



Join us on **Wednesday November 5th** to hear about some **Local Crimes and Punishments**. Using material from our archives and reports found in old newspapers our speakers will reveal crimes that some local people committed and the punishments that justices passed down. The most recent crime we will discuss will be a murder that took place in the 1960s.

Can't be with us on November 5th, then help us kick off the festive season by joining us on **Wednesday December 3rd** when our guest speaker, Kathleen Hallaway will get our taste buds tingling with a **taste of Tudor style cookery**. Now Jerry takes us back to the warmer days of September by reminding us of **Some home grown Stowupland Stories**.

"The group had decided to do another of our specially selected Stowupland Stories, these have been well received by our members and guests, and we have done a series of subjects so far this year. This time Sandra looked after The Sick whilst Neil examined The Poor.

Sandra had chosen to mainly focus on 19th and early 20th century health care. For younger readers, have you ever had a think about what life was like before the NHS. Well not very easy, there were some types of insurance that could be taken out but in most cases treatments and investigations had to be paid for. Older readers may recall the early days of the NHS when medical assistance was 'free'.

This is an extract that Sandra had copied from a 1920s newspaper. She did say she was concerned that it might be felt to be in poor taste but had included it as it raised interesting questions about how attitudes to mental health have changed.

The school at Stowupland (Suffolk) is declared to be suffering from shell-shock, the fabric having become loosened and deranged by explosions probably during the air raids.

Then, as now, there was no medical doctor based in Stowupland but from the 1930s villagers could call on the services of a qualified district nurse. Her base was a shed outside Barn Cottages, but she made house calls and if requested doctors would travel from Stowmarket to visit sick patients. Most but not all babies were born at home with the local nurse or midwife attending. The salary for our local nurse in 1928 was £104, for the year.

Sandra had many examples of stories of various medical professionals, and allied health care providers. One of her interests is the optical profession so she said she was pleased to have found advertisements relating to Tydeman's Opticians. Although there is no longer a sight

Fellow of the Spectacle Makers Company by Examination, London, Nov., 1909.
The only fully qualified Ophthalmic Optician within a radius of 12 miles.

testing Tydeman in Stowmarket the name is still well known. Back in 1910 a William Tydeman advised potential client that he was the only qualified Ophthalmic Optician within a 12-mile radius of Stowmarket. His father, George, was a 'certified optician' but, then

as now, only ophthalmic opticians were qualified to scientifically test sight using an ophthalmoscope to examine for disease as a cause for poor sight. 19th and early 20th century opticians not only dispensed spectacles but often made frames and ground lenses: combining the correction of sight with being a chemist/pharmacist, selling and making scientific instruments or as with the Tydeman's trading as jewellers or watch/clock makers. The Spectacle Makers Company is one of the oldest guilds in London, it still has a role in optics but is no longer involved in examining optometrists (ophthalmic opticians).

The Victorian era was an interesting time for scientific discoveries. Although there were few scientifically tested cures for disease, scientists were finding potential causes of poor health. As the following extract from a 1907 report on Stowupland Green, concerning the village water supply shows, knowledge about prevention of disease was still in its infancy.

“Stowupland Green furnishes a large portion of its supply, here we have water collected by ordinary drainpipes. Sunk two feet deep: above which the droppings of horse, cows, sheep, pigs, ducks, and geese are constantly deposited, and yet no epidemic arises. Facts show that the principal water borne diseases are typhoid, plague, and cholera. It has never been definitely established by scientists that either scarlet fever or diphtheria is ever disseminated by drinking water. However, if an outbreak should occur in the village population, then this is very quickly blamed on water from the village water source”.

Too often, if members of a family were found to be in poor health the house itself would be condemned and burnt down. Sandra said she had been unable to find out what happened to



families who were made homeless. She ended her section with a quote from Leslie Brame's memoirs about his enrolment into the Ancient Order of Foresters, at age 12.

Before taking questions from the audience, she reminded us that after refreshments Neil would continue the evening with his research into how

the Parish cared for its Poor. Our grateful thanks to a member who provided the refreshments in the absence of Annie and Liz.

Neil then took over with a talk on the poor of the village and surrounding areas. He had researched back to the 14th century. A time when the poor had little to sustain themselves in times of need, needing to rely on help from friends and neighbours. If sick and unable to work there was no dole money as we have now, and also no other payments to help with family expenses. This made family budgeting very difficult.

In pre-reformation times one way of helping the poor, which was your Christian duty, was by leaving money in your will. This was often a penny to each poor person who attended the funeral service, doesn't sound a lot today but a penny was a day's wages. As well as ensuring a good turnout, it was believed that the prayers of those at the service would hasten the soul of the deceased on its way to heaven.

A more lasting bequest would be to 'found' a charity. This was usually funded by donating a piece of land that would be administered by trustees and the rents went towards relieving the poor. Later a more reliable source of funds was raised through the imposition of a 'poor rate.' This was a like a tax on each inhabitant. Neil shared some pages he had copied from some poor rate books of the early 17th century. These were interesting as they include a list of all inhabitants, how much they paid, and who was in arrears!

Neil explained that old accounts' books give us an idea as to who were eligible to receive money from the poor-rate and why. For example, in 1619 a John Bird claimed 7d for his lame child. Many of those receiving relief were widows. Fuel was also supplied to the poor, in this time the fuel was wood but later era's it was coal.

Most parishes had a (fairly) local poor house. Neil had come across a single mention of one in 18th century Stowupland that was somewhere near the Green but the exact location is not known. It was put up for sale in the 1780s when the Union Workhouse was opened in Onehouse. I have written about Stow Lodge in earlier articles, and this was one that was occupied by people in distressed circumstances in the last century.

Neil has also copied some entries from another minute book from the late 19th and early 20th century, this was a record of meetings of trustees who oversaw the administration of charity property in Stowupland. He explained it included information on the maintenance and renting out of land and buildings, also listing some needy families who were supplied with coal each year.

Our thanks to Neil and Sandra who had researched their subjects well, but as ever you needed to be there for these excellent presentations. Neil did a Q and A session. (Don't forget you can tune into Jerry Jabbas on the group's website for an audio version)."

Sandra added - as a contributor to Telstar, I am truly grateful to Jerry for putting together his reports on our meetings. Whilst SLHG committee hope you the readers gain some insight into our talks they also provide the committee with a useful *aide memoire* of topics we have covered. And whilst it may seem that Jerry has a simple task to jot down and write up a few notes on our meetings thereby giving you a taste of the evening it is far from easy, so thank you Jerry!

Our October talk took us back to the Medieval times, Jerry will attempt a review of what it might have been like to be living in Suffolk when the aristocracy were marauding across our landscape trying to settle their disputes by shedding the blood of their villeins. Our archives don't tell us anything about any medieval battles fought on our soils, hopefully this means we didn't have any. However, in searching through our archives for notable November events I came across the following entry dated November 7th, 1535.

FROM OUR ARCHIVES. Just a few words of explanation, in earlier times life and lands in our small village came under the auspices of 6 manors, these were held by various lords under the overlordship of the ruling monarch. This deserves a book to unravel all the

intricacies, but for now I am confining myself to some details from the 16th century. You need to know that in the 14th century our Lord of the Manor had granted lands of the manor of Thorney to the Norfolk Priory of Ingham, and my thanks to Neil for his efforts to make sense of the documents he has found.

1534/35 – On **7th November 1535**, Thomas Cromwell received information from Richard Wharton that the prior and convent of Ingham had sold their house and lands to one **William Woodhouse**, without the knowledge of their founder (patron) Sir Francis Calthrope, and contrary to their promise to Edward Calthrope, nephew and heir to Sir Francis to give him the first offer of it. But on 19 November, Dr. Legh wrote to Cromwell from Norwich, saying that the prior of Ingham had made no sale to Woodhouse as reported, but only conditionally in the event of his procuring the king's permission.

Sir William Woodhouse was allowed to retain his purchase, but he exchanged it for the priory of Hickling in 1544, and it became part of the estate of the bishopric of Norwich. The manor is not named in William's will of 1564, probably as he had exchanged it for Hickling. His first wife was an Anne Repps, a Henry Repps was Lord of Thorney Manor in the 16th century.

In his will, Henry Repps of Mendham Suffolk, wills *that Anne Woodhouse alias Reppes to take John Repps my brothers son and to find and keep him to school at his charge and at the age of 18 to have £6 18s and 4d yearly going out of my manor of Thorney in Stowe and I give to the said Anne Woodhouse alias Reppes my manor of Thorney in Stowe and after her death to John the son of my brother Francis*. He also left to the poor people of Stowe Upland 20 shillings. His will was proved 6 November 1587.

A later court book from **19 June 1769**, gives us further confirmation of a link between Stowupland and the Norfolk Priory of Ingham. *All this messuage formerly built upon with 1 piece on land containing by estimate 4 acres. Of the tenement [Colmans](#) one head abutting upon [Badgryms](#) to the west and to 1 piece of land and 1 piece of wood copyhold the said piece of land containing 3 roods lying in the field called **Huntly Field** one head abutting upon a meadow of the village of Thorney and Saxton Hamlet and the other head abutts upon the lands formerly of the **Priory of Ingham** to the west.*

Do you prefer to listen or get involved?

- ✓ Enjoy listening and learning about stories from Stowupland's and Suffolk's past?
- ✓ Sharing your own research about local history, whether family, house or locality?
- ✓ Find out what you don't know by coming to our meetings?

If you have any queries about joining us or hearing about Stowupland's past:

Please contact Jerry Voden on 01449 703717 or
secretary@stowuplandlocalhistorygroup.org

Alternatively visit our website: www.stowuplandlocalhistorygroup.org

Annual Membership will soon be due for renewal or join us as a New Member, visitors always welcome.

