

HOLKHAM NEWSLETTER



THERE might be a perception that all the changes we have seen at Holkham have taken place only in the last five or six years. This process might have been more rapid in that time, but that only reflects the speed of change in the world in general. Change has always been with us.

Mick Thompson, recently retired from the Hall, recalls how he helped to modernise four milking parlours on the Estate. Well, how many have we now? None: this is change brought on by economic circumstances. I started farming at Burnham Norton, 36 years ago, with 11 men. By the time the Holkham Farming Company took over, that was down to only three, again a reflection of changed economic circumstances, and a necessary adaptation to new farming practices. Now, seven men look after 5,000 acres.

A good example of adaptation is the transformation of the 18th century Triumphal Arch into a chic annexe of The Victoria Hotel, thus turning a long-standing liability to economic advantage, and moreover, making use of a perfectly sound building. I never see the point of new build if existing buildings can be satisfactorily adapted without compromising their character.

But with change, it is important to retain and value the best of the past. Nicholas Hills writes about the restoration of the family monuments at Tittleshall Church, to which the Estate contributed a large part of the £70,000 costs. We could have saved our money, but then part of the history of this great Estate would have been lost.

This winter, for the first time, we are keeping the Ancient House shop and tearoom open for five days a week. We had always assumed there would be insufficient trade to make it worthwhile, but of course, we had never tried it. Now we have, and both are doing well, which is another example of successful change and adaptation. From tea and cakes to a rather more powerful refreshment; we are in the process of buying The Globe Public House on The Buttlands in Wells. If all goes well, the renovation and adaptation should be completed in time for a July opening next year, almost exactly four years after The Vic re-opened. The Globe will not be a clone of The Vic, but we are certain it will be equally successful.

Leicester

The Earl of Leicester



Lord and Lady Leicester with John Drury and FTCH Tweedshot Kite, winners of the 2004 IGL Retriever Championship at Holkham.

Picture by: Paul Quagliana, by kind permission of Shooting Times.

Archives

AS the Triumphal Arch has just been refurbished and converted into holiday accommodation for The Victoria Hotel, we thought it would be interesting to explore this unusual building's history.

A laundry maid in the early 1900s, sending home a postcard of the Triumphal Arch, told her family that, "this archway was put up when an ancient Earl of Leicester fought in a war and they built this for him to come home under." She would have been disappointed to know that, although it was from the start called 'the Triumphal Arch', its purpose was simply as a striking landmark, to impress on the traveller that he was approaching Holkham.

Today, the Triumphal Arch is off the beaten track, but for much of the 18th and 19th centuries, coaches and carriages regularly rumbled through it. Before the road from Fakenham to Wells was improved by a turnpike trust in the 19th century, and long before the railway gave importance to the north entrance to Holkham, the principal route to Holkham for visitors from London left the Fakenham road at Toftrees and, by-passing Fakenham, came from Sculthorpe Mill, to Waterden Bottom, across Creak Common and north into Holkham. The Arch was built on this route.

Even before the foundations for the first wing of the hall were dug in 1734, Thomas Coke had built the Obelisk on the highest point in his projected park (which at that time was still fields and sheep walk) as a symbol of his intentions.

Soon afterwards, he constructed 'the Avenue' leading due south from the obelisk; labourers were paid 3d per hole to

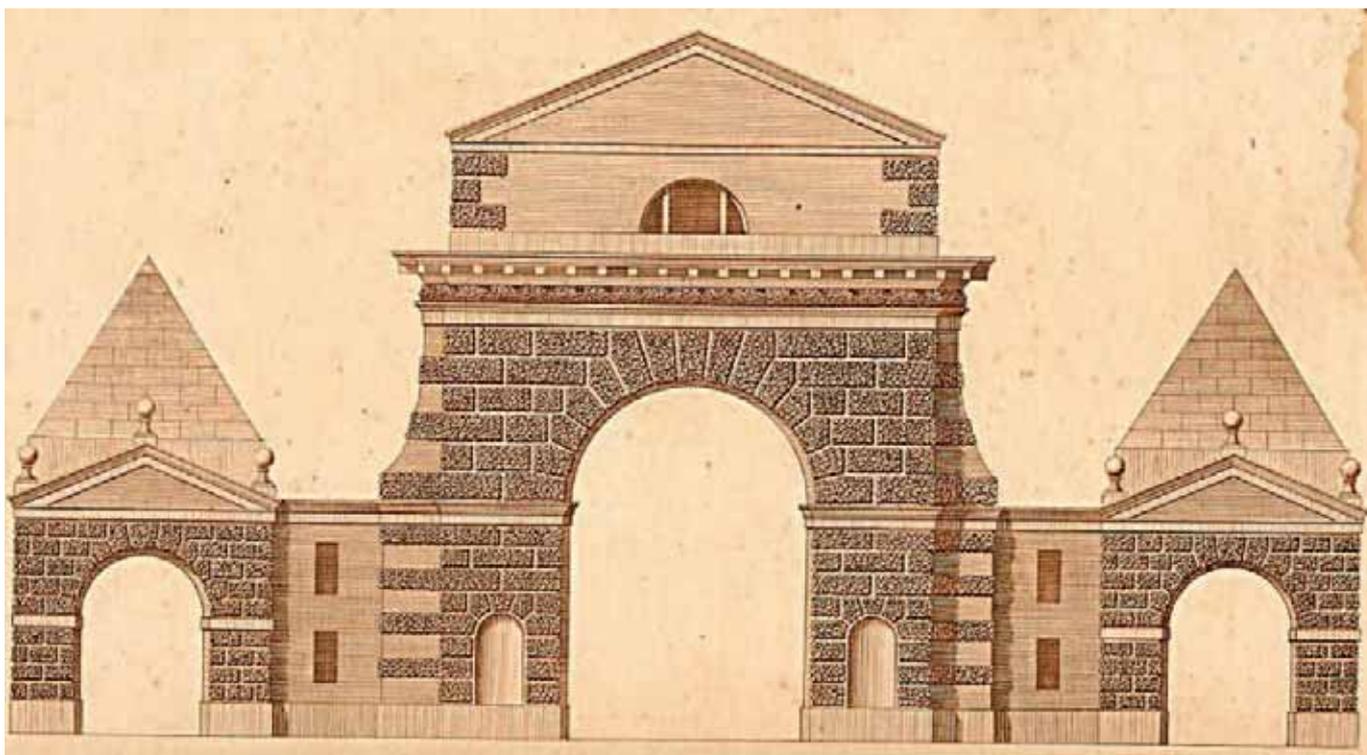
dig 774 holes ready for the trees on either side. Cut through cultivated fields, following no existing track or road, it must have made a striking impact, especially for those who did not know that it was designed to line up with the central point of a hall that was barely started. About three years later, spasmodic work started on carrying stones to 'where the Triumphal Arch is to stand'. This was a mile and a half further south, beyond the parish boundary (in Quarles parish) on land leased from Christ's College, Cambridge.

Work on the Triumphal Arch progressed quite slowly while the first wing of the house was being built. From about 1733 to 1745, work seems to have been limited to carrying stones to the site, perhaps for the foundations. Bricklaying, carpentry and mason's work started in earnest in 1747, and roof tiles were bought in the following year. There were then further delays: the pyramids which originally topped the sides were not pointed until 1752, and plumbing, glazing and other work was still being done in 1757. The last bills were paid in 1761.

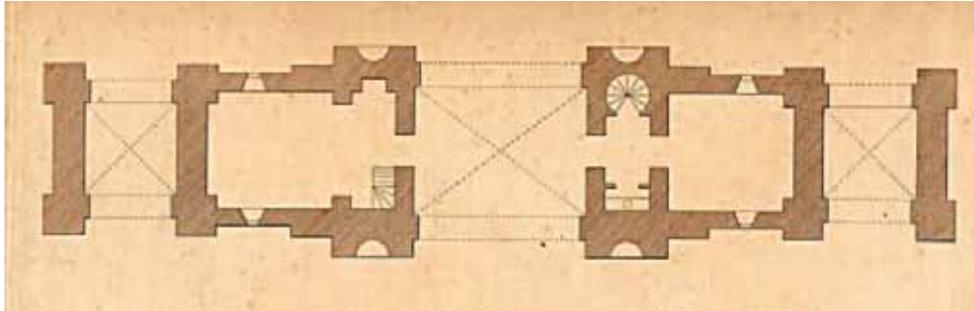
A map of Holkham at the end of Thomas Coke's life shows that, even after his park had taken shape, the Arch (off the map at the south) made an even more dramatic statement than now, for the park he created was much smaller than the present park. The lodge on his southern park boundary lay in the hollow just south of the Obelisk Wood, well north of the present South Lodge. It was therefore out of sight of the traveller as he reached the Triumphal Arch, and saw ahead of him only the long Avenue, with the Obelisk in the distance.

A few years after Thomas Coke's death in 1759, his widow, 'having now completely finish'd Holkham House, the Plantations and other distant Ornaments', bought thirty acres of land from Christ's College, Cambridge, adjoining the Arch, 'so as to secure the said Arch, Buildings and little plantations

BELOW: Executive architect, Matthew Brettingham's engraving of the plans. The pyramids on the sides had been removed by 1838.



thereon, to go along with Holkham House.... she having a great desire to accomplish and perpetuate the approaches and distant decorations of Holkham in the manner the said late Earl designed them’.



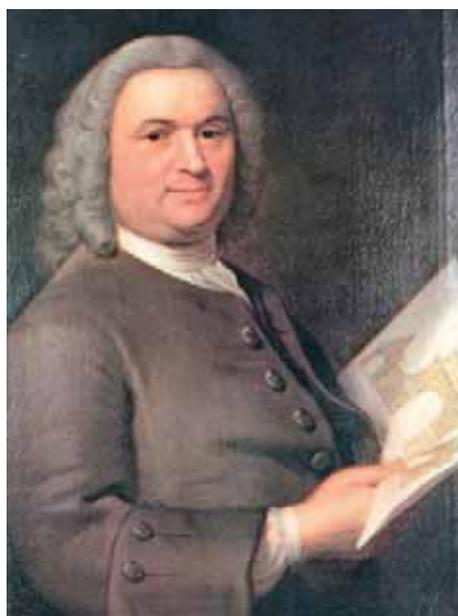
In the 18th century, inventories show that the Arch was used only occasionally, as only the upper room was furnished, with ‘four compass-back Windsor chairs, a walnut-tree card table’ and a grate with fender, shovel, tongs and poker.

Throughout the 19th century and into the 20th century, the Triumphal Arch was inhabited by farm labourers or shepherds employed on the farm at Quarles. In 1861, for example, one half was home to James Jordan, shepherd, and his wife and three young children, while a farm labourer, Henry Frost, and his wife lived in the other half.

In 1881, both halves were probably occupied by the family of Charles Smith, his wife and five sons. The eldest son was home on leave from the army, but, with four other sons aged from 10 to 21 still living at home, the Arch must have been quite crowded.

James Stimpson, who was said to have been born in the Arch in 1872, used to delight in telling his grand-children that he had been born in a house ‘where we ate and lived on one side of the road, and went to bed on the other’. When his grandchildren from London visited him in Burnham Norton, he amused them by taking them out in his governess cart to drive through his birthplace, the Triumphal Arch.

In the 1970s, when the Arch had been empty for more than 40 years, the architect Nicholas Hills gained permission to rent it. Only the roof was sound; the ceilings had collapsed,



ABOVE: The floorplan of the Triumphal Arch.
LEFT: Brettingham holding a plan of the Arch.

as had the straight staircase on the east side. After extensive restoration work, it was used for some years as a weekend retreat. In 2004, some 260 years after it was built, the Arch was renovated and converted by the Holkham Estate for its new role as two romantic hideaways, available to let through The Victoria Hotel (see page 14).

Christine Hiskey
Archivist

Holkham Farming Company Ltd

IT seems an eternity since that hot dry spell in May when we were rushing around to get the irrigation pumps working in the Park.

The system worked well apart from a few problems with stones caught in the pipeline. These had a habit of jamming turbines on the reels—usually in the middle of the night! Total water used was far less than anticipated as the parsnips did not have a drop put on them due to our gorgeous English summer. This, however, will enable us to fill the reservoir brim full this winter as we have capacity for 50 million gallons.

Harvest was a long drawn out affair this year with plenty of gas used in the Egmore drier. It was a real godsend this year and performed with only a few small hiccups. Paul Bloomfield was up to his ears in wet wheat many evenings but coped admirably. Combining went on in all weathers and at one point, the rain was bucketing down as Kent Cooper tried to finish a field. With 100 yards to go we had to admit defeat and retire to the barn again.

All was gathered by early September however, and the drilling started. Again, weather ruled the day and we have struggled ever since, snatching odd days here and there. With more power on the drill tractor this year and the front linkage, Kevin Bray could use our old press ahead of the drill, which he enjoyed immensely!

Johnny Hall has been busy in the workshop refurbishing tractors for the Woods Dept and also some major repairs to our biggest tractor. Hopefully, by the time you read this, we should have a shiny new replacement.

The new corral at Warham for the winter cattle housing is nearing completion and should make life easier for Jimmy Fray and Stephen Attridge this year.

Well done all for the super human effort this harvest and autumn and we all hope for a more clement year in 2005.

Michael Turner
Farm Manager

Management training

I have to admit to being a little sceptical about 'management training' before our first meeting with Charles Baylay at Jarrolds in Norwich, probably because I did not know what to expect.

However, the meeting was fascinating and on the drive back to Holkham, Lord Coke and I agreed that we should write to invite Charles to do some training with the management team.

Subsequently, Lord Leicester, Tom, Mike Wyard and I had our personal profiles assessed, followed by two long sessions with Charles, discussing Holkham in terms of values, objectives and expectations. At the end of the process, we agreed on a set of values and a mission statement for the Estate, which is:

"The Holkham Estate will work to ensure that the Hall and wider Estate are managed and enhanced to the highest standards so that we are one of the very best to be enjoyed by future generations."

We all agreed that the sessions were incredibly useful and focussed our minds on the Estate and its future. As a result of our training, we asked Charles Baylay to run a management training course for heads of department. Sadly, numbers had to be limited to 10, so some missed out. Everyone had individual interviews with Charles and had their personal profiles assessed to help determine their management style.

I think it is fair to say that a number of misgivings were expressed at the first meeting. However, after the second session, it became obvious that people were pulling together and realising that frustrations felt in individual departments, were common across the Estate.

After seven weekly sessions, each manager gave a short presentation about what they had learned and gained from the course. The common theme was that the course had encouraged a team spirit and better communication between heads of department. Problems and concerns that had been identified at the outset were discussed openly and frankly

HOLKHAM OBJECTIVES

- **Business** — "The Holkham Estate will manage its businesses and assets profitably and efficiently and will develop profitable new ventures."
- **People** — "The Holkham Estate will engender a sense of belonging across the Estate, which will encourage commitment, enjoyment, pride and reward."
- **Customer Service** — "The Holkham Estate commits to deliver to all customers both internal and external, an excellent level of service, thereby enhancing perception of the Estate and encouraging repeat business."
- **Conservation** — "The Holkham Estate will continue to manage the land in its custodianship through innovative conservation techniques and responsible farming to improve the rural environment and achieve increased biodiversity."
- **Education** — "The Holkham Estate will educate and inform so as to enhance understanding of the role of the Estate within the local community and to encourage access to all the Estate has to offer."

with the senior management team at a separate meeting.

In the autumn, we set up 'Business Objective Groups', each made up of six or seven managers (including those not on the original course) to discuss the implementation of the Estate's five objectives, along with 'milestones' that we are going to achieve. The findings of these discussions were presented at a breakfast meeting at the Hall in November.

Talk is cheap, but all the managers involved in setting the objectives and milestones are committed to ensuring that we realise our goals and it is now up to us to ensure that we deliver. We have all been charged with introducing these ideas to people in our own departments. I expect that there will be some initial doubt and suspicion, but I honestly feel that if we all believe in the way forward, we will see long-term benefits for everyone involved in Holkham Estate.

*Richard Gledson
Land Agent*

GARDENS DEPARTMENT

OUR biggest highlight since the last Newsletter was the wedding of Lady Leicester's daughter, Sabina de Chair, to Archie Struthers in September, for which we did all the flowers.

I really enjoyed arranging all the flowers with Lady Leicester, though getting it all done on time involved a few late nights, a raid of the borders in the nursery gardens for foliage and a late night meeting in a car park to pick up flowers.

However, the end result made it all worthwhile. The rest of the Garden staff also put in some long hours to ensure that the terraces around the Hall looked the part. My wife Alison and our children even helped out on the night before the wedding to get everything spick and span.

The summer's unpredictable weather meant that one minute it was lovely and sunny, and the next it was raining heavily.

The Hall

IN July, the Diva Opera returned to Holkham to perform *Lucia de Lammermoor* in aid of one of my favourite charities, The Norfolk Churches Trust.

We were fortunate to attract some generous sponsors for the event, including Charles Dunstone of The Carphone Warehouse, who, along with a completely full house for the concert in the Marble Hall, enabled us to raise £20,000. Next year, Diva Opera will perform *Eugene Onegin* on Friday 1st July and *Tosca* on Saturday 2nd July.

This autumn, Holkham hosted the last of the Society for the Performing Arts in North Norfolk (SPANN) concerts, once again organised by Heinz Liebrecht. Over the years, Heinz, who is now 97 years old, and was awarded an MBE in 1998 for his services to music, has promoted dozens of concerts of the highest calibre. It must all seem a long way from the days he spent in the Dackau Prisoner of War camp in the Second World War. Internationally renowned musicians used to performing in such places as the Wigmore Hall, Covent Garden, La Scala Milan and The Royal Albert Hall, have come to Holkham and have given enormous pleasure to thousands of music lovers here in north Norfolk. We are deeply indebted to Heinz, for his boundless enthusiasm and vision in bringing us music from all centuries, by composers of all nationalities.

I would also like to thank the SPANN team of Uri Liebrecht, Trish Kemp, Petronella Crossley, and Desmond Swinburn (our page turner) for all their help over the years. Not forgetting the Building Department and all the staff in the house for putting the stage up, fixing the lighting into position, and arranging 180 chairs for each concert.

The 18th September 2004 saw the culmination of months of planning when my daughter, Sabina, married Archie Struthers from Argyllshire. Luckily, it was a warm and sunny day, with no real disasters, apart from the well-publicised story of my Labrador, Himba, who ate two tiers of the wedding cake! After a spell in the doghouse, Sabina asked Himba to be a bridesmaid, along with the rest of her entourage, including Lord Leicester's grandchildren, Minna and Juno Coke dressed as Flamenco dancers, and Barnaby Paul as an Argentinian Goucho.



ABOVE: Sabina and Archie Struthers on their wedding day, with their parents, pages, bridesmaids and Himba the Labrador.

I am enormously grateful and thankful to all our staff who helped me to arrange the wedding, and all contributed towards making it a very special day for Sabina and Archie.

To David Palmer, our butler, whose expertise was invaluable. To all my girls in the house, led by Doreen Raven, along with Hall Administrator Mike Daley and his team of Colin Shearer, Ian Barrett, Gary Raven and 'Hooker' (Mark Taylor). Very many thanks also to Peter Godwin, our Head Gardener, for helping me to arrange all the flowers in the church and Brian Frary and Oliver Forest for making the gardens around the house look immaculate.

To Brian Ayton who polished and chauffeured the 1908 yellow Wolsey Sidley, which took the bride to and from the church; Norman Smyth who drove the Bentley and gamekeeper Martin Joyce who marshalled cars through the Church Lodge gates. Also, thanks to Suzanne Loxton, Marilyn Franklin and Jane Haynes for typing endless lists and seating plans, the Greshams Choir, which, under the direction of Mark Jones, sang beautifully during the service, and of course, Reverend Tony Douglas, who married Sabina and Archie. It was an unforgettable day!

Archie and Sabina spent their honeymoon in Mozambique, Botswana and Namibia, and are now back in New York, where Archie works for investment bankers Merrill Lynch, and Sabina designs shoes for Ralph Lauren.

The Countess of Leicester

It seemed every time we fertilised the lawns or weed killed, it was followed by torrential rain that made the grass grow like crazy and the weed killer leech away so it was ineffective! But I guess that's just gardening — nothing is ever straight forward, and we just about managed to keep on top of everything.

The work on the new garden at Model Farm is on-going. We have been cutting the large arboretum regularly this summer and that has turned it into quite a nice green area. With the help of the Woods Department, we have cleared the eucalyptus wood and with regular cutting over the next year, this should also

become an attractive area. We have also helped put up two new steel buildings, one either side of the canal. These have had very impressive lead roofs put on them that look really good.

At the time of writing, we are re-doing the herbaceous borders at Model Farm. This involves digging everything out, weeding, digging in leaf mould, and replanting, leaving plenty of gaps, so that we can add different plants to extend the flowering season.

**Peter Godwin
Head Gardener**

Behind the scenes at the Hall

WITH another summer season over, we have two new members to welcome to the Hall team and two farewells to make.

Firstly, welcome Mark Taylor, known as 'Hooker' to one and all except me — I know him as, "where's he gone now"! Mark took over from Mick Thompson and has rapidly assimilated all the complications of the job. You know the kind of thing: what time coffee/tea is on offer in any given department, how to lose a radio, and how to become invisible in less than a nanno second. In truth, Mark has made a great start in the house and lives up to his reputation for being 'multi-skilled'.

A warm welcome also to Thelma Torr, who joined the Room Steward team this season and soon became adept in interpreting the house and its history to our visitors.

Sadly, we said goodbye to two of our longest serving Room Stewards in Doreen Leitch and Diana Groom. They were both terrific stewards whose wonderfully warm personalities and great knowledge and enthusiasm for the Hall, enabled them to strike up a first class rapport with the public. I am extremely grateful for all their support and hard work over the years and wish them both well for the future.



ABOVE: The Jolly Stairclimber has proved to be a real hit with wheelchair-bound visitors.

We are all very proud to have won the East of England Tourist Board's 'Small Visitor Attraction' of the year award. I am sure that our success was due, in no small measure, to the excellence of all our Room Stewards and support staff. Thank you all very much indeed.

The biggest surprise of the season was the impact of our stair-climbing machine (a factor which also helped us to win the award). It became an overnight sensation and is the most photographed object in the house. Most of the visitors who used the device soon realised it was obligatory to give a regal wave as they ascended/descended the Marble Hall stairs.

MARKETING DEPARTMENT

HAVING won the regional final for the 'Tourism website of the year' in the East of England Tourist Board's 2003 annual Excellence in England Awards, Holkham decided to enter the competition again this year, in a bid to win the 'Small Visitor Attraction of the Year', for those attractions with fewer than 100,000 visitors a year.

Our entry was boosted thanks to many improvements, including:

- The relocation of the History of Farming Exhibition
- The launch of the new compendium promotional leaflet and follow on guide book
- The re-launch of the Holkham Centre
- Staff training in various 'Welcome to Excellence' courses
- The major effort made to enhance disabled access with the purchase of the Jolly Stair Climber to transport wheelchair users up the stairs in the Marble Hall and an all-weather metal ramp to the North entrance of the Hall.
- The Countryside Stewardship scheme and conservation policies adopted by the Estate and overall ethos of restore and repair, rather than replace.

Supporting video footage of Holkham with my commentary was filmed in September and unbeknown to us, our entry was also vetted by several visits from some of the judging panel. The results and presentation were held at the East of England Tourist



ABOVE: Promotions Manager, Laurane Herrieven accepts our award from David Sheepshanks (left) and Jonathan Bowman (right).

Board's (EETB) Annual General Meeting at Ipswich Town Football Club in October. Each finalist's video was shown and the results announced. I was delighted to accept the award on behalf of Holkham from the Chairman of Ipswich Town Football Club, David Sheepshanks and the EETB Chairman Jonathan Bowman.

Holkham is now one of nine regional finalists put forward to the Excellence in England Awards to be presented in April 2005 and we keep our fingers crossed for continued success!

Laurane Herrieven
Promotions Manager

The response from carers and other visitors has been very positive. It even gets a mention in the guided tours. It has been the greatest pleasure to assist those of our guests who find the stairs difficult or impossible to manage.

The process of connecting wheelchairs to the machine and then the trip up does look a little daunting and demands a certain degree of faith by the user. One of the first stair climbers was a lady of 91, who, when I asked if she felt comfortable about using the machine replied: "At my age anything is an adventure — what's the worst that can happen?"

At the time of writing, Lou Bailey and Ian Barrett have stripped out the high level lighting in the Saloon and are well on the way to up grading the system to the same standard as the Marble Hall and North Dining Room. A trial run with some of the new fittings showed that much more of the Saloon ceiling will be illuminated and when complete, will really bring the gilding to life.

Gary Raven continues to progress towards his final heating engineer exams and has been working with the Longlands team whenever he can be spared from the house. I wish you better luck with your exams than you've had with your vans Gary.

Our visitors continue to surprise and delight us with their view of the house and its occupants, here is just a selection of comments overheard this season:

On the Green State Bedroom:

"All these doors open into Narnia"

Referring to the acquisition of the tapestries:

"Oh yes, of course when they went on their Grand Tours they raped and pillaged."

Parrot Bedroom:

"This is just like the Indian take-away in Romford."

North State Bedroom:

"This room smells just like Grandma."

"Do you look after the paintings or do they just hang there?"

The Saloon:

"The tables come from Hadrian's Wall."

On being told that there were Room Stewards in each of the rooms, a visitor asked: "Do they speak?"

Mike Daley
Hall Administrator

UP, UP AND AWAY

FIRSTLY, I would very much like to thank everyone who contributed towards my leaving cards, presents and the hot air balloon flight. I would especially like to thank my old boss, Mike Daley, who arranged a lunchtime gathering to mark my retirement from my job in the Hall.

The balloon flight was amazing (see picture below). We took off from Easton near Norwich on Friday, 23rd July and headed south towards the Norfolk Broads, at a speed of six knots and a height of 1,500ft. We then turned north to Hellesden, landing in a field just north of Hellesden Hospital. The views were out of this world and it really was a trip of a lifetime.

Now I am retired, I am finding it hard to understand how I ever had time to go to work. Purdey and I have had a wonderful summer, fishing down on the beach and doing the housework and cooking — as Pam is not letting me relax much!

I will miss Holkham, as I have indirectly worked there since I was 12 years old and I used to help my father and grandfather repair the Overy Bank and the North Bank at Wells. When I left school, I started working full-time for my grandfather and father's building firm, spending much of the time re-felting roofs on Holkham houses and barns, as well as modernising four milking parlours for the Estate.

I started work for the Estate's Building Department in March 1969 and have been at Holkham ever since, so the Estate has always been a very big part of my life. Later, I switched to working in the Hall and also enjoyed many happy times on the game lorry in the shooting season. I also used to play regularly for the Holkham Cricket Club.

Before I retired in June 2004, I thought I might like a small memento of my time at the Hall, and made a small space on a wall at home. The only trouble was that the space was so little that the Rubens would have had to hang sideways and would not have looked right!

My contacts make sure that I keep up with all the goings-on around the Estate, but I am missing all my friends and colleagues, and, once again, I would like to thank everyone very much for everything.

Mick Thompson



HOLKHAM ART GALLERY

2004 was a very successful season for the Holkham Gallery, with a large number of visitors and the continuing support of the staff in the shop.

In addition to the ongoing display of a wide range of work, the five very different exhibitions held this year offered an additional attraction, which kicked off with watercolours by Katie Millard.

The second exhibition of photographs by John Hansell in July, was as popular as in 2003. His collection of new photographs included a wonderful set of three photographs showing the beach huts at Wells aptly titled, 'All of the Beach Huts Wells'. Many could not resist the temptation to buy one or the whole set as a reminder of their childhood or of a holiday. One set of John's photographs was bought by Pinewoods Holiday Park, to go on display in its reception area.

June and Alwyn Crawshaw, well-known for their television programmes and books on art, were in the gallery to meet visitors during the first two days of their exhibition in August,



ABOVE: Just one of the pictures featured in the recent 'Norfolk Wildlife' exhibition at the Holkham Art Gallery.

providing the opportunity for many budding artists to discuss their work. It resulted in much publicity for the gallery including an interview about the exhibition and gallery on *BBC Radio Norfolk*.

'Magical Beach Huts' brought together a collection of works by various artists, photographers and print makers. Not surprisingly, the beach huts at Wells were well represented with the display being enhanced by work by Simon Neale who has built many of the new huts at Wells. The exhibition attracted much attention and also saw the introduction of work by new artists to the gallery. The final exhibition of the year has been 'Norfolk Wildlife', again a collection of works by various artists and new names.

An increasing number of people have been 'knocking on the door' hoping to exhibit in the gallery, favouring the more relaxed atmosphere and wide range of work when compared with some other galleries.

Suzanne Pannell
Gallery Manager



A new lake (see above) was formed in the Park after a torrential downpour on 13th August. Pinewoods Holiday Park was deluged by water, prompting a TV appearance on *BBC Look East*, while West Lodge was struck by lightning, which caused a hole in the roof.



Christmas at Cuckoo

LEFT: Toby Crafer and Graham Thomas of GT decorators, have repainted Cuckoo Lodge in time for Christmas, so that it can be let to guests through The Victoria Hotel.

STOP PRESS

HOLKHAM Estate is in the process of buying The Globe Inn in Wells-next-the-Sea (pictured below), having had an offer accepted at the end of November.

The pub, which has been owned and run by Greene King for many years, is in an excellent location on The Buttlands.

We hope to complete the purchase in January and after extensive refurbishment, plan to re-open The Globe in the summer, as a family orientated pub with rooms.

Richard Gledson
Land Agent



Holkham Pottery

WHAT a great year the shops have had. Turnover is up considerably on last season, being boosted by sales of the new Bridgewater mugs designed by Matthew Rice, which have proved a great success. Of the seven different designs the most popular is, coincidentally, the one depicting words relating to Norfolk, featured in the last issue of the Newsletter.

Sales of giftware have also been rising year on year and this year has been no exception. At the end of last season, when it had become obvious that our present stockroom was just not big enough to store the increasing amount of giftware we held, we took two further rooms from the Factory area, which were transformed by Barry Turner's team. This was well worth it, as we are now able to hold larger quantities and more varied stock for the shops throughout the season, offering our customers even greater choices.

An article in *Country Living* in September showed a picture of one of our Bridgewater mugs, which resulted in several small orders being placed.

One of the downsides of my job is saying goodbye to seasonal staff. This year Tricia Cox, Dianne Johnson, Angie Mansell and Heather Jacklin left at the end of October, and I

would like to say a big thank you to all of them. Those remaining to work in the Holkham Centre over the winter are Jill Watson, Caroline Muncey, Julie Gould and Judy Howard.

The Pottery Shop in the Park closed at the end of a very quiet October. By contrast, half-term week at Holkham Centre was busier than ever, with large numbers of visitors all week.

The Holkham Centre remains open from Wednesdays to Sundays until Christmas, and then it will be open for two weeks from Monday 27th December 2004 to Sunday 9th January 2005. Thereafter it will be open on weekends only until Easter.

At some point during the early part of 2005, we are looking forward to work beginning on refurbishment of the lavatories at Holkham Centre, as I understand planning permission has now been obtained. It is hoped work will be completed for next season's Easter opening.

Sylvia Daley
Retail Manager

BUILDING MAINTENANCE

SINCE the last Newsletter was published, we have lost David Eaglen from our joinery shop. David decided to leave to broaden his skills and has joined a window company in King's Lynn — we wish him well.

We welcome Liam Roe who has joined Ron Teague in the joinery shop as an apprentice joiner. The joinery shop has been busy manufacturing new windows and doors for Hector's Housing Ltd, to be used on the new conservatory extension at The Victoria Hotel. The windows have been made to an intricate design and we must congratulate Ron and his staff on the excellent quality of work they have produced. We would also like to welcome Darren Cave, who has joined us as an additional bricklayer. Darren has moved to Norfolk from Hertfordshire with his wife Kerry and their daughter Emily, and are at present living at Pink Cottages Egmere.

Over the past six months we have been refurbishing 13 & 16 Pink Cottages, Egmere and have now started work on No 17. The properties have had new oil-fired central heating, new double-glazed windows (all made in our joinery), kitchens and showers fitted. Work has also been carried out with the electrics, plastering and roofs, and they have been re-decorated internally. We have also refurbished 16, Burnham Overy Town.

This year, as we had such a wet summer, we had difficulties completing the external painting of the houses in Warham Village. Staff have endeavoured to complete all properties, but

this has been unsuccessful and work has now stopped and we will start again in the spring.

Some of you will have noticed that we have outside contractors insulating your roofs on Estate properties, this has been completed at Warham and the next phase is Wighton which should be in progress as you read this Newsletter. We trust you find this has been a success, and is saving money on your heating bills for those tenants where the work has been completed.

Future projects to keep an eye open for include:

- The proposed new toilet block at the beach end of Lady Anne's Drive (we are still awaiting all approvals).
- Alterations to the existing toilets at the Holkham Centre
- The completion of The Orangery at The Victoria Hotel.
- The refurbishment of Cuckoo Lodge, Wells, which is to be rented to The Victoria Hotel as holiday accommodation.

Finally, I would just like to say thank you to Mike Daley at the Hall for allowing us the use of Gary Raven two-days-a-week to help us through our busy plumbing periods. Gary is training to become a plumber/heating engineer and this has also been good experience for him. We would also like to thank Hector's Housing Ltd, for the use of Mark Fullwood on odd occasions when we have emergency plumbing/heating problems.

Barry Turner
Building Maintenance Manager

Hector's Housing Ltd

OUR Upper Mill project at Hindringham has progressed only steadily through the summer due to the fact that purchasers had initially been very slow coming forward to take up our new properties.

Although a lot of interest has been shown in the properties, particularly at the two open days we held in July and September, most of the interested parties have not been in a position to move towards a sale completion, which seems to be a general problem in our particular area of the housing market.

At the time of writing, the situation has taken a positive turn, and we have received deposits on three of the four houses.

Other projects undertaken over the summer have included repairs to the Park wall, re-building a collapsed arch at Waterden Farm and some re-pointing of brickwork at Longlands (all in lime mortar).

In July, Hector's tendered for and won the contract to build the Orangery at The Victoria Hotel. Work started on 20th September and it is expected that the work will have been completed by Christmas. Holkham Building Maintenance and Windowcraft are deeply involved in the joinery elements of the construction, with the paint being supplied by Holkham Linseed Paints.

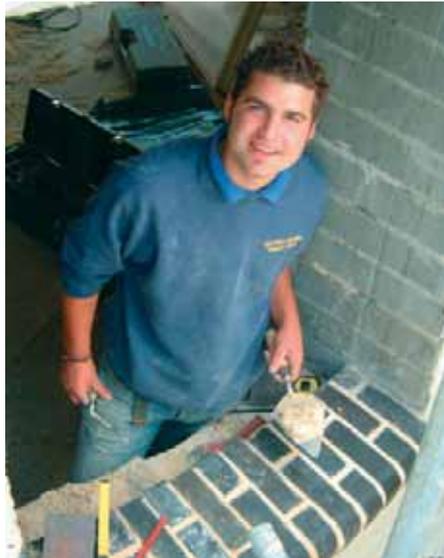
We are also advertising the services of Hector's plumbing and heating engineers, Mark Fullwood and his new assistant, Tom Hulme, to the private sector. So, if you know anyone needs a qualified plumber or heating engineer, tell them to contact Cherry Case, tel: (01328) 711896.

On 27th October, Lord Coke, Ian Cable and I attended an award ceremony at County Hall, Norwich, hosted by the

Norfolk Society (Campaign to Protect Rural England). Tom and Ian were awarded Highly Commended plaques for the construction and design of the new and old cottages at Creake Road, Burnham Thorpe and the four new cottages at Chapel Street, Warham.

In line with our staff development policy, training courses have been organised as follows:

- William Owen has qualified as a digger driver, complete with operator's certification.
- Ben Jeffrey has started an NVQ 1&2 carpentry course.
- Robin Owen has completed his NVQ level 2 in bricklaying and is now doing his NVQ 3 (advanced level).



Award-winning bricklayer, Robin Owen.

Incidentally, you may have seen in the local Press, Robin's recent success, representing the College of West Anglia at an inter-college competition, in winning the Carter Gold Award for brickwork (see picture left).

Cherry Case attended a course in London run by Sage on how to link our Sage accounts package with Microsoft Office programmes, which will no doubt be a great asset in the production of our accounts. In conjunction with Finance

Director, Mike Wyard, Cherry has also produced a staff training and development plan for the forthcoming year, which hopefully will bring us quite a sizeable amount of grant money from the CITB.

I attended a Scaffold Inspection course at Bircham Newton in June, qualifying me to inspect all our scaffolding for safety and Natalie Barrows has recently passed her driving test. (This is not a warning to Newsletter readers!)

Cliff Jeffrey
Project Manager



Game Department

THE weather this year has not been in our favour as far as our wild pheasants and partridges are concerned. It started off looking quite good, but as the partridge chicks began to hatch in June, the rain arrived and it didn't stop.

This prolonged wet spell had a greater effect on the game birds on parts of the estate where there are no stewardship headlands. The headlands provide a drying off area for birds, along with food and shelter.

However, the breeding season has not been a total disaster as we have still had enough stock of grey partridge to shoot across the estate and we had an especially good day on the Burnham Thorpe beat earlier this season, when Lord Coke and his Guns bagged 46 brace.

Four of our keepers, Robert Heaton, Stephen Herrieven, Julian Bond and Andrew Gyton represented the Estate when they shot as a team for The Victoria Hotel at the Adnams Clayshoot in September and won the open Norfolk class.

Elsewhere, Richard Futter and Martin Joyce (or should I say their respective other halves, Catherine and Teresa) are delighted with the work the Building Department has completed in their houses. This is especially welcome news for Catherine who is expecting twins in January.

WOODS DEPARTMENT

THE Woods Department has been busy clearing out the scrub at South Lodge, Quarles Five Crossways and New Holkham cross roads.



Conservation work has also been undertaken at Waterden Farm, where the department has opened up the duck ponds by removing all the Poplar trees (see picture above).

Hedge restoration work for the Countryside Stewardship scheme is underway. This year we will coppice nearly 4km of hedges across the Estate.

Staff have spent a lot of time opening up the Park by removing low boughs. They have also cleared flushing points for the Game Department at Cow Plantation, Creak Common and Fuschia Walk and cut firewood and faggots for the Hall.

Ian McNab
Head Forester



ABOVE: TV Presenter Danny Boome cooking Holkham venison.

The deer in the Park are looking well. The rut has been quite spectacular this year as we have more master bucks (the ones which smell and roar, making an eerie sound at night that echoes round the Park). Richard Bailey has achieved this through selective culling of inferior bucks.

The deer herd will also feature in a cookery programme called, *Norfolk's Coastal Kitchen*, which will be broadcast on Anglia TV in January. The presenter interviewed us about how we manage the herd and finished by cooking a very tasty venison recipe in our kitchen (see above).

You or your friends can buy a whole carcass (at £4.50 per kilo) or a half carcass (at £5 per kilo) of venison from the Estate (a whole carcass will cost approximately £100). To order some venison or indeed some game birds, please contact me, tel: (01328) 711695.

In November, the Estate hosted the International Gundog League Retriever Championship, which was very successful and is the highlight of the year for field trial competitors.

I am pleased to report that our trainee keeper, Andrew Gyton, who has been working with Martin Joyce on the Burnham Thorpe beat for the past two years, has secured a job as a full-time keeper for Earl Spencer, who owns land at Shammer, near Burnham Market. We thank Andrew for all he has done for Holkham and wish him well in his new job.

Finally, the Game Department was recently featured on *BBC Countryfile*. The TV crew interviewed Lord Leicester, Lord Coke, his Guns and me about the sport. They also filmed Wells butcher Arthur Howell and Vic Head Chef, Neil Dowson, talking about how game birds are plucked and eaten. The programme was a great success, and portrayed shooting in a positive light, which is much-needed in these dark times for country sports. A telephone vote at the end of the programme concluded that 91% of callers were in favour of shooting, with 9% against. I am grateful to Lord Leicester, Lord Coke and Mr Gledson for agreeing to let the cameras onto the Estate. Personally, I felt very proud (and nervous) to represent Holkham, my profession and the countryside.

Simon Lester
Headkeeper

Restorative qualities

Nicholas Hills explains how the Coke family monuments at Tittleshall Church have been brought back to their former glory thanks to a £70,000 restoration project

ALTHOUGH members of the Coke family are commemorated in other Norfolk churches, it is at St Mary the Virgin, at Tittleshall, where the Lord Chief Justice, Edward Coke (1551-1634) and the family were commemorated, and their bodies encased in the mausoleum attached to the north side of the Chancel during the period 1569-1842.

Afterwards, burials and resulting memorials were made at Holkham's parish church, St Withburga's, where only in the tomb of Juliana Whitbread, is the great sculptural tradition begun at Tittleshall continued. Later Cokes preferred to be remembered by more down-to-earth gravestones in the churchyard.

Time takes its toll on marble and iron, which has caused problems for the monuments. When iron starts to rust, it expands, which dislodges and stains the marble. Enormous pressure can build up within the marble casing and, when we took one monument apart, a panel of marble exploded into hundreds of pieces, adding an extra £3,000 to the repair bill.

The first table tomb to be erected depicts Bridget Paston (1565-1598), the first wife of Sir Edward Coke, dutifully kneeling facing east, with a frieze of seven of her children below. It is made from alabaster, the same material that was used to face the Marble Hall at Holkham Hall. Very little repair work needed to be done, apart from securing the coat of arms at the top with stainless steel dowels and replacing some rosettes on the arch surround and a set of child's hands that had broken off.

Sir Edward Coke's monument, to the north of the altar, is a much more elaborate affair, made out of black and white marble. A recumbent figure lies facing east, carved in white marble, on top of a black marble sarcophagus. There is also an architectural frame in the form of two columns supporting an entablature with broken pediment supporting figures lolling on top representing justice, prudence, temperance and fortitude.

As a preliminary to the repairs of the sarcophagus, the carved figure was removed on rollers, when it became apparent that the black marble facing slabs could be removed and the iron clamps replaced without totally dismantling the base of the structure.

During the course of the work, a cherub's wing was recovered from behind the figure and reattached. The four pediment figures were removed for cleaning and re-fixing with stainless steel.



ABOVE: The monument to the first Earl.

The monument to the builder of Holkham Hall, Thomas Coke, later the first Earl of Leicester, (see above) is an appropriately architectural one, with two columns supporting a correctly Palladian entablature. Here, however, the centre-piece is not a figure, but the family coat of arms above a plain sarcophagus. At the corners to each side, are superb portrait busts by Roubiliac to the Earl and Countess.

The surface of the marble had deteriorated, which was partly due to the damp walls behind it. It was necessary to dismantle the entire structure and reconstruct it piece by piece on a block work core, with all the former iron clamps replaced by stainless steel.

The re-building was not without incident, when in dismantling the backing marble on which the coat of arms is placed, the whole panel suddenly shattered and sent the carving crashing to the floor. If nothing else, the restorers at the Skillington Workshop Ltd in Lincolnshire have doubtless learned a lesson when dealing with a similar situation in the future.

All the monuments now look magnificent, however, the Siena marble sarcophagus looks particularly well against the cream tinted lime wash of the wall behind (see above).

BELOW: Roubiliac's portrait of the first Earl; the shattered Coke coat of arms after it crashed to the floor; the heraldic panel back in one piece.





Picture perfect

Landscape photographer, **Harry Cory Wright**, explains how he captured this magical image of **Holkham Bay**

SOMETIMES, it's a tough decision. You drive to Lady Anne's Drive; park your car, walk under the big Ilex tree, and step up onto the boardwalk approaching Holkham Beach — and then ask, "which way shall we go?"

Left through the trees, or to the east? Out of the northerly wind and along the south side of the woods? Straight out towards the sea into the teeth of a gale, or that walk on a hot summer's day through all the scents of the pinewoods towards Burnham Overy, and then out into the fresh breeze off the sea, through the dunes and along the seawall? Sometimes we've already made up our minds; some of us always go to the beach, turn right.

But there's still the opportunity to choose a different route. You could walk Holkham woods for all your life and never take the same path twice. I think this is why so often there is a sense of magic at Holkham.

Much of the Estate at Holkham remains relatively similar through the seasons. Even in the Park, during the bustle of

Country Fair, the Hall still retains its grandeur. At Holkham Bay however, something different happens. Subtle shifts in the light can render the whole scene, as you've never witnessed it before. All those familiar horizons, shapes and colours can suddenly seem to be another place entirely. I have pictures of the beach in such atrocious weather that people can barely recognise it.

This photograph is the result of one of those moments. I knew that the tide was in and that it was a big one, but I had not realised quite how still it was going to be, and how fully the tide was to cover the whole bay.

For a couple of hours, the light and the tide gave Holkham a look and feel that was somehow familiar, but also full of a northern enchantment; beguiling, mysterious and exciting.

• *To see more of Harry's photography, visit the Saltwater Gallery in Burnham Market, open Monday to Saturday, from 11am until 5pm, featuring pictures from Norfolk and the coastline of the British Isles.*

MONEY RAISED FOR AIR AMBULANCE

FREDDIE Futter, from the Woods Department and his wife Carolyn are pictured with Linda and Billy Hall, a former Holkham farm foreman, and the Air Ambulance crew following the presentation of £1,000, which was raised at their annual Vintage Tractor Working Day, held by kind permission of Holkham tenant farmer, Des Wright.

The proceeds from the last three Vintage Tractor Working Days have gone to the Air Ambulance and totals £2,920. Previous years have raised £1,641 for the Heritage House Daycare Centre in Wells and £2,145 for Wells Hospital. Raffle and tombola prizes are always welcome every year, along with donations to the Air Ambulance.

The helicopter has been seen frequently in this area over the summer. Thank you to everyone who kindly donates so generously in our part of north Norfolk.



ABOVE: Freddie and Carolyn Futter and Linda and Billy Hall present a cheque for £1,000 to the Air Ambulance.

Pinewoods Holiday Park

AS this is my first article for the Holkham Newsletter, I thought I'd better start by introducing myself.

My name is Richard Seabrooke, and I have been married to Linda for 28 years (I think, what man knows for sure) and we have two daughters, Sarah and Sian. We met while we were still at school, I was at KES and she was at King's Lynn High School for girls. So, yes, I am from Norfolk and under certain circumstances the accent is apparent.

When I left school, I went into the motor trade, starting at Hunstanton as a car salesman (I didn't want to go to university and the job came with a company car, so what better reason do you need).

In the mid-1980s I was persuaded to change careers and joined Bourne Leisure. During my time with Bourne,

I managed holiday parks in south and north Wales, Berwick-upon-Tweed and in the Clacton area.

My first recent visit to Pinewoods was on 13th August this year, the day of those almost tropical rainstorms. My mother tells me I got stuck on the boating lake when I was 13, but I can't remember that (well, who would).

From the point of view of operating holiday parks the past two seasons have been as different as you can imagine. Unfortunately, good weather is a major factor in what our business is about and in 2004 we simply didn't get it.

Thankfully, Pinewoods' reputation is such that the weather didn't destroy our year. Even on my visit in August, the one memory I came away with, was the children riding their bikes through the lakes (which I now know are roads), swimming costumes on and laughing all the time. I have quickly learnt that this is the type of family we attract, the location, landscaping and quality of the caravans and park all make this a traditional holiday park. One where everyone makes the most of what is happening.

On the 31st October we shut the park to all but hire fleet and owners with central heating and double glazing (the owners extend their season if they want to). It's always difficult telling our owners it's time to go home, but at Pinewoods they all wanted to stay. I am sure this says a lot about how the business has changed since the Estate took over the management in 1996 and it is a very positive sign for the future, which I am very happy to be part of.



Above: New General Manager, Richard Seabrooke and accountant, Mike Robinson.

Richard Seabrooke
General Manager

The Victoria Hotel

IT has been a very exciting year for The Victoria Hotel. Despite the inclement weather, the hotel has been extremely busy and has enjoyed continued support from both Norfolk people and also return custom from further a field such as London and the East Midlands.

As usual, we have had a fairly transient staff through the summer, but many departments have had a settled team throughout the year. Peter Coates and Valerie Bray have now been our reception team for nearly a year. Both have done a great job throughout the year, and it is largely down to them that the occupancy levels of the hotel have been higher than ever.

Our Housekeeping team has also been with us some time and have coped well with the busy period especially with the added work involved with Palmer's Lodge and more recently, Triumphal Arch. A particular mention should go to Sharon Thorn, who continues to look after the lodges with meticulous detail. Congratulations are also due to Sue Biddle, who has been promoted to Assistant Manager. At the end of the summer we said goodbye to many of our seasonal staff including Jack Griffin and Monica Bengtsson, who have worked particularly hard.

The success of the refurbished accommodation at Palmer's Lodge in the Park, resulted in us pressing forward with similar projects such as the renovation of the Triumphal Arch, at the South Gates of the Park. Interior designer, Monica Vinader and her team, have made the Arch a unique and



ABOVE: The Triumphal Arch, just outside the south entrance to the Park. RIGHT: Cuckoo Lodge, near Wells.

special place to stay. More recently we have had the opportunity to take on Cuckoo Lodge (right), which we hope will be refurbished in time for Christmas.



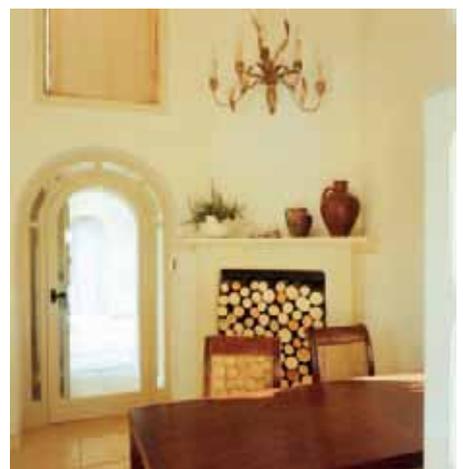
Work is on going on an extension at The Victoria. The Orangery will add a further 28 seats to our restaurant and it will prove vital especially during the busy summer months.

Finally, I'm pleased to report that The Victoria has achieved 2 AA rosettes for its food and service. This is thanks to the consistent quality of food produced by the kitchen and the excellent standard of service from our waiters and waitresses.

*Paul Brown
General Manager*



Clockwise from left: (The Triumphal Arch comprises two separate areas of accommodation). The East Wing lounge; the East Wing bedroom and bathroom and the kitchen in the West Wing.



Holkham National Nature Reserve

WE have had a fairly eventful summer on the Nature Reserve despite some pretty poor weather that kept visitors well below last years record numbers.

On several occasions we were called upon to assist the emergency services in a number of incidents involving serious injuries. The air ambulance was called out six times to deal with stricken people whose injuries/conditions ranged from heart attack, spinal injuries, broken leg and hypothermia, whilst the paramedics were also called out six times to attend less serious injuries, that included treating a young boy who stepped on a weaver fish.

The new Holkham National Nature Reserve and Holkham Park booklet was published in July and has received favourable comments. It is a very attractive 24-page booklet and can be obtained from Holkham Estate Office, the English Nature Office at Holkham or the library at Wells-next-the-Sea. The booklet is free of charge and will also be available via dispensers situated at Lady Anne's Drive and Beach Road Car Park from Easter onwards.

With the exception of terns, our wildlife had a fairly productive breeding season. The late arrival of our terns and low attendance at traditional breeding sites gave a hint of problems ahead for little, common and sandwich terns. With numbers well down on recent years the breeding season eventually got underway but there were concerns about the availability of their staple diet, whitebait and sand eels, which



ABOVE: The weed wiper in use at Burnham Norton.

appeared to be in short supply. In the event, wet weather combined with high winds, high tides and sand blow brought the season to an abrupt end for most terns, the only exception being a few pairs of little tern that managed to fledge 16 young at Wells. To my knowledge, these were the only little terns reared on the north Norfolk Coast this summer.

Breeding birds fared much better on the grazing marshes where 237 pairs of lapwing fledged at least 118 young, 55 pairs of avocet fledged 45 young, and 42 pairs of little egret fledged about 126 young and 28 marsh harriers fledged from 10 nests. Also of note were up to 17 pairs of snipe, 14 pairs of bearded tit (seven pairs in 2003) and 2 pairs of little ringed plover.

Our natterjack toads had a bumper season after a slow start and despite enduring heavy predation of tadpoles by birds, newts and the likes of diving beetles and dragonfly nymphs. I estimate that around 5-6,000 toadlets left the ponds at Burnham Overy. The best result in recent years.

We were also kept busy on the habitat management front throughout the summer. To maintain good relations, we assisted the graziers where possible to ensure the grassland is maintained in optimum condition for wildlife.

We also carried out thistle, ragwort and rush control over several hundred acres of grassland and continued with the bracken control programme west of the Meales House. In addition a contractor employed by the Holkham Estate and English Nature spent over three weeks cleaning ditches and carrying out other minor excavation works.

*Ron Harold
Site Manager*

SUPER NANNY

PICTURED is Viscount and Viscountess Coke's nanny, Sabrina Mack, with 18-month-old, Ned Coke. Sabrina has been looking after Lord and Lady Coke's three children, Hermione (Minna), Juno and Ned, since 2000 and has become a part of the family.



"Many congratulations to Sabrina on celebrating her 21st Birthday on 22nd September 2004, when she also became engaged to Ian Hardy," says Lady Coke.

HOLKHAM LINSEED PAINTS

THE best compliment we can have at Holkham Linseed Paints is when interested parties say that our products have been recommended to them.

We are very reliant on word of mouth and are thrilled that our products are being used by architects and restorers on several National Trust properties, windmills and large Estates (the Old Chapel at Haddon Hall being one of many).

Our paints have even been featured on TV, when they were used on one of the projects in *Grand Designs Abroad* on Channel 4. The owner of the house featured on the programme, Mark Sampson, was really pleased with the Lichen and Wild Sage paint that he used on his wood and straw bale house in south west France.



Unfortunately, there wasn't a good enough excuse for us to pay the site a visit!

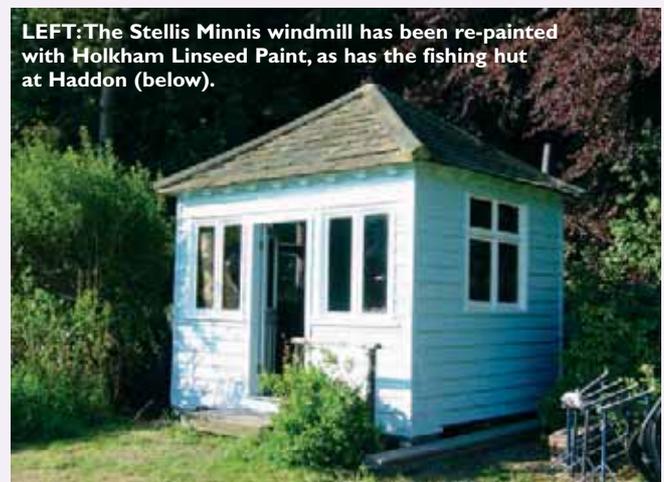
Holkham Linseed Paint will also be used on the new Orangery extension at The Victoria, featuring Lichen on the exterior walls, and a specially mixed creamy beige on the interior.

We have recently added four new colours to our range, including Buttermilk, Ice Blue, Houghton Brown and Iron Primer, which can be used on metal. I will be spending some wintry afternoons sticking pieces of wood to card to make our colour stick charts, which will go on sale in the New Year, and will give our customers a better idea of the colours we sell.

Amanda Taylor, our Sales Manager, gave two seminars in September; one on an introduction to our products to architects and property managers, and another one to our retailers. We received some very positive feedback from these, and Amanda is busy planning more talks in order to spread the word. She recently spoke at a Green Register event held in Norwich for people interested in Ecological Construction and Conservation. The company was featured in an article in the *Eco Echo*, and we are keen to cultivate further PR opportunities in the coming months.

If you are interested in any of our products (our 0.3 Litre tins of wax would make a nice Christmas present for anyone with antique furniture!), please contact the office, tel: (01328) 711348, and we will send you a brochure pack.

Natalie Barrows
Holkham Linseed Paints



LEFT: The Stellis Minnis windmill has been re-painted with Holkham Linseed Paint, as has the fishing hut at Haddon (below).



Holkham Foods

STAFF from many countries work hard for Holkham's various businesses throughout the summer months and this season was no exception. Pictured left are four South Africans who toiled away for Holkham Foods this year, went beating on some shoot days and strengthened the Holkham cricket team considerably, before departing to work in France. They are (from l-r): Gareth Tate, Dusty Gillies, Kyle Mohle and Christian Fry .

THE REAL DEAL

Tenant farmer, **Teddy Maufe**, explains why he decided to diversify and open a Real Ale Shop at Branthill

THE idea for The Real Ale Shop slowly took root over the past three years as the downturn in farming continued.

Some years ago, I helped to form the Malting Barley Growers' Confederation, through which we have tried to tackle the poor returns on this crop and we are still actively campaigning for long term contracts set at a viable price to the grower.

But, while developing the confederation, I started to look more closely at the microbreweries, which were increasingly using our barley. This part of Norfolk, due to its soil type and coastal climate, is ideal for growing the type of top-quality malting barley the microbrewers needed for brewing real ale. I thought that if we could somehow bring that connection into the public's eye we might be able to help the farm business.

The next bit of the jigsaw fell into place while we were staying with Zac, my eldest son, in San Francisco and he took us on a tour of some of the Californian vineyards. We visited some wonderful wineries with their own shops selling, not only their wine but also 'a bit of their history'. We felt that if they could do this with less than a century of history behind them, then we could do it in Norfolk with our much longer history.

So, in conjunction with the East Anglian Brewers' Association, we started on the long road to opening an off-licence. After getting permission for the project from the estate, the next step was to gain approval from the council for a retail outlet in a rural location. My wife, Sally, and I, then had to pass our licensee exams before we could obtain a licence for the premises from the area Magistrates' Court. Finally, we managed to secure a

Rural Enterprise Scheme grant towards the building conversion costs and opened at the end of May 2004.

During conversion work on the building we discovered a lovely original yellow Holkham brick floor hidden beneath vinyl floor tiles, and the only way to successfully reinstate

them was to turn over by hand every individual brick and re-lay them. The shop now stocks more than 35 different bottled ales from nine brewers, seven of which are from Norfolk. All these ales are 'bottle conditioned' which means they still contain a little yeast for secondary fermentation unlike ordinary pasteurised ales and beers.

In return for a little sediment at the bottom of the bottle the rewards are high — a fresh, deep flavour.

Being at this end of the food chain is a new experience for us bringing with it both positives and negatives, and we continue to learn how to juggle running a farm alongside a retail diversification.



Picture supplied by: The Eastern Daily Press.

ABOVE: Lord Leicester and Teddy Maufe enjoy a glass of Branthill Best at the opening of Teddy's Real Ale Shop.

St. Withburga's Church

CHURCH services are now, as is usual in the winter, being held in the Hall Chapel — as it is much warmer.

Matins is on the first and third Sundays in the month at 10am and Communion on the second and fourth Sundays at 10.30am, and of course these services are open to everyone.

As reported in the last Newsletter, we are delighted that, with the help of funds from the Holkham Country Fair, we are able to go ahead with the renovation of the church bells. In the New Year, the bells will be removed from the tower and go to Loughborough for minor repair work. Meanwhile, steel beams will be fitted to strengthen the chestnut beams installed in the 1860s. We hope that the work will be

completed by Easter, which means we will need a bell-ringers team!

Once that is all completed, there will be a great opportunity to put together a Holkham bell-ringers team. Anyone who is interested should contact Marilyn, tel: (01328) 713101, or email her at: m.franklin@holkham.co.uk

During the year we held our usual fundraising events: A classical guitar concert in the Hall in March, a barbecue at the Temple in June, a fete in the Park in August, and a concert at the Hall in November, by two young pianists. Between them, these events raised a total of £4,685.

Finally a message from our Rector, Tony Douglas, who has asked me to tell you that he will be very happy to conduct your marriage service and baptise your children.

*Richard Worsley
Churchwarden*

Finance Department

IN the last issue of the Newsletter, I talked about the importance of reporting and I am pleased to be able to confirm that good strides continue to be made in this respect by the Finance Team. Having counted the beans and crunched the figures what are we planning to do next?

In my experience, the observation that 'Accountants know the price of everything and the value of nothing' is a good one. My profession does itself no favours in the way that we look at the world and there is certainly a need to see the bigger picture.

Perhaps this is not particularly surprising. In the Finance Office, for example we are hidden behind security measures, an obvious, though necessary, barrier to communication. In such circumstances it is all too easy to be consumed with figures, not understand the people or customers and be isolated from the actual business. Additionally our use of technical jargon must sound like a foreign language and makes us appear more remote.

It is important to me that as Accountants we really try to get out more. (I mean that in a business sense, of course, making no comment on my or my team's social life). The fact remains that we have to engage with the businesses of the Estate, gain a depth of understanding, and contribute to those businesses. I have been intrigued during meetings with

managers as to just how much appetite there is for a greater contribution from the Finance Team. Can the Department meet those expectations and engage with the businesses?

Well there are promising signs that this is happening. Already people like Cherry Case, Jayne Cooper, Jane Bloomfield, and Mike Robinson, (our new Pinewoods accountant) are participating in and sharing their views at management meetings. Budgets (and next year Business Plans) are being drawn up because of close involvement between managers and the Finance Team. We are taking the trouble to go out, social pariahs though we may be, to visit farms, the reservoir, hotel developments, land around the Estate, the mansion, Pinewoods etc. All of this is contributing to our understanding and, I hope, enhancing the role we can play.

Some might say it is the stuff of nightmares; legions of Accountants 'let out' across the Estate. However, I strongly believe there are a multitude of benefits that flow from this. The resulting collaboration and teamwork improves mutual understanding, provides a forum for constructive, positive thinking and I think adds value to both people and business.

Mike Wyard
Finance Director

Forthcoming Events

15th & 18th March 2005	Holkham to be featured on <i>BBC Bargain Hunt</i>
8th May 2005	Greshams School concert at the Hall in aid of St Withburga's church
1st & 2nd July 2005	Diva Opera at the Hall
16th & 17th July 2005	Holkham Country Fair (Hall and Bygones closed on both days)



LEFT: Lord Coke recently had a spot of difficulty with the crew bus, which needed to be pulled out of the ford at Walsingham by the Hall staff.

DI RETIRES



ABOVE: Diana Finn has retired after 17 years.

DIANA Finn, our head cashier, retired at the end of October, having worked at Holkham for 17 years.

We presented her with two of John Hansell's photographs, showing Holkham Hall and the Fountain and Holkham Beach, a little Steiff Teddy Bear, an emerald necklace, and a cake shaped like a suitcase.

Diana will be greatly missed in the office, not only by the Estate for her loyalty, diligence and hard work, but for the friendship and kindness she gave to all who worked with her. Her caring nature and sunny disposition, her sense of humour and her words of comfort and wisdom have been much appreciated by her colleagues, and we all wish Diana and her husband, Ian, a long and happy retirement.

They are celebrating by spending three months travelling around the world, returning to Norfolk in time for the spring, so we will look forward to seeing her again soon.

MJF

Holkham People

Welcome to:

BUILDING MAINTENANCE: DARREN CAVE, who has joined us as an additional bricklayer. Darren has moved to Norfolk from Hertfordshire with his wife KERRY and their daughter EMILY, and are living at Pink Cottages, Egmore.

PINEWOODS HOLIDAY PARK: New General Manager RICHARD SEABROOKE and MIKE ROBINSON, Accountant for Pinewoods and Holkham Foods Ltd, who lives in Dereham and previously worked for a company providing structural steelwork to the construction Industry, plus Lord and Lady Coke's new housekeeping/gardening couple, ARTUR and MARIA RODRIGUES and their two sons, Felipe and Andre. Artur and Maria are originally from Portugal, but have lived in England for almost a year, having previously worked in Attleborough. Felipe has also joined the kitchen team at The Victoria.

THE VICTORIA HOTEL: New members of the kitchen team include: kitchen porters, KEVIN BERTIN, JOZEF DANOVSKY and MICHAL MATOUSEK along with junior sous chef, MICHAEL DAVIS. While in the restaurant, we welcome waiter, BARTOSZ BORCZUCH and waitresses, SAMIRA GHANEM, JANA SEDLISKA and MARTA UBA, while LADISLAV KAZIMIR and MAX MAUFE join us behind the bar. JARMILA TOMKOVA has joined the housekeeping team and MERVYN WATTS is our new maintenance man. **HOLKHAM HALL:** MARK TAYLOR 'HOOKER' who replaces MICK THOMPSON and new Room Steward, THELMA TORR.

Farewell to:

DOREEN LEITCH and DIANA GROOM, both long-serving Room Stewards in the Hall. CHRISTOPH and SARAH BROOKE who have left Model Farm and moved back to London. Vicki Brown will continue to run the Norfolk Office of The Hillbrooke Partnership Ltd, tel: (01328) 711131. A sad farewell to Lord and Lady Coke's housekeeping and gardening couple, GEORGE BEREK and ANNAMARIA SZOJAK, who have returned to Hungary to be with their family, many thanks for all their hard work.

Congratulations to:

BILLY TUFFS who completed four laps (24 miles) in two and half hours when he took part in the Big C Cycle Ride in the Park on Sunday, 3rd October, raising £285 for Cancer Research in the process. Billy would like to thank everyone who sponsored him. Lord and Lady Coke's nanny, SABRINA MACK, who is engaged to be married to IAN HARDY.

Births:

Gamekeeper RICHARD BAILEY and his partner, JULIA MUNRO, who gave birth to a baby girl, GEORGINA, on 1st July 2004. TIM and HOLLY ALLEN, who had a son, NICHOLAS DAVID on Saturday, 11th September 2004 and KENNY ROWE from the Woods Department's daughter, GAYNOR ROWE and her partner MARCUS SANDS who have had a baby girl. FREYA CLEMENTINE was born on 4th November 2004 at King's Lynn Hospital, weighing 6lb 11oz. MATTHEW and SUSY HARRISON who had a baby boy, JOSEPH GUY at the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital on 2nd December 2004. JOSEPH is a grandson for HEATHER and MARK HARRISON of Vale Farm, Stiffkey, who are Holkham tenant farmers at Church Farm, Warham.