



Parish Council Matters

A reminder – would you be willing to serve the village as a parish councillor? There are a number of vacancies and the broader the range of experience on the council the better. Full details are available on the PC website.

The next meeting is on Wednesday July 29, at 7.30pm in Bircham Social Club. If you wish to discuss a Parish matter, please attend the meeting or write to the Clerk.

Email: clerk@bircham-pc.gov.uk Post: Hall Farm, Sedgeford Road, Docking, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE31 8LJ Website: bircham-pc.gov.uk



Newsletter Thoughts

Phew! As we write it is still a scorching summer and, as Bryan notes in his weather report, we've lost sight of any significant rainfall. The ever-present danger of fire in our fields and gardens is thus heightened. We are quite some way from help from the emergency fire services if the worst were to happen so we all need to be careful to ensure that the worst never happens. We were unaware that our local stations are not manned by full-time staff but by on-call firefighters: people who live or work locally to the stations at Massingham, Heacham, Sandringham, and so on, who can be called up at a moment's notice to help fight fires. Do consider signing up to help if you are able, work close to a station and/or otherwise fulfil their eligibility rules (see page 3).

Elsewhere we discuss more uplifting summery things: with a prawn cocktail recipe; things to do from flower festivals, exercise classes, the Brownies, staring at the night sky, and summer festivals – though sadly we have lost the Sandringham music festivals (page 3). We have two books of the month: the previously trailed tome on early football tactics (not as dry as described here) for the adults and Asterix (for both children and adults). And if totally at a loose end, then why not consider the annual plea to get together with pals in the spirit of Wacky Races to design and construct a lean mean driving machine to enter into the Hunstanton soapbox derby at the end of the summer.

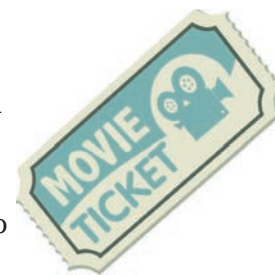
Do remember that the *Bircham Times* can be delivered to parishioners by email. You can email us at news@thebirchams.uk to request that (or for any other matter). In addition, we publish, in advance of the paper copy and in Full Colour, on the 15th of every month on our website: www.thebirchams.uk



The Pilot Cinema

While King's Lynn may be blessed with only the Majestic Cinema (and the KLCC) nowadays, that was not always the case. In the golden years of the 1920s–1930s cinema-planning and building was at its peak in the town and one of the most popular was the Pilot Cinema, a harsh-looking symmetrical redbrick building with a few art deco trims on the frontage, including roundel windows and grand front doors.

The Pilot (in Pilot Street, North End) opened on Monday November 28, 1938 – just six months after the opening of the Majestic in Baxter's Plain – and commenced with the showing of the classic Disney film *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* in a double bill with Will Fyfe and Stanley Holloway in *Cotton Queen*. The cinema had three daily programmes – one in the afternoon and two in the evenings. Prices ranged from 6d to 2 shillings. Car parking was free and available, even though, presumably, car ownership was low.



The cinema was brought to Lynn by local businessman Ben Culey (who also commissioned the Princess Theatre in Hunstanton); his son took on the management of the cinema. The chief contractor was Mr Keeble Allflatt, a notable local builder. Seating 800 guests, the Pilot was opened by the mayoress. "It stands on a site where apple trees were growing 14 weeks ago" reported the *Lynn News*. Proving there is nothing new with movie tie-ins, the press "cooked up" a recipe for "Snow White" Dumplings (seems no innuendo was intended)... suet-y parcels with apples (presumably from the aforementioned cut-down orchard).

The appearance of the Pilot was described thus: "Luxurious seating has been supported by perfect ventilation, lighting and heating and by the best projection apparatus. The aim has been large and comfortable seats, plenty of leg room, a large screen, first class talking machinery and tasteful decoration." There was also a "carpeted balcony" and a projector "identical with the one installed in the new Warner Cinema, Leicester Square; there are only two others of this type in the country". A contemporary report described the upcoming cinema thus: "The interior has been decorated in pale green and amber and the main curtain will bear a huge galleon, with the setting sun behind it, which will be lighted in four colours to give the final touch to the suggestion which the name Pilot brings to the people of Lynn. The buttresses at the side of the curtain are in pale green and will carry two clocks." Other interesting touches were the aquariums in the foyer, circular wall motifs, and moquette seating with a fern design.

After a number of changes in ownership the Pilot closed on March 27, 1983; the final film shown there was Richard Attenborough's *Gandhi*. Next, it was fleetingly a snooker centre, a hardware and builder's merchants and a nightclub – Zoots – but was finally demolished in March 2014 and now lies under housing with a handy green commemorative plaque in Keeble Court the only sign of its existence.

... And in Dersingham



While it appears we have lost, certainly for the time being, the cinema out of Amy Robsart Hall in Syderstone, we bring news of another local cinema in Dersingham. Films are shown there monthly at 7.30pm at Dersingham Village Centre, opposite St Nicholas' Church in Manor Road. The price of entry is £6 (for under-16s it's £3). Entry includes tea, coffee, squash. Bar drinks are also available.



Tuesday July 28 *Hamnet* (12A) starring Paul Mescal and Jessie Buckley
Tuesday August 25 *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (PG) starring Audrey Hepburn and George Peppard



Summer Festivals

Just as we went to press we learned that the concert season at Sandringham has been cancelled. The events that were due to take place were as follows.

Wednesday August 19 Janet Jackson with support by Wyclef Jean and Soul II Soul.

Thursday August 20 Lionel Richie with support from Dave Stewart's Eurythmics, Joss Stone and Brooke Combe.

Friday August 21 Christina Aguilera, Craig David, Blue and Ruby Roberts.

Saturday August 22 Ricky Martin, Sugababes, Olly Alexander and Sophie Castillo.

Sunday August 23 Eric Clapton, Ronnie Wood Band, Andy Fairweather-Low and Will Wilde.

Refunds are available with proof of purchase from the agents who initially sold the tickets.

Meanwhile at Houghton we think you have definitely missed the boat by now for "local" tickets. Do be aware though that for the duration of the festival from August 6-9 (as well as for the set-up and the clear-up) the local roads around the estate are subject to the usual one-way restrictions. Depending on the direction of the wind, you may be able to listen while relaxing in your garden.

Back to Sandringham, the highlight of July is the estate's first-ever RHS flower show. It runs from July 22 to 26 and is open between 10 and 6pm (5pm on Sun). The pricing is from £38.90, with children going free. The Great Plant Sell-Off is on the Sunday from 4 to 5pm for you to capture some of the plants on show for your own garden.

And if you can't afford to go (we think it pricey), take a look at Sandringham's website at the sketches of the featured gardens. <https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/rhs-sandringham-flower-show/gardens>

Seasonal Fire Precautions

Your annual reminder that the ground is currently tinder dry and extremely flammable. For the time-being, please avoid bonfires (certainly unattended ones), barbecues, discarded matches and cigarettes, discarded glass items and so on.

Our closest fire stations are at Sandringham, Heacham and Massingham. They are on-call manned stations, meaning that firefighters are available in their homes or workplaces rather than at a fire station, though like their full-time colleagues they are trained to use the various appliances. There are vacancies at all three for on-call firefighters. Recruitment dates take place regularly throughout the year and naturally full training, uniform and an "annual on-call" fee is provided. If interested, you can apply via the following link.

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/oncall>

Dates for the Diary

Bircham Windmill From Mar 28, 10-4pm

RAF Bircham Newton From Apr 5, 10-4pm (alt Suns)

RAF Sculthorpe From Apr 5 10-4pm (afterwards 1st Sun month til Nov)

Anmer Social Club Coffee, cake and chat, Mondays 10-12. Contact 07947 580555

Snettisham Park Open daily, 10-4pm

Houghton Hall & Grounds May 2 until Oct 4

Sandringham House and gardens from Mar 28

Jul 17 NORFOLK SCHOOLS BREAK UP

Jul 17 Open Air Film Night, Tuesday Market Place, KL

Jul 18 World Championship Snail Racing, Congham

Jul 18-19 Folk in the Town festival, King's Staithe Square, KL

Jul 18-19 Golden Years, classic vehicles and train weekend, N Norfolk Railway <https://nnrailway.co.uk/the-golden-years/>

Jul 22-26 RHS Sandringham Flower Show, 10-6pm (5pm on Sun). From £38.90/ children free

Jul 23 Family Fun Day Hunstanton

Jul 23 Peter Piper Picked Some Litter, Hunstanton

Jul 24-26 Old Hunstanton Flower Festival, 10-4pm

Jul 25 Merchants Market, Tuesday Market Place, KL, 9am-3pm

Jul 25 Adult-Only Date Night, Pensthorpe, 6-9pm, £9.95

Jul 25-26 2026 Food Festival, Tuesday Market Place, KL

Jul 30 Family Fun Day, Hunstanton

Jul 31 Royal Norwich Golf Day, Royal Norwich Golf Club NR9 5JE



Foodie Fare

PRAWN COCKTAIL

As I write this "Flaming June" is living up to its name, as we experience our third mini-heatwave of the year. In temperatures like this, the appetite for hot food pales somewhat in favour of an ice-cold long drink – perhaps with a slice of citrus in it (to keep the scurvy at bay). So what exactly will whet my appetite on such a hot day, I wonder... then I have a sudden yearning for a prawn cocktail. I'm not sure why so many people pour scorn on this dish and treat it like those comedy classics from the 1970s that have had their day. It is a fine combination of crisp, cool lettuce, tender, succulent prawns and an unctuous zesty sauce. So, here goes.

INGREDIENTS

400g king/jumbo prawns or tiger prawns (cooked and peeled). If cooking raw prawns yourself, add them to a pan of boiling water with a little lemon juice and vinegar. Remove when they rise to surface and chill immediately in ice-cold water.

1 lettuce such as little gem or the equivalent amount of romaine or iceberg lettuce – the key thing is that it should be a crispy variety.

Sauce

juice of half a lemon

5 tbsp mayonnaise

5 tbsp tomato ketchup

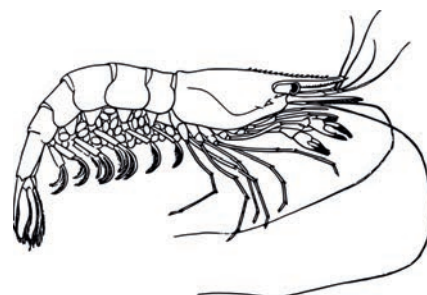
1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce

a few drops of Tabasco sauce

½ tsp paprika (and a bit more to garnish)

¼ tsp cayenne

salt and black pepper to taste and herbs to garnish



METHOD

Cut the lettuce into large pieces and pre-chill in ice-cold water. Remember we are aiming for cold and crispy with this dish.

Thoroughly mix together all of the sauce ingredients. Add the prawns and, taking care not to break them, carefully coat them in the sauce. Chill in the fridge for at least ten minutes.

Shred the lettuce, then remove the water from it, using a salad spinner, tea towel or whatever. Place the shredded lettuce in serving dishes and top with the prawn and sauce mixture.

For extra fanciness, garnish the top of each dish with herbs, such as parsley/thyme, and a dusting of paprika.

Below are the types of prawn most commonly found in UK shops.

Brown Shrimp

Small variety native to the UK shoreline, although mostly caught in the East Atlantic. Salty-sweet in taste with a delicate texture. Mostly seen as potted shrimp where it is cooked with butter, herbs and spices.

King/Jumbo Prawn

Hailing from warmer waters, these may be wild or farmed. Mildly sweet with a firm texture, they are perfect for spicy dishes, standing up well to stronger flavours.

Tiger Prawn (Giant [Black] Tiger Prawn)

This tropical variety can reach very large sizes in the wild, but most sold these days are farmed and harvested before they get that big. They have a firm, sweet texture that can withstand fiercer cooking methods such as grilling/frying and tasting a little stronger than other varieties.

Whiteleg Prawn (Pacific White Shrimp)

Farmed around the world, often in Central and South America, this is a meaty and sweet variety that is very versatile and the most commonly available. When poached it is known as a *crevette rose* in France.



Chair Sitting Exercises

How about taking part in a weekly chair exercise class in Stanhoe Village Hall? Exercises are designed to improve participants' strength, flexibility and balance and are tailored to be done at your own pace.

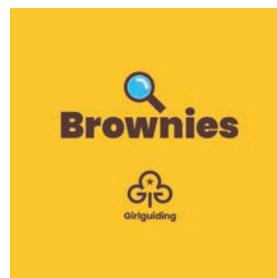
Classes are held on Wednesdays from 10-10.45am. The first class is free, with it costing £30 for a block of six classes thereafter. If interested, contact Sue on 07774 245810

First Docking Brownies

We are a friendly, small group meeting at the Ripper Hall on Wednesdays, 5.15-6.45pm, during term time. The cost is £10 per month, or £2.50 per session. We are receiving a grant from Jack's Lane Wind Farm. Currently, we have ten girls aged from 7-10 years. When they are aged ten they can move on to Guides in Hunstanton or Heacham, Snettisham, Dersingham or Sandringham.

Local girls aged 7-9 years are encouraged to join us, by a parent making an enquiry on the Girl Guides website: girlguiding.org.uk.

The Brownie leader lives in Great Bircham and our assistant leader and young leader live in Monks Close. We would be happy to contact you by email or telephone if your daughter may be interested. Message me on 07963 181573.



Each term, we work towards Brownie badges, we have outings to places like Pensthorpe, a museum or the local parks. We raise money for various charities and have speakers to inform us about e.g. hedgehog and seal rescue organisations! Once a year, we have a Pack Holiday with a two-night sleepover at an interesting place in Norfolk. We have a District Thinking Day celebration in February, and this year we ran a rugby coaching session. We also attend Remembrance services in Docking church and take part in local fundraising events. There is also a Girlguiding garden this year at the RHS Sandringham Flower Show.

The Brownies are organised into groups of five or six, currently Butterflies and Squirrels. Each new Brownie learns her promise and then gets enrolled a few weeks later. We are excited to see a new range of Brownie uniform being launched at the end of July, for Brownies who will join us in September. Brownies restarts on September 9.

Rosemary Rayner
Barn Owl

Dates for the Diary

Aug 1 Breast Feeding Awareness Picnic, The Walks, KL
Aug 1 Warden's Walk, Sculthorpe, £16/£10
Aug 1 Farmers Market, Creake Abbey, 10-12
Aug 1 Creatures of the Night, Pensthorpe, 8.30-10pm, £16.95
Aug 2 Music in the Marketplace, Tues Market Place, KL, 11-4pm
Aug 7 Open Air Film Nights, Tues Market Place, KL
Aug 9 Soulful Sunday, Tues Market Place, KL, 11-4pm
Aug 13 Hunny's Mad Tea Party, The Green, Hunstanton
Aug 15 Beats by the Beach, Hunstanton
Aug 15 Pride Parade and Party, KL town and The Walks
Aug 15 Adults Only Date Night, Pensthorpe, 6-9pm, from £9.95
Aug 16 Pentney Lakes Car Show, 10-4pm
Aug 16 Battle of the Bands, Hunstanton, 12-6pm
Aug 22 Frontline Festival at the Walks, Fire, Rescue, Police
Aug 23 40s/50s Weekend, Tues Market Place, KL, 11-4pm
Aug 27 Family Fun Day, Hunstanton
Aug 29 Summer Gift Fair, Creake Abbey
Aug 29 Merchants Market, Tues Market Place, KL, 9-3
Aug 29 Creatures of the Night (adults only), Pensthorpe, 7.45-10.45pm, from £16.95
Aug 30 Music in the Market Place, KL, 11-4pm
Aug 30 Ride N Norfolk @ Fakenham, 15, 25, 36, 52, 66 or 100 miles



Toddler and Baby Group

A toddler and baby group is held on Wednesday mornings during term time from 9.30 to 11am at Hunstanton Methodist Church in Austin Street, Hunstanton PE36 6AL

For further details ring 01485 298316

All are welcome!



St Mary's 100 Club Draw

JULY RESULTS: Here are the latest draw results: 1st prize no. **55**; 2nd prize no. **28**. (1st prize wins £25; 2nd prize £10).

Many congratulations to the winners!

Sally

Bircham Banter

Next Banter session is on Thursday August 6 from 2.30 to 4pm in St Mary's, Great Bircham. Do come along and join with the regulars for chat, tea/coffee and cake, especially if you are new to the village. You'll be made very welcome!!

Pauline

Stanhoe & Barwick WI

Forthcoming events to be held at the Stanhoe Reading Room, Cross Lane, PE31 8PS at 2pm.

August 6 No meeting.

September 3 A talk by Diane Clark about Norfolk Accident Rescue Service.

Visitors are always welcome. Our charge is £5, which includes refreshments.

Contact stanhoeandbarwickwi@gmail.com for more details about events and membership

Sky at Night

The Perseids meteor showers are our summer visitors, occurring each year between July 17 and August 24. However, they reach their peak over the period August 12-13 when they are at their brightest. Skywatchers can see as many as 100 meteors an hour at their peak.

August 12 also sees a partial solar eclipse. Well it's a total solar eclipse if you happen to be in eastern Greenland, western Iceland, or northern Spain, but here in North-West Norfolk not so much. However for about two hours from 18:14 to 20:03 BST you'll get a taste of the partial eclipse (the Moon travelling in front of the Sun) in a general W-N-W direction. When the eclipse ends the Sun is near the horizon so you'll need an unobstructed view or some higher ground. Remember even though it is evening and "only" a partial eclipse that you mustn't view this directly. You need special glasses (not sunglasses) or project the event on to card, etc. And like buses, in August, on the 28th, there is a partial LUNAR eclipse running from 2:23 to 05:12am and facing roughly SW. This one you are at liberty to watch with no other precautions than being careful when stumbling around your garden in the dark!

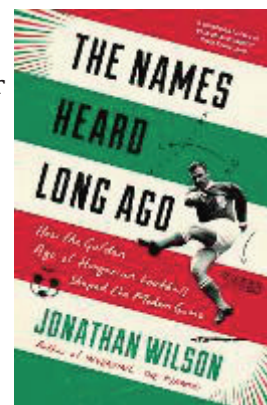
JBB



Curl Up With a Good Book (or two)

The Names Heard Long Ago: How the Golden Age of Hungarian Football Shaped the Modern Game (2019) by Jonathan Wilson.

This meticulously researched book follows the development of football in Hungary from the later 19th century up until the Soviet invasion of the 1950s. Most football fans' knowledge of Hungarian football goes no further than the "Mighty Magyars" famous (and embarrassing) 6-3 victory over England in November 1953 at Wembley, the first home defeat by a "foreign" side. A humiliation that was only amplified by a similar capitulation in Budapest, by a scoreline of 7-1, only six months afterwards.



The accepted opinion at the time was that England couldn't cope with the alien tactics of the Hungarians, which was ironic since they had been taught them by English coaches two generations previously. The story commences with the setting up of a football team in Hungary, MTK, by a Manchester typewriter salesman Edward Shires, who also played games for the Austrian national team. He was joined by a former Scottish player who taught Hungarian players to play two-footed and also to adopt a passing game rather than the dribbling tactics of the time. We get a succession of English coaches, including Jimmy Hogan, who further developed the game on the continent.

As a reader you need to set aside the bland footballer biographies, and get your teeth into not only the football but also the social aspect and development of the game. We have the coffee houses, where tactics and football chat took place (the central European version of the working-class pub); and the *grunds*, where young boys practised their skills – the equivalent of British back-street matches. The author describes the internment in Germany of these coaching Englishmen during the First World War, and then the horrors visited on the footballing world by successive German and Soviet invasions. And then we have wave after wave of personalities, star players and characters who took those honed Hungarian tactics to other footballing arenas in Europe, South America (including Brazil) and, somewhat ironically, back again to the British Isles.

Celebrated football writer Jonathan Wilson (author of *Inverting the Pyramid*) has created a slow, patient read with many names and footnotes to get your head around but it is constantly rewarding you with little known facts and stories about the early years of the beautiful game.

Asterix (the Gaul)

There's never a bad reason to pick up a copy of an Asterix tale and there are many dozens to choose from, whether you are reading the English translation or whether your schoolboy/schoolgirl French will suffice. No, the real reason you should honour these wicked tales of life in Gaul and the scheming escapades of the villagers against their Roman invaders is because Asterix's author and illustrator René Goscinny was born 100 years ago on August 14, 1926.

Get to know such immense punning characters as Obelix, Getafix (and his magic potions), Vitalstatistix, Geriatrix, Fulliautomatix and the faithful hound Dogmatix. And of course there are all those wonderful illustrations, courtesy of Albert Uderzo. If you need a pointer as to where to start you could do far worse than with *Asterix in Britain/Asterix chez les Bretons*.





MOBILE POST OFFICE

Scheduled stop at Bircham Social Club, Church Lane is 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

Fridays Jul 17/Aug 14/Sep 11
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 (new timetable from June 1)

To Hunstanton (from King's Head): Mon-Sat
07:36; 08:36; 10:36; 12:36; 14:36; 17:06
Return from Stand A Bus Station

To Lynn (from Bircham Stores): Mon-Sat
07:36; 08:36; 10:36; 12:36; 14:36; 17:06
Return from Stand E Bus Station

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7 days a week for anyone without personal
transport. Book on 01485 520823
Please give at least 2 days' notice

RECYCLING CENTRE

For pre-booking your visit at **any** Norfolk centre:
<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/62632/Norfolk-Recycling-Centre-bookings>
Or phone 0344 800 8020

Bircham Weather

Changeable weather marked the start of June when a series of depressions and troughs brought some welcome rain whilst a thunderstorm during the evening of the 2nd contributed 8.4mm. Predominantly westerly winds maintained mainly overcast conditions and a pressure reading of 992mb on the 4th would have been more appropriate during the winter months. The 9th and 10th saw us narrowly avoiding further nearby thunderstorms before a cold front supplied another 8.7mm on the 11th, making it the wettest day of the month. By then 35mm of rain had been recorded but this was to be the month's turning point as only a further 6.7mm were noted during the remainder of June with most of this coming on the 17th amongst a total of 16 completely dry days, bringing the final figure to 42mm – 68% of the norm.

Pressure began to rise from the 18th and, although sunshine was initially in short supply, temperatures responded, exceeding 25°C every day for the rest of the month. The real heatwave began on the 22nd with almost unbroken sunshine and, following a notably warm overnight minimum of 19.5°C, the temperature climbed to 36.9°C on the 26th, setting a new June record and surpassing the previous high of 35.6°C recorded at Southampton during the famous heatwave of 1976. Once again, as in May, we were denied the national honour, this time by Lingwood near Norwich which recorded an even higher 37.7°C. These exceptional conditions produced a mean maximum of 23.8°C for June, 3.9°C above the long-term average whilst the mean minimum of 13.7°C was also well above the norm by 3.4°C. Surely July can't make it a treble, can it?

Bryan



Tech Skills for All

Do you need to book appointments, buy things online, or apply for jobs, but struggle with your device or data? Do your children need to do their homework, but you do not have a laptop or Internet access at home? Need some help with a task like filling out an online form? Or want to learn more about staying safe from scams? Whether you're a beginner or have been online for a while, Tech Skills for Life is here to help! Our friendly community tech coaches will help you find new ways to use the Internet that will help you in your everyday life.

They can:

- Give you the skills and confidence to be safe online and use your tablet/laptop/smartphone however you want
- Help you to find out how to borrow a smartphone, tablet or laptop or talk through options to access a device to keep if you are eligible
- Help you to get Internet services like free mobile data, cheaper broadband tariffs, etc
- Suggest other things, like social groups or learning, to help you along the way.



Whether you are completely new to digital technology or want to build on existing skills, we can support you at your pace. You, or someone you trust, can call us on 01485 536420 Mon-Fri, 9-5pm. We also have a quick online form on our website that you or someone you trust can fill in Tech Skills for Life – Norfolk County Council
<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/76842/Digital-inclusion>

Meet the Flintstones

Norfolk is not the only county in the UK to feature flint in its traditional construction, but it's probably the one most famed for it. Here in the Birchams we appear to be in border country as far as traditional building materials go, with visible influences of the red brick favoured in the fens, the carrstone of north-west Norfolk and the flint prevalent in many other parts of the county.

As a building material, evidence that the Romans used it can be seen at Burgh Castle, near Yarmouth. There it was used in its raw, unknapped form and combined with other materials. Later on, however, experienced medieval flint-knappers managed to use flint to create some stunning works – examples include Norwich Cathedral and city walls or, a bit closer to us, Castle Acre Priory. There are plenty of other examples in the county's numerous medieval churches.

But... flint's importance in the region stretches back many thousands of years, way before it was used for building.

Flint is found within chalk. It is essentially silica, a form of quartz, and it comes in various colours: for example, brown in Fakenham, grey in North Walsham, light grey in Holt, black in the Thetford and Swaffham area. The black version is the hardest and was therefore considered the best for tool-making, yielding sharper and harder-wearing edges.

Before metal was an option, flint was fashioned into all manner of tools such as blades, scrapers, arrow- and axe-heads. Probably the oldest dated find is a 500,000-year-old flint axe found at Happisburgh.

The value of black flint as a resource is evidenced by Grimes Graves, near Thetford. Some 4,500 years ago, flint was mined there on, what for the time would have been, an industrial scale and presumably traded across the continent, much as a rare-earth mineral would be today for its use in our current technology.

Sadly, those who carried out flint-knapping as an occupation often suffered an early death due to the effects of silicosis, a lung disease caused by the inhalation of silica dust – the same disease that blighted coal miners in the UK well into the 20th century. In the 21st century, it was the turn of kitchen fitters, exposed to the same kind of dust when cutting quartz-based counter tops.



1976: 50th Anniversary of a Tree Crash and Speeding

Fifty years ago possibly the most glamorous Formula One driver of all time – James Hunt – won the F1 title for his only time. The blond driver Hunt had revelled in his playboy image and had gained a reputation as a thrilling driver prepared to take more risks than most. There were also reasons why he was ungraciously known as "Hunt the Shunt"! So it was strange to read that partway through that season he was racing in Norfolk and managed to crash his car into a tree. Even more surprising was that his co-driver was Noel Edmonds, in his pre Mr Blobby days.

The event in question was the three-day Texaco Tour of Britain in which rally drivers squared up against racing drivers. In mid-July 1976 the event had reached West Norfolk. We used the expression "squared up" advisedly. Apparently Hunt and Edmonds decided to end their frustrations in a verbal dispute, as reported here in the *King's Lynn Advertiser*.

"One of the Tour's rally stages was held over nearly four miles of tracks across land owned by Mr Arthur Carter of Holly House, Magdalen. The stage was kept secret to avoid spectators. But the news that James Hunt and Noel Edmonds [sic] were competing inevitably drew the fans. In fact the Hunt/Edmonds Vauxhall arrived late at Magdalen after hitting a tree at an earlier stage in Hockering Wood, near Norwich. They lost time but decided – after an argument – to carry on. It turned out to be a waste of effort. They lost more time after leaving the track briefly at Magdalen, were stopped in connection with their speed in Lincolnshire and eventually had to retire." A week later Hunt crashed his Formula 1 McLaren at Brands Hatch at the start of that year's British Grand Prix.

A side comment in the paper mentions the following of interest for F1 fans: "Tottenham garage owner John Brundle finished sixth in a production car race in the World Hot Rod Championships at Ipswich on Saturday... his 17-year-old son, Martin, had less luck. After working into the early hours for the previous week to prepare a new Escort, he was hit by mechanical troubles and non-started both of his hot rod races."

A somewhat serious driver in his own right, it must be remembered that Edmonds did go on to present *Top Gear* in the later 70s!

Soapbox Entries

The above story brings us back to the annual summer appeal for a team to take part in the Hunstanton Soap Box Derby to be held in Hunstanton on September 20. Entry forms are available here. https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/homepage/220/soap_box_derby_application_form

Join in on a fantastic day out and build a wacky car and field a team to bring glory to the Birchams. Plus, there are no trees on the route to crash into!

Tour de Tapping

While you are marvelling at the cyclists in this month's Tour de France, why not consider taking part in Norfolk's very own Tour de Tapping, on behalf of the Tapping House charity?

As per last year, you can choose to cover 20, 50 or 100 miles and do it all at once or in smaller bite-sizes.

You can choose:

The Tulip Trail (20 mi ... a gentle ride, perfect for little legs or relaxed riders);

Journey of Joy (50 mi ... a moderate challenge for those wanting to go the extra mile);

Legacy Loop (100 mi ... a mighty ride for those ready to go the distance).

Entry is free but the charity asks that you raise £20 in sponsorship (for which you receive a certificate) or a minimum of £40 for which you also get a medal. Sign up asap. The virtual event ends on August 31.

