



Our next meeting is on Wednesday June 3rd when we will share another chapter in our Stowupland Stories. We will reveal some tales of **Stowupland Council and our Green**. If this seems a curious juxtaposition come along to find out what the connection is. The following month in July Kathleen Hallaways will return, this time to update us on The Armoury Project in Mendlesham church.

But now Jerry takes us back to April with his report: **Stowupland Local History Group brings you "Whispers form Stow Lodge". As presented by Julie Johnson.**

"Neil had again been busy with his local knowledge and this month brought us this talk, it was very well attended, and it is interesting to note that it follows on from a talk by Dot Marsdon on "Stow Lodge". There is information on this area in the November 2024 Telstar and an audio version on "Jerry's Jabbas" on the Stowupland History Group web site.

Julie outlined the history of what has become known as "Stow Lodge." It was planned in 1779 and finished in 1781 at a cost in those days of £12, 000, which was a vast amount of money way back then. The accommodation provided was for poorer families and people that had fallen on hard times. It was known back then as the "Workhouse" or to others a "House of Industry," as residents were expected to spend their days working. Life for residents was intended to be hard with a routine of work scheduled throughout the day. The day started with breakfast at 6am then work through to 6pm, following a schedule of works set by the Works Master. Jobs included manual labour, farming, and manufacturing.

It was not all bad as some of the work was paid, meals were provided, inmates had a roof over their heads and somewhere to lay their heads at the end of the day, something that most of us take for granted. Julie also had found in her research that an amendment to the "Poor Law" in 1834 had made life harder for the occupants in Stow Lodge and it was put around that life in the "workhouse" was much harder than life outside the establishment.

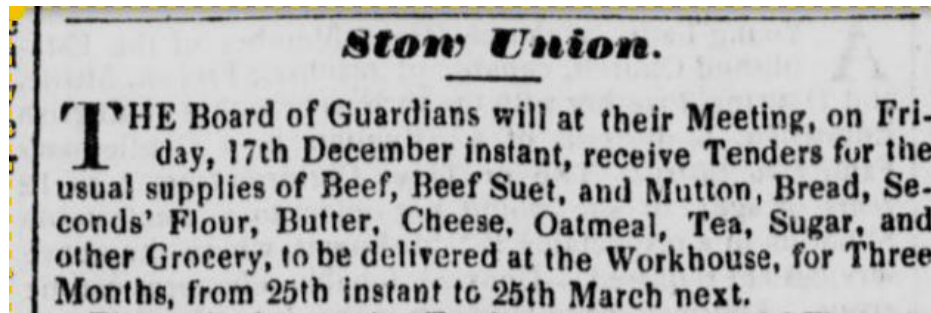
Some paupers spent their lives there, but others were able to get on and leave the workhouse, finding employment and homes in the local community. The local community comprised of 34 parishes around Stowmarket who contributed the funding needed by the Union Workhouse.

So what of the people that were not so fortunate to move on, well Julie outlined that illness and death were all too frequent within the workhouse. Close living and having to share poor facilities, did not help the situation. Often those who passed away had no families and little savings to pay for a funeral, so they were buried around the Lodge area in what was then known as a "Paupers Grave" Over time the area around these graves was neglected and as the graves were not attended, so upkeep was more difficult. Julie named three Stowupland families for whom she had found records but no one in the audience claimed them as relatives. Thanks to other researchers. we do have the names of about 30 paupers from Stowupland who were buried in the graves between 1815 to 1835, their ages range from 2 months to over 80.

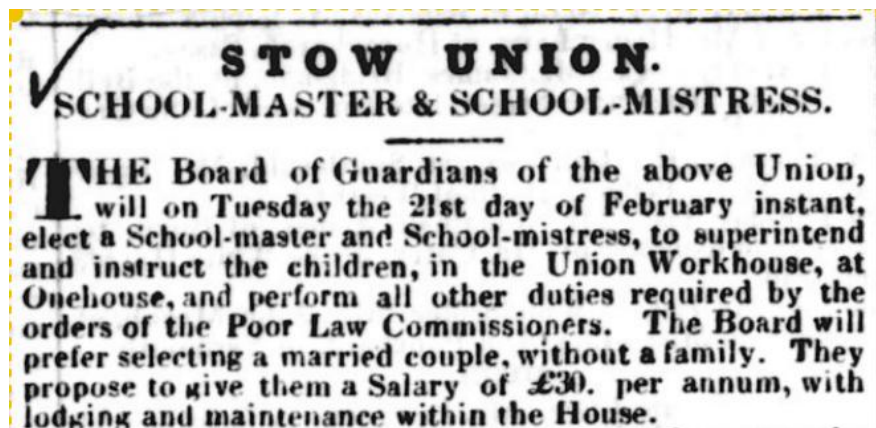
The site of the Paupers Graves was purchased in the early 2000's by One House Parish Council, and they did a lot of work to restore the site and identify many of the graves that were there. A ceremony was held last year to open the restored site to the public, and efforts were made to contact as many relatives as possible that may have been still around to attend. Julie had many photos to back up her talk, which added to her presentation. Neil thanked Julie for coming and we all had welcome refreshments thanks to Annie and Liz".

Julie's talk prompted members of the group to do a bit of 'armchair' research using the online research tools on '*Find My Past*' (other research websites are available).

The following are just a few examples of *positions vacant* that appeared in local newspapers. In 1838 the Stow Union advertised for a '*Governor and Matron, a man and his Wife, without incumbrance at a salary of £100 per annum*'. (Bury and Norwich Post: 18th April 1838). And then from 3 years later we can read a sample of food stuffs that the Union were buying for their inmates (Ipswich Journal: 11 December 1841). Contracts for food were usually issued on a quarterly basis. As will be seen later other commodities were contracted for on an annual basis.



In 1836 Stow Union advertised for a School master and mistress (Bury and Norwich Post: 3rd August, 1836). As can be seen they preferred to appoint a married couple without children.



In 1841 the workhouse guardians advertised for a school master to '*instruct the Boys in the Union Workhouse in Reading, Writing and Arithmetic for a salary of £35 per annum with Board and Lodging in the house*'. It should be remembered it would be over 20 more years before Stowupland built its own school so village children could learn reading, writing and arithmetic.

In 1849 the Board of Guardians for Stow Union were looking to appoint a Medical Officer for their district of the parishes of Buxhall, Combs, Creting St Peter, Finborough Magna, Finborough Parva and Stowupland. The salary offered was £70.00 per annum but the officer was able to claim additional amounts for fractures and midwifery. The appointed officer was to be 'properly qualified' and expected to conform to the Poor Law Commissioners regulations.

In 1864 they advertised for '*a Female to act as a Nurse to the Union House under the direction of the Matron, at a salary of £15.00 per annum, with board, lodging and washing*.' It went on to specify the person elected must be able to read the prescriptions and directions of the medical officer and conform herself in all respects to the rules and regulations of the Poor Law Board.

The following gives examples of some foods and sundry provisions that the Board of Guardians had to buy in, in 1868, for their inmates, most of whom would have arrived dressed only in rags and without any possessions (Bury Free Press: 21 March 1868). The contracts for food were usually awarded quarterly whilst other items were on an annual contract. It may seem strange that Port wine and foreign brandy were included but these were often prescribed for medicinal purposes.

Quarterly contracts for:-

Flour: £2 12 s a sack (Messrs J. T. Smith & Co Stowmarket)

Bread for the workhouse: 7 ¹/₂d per 4 lbs (Mr H.C. Roper)

Edam cheese: 55s 6d per cwt, butter 11d per lb; black tea 2s 3d per lb, Pepper 5d per lb, peas 6s 11d per bushel, soap 30s per cwt, candles 5s 4d per dozen (Mr F. Waller of Ipswich)

Sugar: 4s 3d per stone, salt 11 ¹/₂ d per bushel, oatmeal 22s 6d per cwt, soda 11d per stone (Mr Philip Turner)

Mr Cobb: Beer 16s per kilderkin: Mr Webb: coals 22s per ton; Mr Hayward: beef, mutton, and suet 5 ³/₄ d per lb

Yearly contracts:-

Mr S.H. Wright of Stowmarket; Port wine: 22s per dozen, foreign brandy: 22s per gallon, gin: 12 s.

Mr Conder: Leather butts and grain pieces 1s 1 ¹/₂ d per lb

Mr Robinson of Stowupland; coffins 10s 6d, 6s 6d and 3s.

Presumably coffins were supplied in various sizes as denoted by the differing prices. Mr Robinson of Stowupland was a local carpenter who lived and worked in Saxham Street, as can be seen he was contracted to supply 3 sizes.

We have specifications for Bury St Edmunds' coffins in 1877 – *'to be made of not less than three - quarters of an inch elm, planed, with battens to the lids, and well-pitched inside. The lids to be fastened with not less than six screws. In every case the body is to be placed in the coffin and the lid screwed down by or at the expense of the contractor.'*

And one last job advert from 1890 when *'the Union are desirous of receiving applications from clergymen of the Church of England for the Office of Chaplain at the Union Workhouse, Onehouse, Stowmarket ... salary at the rate of £50.00 per annum.'*

We don't know much about the lives of anyone who lived in the Workhouse but we do know about an Emma Poole who according to the 1871 census was a pauper living in the Onehouse Workhouse. She had been born in the early 1850s in Thurston.

According to the 1891 census Emma had been *blind since infancy* but despite having spent at least the previous 20 years in the workhouse she now had a 10-year-old son, Frederick, also living with her in the workhouse. We don't know when they left the workhouse but by 1911 Emma is living on Thorney Green with her widowed older sister, Ellen Cooper, and three of Ellen's sons. We don't know what happened to Frederick.

Ellen had been a widow since at least 1891 living in 7, Thorney Green with 11 children. The eldest was 21-year-old Eliza who was working as a domestic servant at Onehouse and the youngest was 3-year-old Phoebe Poole. Six of Ellen's children were still at school. Phoebe poses one of those niggling

puzzles that anyone who has researched family histories encounter. She is described on the 1891 census form as Ellen's granddaughter who had been born in 1888 (this may have been 1887) at Onehouse. So, was Phoebe's mother Eliza? However, on Phoebe's baptism record the mother is named as Emma and the place of residence was Stowupland, no father was named. Interestingly her baptism date was given as 25th December (Christmas Day) in Holy Trinity Church in Stowupland. By the 1920's Emma and Ellen are living in a cottage that backs on to Chapel Alley. In the 1921 census Ellen at 71 is head of the household and an Old Age Pensioner, Emma at 69 is a boarder doing home duties.

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

In our archives we have some details of mid-19th century properties on The Green that were being offered for sale by auction, does anybody know if these houses still stand?

From 1833 a messuage or dwelling house was advertised to be let with a 'tastefully arranged garden and well-planted orchard, most pleasantly situate on Thorney Green...now in the occupation of Captain Mw Barber. particulars could be had from Mr Edward Pyman {Suffolk Chronicle 1833}.

And from 1856, following the death of Isaac Taylor, 2 lots were offered for sale:

- Lot 1 was a messuage in 2 tenements occupied by Robert Wise and John Bloom. It had a 'a shed and outbuildings in good repair; and large orchard and garden, well planted with a range of fruit trees; and an excellent pump of good water, pleasantly situated on Thorney Green'.
- Lot 2 was 'a substantial tenement or cottage and garden in the occupation of John Kerry. and a substantial barn, stable and cart shed, in good repair; with 3 acres 2 rods of very superior arable land; enclosed with a good fence, upon which are several Timber Pollard and Fruit Trees, pleasantly situate on Thorney Green adjoining Lot 1'.

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**

Visitors to our meetings are always welcome. Just turn up and pay £5.00 at the door.

Or read for yourself about your village @ www.stowuplandlocalhistorygroup.org.uk