find out more. He found out that in 1911 a Mr William Ernest Phillippo was listed in the census as a solicitor's clerk, Neil suggested that this explained his skill at calligraphy. He was one of the sons of a Mr William Phillippo who was a police Inspector in Stowmarket.

Moving forward a few decades, to an era that may trigger a few memories and bringing us back to the American's in Suffolk.

## DOWN MEMORY LANE

I don't expect anyone remembers seeing delivery vans like this on our roads. We assume this photo dates from the late 1930s, but I don't know how long the van was in use for.



The original photo from which this has been copied must be nearly 90 years old. It was brought along to our Archive evening by a visitor who knew I am interested in anything to do with Saxham Cottage and "Gyford's, The Tailors" shop that stood next to it in Saxham Street. He had found it for sale on eBay and whilst I couldn't persuade him to part with the original, he was happy for me to use my phone to photograph it for our archives. Whilst it is always a privilege to see and handle original documents with photos, I wonder whether knowing the province is more interesting than possessing an original? (Though I would never say no to the offer of original photos for our archives, or even properly printed copies!)

Indeed, there are many advantages to being able to use smart phones to make digital copies of original material, not least if the copy gets damaged another can be easily printed off. And having a digital copy makes it much easier to enlarge and enhance potentially interesting details that are difficult to see with the naked eye.

Normally it is not recommended to write notes on the front of photos but if someone had not written **Chas Gyford, Stowupland** just behind the van's door on this photo it may never have found its way home. Assuming that this is authentic then it must date from the late 1930's. A bit of internet sleuthing by my husband revealed that this was a Ford model T van with solid wheels. Working out who the people were required a bit of inspired guess work but presumably Chas is standing in the foreground wearing the  $\frac{3}{4}$  length (hand tailored?) jacket, on his left is a young Sidney Scarlett and to the rear of the van is Sid's older brother Rufus William.

We know that Chas lived in Saxham Cottage from 1909 to 1938. Sidney and Rufus (though he may have used his middle name of William) were brought up in the thatched cottage next door to Saxham Cottage. In the 1939 survey William's occupation was a Tailors' roundsman, Sid was a tailor's assistant, but their elder brother Wilfred is not named so may have already moved away from Saxham Street. We don't know what Sid or Rufus did in the war, but we do know that Wilfred was in the RAF.

In 1942 he married his sweetheart in Hertfordshire, just a few weeks later the plane he was in had been shot down over the Netherlands. All 7 crewmen on board were killed and they were buried in adjacent graves in a cemetery just outside Amsterdam. His pilot was a young American who was so determined to fly he joined the Canadian Air Force and was posted to Suffolk.

After the war Rufus and Sidney returned to normal life in Stowupland and in the 1950s Sidney moved into Saxham Cottage with his wife Joan and ran Gyford's till it closed in the late 1970s. Sid and Joan were very active in the village and many people still remember them. If you have memories or photos of Gyford's shop or the Scarlett's please share them.

Why not come along to our meetings, you can just turn up – 7.30 in the village Hall (first Wednesday of the month).

Visitors pay just £4.00 and members £2.00.

Want to know more, please contact **Jerry on 01449 703717** or **[voden@btinternet.com](mailto:voden@btinternet.com)**