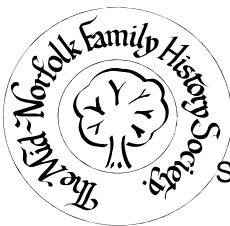


News

Issue 16 - 1/4



Letter

Spring 2016

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Mid-Norfolk Family History Society meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month except for December, when there is no meeting. For details see over.

PROGRAMME

*Meetings are held at: Trinity Methodist Church Hall, Theatre Street,
Trinity Close, Dereham NR19 2EP ... Starting 7.30 pm*

16 March Kindertransport Boy and Past Sheriff of Norwich -
Phyllia Scrivens with Joe Stirling

20 April Old Courts and Yards of Norwich -
Frances & Michael Holmes

18 May Making the most of on-line census records -
Peter Christian
**Note: this meeting will be held in Dereham
Library**

15 June Service Battalions on the Somme - Neil Storey

20 July Familysearch - Steve Manning
**Note: this meeting will be held in Dereham
Library**

17 August Dissent & Nonconformity - Simon Pawley

A few words from your Editor ...

Another New Year has come and gone, where does time go? Have you made any New Year resolution? Mine is to get my family histories, from the different sides of the family, written up, into a booklet form. There are more records becoming available all the time to help.

A big thank you to all who have contributed to this issue of the Newsletter, we have a very varied selection of articles this time, something for everyone, I hope.

I look forward to hearing from you, all your letters and emails are very welcome.

Kate (Editor)

Format for Newsletter Contributions Preferably typed using Microsoft Word or Works, or handwritten, then please either:

- email the file to me at kate.easdown@btinternet.com or
- post handwritten copy/CD, to me at the address on the back of the Newsletter

Please contact Sheila Moulton, the Membership Secretary if you change your address or email address (contact details on back cover).

Deadline for inclusion in the next Newsletter - 20th April 2016

LET'S LOOK AT A CHURCH

No. 81 – St Mary, Colkirk



The parish church of St. Mary or, to give it its full title St. Mary the Virgin, is to be found about two miles south of Fakenham in a small settlement of roughly 500 inhabitants on the upper Wensum, quite close in fact to the river's source. The village name, Colkirk, actually means either Koli's kirk in Old Norse or Cola's church if we choose to see the place's origins in the period when Old English was predominant so there must have been a place of worship here for at least a thousand years, perhaps originally a simple structure built by a local lord for his household and tenants, possibly sharing the same footprint as the present building. Colkirk is justly proud of its inclusion in Domesday, an event celebrated on the village sign which shows a monk scribe complete with quill pen diligently recording livestock with St. Mary's in the background. In those days, there were 12 smallholders, 14 freemen and 2 slaves living here. The church we see today is of medieval origin and a fine building of flint and carrstone

(common in this part of the world) with dressed limestone ‘trimmings’ standing on a small rise, squat and solid against the wide Norfolk sky. Passing inside, we find a plain, well-kept, whitewashed interior typical of many of our churches, worthy if unremarkable. A classical Norman font which has had not a few additions and repairs over the years stands upon an octagonal base and we speculate on how many baptisms it may have seen since it was first installed and idly recall the words of John Betjeman when he described this rite as ‘the first armour we put on against the assaults of hate, greed and fear on our journey back to eternity.’ Among the testaments to the church’s venerable age is a list of rectors starting in 1259 with one Haymo de Thorp while, nearer our own times, a roll call of village men who served in the Great War includes, quite rightly, a number who ‘offered themselves for service, but were not accepted.’ The windows are worth a prolonged examination, being mainly of Victorian glass but rather good if your taste lies in that direction. As the most interesting and comprehensive church leaflet tells us, a number of items still remain of the 12th century church fabric, including two of the door arches and a piscina or drain where the priest washed his chalice and fingers after administering Holy Sacrament. On leaving, the visitor is drawn to look back again at the substantial crenellated tower which once boasted five bells but now sadly only has two as three were sold to pay for the re-hanging of the ones that are left. I recently read a fascinating book by one Alain Corbin called *Village Bells* (Columbia University Press, 1998) which examines the importance of bells in nineteenth-century France in marking out what the writer calls the ‘auditory landscape’ of the countryside and he describes the way in which a rural church’s bells were a source of great importance and civic pride for the villagers, perhaps to a greater extent than was the case in England. Before we leave St. Mary’s, it is worth mentioning the so-called Camping Land, an open space just south east of the church which was once used for ‘camping’ an early form of football popular in Norfolk and first mentioned in 1677 but later banned by law on health and safety grounds. The word ‘camp’ means battle in Old English and this rather robust version of the beautiful game often led to mayhem and sometimes loss of life, surely a situation unthinkable in our more enlightened age. O tempora! O mores!

The original parish records are held at the Norfolk Record Office (Cat. Ref. PD665) and comprise Baptisms 1539 – 1948, Marriages 1539-1992, Burials 1539 – 1901 and Banns 1763 – 1806 and 1823 – 1954. There are microform copies with Baptisms and Burials ending in 1901, Marriages in 1900 and Banns in 1902. There are also Archdeacon's and Bishop's transcripts all starting in 1600 but Baptisms and Burials end in 1921 and Marriages in 1837. There is a small parish chest and this contains mostly twentieth century items along with Glebe terriers 1677 – 1933, Tithe apportionments for 1838 with a map for 1839, Churchwardens' accounts 1815 – 1884 and Vestry minutes 1858 – 1924. Also included are the Parish Records for Oxwick 1318 – 1955 and a map of the parish of Colkirk as it was in 1817.

Roderic & Denise Woodhouse

BOOK REVIEW

THE AMERICA GROUND

A genealogical mystery

By – Nathan Dylan Goodwin

Another exciting genealogical mystery from Nathan Dylan Goodwin. The story is set on the south coast of England, the 'America Ground' at Hastings, which is a real place.

We again meet the Forensic Genealogist, Morton Farrier, who at the beginning of the story has set aside some time to research his own family history, then he gets sidetracked. A new client has purchased an old painting of a woman murdered nearly 200 years ago, and has asked Morton to find out what he can about her you'll find it hard to put the book down.

There is a copy in the Society Library for local members to borrow.

Kate(Ed)

MEMBER'S DEATH PROMPTS NBI PROGRESS UPDATE



It was the recent death of John Ward, that prompted me to write this update on our local National Burial Index (NBI). John served on our Committee from 2002 - 2011, and has been ill for several years. He passed away on December 18th, aged 79. Despite his illness he always appeared cheerful and had the last laugh on us all, when he was late for his own funeral due to flooded roads

John's name appears on many of the parish Burial Register transcriptions and I would like to reassure all those members, who contributed to the index, that their endeavours will live on. As technology has advanced, more and more of us have been forced to upgrade our computers and it has become increasingly difficult to use the *special* NBI inputting programme, devised for the Federation of Family History Societies (FFHS), over twenty years ago (the Federation declared it redundant several years back). It is/was very user friendly and we continued to use it, along with floppy discs to transfer data between computers. However, thanks to the knowledge and skill, not to mention many hours of dogged determination, Barry Hughes, our NBI Co-ordinator, has managed to reformat all the data into a simple excel database.

We have still to re-format some basic burial information to enable it to be submitted to the National database at 'findmypast' (for which the MNFHS receives royalties) and at the moment, Kate is still able to use the original FFHS system to provide members with a print-out of all the entries of a particular surname. However, should Kate upgrade to Windows 10, our new format will enable her to search the 153,946 burial entries in the new database format and still produce print-outs as before.

TFG

YOUR LETTERS

A plea for help from Christopher and Lynda Harpley from Dorset ...

Subject "HARPLEY" "HARPLY" "HARPER"

My 3 x Great Grandfather was James "HARPLEY" died on the 28th "JULY" 1844 aged 56 at Wisbech St Mary Cambridgeshire. This would mean he was born in "1788".

1841 census asks were you born in this county? Answer NO.

Marriage at HILGAY Norfolk. James "HARPLEY" (Parish Hilgay) = Susannah Franklin (Parish Fordham) on the 28th July 1810.

The Parish of HOCKWOLD cum WILTON. They were two very small villages with two churches and are only 10 miles from Hilgay as the crow flies.

Marriage:- John "HARPLY" = Frances Crane 17th October 1774.

Children Baptisms:- John 29th October 1776-- Sarah 30th November 1777 (In BTs Sarah is down as "HARPLY" but in Parish Registers she is down as "HARPLEY" Joseph 13th August 1780. For another 8 years until 1788 there is no mention of a John or Frances and then a baptism appears. "JAMES" son of John and Frances "HARPER" 12th June "1788"

Now here is the problem. Are John and Frances the same couple in both instances? James "HARPLEY" died 28th "JULY" 1844 aged 56. 56 from 1844 makes "1788". James "HARPER" baptism 12th June "1788". June comes before July so if they are the same person. James "HARPLEY" when he died would have been aged 56 and about 6 weeks old.

Has anyone out there have any idea as to how to prove that the two "JAMES" are two of the same person?

If you can help please get in touch at - chrisharpley@hotmail.co.uk

CREATING A FAMILY HISTORY BLOG

By Matt Walker

I'm in my 30's and have always been interested in my family history. Over perhaps 15 years or so I have been gathering together a lot of research, trees, etc, done by many other people, and have from time to time done research of my own, to verify that done by others, and to add to it where I can.

In January 2014, I was looking back through some of my own family history notes, and through some very old family documents, and I thought that it would be a great idea to create a website about my family history. I have created several blog based websites in recent years, both for myself and for community groups/projects that I'm involved with. So I knew that it would be technically easy for me to setup the basic website.

A "blog" is a "web-log"; a kind of on-line journal. There are several services that will allow anyone with an e-mail to create a free blog, with space to "post" your journal entries, and the ability to create static web pages; e.g. a personal profile, or a welcome page. Among the popular services is "Blogger", owned by Google – if you already have a Google account for e-mail or YouTube, then you can easily start a "Blogger" blog. Another great service is "WordPress.com".

My primary motivation for creating a website is to share more widely the details of these old family documents (dating back as far as the early 1700's). My concern is that if these documents are held in just one small part of the family, then how will other people in the wider family (with a shared ancestry and a shared interest in documents about their ancestors) get to know or hear about such documents, or about the family details that they can contain – details like evidence for family relationships which may be difficult to demonstrate purely from other available records. These

documents and the details they contain could remain unknown to many people who would be interested in researching these family histories.

By creating a website I can share scanned images and transcriptions of these family documents for others to find on-line, helping them with their family research, and demonstrating the sources of my information – which sometimes lead me to conclusions that differ from those of others on-line who often appear to have relied only on records like parish registers!

I began my blog as a private, password protected site, because I wanted to build up some content and play with the layout and format before showing it to other people. With blogging services you can often choose and change between a large range of site design “templates”, which you can then customise to varying extents. I also wanted to consult my close family about it before going more public. So it’s only after about 2 years that I’m ready to make my website more public.

I deliberately chose a generic name for my site; “A Family History Blog”, because my intention is to include material about all the different branches of my family tree. Other people might be focused on a particular branch or surname, so might wish to use that name in their blog’s title. I was fortunate to get the name I had thought of. You could try to register a variety of different website names and find them all to be taken already! So you’ll probably need something very original!

I hope that my website can become a very collaborative one, with some of my relatives adding details of the information that they have, and the research that they’ve done into our shared ancestors. It is possible with most blogging services to add multiple

authors/accounts to a blog, allowing each one to add articles/“posts” to the site, while one account remains overall administrator.

I would advise anyone else thinking of starting their own family history website to think about what your aims are for doing so. This will help to inform what services you use, and the style, layout and content of your site. Also have a look at the numerous other personal family history websites that are out there. As I began my site, I discovered www.geneabloggers.com which has a list of over 3,000 genealogy and family history-related blogs. It's well worth looking through some of these to get a sense of the kind of site that you could create. In due course I plan to submit my site for addition to the GeneaBloggers list.

Please have a look at my blog. I would welcome the thoughts/comments of more experienced family history researchers about my site and approach. I would also be happy to speak in the Dereham area, to individuals or small groups, to advise about the practical/technical side of how you can create your own family history website.

You can see my blog at; <http://afamilyhistoryblog.wordpress.com>
e-mail; afamilyhistoryblog@gmail.com

(a dedicated e-mail address that I created to go with the website)

Matt Walker.

Useful resources;

Blogging services (a few of many);

- Blogger (by Google) <https://www.blogger.com>
- Word Press <https://wordpress.com>
- Weebly <http://www.weebly.com/uk/>

Genealogy and Family History blogging;

- Genea Bloggers <http://www.geneabloggers.com>

The Armchair Genealogist



NEW MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Submissions and changes must be made before April 1st for inclusion in the directory.

Member 794 – Rev. M Wxxxx, ----, ----, ----,
---- ---- -----@-----

ROBERSON/ROBERTSON/ E & W Bradenham/Congham/Ashill
All ROBINSON

Member 327 – Mr V Asker

The Society has been informed of the death of Mr Asker and wish to send their condolences to his family.

AMUSING CENSUS ENTRIES

We all know how useful and fascinating census returns are. Sometimes they even make you laugh! Having carefully listed his wife and six children on the 1911 census, Londoner Arthur Blake, 52, came to column 16 which asked if any were blind, deaf, dumb or mentally ill. Very neatly he bracketed them all and wrote 'All quite well. Thank you!'

When he was appointed as a census enumerator, George Bird, a wheelwright at Corby, Lincolnshire, whose diary has been published, wrote:

'M. 3 April 1871 I started this morning to collect up the Census Schedules. I had a great many to fill in myself, didn't get home while 8, was very much amused at the different questions asked about it at the poor peoples houses. Weather fine up to 5 when it rained, which made it very bad coming home.'

At Dereham In 1861 perhaps it was the census enumerator, rather than the husband, who entered the wife's name, then in the column 'Whether Blind, or Deaf and Dumb' wrote 'One' and drew an eye!

So if you have found an amusing census return, why not tell us about it?
Please write to Kate (Ed).

Joy Lodey.

A QUESTION OF BIGAMY

Ernie Wright, one of our distant members, sent me copies of GRO Certificates and Census returns relating to his ancestor Arthur Daines Wright. Arthur was born in 1868 in Norwich, which was rather fortunate, for we next find him in the Manchester area, where a Norwich man of the right name and age, rather stands out. He married Caroline Hazleton in 1889 and they had at least two

children. However in 1910, the same Arthur, now declaring himself to be a widower, re-marries widow Henrietta Newman. As well as having the full name and correct age, both marriage certificates show his father as being Daniel Robert (decd). But, there is no evidence to show that his first wife had died. In fact, there is good evidence to believe she was still alive and co-habiting less than twenty miles away.

Ernie's question: In 1910, would the vicar have required evidence of his first wife's death, thereby making him a widower?

My personal thoughts are that the vicar would have taken Arthur's word for it, after all, it's not a lot different to accepting someone being a spinster or bachelor. But my interest was aroused, and putting "Bigamy" into the 19c newspaper website, I discovered that there were hundreds, if not thousands of hits. Bigamy was relatively common and these were only the ones reaching the newspapers, that have been digitised. But one article caught my eye, which could possibly account for the large number of cases. In the Norfolk News October 1849:

....having confessed to the charge of bigamy the man's council pleaded extenuation, in that it was a common understanding amongst the lower classes that when a man and his wife had lived separately for a number of years, either was at liberty to remarry again. Lord Cockburn (presumably the magistrate) said, that the best way of counteracting such unfounded and injurious impression was by adding some months to the ordinary period of imprisonment attached to the crime. In this case the usual sentence of one year incarceration was extended to fifteen months.

Has anyone else found examples of bigamy in their family trees?

Tom Garland

THE 1939 REGISTER ON FINDMYPAST

At the outbreak of war in September 1939 a massive administrative task was underway: the taking of the 1939 Register, one of the most important British documents of the twentieth century.



In December 1938 it was announced in the House of Commons that in the event of war, a National Register would be taken that listed the personal details of every civilian in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. This Register was to be a critical

tool in coordinating the war effort at home. It would be used to issue identity cards, organise rationing and more.

On September 1st, 1939 Germany invaded Poland, putting the wheels in motion for Britain to declare war on the 3rd. On September 5th, the National Registration Act received royal assent and Registrar General Sir Sylvanus Vivian announced that National Registration Day would be September 29th.

Having issued forms to more than 41 million people, the enumerators were charged with the task of visiting every household in Great Britain and Northern Ireland to collect the names, addresses, marital statuses and other key details of every civilian in the country, issuing identity cards on the spot.

The identity cards issued were essential items from the point the Register was taken right up until 1952, when the legal requirement to carry them ceased. Until that point, every member of the civilian population had to be able to present their card upon request by an

official (children's cards were looked after by parents), or bring them to a police station within 48 hours. The reasons were numerous – it was essential to know who everyone was, of course, and to track their movements as they moved house, as well as to keep track of the population as babies were born and people passed away.

The 1939 Register, then, represents one of the most important documents in 20th century Britain. The information it contains not only helped toward the war effort, it was also used in the founding of the NHS. In addition, the 1931 census was destroyed during an air raid on London and the 1941 census was never taken. The 1939 Register, released online by Findmypast in partnership with The National Archives, is therefore the only surviving overview of the civil population of England and Wales spanning the period 1921-1951. It bridges a census gap that risked losing an entire generation, and is a fascinating resource for anyone interested in understanding 20th century Britain and its people.

The process of bringing the Register online for the first time has been the work of hundreds of people. The Register itself consists of 7,000 volumes which contain over 1,200,000 pages listing the names, addresses, marital statuses, occupations and more of over 41,000,000 people. If you were to stack the books on top of each other, the resultant pile would be over twice the height of St. Paul's Cathedral.

Conservators have restored the document to a condition fit enough to be legible once scanned. The pages have then been scanned, digitised and transcribed by a huge team in offices and facilities around the world. Our quality assurance process dictates an accuracy rate in readable documents of over 98%, and so meticulous work has been done to ensure that this release is the

best it can possibly be for our users.

I am sure that most of our members will know about the 1939 Register. Myko Clelland of Findmypast gave an excellent presentation at our January meeting. For those who were unable to attend might I suggest you visit the Findmypast.co.uk website (the above is reprinted directly from their website), where there is a short guide, including videos to help you get the most out of your research.

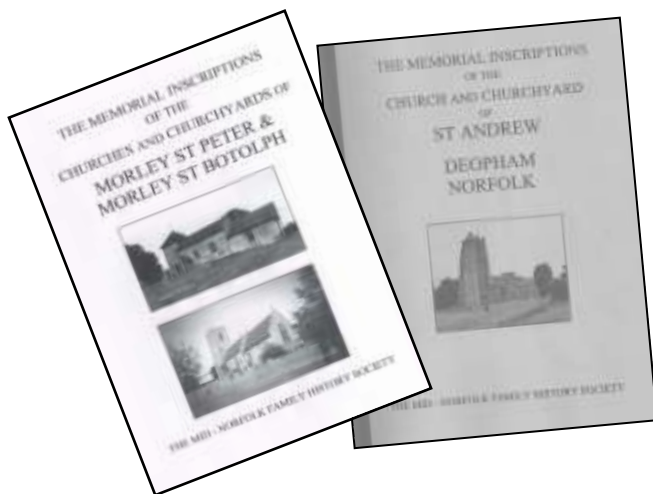
Basically the register is similar to a census, listing everyone at a given address. It gives their name, date of birth, gender, marital status, and occupation. Place of birth and relationship to head of family is NOT included, neither are people already in the armed forces. Births were added to the register until 1952 when Identity cards were no longer required. The Register was in use by the NHS until the early 1990s and in some cases, because of death and marriage, names were amended. Unfortunately, the 100 year rule still applies. Consequently, approximately a third of the names are currently blanked out. When 100 years have passed from their date of birth they will automatically be un-blanked. However, there is a scheme whereby if you have proof of death (death certificate) entries may be revealed earlier.

Please let us know how you get on, your discoveries and any tips you think may be of use to other members, especially with regards to the maps and photos that come as part of the package.

Latest News: It currently costs £6.95 per household but, and this is NOT an advert for Findmypast, from February 16th Findmypast membership subscription will include access to the 1939 register at no extra cost.

(Printed by kind permission of Findmypast)

TWO NEW PUBLICATIONS



As mentioned in the Winter 2015 Newsletter the Memorial Inscriptions at Morley St Peter have now been recorded. We have decided to publish them in the same cover. ie the 280 memorials at St Botolphs and a further 150 at St Peters This results in a 50 page A4 booklet which is now available for £3.70 plus the usual £1.19 post and packing

Meantime, our recording team have not been idle, and have also added the 260 memorial inscriptions at St Andrews Deopham to our list. This booklet has 30 pages and will cost £2.60 also plus the £1.19 postage

Readers are reminded that the books may be obtained from Kate (Editor) and details together with the full list of our Memorial Inscription booklets from the 120 parishes that surround Dereham are on our website (see rear cover of this Newsletter).

NORFOLK NEWSPAPERS

Having read my article, regarding a ‘highway robbery’, in the Winter Newsletter, Christopher Harpley, who lives in Dorset asks “what newspapers are available for Norfolk and could we print a list of these newspapers in our Newsletter”

Ever curious, I asked which Newspapers were available at The Local Studies Library in the Forum, Norwich, then wished I hadn’t, as there are so many. For example, just to name a few Norwich papers: there are the Norwich Gazette 1709 – 1773, Norfolk Chronicle & Norwich Gazette 1769 – 1955, Norwich Mercury 1727 – 1980 and The Eastern Daily Press (1870 – to-date). They also hold some copies of smaller, more local papers such as the Dereham & Fakenham Times, Downham Market Express, Thetford Weekly, etc. but, in many cases for few years only.

As always, my advice is, ask at the desk, and for distant researchers, enquire by email BEFORE travelling. The most popular Norwich paper is the Eastern Daily Press (EDP). This was founded in 1870 as a broadsheet, renamed EDP in 1872; it took on the tabloid format in the mid-1990s. But this is a daily paper and also carries national news. A ‘desk lady’ gave me some good advice, when I was searching for a coroner’s report, by suggesting I did not start with the EDP but, search the Norfolk Chronicle first, as this was published weekly.

All these newspapers are great, if you know the date of your occurrence, for none are indexed and, although the newspaper microfilm readers show the full page, random searches are time consuming and a little impractical. In addition, few of us want to travel, then spend hours scrolling through papers. However, help is at hand. The British Newspaper Library (once at Colindale, now at Boston Spa, near Wetherby in Yorkshire), in collaboration with findmypast. co.uk are digitising British Newspapers from 1710 and 1953 and they ARE fully searchable. Today, there are 12,845,331 digitised pages available (there will be many more by the time you read this). They are available on-line from **The British Newspaper Archive** and **Findmypast.co.uk**. As the majority of the

digitised newspapers are provincial, they are likely to carry reports of local interest in which our ancestors were involved, local sports, meetings, flower shows, schools etc – the real stuff of family history.

Although presented slightly differently both sites carry the same newspapers and cover the same dates.

Twelve million pages sounds a lot but they are spread throughout all the British newspapers over 240 years,. The home page on the British Newspaper Archive site, gives a list of the newspapers digitised and dates covered. e.g. Norfolk Chronicle 1776-1869; Norfolk News 1845-1870. While Findmypast presents the same information but as Norfolk Chronicle 186,749 articles, Norfolk News 92,618 articles, although when you search by county and date it will only show the dates for which articles are available

It would appear, therefore, that Norfolk is covered from 1776 – 1870 by about 280,000 articles in just two newspapers. However, newspapers shared information and good stories. When I searched for a Norfolk man's obituary it was in a Suffolk newspaper - **The Bury and Norwich Post** which carries 215,000 articles.

It will take practice with a little local knowledge, to get the best out of the digitised newspapers. For those of us, who always want more, although this digitisation programme is in its second year and I believe being given 24/7 attention, it will take a long time to complete the project, especially, no doubt, the digitisation of the newspapers carrying news of OUR ancestors.

Cost: Basic search free on both sites.

British Newspaper Archive: £12.95 (one month) £79.95 (12 months).

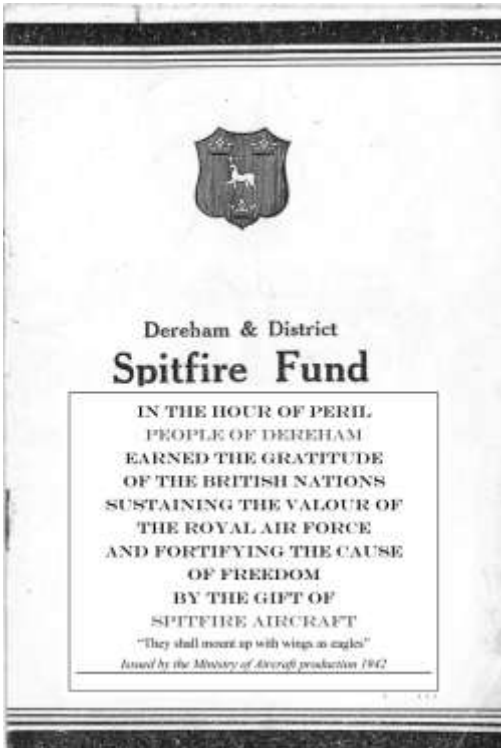
Findmypast: subscription (includes newspapers) £9.95 (one month).

£99.50 (12 months) [Increase due February 2016]

TFG

DEREHAM SPITFIRE FUND

(September 1st to October 12th 1940)



In 1940, people of Dereham and nearby villages subscribed to strengthen the Royal Air Force by purchasing (for £5020) a Spitfire. A booklet was subsequently produced, and we have reproduced it from a surviving copy in the Millennium Library, Norwich, with additional material about the project. Thanks to Stephen Pope for identifying 152 Squadron.

Members whose families lived in the area in 1940, may well be able to see

how much their family contributed. Many well-known local families and businesses are represented. Over 1400 separate donations were made. £2/16/6d was collected by Miss Q. Shickle from viewing the North Tuddenham Bomb Crater. Master and Miss Dodds of Scarning subscribed 7/6d. The Pig Guessing Competition in Dereham Market Place raised £10/14/10½d.

Copies (in colour) are available (24 A5 pages) from the Editor, price £1 plus postage and packing 55p (Total £1.55p).



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