

LOCAL HISTORY RECORDER'S REPORT

EARL SOHAM ** 1979-1980

(Electoral Register 339)

Weather 1979. The cold and stormy weather which began in December 1978 and necessitated performing the ceremony of the Crib inside the Church instead of outside at the foot of the tower, continued into March; heavy snow and drifting in February blocked all roads for two days until tractors forced their way through with supplies. Notably, the local W.R.V.S. Meals-on-Wheels service continued without disruption though under difficulties. The Senior Club had however to cancel three consecutive monthly meetings owing to the poor conditions,

Village Hall. The Secretary reported a profit of over £ 700 mainly due to bookings by outside discos but tighter regulations for the hire of the hall were found necessary to control conduct and cover possible damage. No building maintenance had been carried out in the previous year. A proposed plan of improvements to entrance, cloakrooms and kitchen was published with estimated cost of £ 15000, of which sum grants might provide 75 per cent. This plan, approved by the Parish Council, was later withdrawn on account of cost and a more modest plan substituted. No work had however been carried out by end of 1980.

Police. Due to changes in County organisation the village police station was closed. Apart from 999 calls, daytime service is available at Leiston and full 24-hour service from Lowestoft. The Police House was bought by P.C. Carter as his private residence and re-named *Eastfield*. He himself was promoted to Sergeant in 1980.

Flower Festival and Craft Show, July 1979. A 2-day Flower Festival in the Church, with theme 'Year of the Child' resulted in window displays representing Nursery Rhymes. At the same time in the Village Hall a display was mounted of crafts, parish records, photographs and press cuttings which attracted keen interest; together with teas, a profit of £ 200 was made.

Parish Council. (a) Footpaths. The main task in 1979 was the walking of the footpaths and preparation of proposals for the Definitive Map; it was decided after a public meeting to apply for registration of the footpaths from the bottom of Lodge Drive to Little Green, from the bottom of Lodge Drive to Footpath 1 and from the School to Town Corner. No application would be made for the right of way at Old Hall (formerly Churchyard Farm) unused for many years.

(b) Lordship of the Manor. The Council accepted the offer as a Jubilee gift by Mrs. Lehmann widow of the late Dr. H.P. Lehmann of Wickham Market of the Lordship of the Manor of Earl Soham. A short History of the manor, distributed at the time, is appended.

Tennis Court. Outline planning permission reluctantly given in 1976 enabled a start to be made preparing the ground which was seeded in September 1977. Planning permission finally given in 1978 subject to landscaping and review after 3 years. The court was first played on in June 1970 and officially opened by Mrs. Janes (Christine Truman, of international fame) in April 1980.

Council Flats. After some delays the 8 flats in Brandeston

Road, started in 1979, were completed and occupied in August 1980 by people moving from other houses in the village (with one exception).

Choral Society. Due to a lack of tenors it was decided to disband the Society; a small balance in hand was handed to the P.C.C. for Church Music.

Women's Institute. A few members made a patchwork bedcover which was raffled at 25 p. per patch in aid of the Anglian Autistic Community Trust, realising £ 200.

Gardens Open Day. About 12 gardens were open, a 50 p. ticket giving admission to all. Proceeds in aid of Church Funds realised £ 204 (June 1980)

Football Club. The Club, which is in Division 7 of the Suffolk and Ipswich League, continues to flourish.

Retirement of Rector. As the Rev. G. St. C. Tisdall no longer felt in sufficiently good health to continue to look after three parishes he resigned after eleven years' service to the community. On 31st August 1980 members of the three parishes including Baptist friends met to wish him a long and happy retirement in Framlingham and to present him with a colour television set.

Gymkhana and Fete. Despite poor weather the 18th. Gymkhana and Fete resulted in a profit of £ 450.

College House. Residential and non-residential Courses are now held at College House, The Old Rectory, the home of Rev. J. Peck, Pastor of Earl Soham Baptist Church. The Old Rectory itself is slowly being restored and has already taken on a much improved appearance.

Shop. The butcher's shop finally ceased business at Easter 1980.

Miscellaneous. Assistance was given to the Deben Valley Project organised by Miss G. Dyke for the recording of past and present field names. In general it was found that the names recorded on the 1841 Tithe Map of the village are rarely known or used at the present day

Brief extracts covering the years 1785-1790 from the diaries of William Goodwin of Street Farm, born 1746 died 1851, have been among Church papers for some years but the diaries themselves could not be traced. They have now been located in the Suffolk County Council Record Office Ipswich, where they were placed in 1974 by someone unconnected with the village. The diaries are in three volumes and cover the years 1785-1809. They have yet to be examined.

The death took place in November 1979 in a nursing home of Arthur Q. Cooper 94, whilst in December 1980 shortly after her 90th. birthday was recorded the death at Roxwell, Essex of Ruth Ann Norman Burdekin, surviving issue of Canon Abbay, rector of the parish from 1880 until his death in 1927.