

LOCAL HISTORY RECORDER'S REPORT.

EARL SOHAM ++ 1978
(Electoral Roll - 330 names)

An item omitted from the 1977 record was the 'Gardens Open' fund raising project organised by the P.C.C. on Sunday 17th. July. Eleven gardens were on view for an overall charge of 25p. whilst teas, produce and demonstrations were available. This event, the first of its kind in the parish, attracted about 350 people and resulted in a profit of £140 for Church funds.

The course of the Roman road across the village from Mill House on one side to Cherry Hill on the other, crossing the river en route, remains a matter for speculation. The writer had noticed snow and water streaks on the meadow between the Rookery and Mill House on a few occasions and suspected these might indicate the course of the road. With the permission of Mr. Sheffield a series of soil resistance measurements were made crossing the line of the streaks at right angles using 3ft. probes 3ft. apart. Although two traverses 30 yards apart both gave some indication of a road flanked by ditches, two others either side of these were negative. It was suspected that such positive indications as had been observed could as well have been due to chalk or flint in the subsoil, the nature of which is known to change rapidly in the area, or to a clay overlay on the surface. The meadow, ploughed for food production in the 1939-45 War, varies from sandy loam at river level to clay on the hilltop.

Following upon the sale of fields on the south side of Low Road by Mr. V. Marsden-Jones to Mr. D. Scott of Bedingfield (£1400 per acre approx) extensive drainage works and drastic hedge trimming were completed.

Planning permission was eventually given for the Tennis Court in The Street subject to landscaping, the situation to be reviewed in three years' time. An Autumn Social in aid of funds for this project raised £400.

After being closed for some months to the inconvenience of many, the butchers shop re-opened at Easter as Anvil Butchers. A new landlord took over the Falcon Inn at about the same time.

A Punch and Pie evening was held in November in aid of the School Amenities Fund. With the aid of old equipment loaned by Abbots Hall Museum an old schoolroom was reproduced in the Village Hall together with displays of old School records from the County Archives, photographs loaned by former pupils and a continuous projection of coloured slides covering Mr. Willsher's ten year tenure of the Headship. In addition a display of pottery and associated demonstrations were provided by Miss R. Short, recently resident. The Primary School with about 70 pupils, only a few of whom live in the village, now serves 10 villages and has a catchment area the size of Ipswich.

A public subscription resulted in the presentation to Mrs. Gwladys Murrell of a framed photograph of The Green in recognition of her services to village and church over a long period when she left Riverside Cottage for the Nunnery

at Diss. A native of S.Wales she had married Mr. Geo. Murrell when he had been posted to Lloyd's Bank, Cardiff where she herself had been cashier.

Following severe flooding outside the School in the Autumn due to a rainstorm, the school entrance was moved a few yards westwards and an enlarged culvert built under the road for the adjacent stream. Persistent flooding over many years at the western end of Low Road after rain was considerably reduced after attention to ditches etc. by the Council.

The Rev. J.Peck, recently appointed Baptist Minister, took up residence with his family in the Old Rectory to which structural repairs had been completed by some members of the Koinonia Group formerly resident there.

Mr. B.N.Hinton moved from Yew Tree Farm to New Street Farm in Framlingham.

Three nonagenarians passed away during the year; Alfred Game, 96, at Paddocks, Eye; Bessie L. Hambling, 96, at Stow Lodge Hospital; Geo. Rogers, 92, of Bedford Road.

A plan to enlarge the Village Hall was abandoned as being too ambitious for a small village and a new set of plans was put forward for costing and discussion early in the following year.

Members of the Women's Institute succeeded in *winning* three first awards in the Suffolk East W.I. Speech and Drama Festival held in Woodbridge Cinema.

O.E.Keall
Local History Recorder
Earl Soham
March 1979