

# Society News

The Lowestoft Archaeological and Local History Society  
Newsletter

March 2026

Editors:- Ron and Irene Ashman



## St Osyth Children's Home.

by Ron Ashman

Whilst researching on-line for information on a soldier from Lowestoft who died in a Japanese prisoner of war camp, the website not only gave details of the soldier's occupation before being 'called up' but also that of his wife. The lady in question was listed as the Matron's assistant in the St Osyth children's home in Bridge Road Oulton Broad. Neither my wife or I had ever seen any information on this home, or, as we found out, that there was another one in Kirkley.

The story starts at a meeting of the Board of Guardians of the Mutford and Lothingland Workhouse in May 1898 where it was recommended that a committee be appointed to consider as to a site and prepare plans for a children's home. The Local Government Board had strongly urged that this be done due to the over crowded conditions of the childrens quarters. Although all over the country the workhouse administrations were removing the children from the workhouse to other accommodation.

### MUTFORD AND LOTHINGLAND UNION

#### ASSISTANT FOSTER-MOTHER WANTED

The Guardians require the services of an ASSISTANT FOSTER MOTHER at their home for 12 boys, at Bridge Road, Oulton Broad, near Lowestoft, at a salary of £14 per annum, rising by annual increments of £1 to £18 Less statutory deductions, with board and lodging.

Age to be not less than eighteen years.

Applications, with two recent testimonials, to reach me as early as possible.

By Order

F.W.OSBORNE  
Clerk.

Crown Street Hall, Lowestoft  
9th February 1918.

In the 1911 census there were 6 boys and 6 girls in the Number 1 home in Acton Road, Kirkley.

In 1918 an East Anglian Daily Times article reported that the Number 1 Home was for girls and the Number 2 Home (St Osyth) in Oulton Broad was for boys. When the Number 2 home opened is not known as it is not recorded in the 1911 census, but it is in this 1918 article. Each Home was under the control of a Foster Mother with the help of an Assistant Foster Mother.

Left is a reprint of an advertisement that appeared in the East Anglian Daily Times on the 12<sup>th</sup> February 1918.

The following article comes from the Lowestoft Journal of 22 January 1910.

### A CAPITAL INVESTMENT

Those few members of the Lowestoft and District Board of Guardians who - very faintly it is to be said- protested against the acquisition of the Children's Home in Kirkley, must be exceedingly pleased, in common with the rest of the Board, at the great success of that institution. And it has all been brought about so inexpensively. The home was not dear, and repairs, alterations, and equipment did not cost a great deal, thanks to the keen, overlooking interest which the Board exercised over details. Since then the amount paid for maintenance and salaries has been exceedingly moderate, owing to the fact that the Board were fortunate in securing an excellent foster-mother, who received a merited meed<sup>1</sup> of praise on Tuesday, and also that the Children's Home Committee, headed by Mr Kerry Rix, act on strict business principles - they are neither faddists nor extravagant. The children look well, are healthy and happy, and get a good education at the neighbouring Council Schools. They know what they never knew before - the joys and influence of home

life in its very best form, and it is good for them both mentally, morally, and physically. They are away from the Workhouse with all its deleterious environment, and in the future they will, if appearances count for anything, become worthy men and women, taking their places as useful citizens of the greatest country in the world. Left in the Workhouse they would, by all the laws of average, have become wastrels, useless, vicious, and a burden on the rates. This Children's Home, therefore, is the finest investment that the Board has ever made, and the ratepayers cannot but feel satisfied that so much good is being done at so little cost to their pockets.

*Note 1:- Meed is an archaic term that means to bestow or grant something, particularly in the context of merit or reward.*

This piece is a classical example of how the 'upper class' viewed the so called 'working class' at the time. If a man was unfortunate enough to be unable to find work and therefore could not feed his family, he was viewed as a wastrel, useless, and a burden on the rates.



I don't know how many children were in the Mutford and Lothingland Workhouse in 1910, but at the time of the above article, only 12 were resident in the childrens home, although this was increased to about 20 by 1918 with the opening of the second home in Oulton Broad.

The building with the later added blue front extension was St Osyth Children's Home.

## Lowestoft Museum News.

The volunteers will soon be installing a new display case in the main entrance hall which will be used for some examples of Lowestoft Porcelain so that visitors who cannot manage the stairs can see some of the porcelain which is displayed in the Johnson Room.

The Museum will open on Saturday 28 March.

Sally Francis will return with her saffron items and also Lowestoft Dingers provided by Bushells on a following Saturday.

## Tithes and Tithe Redemption

by Ron Ashman

When my parents purchased their house in Blundeston in 1950 they had to pay a Tithe. However, in the Tithe Act of 1936 it allowed such annuities to be cancelled by a single payment through the Tithe Redemption Commission.

In the Tithe Act of 1951 it established the compulsory redemption of English Tithes by landowners where the amount payable was less than £1. This removed the bureaucracy and costs of collecting small sums of money.

On the copy of the form below you can see that the annual Tithe was 4d (approx. 1.7p in today's money) and the Redemption was 7 shillings and 5d (approx 37p). It should be noted that, according to an internet source, in 1950 an average weekly wage was £5.60 to £10 which is less than the minimum hourly wage today.

Reference No. 33/47 LL 2 Serial No. 101153

**TITHE REDEMPTION COMMISSION.**

REDEMPTION OF ANNUITIES CHARGED UNDER THE TITHE ACT, 1936.

Name of Owner MR J. ASHMAN  
 Address LOUND ROAD,  
BLUNDESTON,  
NR. LOWESTOFT, SUFFOLK.

Received the sum of \_\_\_\_\_ pounds seven shillings and five pence, being the consideration money for the redemption of the annuity amounting to \_\_\_\_\_ pounds \_\_\_\_\_ shillings and \_\_\_\_\_ pence set out in the Schedule below, which annuity has been extinguished as from the 2nd October, 1950

On behalf of the Tithe Redemption Commission,  
 Signature [Signature] Date 21 DEC 1950  
 (£ or the Principal Finance Officer)

£ - : 7:5

**SCHEDULE.**

COUNTY Suffolk TITHE DISTRICT Blundeston - cum - Lowestoft

No. of Tithe Area.	Amount of Annuity			No. of Tithe Area	Amount of Annuity		
	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
<u>(A.200) 8, 9</u>	-	-	<u>4</u>				

Receipt herewith in respect of Consideration Money for Redemption.  
 A separate receipt will be issued in respect of the instalment(s) of annuity.  
 Apportionment and Redemption Division,  
 Tithe Redemption Commission,  
 33/37, Finsbury Square,  
 London, E.C.2.

Form No. 618.  
 Exempt from stamp duty.

Form No. 500. 21525. W.L.F372/01. 150 Pads. 5/47. W.Y.L.P. Gp.676

**Did you know.**

During World War 1 a huge number of horses were sent to serve alongside British troops. The RSPCA trained handlers to ensure their charges were looked after properly, as well as setting up 13 animal hospitals to treat horses injured in battle.

Life for the horses was extremely harsh, with the British Army alone using over 1 million horses and mules of which more than 400,000 were killed. At the end of the conflict the Army had many more horses than it needed, so about 500,000 were offered for sale, with about 100,000 coming to the UK. Sadly, about 61,000 were sold for meat as they were considered unfit for work.

## Lowestoft in Lego

by Richard Mundy

I was recently going through some photos from 5 or 6 years ago (during the dark days of Covid lockdowns where we could not go out in the evenings and hear fabulous history talks) and remembered that I spent some time back then playing with my Lego.

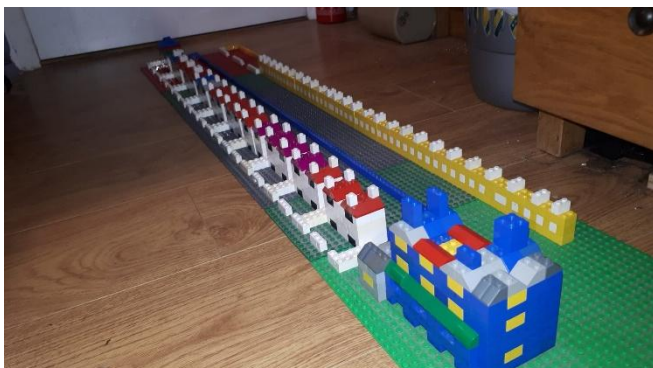
As you may be able to tell from these attached pictures, I had a go at constructing Marine Parade, The Esplanade Villas and The Royal Hotel Lowestoft – as they looked in Victorian times. I will leave you to judge how successful I was...

The Lego Group began in the workshop of Ole Kirk Christiansen (1891–1958), a carpenter from Billund, Denmark, who began making wooden toys in 1932. In 1934 his company came to be called "Lego", derived from the Danish phrase leg godt which means 'play well'. In 1947, Lego expanded to begin producing plastic toys. In 1949, the business began producing, among other new products, an early version of the now familiar interlocking bricks, calling them "Automatic Binding Bricks" and the rest is history.

My youngest daughter Daisy (who is now 20) enjoys buying Lego sets and following the instructions to construct the advertised item. I don't mind these sets but do enjoy the 'designing' aspect of starting with the bricks from scratch and choosing what to build and then working out how to build it.

Also, in them 'lock down days' I designed and constructed Tower Bridge. You can buy an official Tower Bridge Lego set for £450! So, this was a much cheaper option to use bricks I already had. Again, photos attached for you to consider how successful I was.

I have been a bit too busy to play with my Lego these last couple of years, but if you do have any suggestions for me for buildings or infrastructure to have a go at, feel free to let me know and I will see what I can do.



## Benjamin Britten Statue – Thankfully NOT vandalized

by Richard Mundy

I had some family come and up to visit from London recently, so thought we would take a stroll down the promenade so that I could proudly show off the town's new statue of Benjamin Britten: 'Britten as a Boy' – as featured in a recent Society Newsletter.



They were quite rightly very impressed with the life-sized statue of the composer at age 14. I did a bit of 'History Tour Guide' stuff, pointing out his birthplace of 21 Kirkley Cliff Road in 1913. Also, where the nearby South Lodge School was, which he attended (the main building being demolished in the 1930's and is now a car park – although part of the school survives as residential flats at 2 Kirkley Cliff Road). We captured a few photos, and I then noticed that one of the brass plaques was missing, there are two on marble looking slabs near the statue providing information, my immediate thought was that the statue had suffered some vandalism! So, I fired off a quick message to a friend who is on the 'Britten as a Boy' committee and discovered that the original plaque had a spelling mistake, so should be back in place soon.



The missing plaque.

**My First Lowestoft Postcard** – a Fisherman’s note home to the family

by Richard Mundy

Although I now have a fair few postcards of Lowestoft, it all started with this one. Which I bought, not long after I first moved here in 2012, from a local shop in the High Street. I probably picked this one as my house (in Marine Parade) is ‘hiding’ somewhere behind the ‘Peto’ Esplanade Villas. The Lowestoft Corporation’s 1930’s policy of buying up the old villas and demolishing them to make way for leisure activities, such as the boating lake and Putting Green, meant that I now have a sea view – well apart from them trees that have been recently planted that Ron Ashman was moaning about in the previous newsletter.

Anyway, back to our postcard:

‘South Beach, Lowestoft’

Posted November 1930 to Mrs Edwards at 14 Trafalgar Road Gorleston On Sea

“Dear Wife and Children, Just a line to let you know that I am quite well, hope you are all the same, we are going to sea again today, with love Dad (?) xxxxx”

A simple yet lovely message. I do not currently have access to census records or much time for researching at the moment, so if any of you fancied doing a bit of research regarding Mr and Mrs Edwards of 14 Trafalgar Road, that would be great. If you find anything feel free to share with the editors and we can maybe feature the findings in the next newsletter.



If you have any articles that you would like published in this Newsletter, please contact the editors at a meeting or send your piece to email address [lalhs@btinternet.com](mailto:lalhs@btinternet.com)