



# B I R C H A M T I M E S



In and around the Birchams

February 2024 Issue 4

## *Parish Council Matters*

We do not have a meeting in February this year, hence a short report this month. Our next meeting is on Wednesday March 6, in the Social Club at 7.30pm as usual. All are welcome to attend.

Council is looking at another **defibrillator training** session, or possibly a wider **first aid** course. If you are interested, it would be helpful if you could let the Clerk know. You will appreciate that it can be difficult to schedule such events at times which are convenient – it would be helpful therefore if you could indicate the best time for you – morning, afternoon or evening.

Also, to keep you up to date, there has been, as you may recall, a request to look at providing **allotments**. We are awaiting information from the Diocese about the possibility of using Church land – this is working its way through their system. The Clerk is also attending training on allotments in the near future, which will help to provide information to assist Council in its decision making.

As ever, if you wish to raise any issues with Council, please contact the Clerk on: [clerk@bircham-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@bircham-pc.gov.uk) or by post at 7, Glebe Avenue, Hunstanton, PE36 6BS.

## *Newsletter Thoughts*

Spring is just around the corner and the days are getting warmer (though still a tad too wet). Reflecting the changing of the seasons we're majoring on three main topics this month. Firstly, it is **Lent** with Pancake Day (ie Shrove Tuesday) falling on February 13 and introducing 40 days of Lent running up to Easter. Instead of the ubiquitous pancakes that you can all no doubt make, we've turned to Spain for a moreish almond tart.

March 7 sees the UK's **World Book Day**, a celebration of literacy that was founded in the 1990s. We've a first line book quiz for you all. Just for fun... no prizewinners this time.

Thirdly, we've gone a bit **sheepy**. Spring is traditionally the season of rebirth and young fluffy animals (think bunnies, ducklings and lambs). Well we've gone on a celebration of the latter, especially since Norfolk traditionally owed much of its prosperity to the wool trade. Let's not forget that Norwich was once England's second city based on the wealth generated from wool. And that King's Lynn, a Hansa trading port, exported that wool to the continent. Norfolk would most likely have been a backwater without its sheep.

And, finally, we'd like to recognise all the great content that is being generated for inclusion. A 4th issue represents a mini milestone and we'd like to send a million thanks to all of you who have contributed thusfar, whether by writing articles, suggesting content, taking part in the quizzes, sending us details regarding dates for your clubs, events, meetings and get-togethers. You are lovely bunch!! And to those of you who have dropped us very kind notes of appreciation, we're bowled over by your enthusiasm. Thank you. And last, but not least, we can create the *Bircham Times* but we are aware it would never reach most of you without the dedication of the deliverers... grateful thanks to each and every one (especially in January's cold snap)!!

And to anyone thinking that providing content is a closed shop... Well you couldn't be more wrong. Don't be shy. Drop us a line with suggestions. comments and ideas for columns.

Contact us at at [news@thebirchams.uk](mailto:news@thebirchams.uk)



## February's Recipe

**TARTA DE SANTIAGO** (Or Torta de Santiago, in its native Galician, literally means cake of St. James)

Originally from Galicia in northern Spain, home of the pilgrims' destination of Santiago de Compostela where the shrine to the Apostle James (the Greater) lies, this cake, that can be traced back to the Middle Ages, is now commonly found on dessert menus throughout Spain and beyond.

It is naturally gluten-free, as the recipe includes no flour. No added fats are used either — no lard, margarine, butter or oil. The lack of fats and flour suggest a religious lent-based origin, although almonds must have been a treat if somewhat ubiquitous in the Galicia of old, so who knows. In any case, I make it because it tastes good, so the history is just a nice-to-know.

Note: don't be alarmed by the lack of rise compared with other kinds of cake. The egg whites are doing all the hard work here and cannot produce the same results as "modern" inventions like self-raising flour and baking powder!

### INGREDIENTS

250g blanched almonds (or ground blanched almonds)  
6 eggs, separated  
250g caster sugar  
zest of 1 lemon  
zest of 1 orange  
4 drops almond extract  
icing sugar for decoration



If using whole blanched almonds, grind them finely in a food processor. Beat the sugar and egg yolks with an electric mixer, then blend in the orange and lemon zest and almond extract. Add the ground almonds and mix well. In another (or cleaned) mixing bowl, whisk the egg whites until stiff. Fold these into the egg yolk and almond mixture, being careful not to overmix and risk losing the fluffy structure of the egg whites.

Grease a cake tin about 28cm in diameter (a spring-form tin is most convenient) and dust with flour (omit or use gluten-free flour if cooking for coeliacs), then pour in the mixture. Bake in an oven preheated to 180 C/gas mark 4 for 40 minutes or until firm to the touch. Use a skewer to test. Leave to cool before removing from the tin.

For the traditional look, cut a Santiago cross out of paper and place it in the middle of the cake before you dust with icing sugar. Otherwise, just dust away!

LR

## Plant of the Month

### WINTER FLOWERING IRISES

Growing irises is easy and provides some of the earliest blooms in the garden. There are several different types, but start with any *Iris unguicularis*, which flowers the earliest. 'Mary Barnard' is a purple, velvety one, or 'Kilndown', opening from mid-winter to spring. The only maintenance is a twice-a-year clipping, since the clump fills up with dead leaves. Next to flower are the *reticulatas*. 'Fabiola', which is a splendid blue would make a great choice. Also, if you want a taller iris, try 'Purple Hill'. Not all irises are blue or purple though; there is a fabulous gold iris called 'Happiness'. Most of these irises have an amazing perfume. They can also grow in pots, especially in a bulb lasagne when the iris bulbs make up the top layer.



Anna



## From the Annals

Two tales again this month: cautionary stories of avoiding the perils of drink, especially when mixed with snuff!

### 1879

"On Saturday night last a labourer named James Wagg left Docking about 11pm intending to walk to Great Bircham where he resides. He had not proceeded far when he caught his foot in a drain by the roadside, and fell, breaking his leg. As the road is unfrequented at that hour, the poor man lay for some time in the falling sleet [it was February] but afterwards managed to crawl a distance of nearly two miles. At about 7 o'clock on Sunday morning he was seen by a shepherd... who immediately went to his assistance. He was taken home and the broken bone was set by Mr Parry of Docking."

### 1890

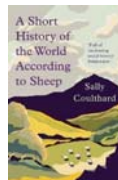
#### "Fatal Result of a Practical Joke"

In early June Mr Vores held an inquest in the Mission Room, Bircham Newton, on the body of Wm Wadlow, a 31-year-old carpenter. On a Saturday in late May "some young fellows met at the King's Head, Great Bircham. A squabble arose as to who was to pay for glasses. A young man named Osborne purchased some snuff and mixed it in Wadlow's threepennyworth of whiskey. Deceased drank part of it and became very ill." He was attended by a Dr Manby but "expired" on the 4th. The post-mortem was conducted by Dr Manby and Dr Parry [him again! See story above]. A verdict of manslaughter was brought in against Osborne who was sent to the Norwich Assizes with sureties as to his good behaviour provided by the rector of Bircham Newton and a local farmer. At a trial in July, the Grand Jury judge directed the jury to acquit the defendant.

## Curl Up With a Good Book

*A Short History of the World According to Sheep* by Sally Coulthard (2021)

Don't be sheepish, discover more about our fleecy friends' connection with balloons, berets, bog bodies, Bradford slums, the Highland Clearances, monasteries, Mongols, Queen Victoria, Romans, smugglers, a piece of Scottish tartan some 1,700 years old and many more strange and fascinating facts and stories about the history of sheep and the important part they have played in our lives over the millennia from 11,000 years ago to possibly the most famous-ever sheep in Dolly and the present. Curious? Then quite possibly this is the book for ewe (!): easy to read, and full of surprising and interesting stories, including how Norfolk, with its 635 churches, has played such an influential role in this woolly story.



Clemency

## Dates for the Diary

**Feb 14-24** King's Lynn Mart, Tuesday Market Place, KL

**Feb 15-May 6** Feeding & Lambing Live  
<https://www.churchfarmstowbardolph.co.uk/>

**Feb 16** Raceday at Fakenham Racecourse

**Feb 17** Red Deer Safari, Snettisham Park Farm, [snettishampark.co.uk](http://snettishampark.co.uk)

**Feb 17-25** Poo Trail at Pensthorpe. Tel 01328 851465 for information

**Feb 19-23** NORFOLK SCHOOLS HALF-TERM

**Feb 20** *The Old Oak* (15) by Ken Loach, Princess Theatre, Hunstanton, 7.30pm. £7.50

**Feb 22** NT Live showing of *Vanya* at Westacre Theatre, 7pm. Tickets £14. Tel: 01760 755800

**Feb 24** *A Haunting in Venice* (12A), 7.30pm at Amy Robsart Hall, Syderstone. £4

**Feb 24** *The Elton John Show – The Ultimate Tribute*, Princess Theatre, Hunstanton at 7.30pm. £28

**Feb 26** *The Great Escaper* (12A) showing at Reading Room, Stanhoe 7.30pm



## Norfolk Dialect

### Sheep counting

Shepherds around the country have traditionally had their own language for counting up their flocks, ensuring that no sheep has gone AWOL. They counted in sets of 20 and when that figure was reached would transfer a stone from pocket to pocket, or perhaps would crook their fingers till all ten were bent and 200 sheep were accounted for. They used a Celtic form of counting – Brythonic Celtic if you want to be accurate – but it had sufficient differences from region to region, hence Yorkshire counting differs from Cumbrian, and so on. Lincolnshire and North Norfolk largely share the same language and here is where we begin with our counting scheme.

1 Yan	6 Setherera	11 Yan-a-Dik	16 Yan-a-Bumfit
2 Tan	7 Letherera	12 Tan-a-Dik	17 Tan-a-Bumfit
3 Tetherera	8 Hoverera	13 Tetherera-Dik	18 Tetherera-Bumfit
4 Petherera	9 Coverera	14 Petherera-Dik	19 Petherera-Bumfit
5 Pimp	10 Dik	15 Bumfit	20 Figgot

### Sheep joke

What is a sheep's favourite car?  
A Lamborghini.

## St Mary's 100 Club Draw

Please contact John or Sally on 01485 779669 or email [lsallyjohn@gmail.com](mailto:lsallyjohn@gmail.com) for details of how to enter each month's draw

**FEBRUARY RESULTS:** 1st prize no. 44; 2nd prize no. 32.

## Websites of the Month

### For safer driving

Want to avoid a potentially costly duel with a pot-hole, then you can check out this website, called FixMyStreet, to see where the dangers lie. You can also report damage to the local infrastructure (flooding, broken manholes, errant street signs, etc) by uploading your own images and locations (and anonymously too). Reports are forwarded to the County Council.

<https://www.fixmystreet.com/>

### For travelling bookworms

Going off on your travels and want a bit of flavour beforehand? Try this website where you can simply type in your destination and the site brings forward fiction and non-fiction titles for vast numbers of places worldwide. There's even an entry for Skegness!

<https://www.tripfiction.com/>

### For would-be plane-spotters everywhere

You're sitting in the garden with a drink in hand when a plane screeches over low, disturbing the peace. Well if you are quick you can reach for this url to see all the details of what is going on overhead. And you can shake your fist at the commercial or military winged menace. Find out where it started, where it is heading and what type of aircraft it is. Follow flights near Ukraine and Gaza and ponder the recent Qatari air force planes over Yorkshire, for example.

<https://www.flightradar24.com>



## Woolly Tales

East Anglia is famous for its very many "wool churches". These grand buildings were built by those merchants who became rich on the back of the wool trade.

Wool's link with politics was established with the adoption of the Woolsack, the traditional seat of the Lord Chancellor (now the seat of the Speaker of the House of Lords) in parliament. It dates from the 14th-century reign of Edward III and symbolises the importance of the wool trade to the nation's economy.

The imperative to keep the wool industry going meant that by the mid-17th century there was a requirement to be buried in a woollen shroud (***The Burying in Woollen Acts*** [Ed: snappy!]). The act of 1666 required all the dead to have woolly shrouds apart from plague victims (since presumably no one wanted the job of checking to see whether the deceased was complying with the law). Families were liable to a £5 fine if the shroud was made from anything other than English wool. The law remained in force for around a century.

"No corpse of any person (except those who shall die of the plague) shall be buried in any shift, sheet or shroud, or anything whatsoever made or mingled with flax, hemp, silk, hair, gold or silver, or in any stuff, or thing, other than what is made of sheep's wool only"

### Sheep joke

What is a sheep's favourite newspaper?  
The Wool Street Journal.

## Poems of the Month

In honour of World Book Day, and to celebrate the sheep and lambing season, we have two poems that appealed. One by an American poet and another anonymous as far as we are aware.

Sheep that keeps me warm to-day,  
Are you living far away?  
Are you shut up in a stall,  
Shivering and cold and all?

Sheep, when I go out to play,  
I never mind the cold to-day,  
I have mittens of your wool,  
Strong and soft and beautiful.

Sheep, sheep, far away—  
I hope you are not cold to-day.

Annette Wynne

Sheared sheep shiver  
Way out there –  
Nothing on their backsides –  
Sans wool underwear.

Anon



## Dates for the Diary

**Mar 1-3** RNLI 200th anniversary at Wells Lifeboat Station and Wells Maltings

**Mar 6** Parish Council Meeting in Social Club 7.30pm

**Mar 7** Bircham Banter at St Mary's 2.30-4pm

**Mar 7** Talk by Kate Craven on Hunstanton RNLI, Stanhoe WI, 2pm at Reading Room £5

**Mar 8** *The Tom Jones Songbook*, Princess Theatre, Hunstanton 7.30pm. £26

**Mar 9** *The Canterbury Tales*, Westacre Theatre, 2pm. Tel: 01760 755800

**Mar 14** Water Aid Spring Lunch, St Mary's 12-1.45

**Mar 14-16, 22-24** *Betrayal* by Harold Pinter, Westacre Theatre. Tel: 01760 755800

**Mar 19** Bircham in Bloom, Bircham Stores 9.30am

**Mar 21** Water Aid Spring Lunch, St Mary's 12-1.45

**Mar 23** *The Miracle Club* (12A) 7.30pm at Amy Robsart Hall, Syderstone £4

**Mar 24** Houghton Hall visit at 2.30pm

**Mar 26** Coffee Morning, Covey Cottage, Church Lane, Great Bircham 10-12

**Mar 31** RAF Bircham Newton Heritage Centre Open Day 10-4pm





## World Book Day Opening Lines

March 7 is World Book Day, a celebration that in schools, at any rate, has seemingly spiralled out of control with parents compelled to create bigger and better costumes for their offspring to model in the classroom. No reason why adults should miss out... no, we're not expecting you to get the sewing machine out, but we thought we could tempt you with another quiz (no prizes this time unfortunately). We'd like you to identify the title of the work from which these memorable first lines come. At the same time, why not try to write your own intriguing, amusing or enticing opening lines to a book you'll probably never write.

We give the author as help; answers available on page 8.

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| 1) "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times"   | Charles Dickens        |
| 2) "It was a queer, sultry summer, the summer they electrocuted the Rosenbergs. And I didn't know what I was doing in New York."                                 | Sylvia Plath           |
| 3) "Mother died today, or maybe yesterday, I can't be sure"  | Albert Camus           |
| 4) "The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there"   | L. P. Hartley          |
| 5) "It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen"  | George Orwell          |
| 6) "All this happened, more or less"   | Kurt Vonnegut          |
| 7) "Call me Ishmael!"  | Herman Melville        |
| 8) "Where's Papa going with that axe?" said Fern to her mother as they were setting the table for breakfast."  | E.B. White             |
| 9) "My father got the dog drunk on cherry brandy at the party last night. If the RSPCA hear about it he could get done."   | Sue Townsend           |
| 10) "The drought had lasted now for ten million years, and the reign of the terrible lizards had long since ended."  | Arthur C. Clarke       |
| 11) "Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way."  | Leo Tolstoy            |
| 12) "We were somewhere around Barstow on the edge of the desert when the drugs began to take hold."  | Hunter S. Thompson     |
| 13) "It was a pleasure to burn"  | Ray Bradbury           |
| 14) "It was the day my grandmother exploded"   | Iain Banks             |
| 15) "All children, except one, grow up"  | J. M. Barrie           |
| 16) "As Gregor Samsa awoke one morning from uneasy dreams he found himself transformed in his bed into a monstrous vermin."                                      | Franz Kafka            |
| 17) "Many years later, as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendia was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice." | Gabriel Garcia Marquez |
| 18) "Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again."   | Daphne Du Maurier      |
| 19) "When shall we three meet again/In thunder, lightning, or in rain?"  | William Shakespeare    |
| 20) "One thing was certain, that the WHITE kitten had had nothing to do with it — it was the black kitten's fault entirely."                                     | Lewis Carroll          |



## History Corner

### **King's Lynn Mart and Frederick Savage**

The mart is a showman's fair held in Tuesday Market Place and in 2024 it celebrates its 818th year! Traditionally, the mart is opened by the mayor in full ceremonial garb aboard one of the dodgems but a Norfolk man, Frederick Savage (a former mayor 1889-90), was the creator of many of the funfair rides we recognise today, including gallopers and similar steam rides known variously as "velocipedes" and "dobby horses", carousels or roundabouts.

Savage started life as an agricultural machine-maker, designing patents and creating prototypes of steam-run threshers, winnowers and diggers. Later he built up a family engineering concern in King's Lynn, the St Nicholas Ironworks, and became renowned around the country as the builder of "steam roundabouts", which featured not just the galloper horses but also carved figures of cockerels, peacocks and cats, and so on.

Also a philanthropist, during Savage's term of office as mayor he paid off the entire debt of the King's Lynn hospital. He is memorialised with a statue in Lynn on London Road, at the junction of Guarnock Place.



For anyone who wants to know more about Savage's full life, it can be found in David Braithwaite's tome, *Savage of King's Lynn* (1975).

### **Crossing the Wash**

The wonderfully named Mercedes Gleitze stepped ashore (actually according to contemporaneous reports she crawled up the beach) at Heacham after a mammoth swim across the Wash in June 1929. She set off from near Boston, Lincs and the journey took her just over 13 hours. The distance between the two points was measured at about 16 miles but the currents, tide and sandbanks meant she swam an estimated 25 miles. There was a joyous reception laid on at Hunstanton where she was feted by the populace.

This was the first recorded crossing of the Wash; Gleitze was also the first British woman to swim the English Channel (in 1927), and made the first crossing of the straits of Gibraltar. Gleitze's name became synonymous with Rolex Oyster watches, a link that continues to this day. On her heroic Channel swim she wore a waterproof Rolex that survived the journey, and Gleitze subsequently became what we would know today as a brand ambassador for the company.

**VILLAGE SCREEN CINEMA**  
at Amy Robsart Village Hall, Syderstone



### **A Haunting in Venice (12A) showing Feb 24 at 7.30pm**

An Agatha Christie-derived mystery starring Kenneth Branagh as a retired Hercule Poirot and a Halloween seance in the Italian beauty spot.

Coming soon on Saturday nights: **The Miracle Club** (12A) (23.3.24) and **The Great Escaper** (12A) (27.4.24). £4 per film (advance booking/pay on door).

Contact 01485 578171 or syderstonecinema\_ARVH@outlook.com for further details.



**STANHOE VILLAGE SCREEN**  
at Reading Room, Stanhoe

**The Great Escaper (12A) showing Feb 26 at 7.30pm.** £5 inc refreshments. Doors open 7pm. A true life story of near-nonagenarian Bernie (Michael Caine), who skips the country to join D-Day commemorations in France. Irene, his wife (Glenda Jackson), waits stoically at home.

Contact 01485 518191 for further details.



### **MOBILE POST OFFICE**

The scheduled stop at Bircham Social Club, Church Lane are as follows.

Monday	10:45-11:30
Tuesday	10:45-11:30
Thursday	10:45-11:30
Friday	12:10-12:55

### **MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICE**

Friday March 1

Stops at:

Monks Close	15:15-15:35
Village Shop	15:45-16:00
Social Club	16:05-16:15
Windmill Hill	16:20-16:35

### **BUS 33/33A**

To Hunstanton (from King's Head): Mon-Fri 07:36 10:36 13:36 17:16; Sat 8:21 10:36 13:36 15:41

Return from Stand A Bus Station

To Lynn (from Bircham Stores): Mon-Fri 07:22 09:23 12:23 15:38 15:43; Sat 09:23 12:23 15:38 17:08

Return from Stand E Bus Station

### **GREAT MASSINGHAM AREA COMMUNITY CAR SCHEME**

Offering a reliable door-to-door car service, 7 days a week for anyone without personal transport. Book on 01485 520823 Please give at least 2 days' notice

## *Bircham Weather*

The new year began as the old one had finished when 53mm of rain fell during the first five days, this being just short of the average total for the whole of January, and it was with some relief that just a further 15mm were collected during the rest of the month. It also started on a mild note, the temperature peaking at 12.0C on the 2nd, although the gale force winds and 22mm of rain on this day made the warmth seem somewhat irrelevant.

From the 8th to the 20th only 1mm of rain was recorded although a fresh E-NE wind kept the temperatures depressed during this period with a blast of Arctic air from the 15th to the 19th, bringing the coldest spell of the winter, which saw a maximum of 3.4C on the 19th and a minimum of -4.8C on the 18th, but we did benefit from some clear air and sunny days. Apart from a slight flurry of snow on the 18th there were no further falls though, and no air frost was noted beyond this spell.

With the higher temperatures came a return to more turbulent conditions though, with storm Isha on the 22nd and Jocelyn on the 24th bringing gales, the latter producing gusts up to 55mph during the night but without the high rainfall totals seen earlier in the month. The latter part of January brought some quieter breezes with welcome sunshine, prompting an early appearance of snowdrops!

### **Sheep fact**

In December 2022 there were 22 and a half million sheep (and lambs) in the country. That equates to only one sheep per three of us nationally

## *Opening Lines Quiz Answers*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) A Tale of Two Cities                      | 11) Anna Karenina                       |
| 2) The Bell-Jar                              | 12) Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas      |
| 3) The Stranger (L'Étranger)                 | 13) Fahrenheit 451                      |
| 4) The Go-Between                            | 14) The Crow Road                       |
| 5) 1984                                      | 15) Peter Pan                           |
| 6) Slaughterhouse-Five                       | 16) The Metamorphosis (Die Verwandlung) |
| 7) Moby-Dick                                 | 17) One Hundred Years of Solitude       |
| 8) Charlotte's Web                           | 18) Rebecca                             |
| 9) The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole, Aged 13¾ | 19) Macbeth                             |
| 10) 2001: A Space Odyssey                    | 20) Through the Looking-Glass           |





## *Bircham Banter*

Next Banter session is at St Mary's, Great Bircham on March 7, 2-30-4pm.

We'd like to extend a very big thank you to the Social Club for letting us use the club facilities over the very cold winter period.

Sue

## *Water-Aid Spring Lunches*

We will be holding this year's Spring Lunches at St. Mary's Church, 12 noon to 1.45pm on both Thursday 14 and 21 March. There will be a choice of two delicious soups and homemade bread, with a hot drink. If you haven't been before do come along, since it's a chance to have a chat with friends and meet new people, for just £5.

All proceeds go to Water-Aid, a charity that helps a million people every year to access a safe water supply and sanitation.

If anyone living in Bircham has no transport but would like to attend, please ring 779669 the day before and leave a message, your name and phone number so that we can arrange a lift for you.

Sally

### **Sheep fact**

We might be encouraged to "count sheep" in order to drop off at night, but sheep themselves only sleep for around 4 hours per day. Perhaps they should consider counting humans...

### **Sheep joke**

What do you call a sheep with no legs?  
A cloud.

## *Stanhoe & Barwick WI*

Upcoming events at The Reading Room, Stanhoe include :

Thursday 7 March at 2pm Kate Craven from Hunstanton RNLI

Thursday 4 April at 2pm Lois Capstick, holistic therapies and Neals Yard products

Visitors are most welcome. Our charge is £5, which includes refreshments. Please contact Valerie (01485 576261) for further details.

In 2023 we undertook nearly 30 teas, walks, visits and crafting sessions, as well as our 12 monthly meetings. Once again we have increased our numbers, now with 44 members from 19 villages.

## *Houghton Hall Visit*

As mentioned previously, Lord Cholmondeley would be delighted to welcome villagers to take part in a visit to Houghton Hall to take a look at Bircham-related historical maps and documents. Visitors who went on the previous visits found the documents thoroughly engrossing and managed to add significant detail to the origins of their homes and the environs of the villages.

A number of you have already signed up to take part in this experience but there is room for more, should you be interested. The date of the visit has been arranged for Sunday March 24 at 2.30pm.

If you'd like to take part, please contact Hugh Rayner (07976 510134) or email [hughrayner@email.com](mailto:hughrayner@email.com)



## *RNLI 200th Anniversary*

The RNLI (the Royal National Lifeboat Institution) was founded on March 4, 1824 and thus this March marks its 200th anniversary celebration.

Wells Lifeboat Station will be marking the RNLI's 200th Anniversary with a weekend of events Friday March 1 – Sunday March 3, both at the Lifeboat station and at Wells Maltings.

Some of the highlights include a Lifeboat launch on Sunday 3rd from 9.30am and Blakeney Old Wild Rovers singing sea shanties from 1.00pm at the Maltings.

There are a lot of events over that weekend, all of which can be found on the Wells website, [www.wellslifeboat.org](http://www.wellslifeboat.org) under events.

Alan

### LIFEBOAT FACTS

- More than 144,000 lives saved
- 238 lifeboat stations around the UK and Ireland
- Around 450 lifeboats of differing classes both inshore and offshore
- 600 volunteer lives lost in acts of rescue



## *Coffee Morning*

I will be hosting a coffee morning at Covey Cottage, Church Lane, Great Bircham on Tuesday March 26, 10am-12 noon. Donations will be welcomed towards a project to restore the water supply to the Methodist school in Matjinge, Zimbabwe, which is where our local Methodist minister, Rev R. Ncube, was educated.

This is in an area in South Matabeleland which has suffered, because of climate change, and a deeper borehole will be needed. The Methodist circuit in West Norfolk has already raised £5000 towards this project.

There will also be a musical event at London Road church in King's Lynn on Sunday May 12 from 3pm to celebrate our circuit twinning and our achievements so far. Please contact me, or speak to Hugh for further information, or if you would like to come to the musical event. No need to book for the coffee morning, just turn up please!

Rosie Rayner

## *Bircham in Bloom*

The BiB group met on January 25 at Bircham Stores. This is a quiet time of the year but some tidying up of the churchyard entrance and general litter-picking has been done by members of the group.

The main topic of conversation was plans for the "Snettisham Triangle". Darri Pattinson, Richard Ellis and Hugh Rayner agreed to work-up proposals, including different planting options. Any shrubs will be low and not affect the visibility for drivers, and the planting will be low maintenance and promote wildlife. People living close to the Triangle will be asked for their opinions on any options that are supported by the BiB group.

If you would like to be more involved, please come along to the next meeting at 9.30am on Tuesday March 19 at Bircham Stores.