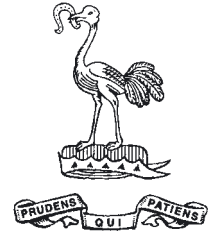


HOLKHAM NEWSLETTER



ON the 11th October, my father retired from running Holkham Estate after 32 years at the helm. On the day, he was a little surprised to go into the Estate Office to find a computer on his desk with me already ensconced behind it!

Lord Leicester was 38 years old when he took over the responsibility for the Estate from the fifth Earl. As a family, we moved into the Hall in 1982 when he was 46. Now, at 69, he has retired from management and has taken the unprecedented step of becoming the first Earl of Leicester to leave the Hall of his own volition, to retire to Model Farm. He was keen that I should take on the responsibilities of Holkham with youth and energy on my side and that our young family should grow up in the Hall regarding it as their home. Indeed Ned, who will be three when we move next year, will hopefully have a very long and happy life there, well beyond the time that Polly and I retire to something smaller for some peace and quiet.

My father's retirement will not be a loss to the Estate, I shall often call upon his wisdom and experience, but I also know that he has earned his retirement. He described to me the feeling of liberation when, on his first day of retirement in his new study in the Hall, he only had two telephone calls — one from me and one from Teresa Fowle in Accounts!

Lord and Lady Leicester will live in Family Wing for much of next year while they wait for the two halves of Model Farmhouse to be joined together. Building work will commence there in the New Year. With our ever-expanding family, Polly and I have decided, due to lack of bedrooms in other wings, to live in Chapel Wing. Therefore, in the New Year, we too, will start more limited works to make the wing child friendly, as well as undertaking extensive redecoration.

When Lord Leicester took over Holkham, virtually every facet of the Estate was losing money.

Today, thanks to the raft of changes my father instituted, many of which we read about in his foreword in the last Newsletter, it is modernised, and profitable and turnover has increased 14-fold. Now that I am in charge, I make no excuses that there will be more change. If we stand still, we get overtaken, so constant evolution is necessary. As long as we handle change sensitively and plan it properly, change brings opportunity. Opportunity for you the employees and everyone else connected with the Estate, especially our customers.

To that end, we started work on the Succession issue at the beginning of the year. Business managers were interviewed, to ascertain their current concerns and future aspirations. In the autumn, a Succession Business Plan was produced. Many of the changes relate to the reduction in influence of Coke Estates Ltd, the company that had run the Estate. Core to the Estate is the Hall and that will now become the centrepiece of a new company; Holkham Enterprises, which consists of our visitor and retail operations. We have recruited an Events Manager, Paul Gray, and over the next few years we can expect to see more events and concerts in the Hall and Park.

Another major change is the expansion of the Building Department. I no longer have the time to run a building company and so it has taken on all Hector's Housing Ltd's employees. Hector's will become purely a property development company, taking on opportunities as they arise.

My family and I have every confidence in the capable teams we have at Holkham to help us drive this great Estate forward into the future. It is, for all of us, a very exciting time.

Viscount Coke



Picture by: The Eastern Daily Press/Matthew Usher.

In praise of Lady Leicester

I had thought that my contribution to the summer Newsletter would be my last, but on reading it again, my article said a lot about some of our achievements here over my first 20 years, but very little about my wife. In this issue, I want to pay tribute to her.

Few people realise just what hard work it is running a big house. The Holkham house staff are excellent, but inevitably a lot of crossing the 't's and dotting the 'i's are undertaken by the lady of the house, and this is true of every big house I know. Everything takes longer because of the distances involved. Taking fresh towels from the linen cupboard to the guest wing, for example, involves a journey of a quarter of a mile!

When we first moved in 20 years ago, the house was cold, damp and unfriendly. My wife immediately threw herself into turning the Hall into a comfortable house fit for modern living. Her first task was to renovate Chapel Wing. An extra bathroom was added. A new kitchen was created where none existed before. Surplus furniture was brought down from the attic and a complete redecoration undertaken — paint, wallpaper and new fabrics.

Nelson Wing on the attic floor was the next focus of her attention. All the decrepit beds were recovered, the windows were curtained from inexpensive 'end of sale' fabric, and the floors covered in coir matting. An extra bathroom was created, and of course a complete redecoration done. Now there is comfortable accommodation for 14 people. As the climb to these bedrooms is 42 steps from the ground floor, our guests are generally young!

Family Wing did not need much attention, apart from replacing completely rotten curtains in three rooms and re-upholstering nearly all the sofas and chairs in the library. All the springs had gone, so that when you sat on them you actually found yourself on the floor.

The Smoking Room was next on the list with a complete redecoration, which has transformed it into a comfortable family room. The Audit Room was tackled at the same time. The imitation Dutch chandeliers were removed, modern ceiling lights installed, and an attractive warm ochre colour replaced the 'hospital green' walls. It is now a well-used room, as both a dining room and a useful meeting room.

In Strangers' Wing, (the guest wing), all the beds needed urgent attention. One of our frequent guests told us how much they enjoyed staying with us, but only for one night. If they stayed any longer, they were crippled by the hard lumps and huge holes in the old horse-hair mattresses. Curtains have been replaced, and four new bathrooms have been created.

Way back in 1986, the State Rooms were generally dull and lifeless. My wife first started the practice of putting fresh flowers in every room. Visitors can't believe we go to so much trouble, and ask if the flowers are real! Again, at my wife's



ABOVE: Lady Leicester pictured in the EDP, when she organised the Stately Car Boot Sale, just one of the many successful events she has hosted at Holkham during the past 20 years.

instigation, ropes restraining visitors were removed, and in recent years she has collaborated with David Bamford, a well-known carpet manufacturer, to produce four new carpets for the State Rooms, all to 18th century designs, and made comparatively inexpensively in Bulgaria.

Houses such as Holkham were built to entertain and give pleasure to others. Under my wife's direction, this house has come alive. It is no stuffy museum, but a living, vibrant place, full of people enjoying themselves. The series of spring and summer concerts have been a regular part of the calendar, bringing music back to the great house, and giving pleasure to a great many people. We host more and more charity events.

We have a loyal and hardworking staff, without whose help we could never have made it the happy house it is.

My wife's activities haven't been limited to the house. Until we married, I ran the Pottery and generally managed to lose money most years. When she took it on, it made money most years. Her hard work, attention to detail and eye for quality were the ingredients for success. Similarly, it was she who kept an eye on quality in the tearooms, which led to so many unsolicited letters praising our food and friendly staff.

So, as I write this, three weeks into our joint retirement — and thoroughly enjoying it — I am overwhelmingly grateful to my wife for giving her all to Holkham, and for the huge support she has been to me over the past 20 years.

Leicester

The Earl of Leicester CBE

LORD LEICESTER'S RETIREMENT DINNER



ABOVE: Maurice Bray and Lord Leicester.



ABOVE: Former Clerk of Works, Ken Hulme.



ABOVE: Lady Leicester and her bouquet of flowers.

ON Thursday 13th October, Lady Leicester held a dinner in the Hall, to mark Lord Leicester's retirement. Among the guests were all the current, and some previous, heads of department, Lord Leicester's brother the Hon Wenman John Coke with his wife Carolyn, and my wife Polly, and I.

The evening began with champagne in the South Drawing Room, followed by dinner in the Saloon. Neil Dowson, Executive Chef from The Victoria prepared a delicious dinner of shell fish, followed by Holkham venison. After dinner, Richard Gledson, the agent, spoke of Lord Leicester's qualities, his sound judgement, and sense of fairness, common sense and indeed, his sense of humour, all of which have earned him great respect from everyone on the Estate. Richard then presented Lord Leicester with an engraved silver banded claret jug, from all the heads of department, past and present. Lady Leicester was presented with a bouquet of flowers and thanked for all the support she has given her husband over the past 20 years.

My father spoke next, and thanked everyone for the help they had given him over his years at Holkham. He talked about how important living



ABOVE: Mr Gledson's speech raised some laughs.

and working estates such as Holkham are to our national heritage and the local economy, and reminded us all that the Estate is the largest local employer. Finally, he described what an honour and pleasure it had been for him to be able to do what he has done at Holkham.



ABOVE: The claret jug, with the inscription, 'Lord Leicester from his Heads of Department 1973-2005'.

I spoke of my father's rather unique early years, instead of the traditional route of public school and army life; he grew up in South Africa and worked for an agricultural sales company. He came to Norfolk with an open mind and different outlook. He soon set about making the necessary changes that were needed to save this great Estate, and to arrest its sad decline. What we now see at Holkham, with all its various businesses and successes, is testimony to his efforts and he leaves a fine legacy, which he passes on to me. I also congratulated Lady

Leicester on breathing new life into the Hall.

Patrick Cole, the retired farm manager, then spoke on behalf of all the retired employees, and thanked Lord Leicester for the incredible opportunity he had given them to enjoy happy working lives here.

Viscount Coke



ABOVE: Sylvia Daley, Douglas Codman and Marilyn Franklin pictured in the Drawing Room.



Government Minister visits the Estate

GOVERNMENT Minister of Culture, the Rt Hon David Lammy MP, visited Holkham in August to meet with Lord Leicester and Lord Coke to discuss how an Estate such as Holkham is maintained. He was particularly interested in diversification, employment and the provision of rural housing and the importance of Estates to the social fabric of the countryside.

Behind the scenes at the Hall

NEVER mind 'That was the week that was', it's 'That was the summer that was'! Have you noticed this recurring theme in my Newsletter articles, in that time never stops going by faster than I can deal with? Yep, old age, addled brain, or both, have finally caught up with me.

It has been an interesting and busy season. The stairclimber machine has been working overtime, and proving a real boon to those of our visitors who are unable to tackle the Marble Hall stairs unaided, and for some reason, it continues to be the most photographed object in the house.

Our Room Stewards, both veteran and novice, have once again been first class and helped us to retain our coveted status as a 'Quality Assured Visitor Attraction'. Well done everyone. Particular thanks must go to Christine Cardwell on the cash desk, who despite being involved in an unpleasant car accident, has been on top form throughout the summer.

I'm not yet sure of the numbers of Room Stewards returning to the Hall next year, but do know that Gilly Lewis will not be among them, as she is off to foreign parts – New Zealand and Canada to name but two. Many thanks for your work here Gilly, and we wish you all the very best for your new ventures.

Holkham's PR Advisor, Paula Minchin, and I turned model makers for the Holkham Country Fair when we were asked to produce a scale model to demonstrate the Estate's new farming policy. The method, which is the brainchild of farm manager, Michael Turner, is being trialled at Waterden and Peterstone, means that only the productive parts of the fields are farmed, with the rest of the ground being enhanced with special strips and cover crops to improve wildlife habitat.

Well, I haven't had such fun since primary school, with all that glue and soggy paper! Then, to top it all, we ordered lots of the sort of kit model railway enthusiasts love so much and spent many happy hours gluing synthetic leaves on to plastic tree trunks!

Then, Paula, having been impressed with my ability to paint farmland, asked if I could paint a portrait of Lord Nelson like the Gainsborough of Coke of Norfolk, for a life-size cut out of the great man, also to be displayed on the Holkham stand at the Country Fair. The expurgated version of my reply ran along the lines of, "If I could paint like Gainsborough would I be working as the Administrator at Holkham?", or words to that effect.

Anyway, I had to try, (see pictures below to see how our local hero gradually took shape). My thanks to Barry Turner for providing the board he was painted on so promptly, and to Ian Barrett with his trusty jigsaw for cutting him out and making Nelson stand up.

As predicted, Gary Raven sailed through his final plumbing exams and is now working for Holkham Building Maintenance alongside Paul Rowe. Well done Gary, and many thanks for all your help here at the Hall over the years.

In the past, if it was decided to set dinner in the Saloon, house staff had to manhandle the large, and very heavy, mahogany table up from the Audit room. But now, thanks to Ian's ingenious MDF design one or two men can set up a table for 30 places in less than an hour.

Mark Taylor is now a fully qualified tower scaffold erector and all round mean fly killer. Prior to the Heritage House 'Basements and Attics' tour in October, he and Colin declared war on the insect inhabitants of the attic rooms. Mark cleared up the resulting carnage with his usual efficiency, however his suggestion that we should use the bodies in currant cakes was just a recycling step too far.

At the time of writing, Rod Lovick and Stuart Watkins, from Holkham Building Maintenance, are painting the Libraries in preparation for the next stage of the re-gilding project. As usual, they take the most meticulous care to protect everything that should not be painted, so there are dustsheets and plastic sheeting everywhere. It's interesting to see librarian, Sam Mortlock, preparing to search for a book in the Long Library wearing kneepads and a safety helmet with light attached!

*Michael Daley
Hall Administrator*

NELSON'S PROGRESS



Archives

MOST of my time is being spent listing and filing photographs at present, having acquired special boxes and polyester sleeves for long-term storage, and I should be glad to hear from anyone who can help to identify the people and the occasions shown here.

I am also cataloguing the second Earl's financial papers: As well as enjoying the benefits of the railway through Holkham (see below), he invested large sums in rather more exotic lines — the Scinde Delhi and Punjabi Railway, the Canadian Pacific, the Buenos Ayres Great Southern Railway, and many others.

R is for Railway

The Estate Office Letter Books reveal that the opening in 1866 of the West Norfolk Junction Railway, with a station at Holkham, transformed both the carriage of goods and travel arrangements for the family.

Most bulky goods had been brought by sea to Wells; now, however, daily deliveries of even ice and fish could be ordered from London suppliers, while surplus nectarines, figs and grapes from the glass houses could be sent in the morning for sale in the London markets that evening.

Arrangements for personal travel were surprisingly flexible. In 1875, for example, when the second Earl was travelling home from London, the station-master at St Pancras provided a special carriage, and the Lynn station-master was asked to have an engine 'ready to start with the carriage and come straight through to Holkham'.

For a journey to Scotland in the 1880s, arrangements were made for the 8pm train from King's Cross to stop at Peterborough to pick up Lord Leicester's party. On other occasions, the agent wrote to the station-master at Peterborough asking him to ensure that there was no delay (Mr Gledson might like to try this) and the station-master at Grantham was asked to arrange dinner for the family at a nearby hotel.

At the turn of the century, Lady Leicester often went by train to watch races at East Winch (a few miles south-east of Lynn) and a through-carriage from Holkham was ordered for



ABOVE: Can you name these women? Had they been taking part in a play?
RIGHT: Where and what is happening? Is it an auction?



her party. In the meantime, the horse-drawn wagonette was driven to Wells, to be carried by goods train to Lynn, where it was arranged that a man from the Globe Hotel would drive it to East Winch, 'to a reserved place in the enclosure', so that Lady Leicester and her friends could sit in it to watch the races. Then both Lady Leicester and the wagonette would return by their respective trains in the evening.

S is for Saffron

'Saffron' appears in Holkham place-names from at least the mid fifteenth century. In 1609, Sir Edward Coke's first property at Holkham included three acres planted with saffron corms, worth ten shillings per acre, double the value of ordinary arable land. It was a valuable but not particularly unusual crop: a researcher in the Archives has found that there were many saffron closes in Wells around this time.

Produced from the dried stigma of the flowers of a type of crocus, it was used not only in cooking and baking, but also for numerous medicines and remedies. A few surviving bills in the Archives show that at Holkham in July 1661, 24 people worked for four days, at 6 pence (2p) a day each, gathering up the corms, probably using spades or a type of hook; more were gathered by four men using a plough.

Fourteen 'stoners' then spent two days clearing the saffron close of stones, after which the corms were promptly re-planted. They were raised and re-planted like this probably every three to seven years. The pale blue flowers appeared towards the end of September; the surviving accounts do not mention the harvest, but Edmund Sanders was paid 'for setting up the saffron kell' or kiln, for drying it. 'A bunch of cords' and canvas were bought for the kell, which consisted of canvas pulled tight over a gentle fire. It took Sanders three weeks to dry the saffron, and a quire of saffron paper was bought for bagging it up.

When John Coke the elder died in 1661 (in July, before that



ABOVE: A bill for work in the saffron closes (and for a pew in the church for John Coke's daughters, Mrs Legard and Lady Le Strange) 1661.

year's saffron harvest), a painted box in his sweetmeat closet was found to contain 28 pounds of saffron. An acre of ground could yield a hundred pounds of wet saffron, twenty pounds when dried, worth around £2 per pound (500g), so that, as a contemporary author noted, although it was an expensive crop to grow, 'it is easy to see what benefit is reaped by an acre of this commodity'.

T is for Turkeys

For more than 100 years, wild turkeys were a feature of the Park. In 1932, the librarian, C.W. James, noted that there were usually about 70 to 80, and that 'flocks of them may be seen in different parts of the Park', particularly towards the east and in Obelisk Wood and Willow Clump.

In 1922, when the weather had been particularly suitable for nesting, numbers had reached around 200. Mr James thought that these birds were descended from two cocks and a hen sent to Thomas William Coke in 1819 by a correspondent in New England, who had described them as 'a great luxury and far superior to the English Turkey'. In fact, however, wild turkeys were already well established in the Park, for in 1817 the gamekeeper had gathered 20 wild turkey eggs to be sent to the Duke of Bedford. Transport (presumably to Woburn, in

Bedfordshire) was a problem, however, for 'eggs conveyed by coach rarely hatch, and the best conveyance would be for Your Grace to send a man on foot to carry the eggs packed in a basket'.

A cook at Holkham in 1826-27 later wrote a recipe book, in which he mentioned that the wild turkeys afforded T.W. Coke 'the same sport as any other bird in cover. This is the red American turkey, which is far superior in flavour to any other'. He was not the only person to think so, for a reward of five guineas was offered for information about the theft of several full grown wild turkeys from the Park.

In 1932, an acquaintance sent the third Earl some more specimens of 'the regular American wild turkey', caught in Virginia. Although the Earl had talked of getting a new line of blood for the Holkham turkeys, these new birds were confined to the area around the Great Barn, to keep them distinct from the New England birds. Possibly weakened by too much in-breeding, however, the wild turkeys were wiped out in the severe winter of 1939-40. I would love to find out more (perhaps even a photo) from anyone who remembers them.

*Christine Hiskey
Archivist*

Holkham Farming Company Ltd

JUST before the harvest this year, we promoted Kent Cooper from Sprayer Operator/Tractor Driver to Arable Foreman. This has given Kent extra responsibility and means that I have more time to think about the business and drive it forward. In November, we took on a new Tractor Driver/Sprayer Operator, in Stephen Retchless, who has fitted in well.

During the harvest this year we employed Arnaud de Colbert from France. He came to us via Tom, who had worked on Arnaud's father's farm 20 years ago. He proved to be a very able addition to our team and the one the major concern regarding language was laid to rest early on — yes, he understood 'Norfolk'! After spending time in the workshop with Johnny Hall, his language certainly improved.

This year, we have changed our sugar beet haulage arrangements and have contracted our tonnage to some of the farming tenants. John Harrison, of Hall Farm, Wighton, is running the group with day-to-day organisation from his senior driver, George Brett-Reynolds, assisted by the Branthill Farms' lorry with additional trucks supplied by Stephen Temple, of New Farm, Wells, as required. This new arrangement is working well with sugar beet being delivered within days of harvest.

The cleaner/loader is also a top of the range machine capable of removing far more soil than I imagined and even eliminating stones from the loads. This should lower the non sugar beet material delivered to the factory, which we are penalised for. It also makes a lot of sense to keep the money paid to hauliers among people on the Estate.



ABOVE: Three tenants' lorries delivering Park Farm sugarbeet to the Wissington factory. Pictured by their trucks are Michael Bix (Branthill Farms Ltd), Wayne Brett-Reynolds and David Skinner (both Ralph Harrison and Partners).

The new farming system at Waterden and Peterstone appears to be giving the results we hoped for. The average yields of wheat have increased after removing lower yield potential areas and sugar beet has yet to be harvested but judging by the look of the crop, this too appears to have improved. After one year it would be wrong to come to solid conclusions but the signs are good. The new combine with GPS yield mapping has opened our eyes to the huge variation in cereal yield within fields on all farms and this is an area that I will look at closely during the winter months.

As I write, we are awaiting a decision on our planning application for a new workshop facility at Egmere. We have been considering a move from Longlands to Egmere for a while now. Our machinery is getting larger and the buildings at Longlands are no longer suitable for our needs. The Egmere site is the obvious solution as it would mean all grain storage and machinery being on one site.

*Michael Turner
Farm Manager*

A life on the Ocean wave

HAVING the opportunity to work as the boatman on the Holkham Lake this season has been immensely enjoyable.

However, there were frustrations with trips being cancelled due to bad weather, a two-week period in June while the electric motor was being repaired, and weed problems following a spell of hot weather at the end of May. The latter resulted in shorter trips on the lake, only getting as far as opposite the small boathouse, but I was able to turn that negative into a positive by being able proceed slowly thus allowing passengers to soak up the atmosphere of the lake and enjoy the peace to the extent that some would fall asleep! The same applied to full trips, as I would slow down at the northern end.

The biggest compliment paid to me was the occasion when a family returned to Holkham with the sole intention of enjoying another trip on the lake. Meeting so many people from a variety of backgrounds was a real pleasure including visitors from countries such as the United States, China, Japan, Russia, Australia, New Zealand, Zimbabwe and South Africa. I even met a gentleman who used to live at Model Farm many years ago, but now lives in Vancouver.

Although the sight and sound of the countryside stole the

show, it was not until I re-commenced the full trips, that the wildlife really caught people's imagination. On numerous occasions in August and early September, Kingfishers were seen at the northern end of the lake.



ABOVE: Former Naval Commander, John Plummer, gets used to a slightly smaller vessel!

In the previous Newsletter, Mike Daley reminded me that the launch is much smaller than ships I had driven while serving in the Royal Navy. This was very observant of him, but the thought process of putting a craft or ship alongside a quay or jetty remains the same. For example, with a strong wind blowing across the lake from the west pushing the launch onto the jetty, I could stop abreast of the jetty and allow the wind to do the rest.

John Plummer

MARKETING DEPARTMENT

WITH improved visitor numbers to the Hall and Bygones Museum, the 2005 visitors' season has been rewarding. Identifying whether or not this increase is part of a general pattern for Norfolk will hopefully be established over the winter months, with the exchange of relevant information to various governing bodies. Undoubtedly, winning the prestigious Enjoy England Excellence Award in April this year, has contributed to raising the profile of the Estate as a tourist attraction.

Our award-winning website, www.holkham.co.uk, continues to play a major role as a promotional tool for the Estate. The revamped site, launched in April 2005, has been a great success, receiving much positive feedback. Helped by the fact that we now have the software to update the site in-house, new pages and information continue to be added, further enhancing the contents and appearance. The farming, shooting and conservation section has been extensively updated to include the Estate's farming and conservation policies and an excellent page on conserving the grey partridge at Holkham.

With the Estate's continued high profile and the subsequent volume of topics and information to impart, it was necessary to increase the size of this year's summer newsletter by four pages! This 'new look' will continue and inevitably increase further as we progress. As well as every employee receiving a copy, we have an expanding mailing list of more than 300 recipients nationwide.

Similarly, for next season, we are revamping the Holkham compendium leaflet. The 16-page leaflet, with a wide distribution



ABOVE: The Holkham website has been re-designed and updated.

network throughout East Anglia, has proved invaluable in encouraging visitors to the Estate. The enhanced appearance will now include the new enterprises: The Globe Inn at Wells-next-the-Sea and The Marsh Larder at Ancient House, plus a mention of the Adnams Wine and Kitchen Cellar in Holkham Village. The brighter, fresher look will take the Estate forward into 2006.

*Laurane Herrievan
Promotions Manager*

GARDENS DEPARTMENT

SINCE writing the last report, the Gardens Department has continued to expand, and we are now set to take over the grounds maintenance at Pinewoods Holiday Park, from Norfolk County Services.

We will be looking after the main holiday park, the horse paddock (used for over-flow tent pitches in the summer), the over flow car park and the pitch and putt. This involves quite a capital investment as new machines and mowers have had to be purchased.

This time last year, we started doing the grounds maintenance for The Victoria Hotel and its lodges, and it seemed a natural progression for the department to take over at Pinewoods. This is a big step for all within the department, but especially for Ollie Forrest who will be running the contract on a day-to-day basis, with me overseeing everything. It will be a great challenge for Ollie, but one I am confident he will rise to and enjoy. His main worker will be Neil Wakefield our student, along with James Turner and I helping as and when needed.

Elsewhere, we have been carrying out the regular round of garden maintenance and continuing to develop the garden at Model Farm. Now we have filled the borders, we are going to change their shape slightly, which will make the garden flow



ABOVE: James Turner, Peter Godwin, Ollie Forrest and Neil Wakefield.

better. We also plan to change some of the plants, so that we extend the borders' flowering season even more. We have started to cut out the pathways around the arboretum, if we don't like where they are, we simply let the grass grow then cut them again. Once we are happy, we will cut them shorter than the rest of the grass.

Along with headkeeper Simon Lester and the Game Department, we have been helping to deliver the practical content of a course in conjunction with Easton College, with students from both Alderman Peel and Fakenham High schools. As I also help out with the

garden club at Alderman Peel High School, it is a very busy but very rewarding task.

James Turner, who was only going to be with us over the summer, has enjoyed it so much he is now full-time. He has been so inspired that he is going to college to do an NVQ in amenity horticulture, while Ollie is also back at college doing a higher level NVQ in horticulture and management. We have also taken on Carl Balding, who worked at Pinewoods over the summer.

Peter Godwin
Head Gardener

Holkham Cricket

THE LAST issue of the Newsletter featured a report on how the Estate team had narrowly lost to the Club in the first of three 20 over matches. Unfortunately, we also lost the second game by 20 runs, despite good batting performances from Martin Joyce (Game Department) and Kevin Bray (HFC). Worst luck, the Agent Richard Gledson, also scored 30 not out — for the Club — as they were short of a player.

History was made on 13th July when the Estate recorded its first victory over the Club by four runs. The Estate batted first and scored 116 thanks to 30 not out from Mick Davis (Victoria Chef), Matthew Clark (husband of Sarah who works at Pinewoods) 15 not out, and two mighty sixes in the last over from Fred Ingrams (designer of our Estate brochures). Thanks to some very tidy bowling from Davis (two wickets), Peter Godwin, Head Gardener (three overs for four runs) and Martin Joyce (a wicket maiden in the last over), the Estate team kept the Club tied down. They needed 10 runs off the penultimate over and four runs off the last. In both overs, crucial wickets fell and the victory was secured. The Club retain the Holkham Shield though by winning the series 2-1, but had to buy the drinks down at The Vic.

Viscount Coke



Tenants' shoot

PICTURED above, after lunch at The Temple, are the Guns who shot on the tenants' day on Friday 18th November.

From left to right they are: Lord Leicester, James Basset, John Harrison, Matthew Harrison, David Stilgoe, Tim Allen, Phillip Harrison, Barry Southerland, Tom Green, Phil Allen, Mark Bevington, the Hon Rupert Coke, Chris Gardner, Nick Gardner, Geoff Allen, Mark Harrison, Richard Gledson, the Hon John Coke, Alister Borthwick, Michael Turner and Lord Coke.

Holkham Pottery

THE early part of this year brought some challenges for us with the major refurbishment works on the lavatories at Ancient House, and the consequent, but necessary closure of the tearooms. However, we were all pleased in mid-July, when they re-opened as The Marsh Larder. Nevertheless, it is taking a bit of time to catch up on lost sales. We are planning to open for more next year at Ancient House, the times will be in the new brochure which will be available early 2006.

The Pottery Shop at the Hall benefited from more visitors to the house and Park and so had a good season with sales up on last year, every month except April. In addition, the unusually good weather that we enjoyed during October brought in more local visitors than usual.

The very striking Nelson mugs (depicted in the last issue of the Newsletter) designed by Janine Codman and Lady Leicester, for the Bi-centennial, have proved extremely successful with good sales, and formed part of our large Nelson displays in both shops. Lady Leicester and Douglas Codman, our Production Manager, had a very successful sale of these mugs at Burnham Market Craft Fair in August, bringing in around £600.

Production of pottery in the factory was seriously affected during July and August, because of the failure of the Blunger (this turns clay into liquid slip for casting), and Douglas is very grateful to Tom Borthwick from the pottery in Wells



ABOVE: Both the Pottery Shop at the Hall and the gift shop at the Ancient House in Holkham Village have enjoyed good sales.

Old Station for coming to the rescue with the loan of a portable Blunger. Eric Rowe carried out repairs to the Blunger during August, and Douglas and Jane pulled out all the stops to build-up pottery stocks for the two shops.

Good news for all those who have been awaiting arrival of the newly published book "Holkham", with a foreword by Lord Leicester. New stocks have arrived and are for sale in Ancient House Gift Shop in plenty of time for you to give as Christmas Gifts. There are also lots of other gift ideas in the shop, which is open Wednesday to Sunday (closed Mondays and Tuesdays) through till 23rd December.

Sylvia Daley
Retail Manager

THE MARSH LARDER AT HOLKHAM

THE revamped tearooms at the Ancient House opened as 'The Marsh Larder at Holkham' on 13th July 2005, which thankfully coincided with the annual migration of tourists to the north Norfolk coast.

We made quite a few changes to the internal layout, including creating a new coffee lounge in the former food hall. Thanks to the expertise of interior designer, Monica Vinader, the lounge is a stylish room where people and their families can relax and enjoy a hot drink while sat on a comfy sofa. Much of the furniture in the lounge, which is also available to buy, is Spanish and dates back to the 18th Century. We also developed the entrance room into a delicatessen. Trevor Parfitt from Holkham Building Maintenance, worked round the clock to construct our shop counter and attach all the shelving (apple crates) to the wall. So, thanks Trevor and also Mark Bird, for your patience as we continually put things up and took them down again. But the work did not finish there. Over the past weeks, a local carpenter and friend John Crosthwaite carried out further improvements to the shop and tearooms in time for



our Christmas Preview Party, on the evening of Tuesday 22nd November, when we served champagne and canapés to 100 guests. We launched our own range of chutneys and seasonal preserves, which we served with a roast haunch of Holkham venison.

The Marsh Larder stocks a wide range of products from organic breads, chutneys, pasta and spices to olive oil soap and lavender linen water. Holkham venison is available from our chiller or by contacting us to place an order, tel: (01328) 711285. The tearoom menu offers a wide range of light lunches such as soup, pâté, and Yorkshire pudding filled with a Holkham beef and Norfolk Ale casserole. We are open from 10am to 5pm every day, except Monday and open all year round (except Christmas Day).

I would like to thank all my staff who have helped to make our first summer so successful. Huge thanks also go to my friends and family, especially my husband Paul and my children.

Vicki Brown

HOLKHAM ART GALLERY

ALTHOUGH the number of visitors to the gallery does not seem to be as great as in previous years, sales have been very pleasing and the great support of the staff in the gift shop again this year has undoubtedly contributed to its success.

It is always interesting to see how sales vary from year-to-year, there is no guarantee that an artist who sells well one year will be as successful the next, and this has proved very true in 2005. Images of the Norfolk coast, particularly around Holkham, still continue to be very popular, but there now appears to be a swing to a preference for more contemporary work and customers purchasing more than one piece of work.

This year has also resulted in an even greater number of artists and photographers approaching the gallery enquiring about the possibility of exhibiting.

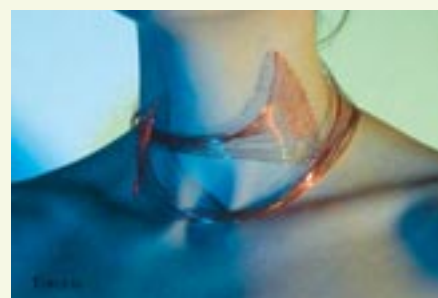
A focus on photography is at present featured in Gallery 4, as an increasing number people are beginning to accept that photographs are worthy of collecting. It includes an interesting range of work from the magical images by John Hansell, to intriguing use of photographic images by Colin Giles who creates photomontages and striking beach images by Kell Skott.



ABOVE: A photomontage entitled 'Sailing Boats', by Colin Giles.

ABOVE RIGHT: One of artist Kell Skott's striking beach images.

RIGHT: Alison Hodgson's Torquis Neckpiece.



Three very different styles of jewellery are now on display, including the newly acquired pieces by Alison Hodgson. These distinctive delicate pieces created of knitted wire, are most suitable for the Christmas and New Year party season!

Suzanne Pannell
Gallery Manager

Holkham Foods

AS this Newsletter goes to press, Holkham Foods has gone into semi-hibernation for the winter months. All staff have now finished for the winter, and I am here alone making venison casseroles and ice-cream!

This season was my first in charge and I am pleased to say, a great success. My staff are a great team and worked very hard to make sure the customers had a happy visit. I would like to express my thanks to them all for their hard work and loyalty. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Laurane Herrievan and Jane Haynes in the Estate Office, for their help and Jayne Cooper and Denise Durrant in the Accounts, for their expertise.

Holkham Foods has down-sized this year with only the Stables Café and ice cream production left. The ice cream has been very successful among the Estate businesses this year, and hopefully in the coming months, we will expand the number of outlets we supply. This season we expanded our

range a little, as I experimented with lavender ice cream, flavoured with the lavender grown in the Pottery Courtyard. It turned out to be a great success with everyone that tried it! Hopefully, this will be the start of a range of seasonal, limited edition flavours through the year.

We were delighted to receive so much good feedback from customers throughout the summer, who appreciated our good, simple, home-made fish pies and casseroles.

We look forward to an even more successful season in 2006 with the same team wanting to return for another year. Hopefully this will be the last year the Stables closes down completely from November to March as we are planning new way of using it throughout the winter months — watch this space!

Wendy Mason
Manager

Hector's Housing Ltd

CHANGES, changes, changes — yes, it's happening — the Hector's Housing workforce is teaming up with Holkham Building Maintenance to take up a new project role within the new succession business plan for Holkham, devised by Viscount Coke.

Our remaining Upper Mill plot, the one with the distinctive round tower, was 'handed over' to its new owner on 28th October. Although the projected sales for our Hindringham site were somewhat slow, the excellent quality and finish of the houses will be a lasting testimony to our dedicated team of craftsmen who contributed to the outstanding success of the development for Hector's.

The cottage at Buddells Lane, Wighton, is also complete and is being actively marketed by our agents. Again, another traditionally-built, quality construction.

During the summer we have again carried out various projects within the Estate, such as re-pointing and roof repairs at Longlands, plus wall repairs and concrete and drainage works at the Great Barn.

Cliff Jeffrey
Project Manager

HOLKHAM BUILDING MAINTENANCE

HERE at Holkham Building Maintenance we are always busy and the past six months has been no different.

Most recently, we have refurbished the small shop on the Coast Road, Holkham. In the last Newsletter, we reported that we were working on the Old School House to convert into a retail shop for Adnams of Southwold (see right). This project was completed on time, and we thank our team for their help in achieving this.

Over the past six months, we have also refurbished a number of cottages, along with numerous maintenance jobs and emergency call outs.

We are pleased to welcome the following staff, who have joined the maintenance team: Gary Raven has joined us as a plumber/heating engineer, having transferred from the Hall, after putting himself through a plumbing and heating course at college, Gary's brother Jeremy Raven has joined us as a plasterer/ bricklayer, David High has joined us as a Bricklayer, and Matthew Gibson as a painter and decorator,

As most of you will be aware, the Windowcraft workshop burnt down at approx 5.00am on Saturday the 29th October 2005 cursing severe damage to the building, We must thank Sally Harvey from Park Farmhouse, Longlands, as if it hadn't been for her being woken up by the crackling of the fire, and looking out of her bedroom window to see the flames shooting from the roof and raising the alarm, things could have been a lot worse. In the event, five fire engines attended and were able to stop the



ABOVE:The Old School House, which houses the Adnams' store, before. **BELOW:**And after.



fire spreading to the adjoining wooden buildings.

We lost windows in the fire that were being worked on at the time, including one pair of oak doors from the Hall, which is a sad loss, as the doors can be remade, but the history has been lost. A new French door frame and doors for Lady Coke at Norton Hall, and windows and doors from private clients were also lost, but can be remade and are covered by our insurance. The tradesmen's tools have also been lost, some of which have been handed down from father to son to grandson, and cannot be replaced.

Meanwhile, a workshop has been set up in another building and the Windowcraft team is back in business. The only drawback being that we are unable to dip items in our linseed oil tank, which was destroyed in the fire.

A new one is on order, but until then we will be painting warmed linseed oil on by hand.

We hope that those of you who have had their lofts insulated will see some savings on your heating bills this winter and can confirm that the contract has been placed for Holkham Village to be completed next.

Lastly, fractionally better summer weather this year has meant that we have been able to complete the external painting on the last seven properties in Warham and most of the properties in the Burnhams.

Barry Turner
Building Maintenance Manager

HOLKHAM LINSEED PAINTS

A slower summer this year has been followed by a busy start to autumn/winter, the changeable summer weather being mostly to blame.

We have achieved more sales than last year and are still steadily increasing our customer base in all areas. It's been a mixed bag from matching colours on another estate, through to builders and joiners all switching to more environmentally conscious products; not forgetting the steady stream of orders going out to homeowners up and down the country wanting to protect their homes the best they can.

We are hoping to see our paints featured on *The Discovery Channel* in the near future; one of our customers is undertaking the restoration of a large house called *The Menagerie* near Coventry. The programme will be presented by Marianne Suhr, who presented the *Restorations* series last year. The project is being undertaken with the guidance of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB), which has, in the past, recommended our paints for use on listed properties.

The unfortunate fire in the Windowcraft workshop at the end of October at Longlands has affected everyone based here (see pictures below). The devastation was apparent on everyone's faces as we arrived on Monday morning. We would like to report though that it's business as usual for us, and that despite not having any electricity in our store, sales are going ahead as usual. Our thoughts are with the Windowcraft team who lost much of their hard work and most of their tools.

Lastly, we lost Natalie Barrows from our team when Tom took over from Lord Leicester at the beginning of October and she moved to the Estate Office to take up her new role as Tom's Personal Assistant. We would like to wish her every success in her new job.

Amanda Taylor
Sales and Technical Manager



ABOVE: Maurice Bray assesses the damaged at the fire-ravaged Windowcraft Department.

BELOW LEFT: The fire rapidly took hold of the building.

BELOW RIGHT: The salvage team get on with the clearing up.



Holkham — The Book

In 1998, we started the Holkham Research Project with a seminar at Holkham, forging a closely collaborating, international group of researchers.

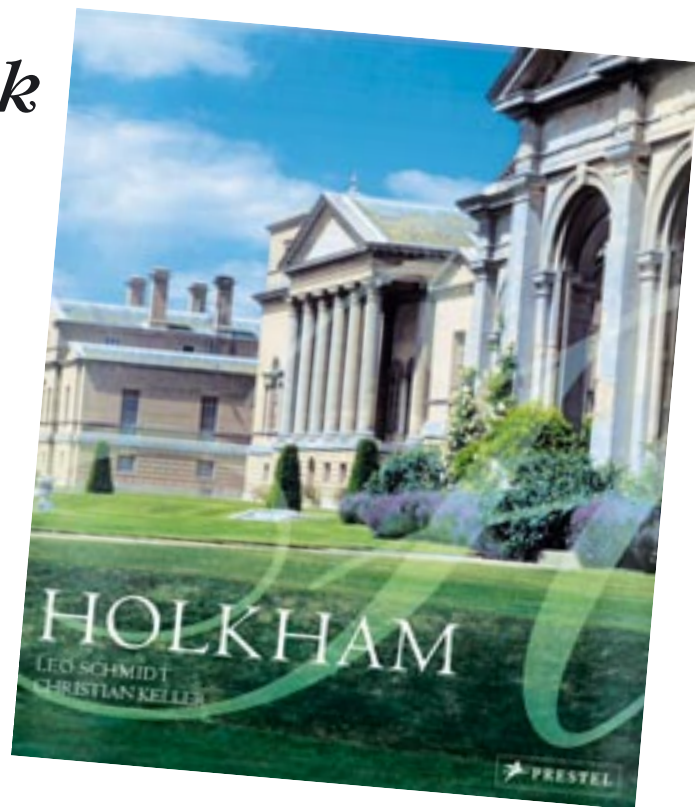
Now, seven years' later, the project has at last given birth to a publication. Under the deceptively simple title of *Holkham*, the book presents the most defining and significant features of this great house and estate. It deals with the historic background of the Holkham landscape, with the builder of Holkham and his ambitions, with the invention and erection of the house and with the interiors and the collections of paintings and sculpture. It also looks at the ways the house was used and lived in, at the changes introduced by later generations, and discusses the role of the visitors from the early times to the present. The book attempts to do justice to the Gesamtkunstwerk of Holkham — a complex of landscape, architecture, works of art and craftsmanship, as well as a place of wide historic significance.

In this, the book is unique: none of England's many great houses has ever been researched and published in a way that takes into account the many facets of these complex achievements.

Getting there took some time and involved many people. Holkham's inhabitants will not easily forget the annual invasions from the Continent; in six campaigns of building archaeology, a group of ten or twelve researchers used to take over the Chapel Wing (thanks to the hospitality of Lord and Lady Leicester) and then get in everybody's way for about a fortnight. The purpose of these visits, which usually involved a number of young architects (whom we exploited shamelessly by paying them next to nothing for their labours), was to



LEFT: Professor Leo Schmidt (seated in the third Earl's 19th Century wheelchair) with contributors to the book, at the start of the project in 1998. BELOW: Bernhard and Silke taking down measurements on the terraces.



ABOVE: The latest book on Holkham took seven years to put together and defines the most significant features of the Hall and the surrounding Estate. Copies priced at £30 are available for sale at the gift shop at the Ancient House in Holkham village.

produce an exact record of Holkham's central structure, the Hall-Saloon axis. This detailed observation and documentation provided unexpected insights into how the house was actually designed and built.

Having amassed a huge amount of historical facts and insights over the years, we heroically decided not to publish all our findings in a huge scholarly tome which would only have been read by about 15 people. I am particularly proud of the way in which we reduced them to a compact and (thanks to the editorial genius of Lady Feversham) extremely readable and elegant text, beautifully illustrated by Frank Dalton's sensitive photographs and containing many hitherto unpublished illustrations. Prestel, one of the leading international publishers of art books, have done us proud by turning it into a most attractive and — as these things go — affordable book, which, it is hoped, will catch the eye of a wider public.

Holkham, at first glance so severe and rational, casts a particular spell over those who let themselves be drawn into its magic and, one fears, never releases them again. One of our group even confessed that, whenever he came to Holkham, he wanted to hug the building because he loved the place so much! Well, my sentiments entirely. I think this is because the place was designed and constructed with so much enthusiasm by its builder, the first Earl, and also because his successors have treated it with similar affection: Holkham is a vessel containing all these positive emotions that were poured into it over two and a half centuries.

*Professor Leo Schmidt
Cottbus University, Berlin*

HOLKHAM COUNTRY FAIR

Over the weekend of 16th and 17th July, the Holkham Country Fair took place in the Park. With an estimated 50,000 visitors and glorious weather, the bi-annual two-day event was a massive success for the organisers. As the Holkham display at the previous Country Fair in 2003 had gone so well, a working party was formed, which set out to make this year's exhibit even bigger and better! The impressive display area invited visitors to view how the Estate has become 'much more than a stately home'.

Leisure and tourism created a welcoming display to highlight the range of accommodation available at Holkham. Visitors were invited into a mini-lounge area, complete with rugs, comfy sofa, table and television showing a virtual tour of The Victoria Hotel. Colourful images of the hotel, the three luxury lodges, newly-opened Globe Inn in Wells-next-the-Sea and Pinewoods Holiday Park further enhanced the stand.

Holkham Pottery adopted a nautical theme to display its range of commemorative pottery specially designed for the Battle of Trafalgar bicentenary, while Holkham Linseed Paints drew several prospective customers keen to learn about the range of environmentally friendly paints.

An array of local and national newspaper and magazine press cuttings highlighted to the curious how the Estate both welcomes and benefits from a healthy and respected relationship with the media. And a display of the various Holkham



ABOVE: The 2005 Holkham Country Fair was another big success, attracting approximately 60,000 visitors over the course of two days.

Newsletters invited people to read about the Estate in more detail. The Garden Department's exhibit of photographs allowed visitors to get a glimpse of the Arboretum throughout the seasons, and an impressive display of the original roof panels from the Shell House drew in people.

A central area of the marquee was dedicated to the new farming policy adopted by the Estate this year, with an excellent model of a field depicting the various methods used. Two 1925 agricultural implements; a Norfolk plough and a portable crop sprayer were borrowed from the Bygoness

Museum to enhance the theme.

Perhaps the most creative display was that of the Game Department. The replication of woodland, arable land and salt marsh complete with flora and fauna in the middle of the bare parkland was a truly remarkable achievement and drew immense interest. It further drew the crowds with a cookery demonstration by Head Chef, Neil Dowson and Deer Park Manager, Julian Stoyel, who encouraged visitors to sample tasty sausage and burgers made from Holkham venison.

All in all, the two days were a remarkable achievement for all involved and drew an immense amount of interest and compliments from the crowds, which can only help in the marketing of the Estate.

Laurane Herrievan
Promotions Manager

Woods Department

THE Woods Department has just taken delivery of a new wood chipper, which will help us to get rid of waste wood and put it to other uses, rather than having a big old bonfire and lots of smoke.

We have spent nearly all summer grass cutting at various locations across the Estate and if this mild weather continues, it looks as if we could still be cutting on Christmas Eve!

Quinto Crane visited the Estate again this summer to take out five dangerous Ilex trees at Egmere House, one last Corsican Pine at Meales House and one dead Elm at Mill Farm in Wells-next-the-Sea. We have also taken down several low boughs from Beech trees from Chantry Hills to Haggard's Lodge.

At the moment, the team is in the process of coppicing



ABOVE: Kenny Rowe pictured in front of the Hall, for a display of staff photos that were exhibited at the Country Fair.

thorn hedges at Peterstone, ready for re-planting.

Ian McNab
Head Forester

Game Department

AT the time of writing, it is nearly December and the leaves of the Oaks still don't look as if they are going to fall off. There are still blackberries about and some brambles are still in flower. What a strange year it is turning out to be.

The wet summer and the mild autumn have certainly made it a difficult year so far for the Game Department. The shooting season got off to a roasting start in October when high temperatures made it feel more like the plains of Africa than Burnham Thorpe. Then, a day for Lord Leicester was abandoned because of torrential rain. We lost another day to fog and on the 25th November it looked as if we may have lost another day to snow and blizzards, when I looked over the marsh at 7.30am and couldn't see much. Thank goodness this was not the case, as despite the strong winds, we had an exceptional day thanks to a stalwart team of keepers and beaters, even the moorhens flew well. On such a cold day, we were all glad to have Wendy Mason's hearty venison soup to warm us up at lunchtime.

Although it was not a great spring for game chicks it has been very good for Harriers, we are now supporting more than 30 pairs throughout their breeding period. Barn owls have also had a good time and we are working closely with local ornithologist, John Middleton, to monitor their progress.

We are now starting to see the health of the lake improve, thanks to our decision to take out a great number of carp. There has been a good hatch and young fish are present in large numbers, which in turn, has meant good news for Great Crested Grebes, which nested successfully and reared an impressive brood. While netting the lake it was also clear that there is now a respectable stock of roach coming on.



ABOVE: The new Nature Trail has proved popular with visitors.

This summer, I also completed a 28-stop Nature Trail around the lake, which we plan to officially open in 2006.

Holkham will be hosting The Kennel Club's English Springer Spaniel Championships on 11th, 12th and 13th January. This annual competition is the culmination of field trials that have been held all over the country the winners of which will compete over the three days of the event.

This is the first year for many years there has been no hare coursing events on the Estate, because of the present hunting ban. At present, Harriers and Foxhounds have found workable alternatives, but so far, coursing has not. On the subject of dogs, we were all invited and entertained at the 25th anniversary of the Pointer and Setter Trials at Holkham. To celebrate the occasion, the organisers, Bob and Gill Truman threw a party at The Three Horseshoes in Warham and all had a great night.

*Simon Lester
Headkeeper*

RARE HARRIERS BREED AT HOLKHAM

A pair of Montagu's harriers, rarely seen in the UK, successfully reared a brood of chicks at Holkham this year.

The birds come from Africa and sometimes visit southern England from May to August. It is thought to be the first time that a pair of Montagu's has stayed to breed here.

Viscount Coke believes that the birds chose Holkham because of its carefully maintained habitat: "There is no doubt in my mind that the Montagu's harriers have bred successfully as a result of the efforts of our gamekeepers in controlling predators, particularly foxes, which would otherwise have hoovered up the nest," he said.



Above: A Montagu's harrier.

Picture by: Roger Tidman/
rspb-images.com

Lord Coke added: "We also spend a lot of time and effort maintaining and creating good habitat for all sorts of wildlife, not just game birds. Similarly, our 24 pairs of Marsh Harriers have benefited for the same reasons."

"It's great to see such a magnificent bird breeding in Norfolk, and even better to see that its presence was welcomed by the Estate at Holkham," said Richard Powell, RSPB regional director for Eastern England. "The Montagu's harrier is Britain's rarest bird of prey. These birds are easily

disturbed, so credit is due to the land managers at Holkham for allowing it to nest and raise a brood of chicks uninterrupted," he added.

TONNANT WOOD LAUNCHED

A fleet of 2600 English Oaks and Scots Pine set sail at Burnham Thorpe on Sunday 27th November launching the creation of Norfolk's own Trafalgar Wood.

Hundreds of people from babies in buggies to grandparents came to the 10-acre field on Creake Road, armed with wellies and spades and set-to planting the first wave of trees in the brand new wood. They were followed during the next week by hundreds of primary school children from all over Norfolk who not only planted trees, but learned why trees and timber were important to our maritime history and why they are just as important today.

Tonnant Wood is one of 33 planted in a partnership between landowners, the Woodland Trust and the Society for Nautical Research to mark the bicentenary of the battle of Trafalgar and Nelson's death. The week long planting event at Holkham was one of many this winter completing the UK-wide Trafalgar Woods project, which has seen 250,000 new trees planted. Holkham Estate was one of the very first to step forward with a suitable site.



ABOVE: Lord Nelson and Coke of Norfolk welcome visitors to Tonnant Wood at Burnham Thorpe.

Pictures by: Jason Bye/Woodland Trust.

Lord Leicester said: "I am delighted to have Tonnant Wood on Holkham Estate. We are all very proud of the connection between Nelson and the Estate and planting a wood is a fitting way to mark the bicentenary."

The 10-acre wood is planted with 10,000 trees and has fine views of the surrounding countryside and of the church at Burnham Thorpe where Nelson's father was Rector.

Visitors are welcome to walk round it. It is named after HMS Tonnant, that was captured from the French at the Battle of the Nile in 1798, and went on to be part of the fleet that defeated the French at Trafalgar, captained by Charles Tyler. His direct descendant, Rupert Tyler, was able to attend the official planting ceremony (as pictured below).

Sue Roe from the Woodland Trust said: "The fact that Tonnant Wood is only a field away from Nelson's birthplace makes it a really special Trafalgar Wood. We are tremendously grateful to the Holkham Estate for finding the site and for working with us to create a living reminder of the Trafalgar bicentenary."



ABOVE: Lord Leicester and Sue Roe plant the first tree at Tonnant Wood, assisted by Edward, Harriet and Mary Gledson.



ABOVE: Ned Coke with his grandmother, Valeria, Lady Coke.



ABOVE: Rupert Tyler and Lord Leicester.

Carol Service at St Withburga's

THERE will be a Carol Service at St Withburga's Church in Holkham Park on 24th December at 12noon, with mulled wine and nibbles. This is the first time in living memory that the parish church has hosted a Carol Service on Christmas Eve — all are welcome.

HOLKHAM GAME



VENISON is now available at £4.50 per kilo for a whole carcass or £5.50 per kilo for a half carcass, with carcasses averaging 23kg. Comes jointed and boxed. Oven-ready pheasants and partridges also available. To order, contact Julian Stoyel, tel: (01328) 711040.

www.holkham.co.uk

Pinewoods Holiday Park

THE 2005 season has come to a close except for our hire fleet of double-glazed and centrally heated caravan holiday homes and lodges.

Every year, the number of caravans being used until the 2nd January increases, last year 40 owners extended the season; this year we are expecting nearly double that. All our hire fleet are now available for the extension, so the potential now exists for over 100 units to be used during the winter. This has all helped to improve Pinewoods' popularity both as a holiday destination and as a park to own a caravan holiday home on.

The 2005 season has been exceptional, although not without its ups and downs. Without a doubt, the weather could have been kinder to us, 2003 is becoming a distant memory. But September and October has made up for it, with possibly the most settled spell of the year. The sales of holidays are well up on previous years and the demand was so high that halfway through the season we increased the size of our letting fleet. Caravan sales finished the year strongly, but this made up for a quiet spring and early summer. Retail sales from the shop have been our only disappointment and this is an area we will focus on for 2006.

Many of you may have noticed an increase in articles on Pinewoods Holiday Park in the Press. This is because we have employed the services of both Mary Rudd PR and Paula Minchin to raise the awareness of this unique holiday park. All reporters who have visited the park have also gone to the Hall and sampled the food at either The Victoria or The Globe. Every article I have read has been exceptional in its praise; all aspects of the break have been well reported. It is the strength of all our facets, which makes this holiday park so special.

At the beginning of June, Lord Coke opened the boardwalk on Abraham's Bosom, and during the summer, we



ABOVE: Pinewoods has enjoyed a very busy summer season.

organised tours of this Site of Special Scientific Interest for owners and holidaymakers staying at Pinewoods. On Tuesdays, Ron Harold gave guided walks for up to 15 people, while on Wednesdays; Derek Jarvis held a "Meet the Warden" session when he would explain aspects of this area to any one who went to see him. Next year we plan to organise many more information opportunities on the boardwalk for anyone who is interested.

On a personal note, I have thoroughly enjoyed managing Pinewoods Holiday Park this year and I am starting to understand what makes this a special place to be.

On behalf of all the team at Pinewoods, I would like to take this opportunity to wish John Hingley who was our maintenance manager, all the best for the future and we all hope he has a successful and enjoyable time in Italy working with his brother.

Richard Seabrooke
General Manager

ON THE ROAD



PICTURED are Lord Coke and his three children, (from r-l) Hermione (Minna), Ned and Juno, while camping in Cromer with the 1965 Airstream trailer that Lady Coke gave him for his 40th birthday.

In loving memory



THIS plaque commemorating Major Tom Harvey (a former Trustee of the Holkham Estate) and his wife, Mary (sister of the fifth Earl of Leicester) was unveiled by their son, David, at an Evensong service at All Saints' Church, Warham, on Sunday 27th November 2005.

Holkham National Nature Reserve

THINKING back over the summer the first thought that springs to mind is the dreary weather. Only after the school holidays did we start to see any real improvement and the start of an Indian summer. As a result there were fewer visitors to the reserve and the season passed rather uneventfully, with relatively few problems. On a positive front, the absence of a prolonged hot, dry period minimised the fire risk and there were no reports of fire anywhere on the reserve this year.

There is often cause to smile at the antics of visitors, these range from the sublime to ridiculous. A most bizarre incident involved a group of people spotted carrying plastic bags full of human limbs into the Pinewoods. This caused some concern initially but our fears were soon allayed when we discovered several London Art College students adorning pine trees with plastic arms and legs. Their purpose, through a photographic sequence, to generate an impression of walking trees — the mind boggles!

English Nature pulled out the stops for the Holkham Country Fair and invested in an exhibit featuring climate change. This was very much an interactive exhibit with opportunities for people of all ages to engage in. Children especially found it most enjoyable and many joined in a quiz that involved finding answers to the questions within the exhibit. English Nature has tended to have a low key presence at the Country Fair in the past; but hopefully, having set a precedent, adequate funding will be available in future to maintain the standard we set this year.

Following the opening of the Abraham's Bosom Project in June (see Holkham Newsletter Issue 10) English Nature and



Picture by: Andrew Bloomfield

ABOVE: White Letter Hairstreak butterflies attracted a lot of attention on the reserve this summer.

Pinewoods Holiday Park organised a series of guided nature walks for Pinewoods visitors. We also laid on a weekly "Meet the Warden" session. The idea here was to provide an opportunity to inform people generally about the area, its varied interest, safety issues and to share anecdotes. The events appeared too to be enjoyed by all.

The breeding season brought mixed fortunes for our nesting birds. In general, those nesting on the grazing marshes fared well with some notable successes, whilst birds nesting within the intertidal zone suffered badly. On the grazing marshes for example, 228 pairs of Lapwings fledged 100 young, 69 pairs of Avocet fledged a minimum of 32 young, 35 pairs of Little Egret fledged at least 90 young and about 40 Marsh Harriers fledged from 14 nests. Bearded Tit is on the increase and we had a remarkable 17 pairs in the reed beds where breeding success appeared to be very good.

Out on the beaches it was once again a very sad story, with poor weather and high tides in particular combining to ensure a virtual wipe out of breeding terns. In the event, only six Little Tern chicks survived to leave the nest.

We are all used to the term twitcher as another name for bird watchers here in Norfolk, but another form of twitcher is also about, in the shape of an insect twitcher. These guys are also well organised and have their own telephone alert system. The main species of interest to them are butterflies and dragonflies. The target species at Holkham are the White Letter Hairstreak (see picture above) and White Admiral butterflies. Both species are recent colonisers in the nature reserve and are generating lots of interest. This does not present a problem, as long as people continue to take care and respect the insects and their habitat.

*Ron Harold
Site Manager*

MY HERO



HOLKHAM Room Steward, Lesley Clarke, is pictured standing next to a special display she devised about TW Coke, at St Mary's Church, Old Hunstanton, on 29th July 2005.

Lesley created the display to depict her personal hero, Coke of Norfolk, as part of the church's 'Heroes of Norfolk' celebration.

The Marketing Department helped out by supplying an A3 print out of the Gainsborough portrait of the first Earl of Leicester of the second creation that hangs in the South Dining Room in the Hall, while Lesley created the floral arrangements and made the ostrich, using paper maché and real feathers. The model is available for hire for special events if required.

The Victoria Hotel

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

As usual, the hotel has had a fairly transient staff during the summer, but many departments have had a settled team throughout the year. Peter Coates and Valerie Bray have successfully run our reception team for longer than I can remember. Both have done a wonderful job throughout the year, and it is largely down to them that the occupancy levels of the hotel have been higher than ever, and the room bookings at The Globe continue to grow.

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, the Triumphal Arch and the quirky Cuckoo Lodge.

All at The Victoria will be sad to see our summer staff leave, but in particular, our two Belorussians, Alex Klimkovich and Anna Samalazava, who have been with us for nearly two years. Both have proved to be an integral part of the team and in Anna especially, have improved beyond recognition to become one of our strongest members of staff alongside Alex. All at The Victoria wish them both well for the future. Arnaud de Colbert has also left, leaving a lasting impression with a certain member of staff, along with another Frenchman Stephane Gnahore-Gogo, who leaves us after being a consistent face behind the bar for the past seven months.

This year, The Victoria took over responsibility from Holkham Foods, for the trailer on Lady Anne's Drive. This was run throughout the summer months by another very enthusiastic team of young South Africans, who had been to the same school as last year's South African trailer team.

The Victoria continues to do its bit for the local

BELOW: Shirley Gidney and Anna Samalazava of the Housekeeping Department work hard to keep the hotel spick and span.



ABOVE: Chefs Andrew Cameron and Rory Waddingham preparing meals in the recently updated hotel kitchen.



RIGHT: Just one of the tantalising fish dishes on The Victoria's menu.

community by sponsoring the under sevens' Wells Town Football Club team's playing strip, while The Globe, sponsors the club's training strip.

Finally, I'm pleased to say that The Victoria was recently judged to be one of the top four hotels in Norfolk, in the Archant tourism awards. Obviously, I am immensely proud, and all credit for this success should be given to the hard working staff at the hotel who continue to improve our level of service.

With Christmas looming, everyone at The Victoria is preparing for a busy period — we hope you have a good one and that you will find the time to pop down for a drink at some point over the festivities.

STOP PRESS! At the Wells Christmas Tide event held over the first weekend of December, Melvyn Bobbins (pictured below), one of our young chefs at The Victoria, beat 11 other local chefs, from The Crown, The Globe, The Victoria and other restaurants, to win the 'Golden Mussel' award for his mussel recipe using cider and various secret ingredients. Congratulations from us all Melvyn.

*Paul Brown
General Manager*



THE GLOBE INN



THE GLOBE INN, situated in the centre of Wells-next-the-Sea, opened amid much local interest and excitement exactly on schedule on 1st July. Well, actually we were one hour late.

The fact that we managed to finish on time is a great credit to all those involved in the project. The Directors showed their thanks by throwing a 'Builders' Party' the night before opening. This was quite a baptism of fire for the bar staff, as after months of working in dust and grime everyone had worked up quite a thirst!

The opening night was just as frantic with the local community, having been prepared by a 'count down to completion' board in the front window, eager to come and see the completed project. It was good to see the interest taken by all sections of the local community who came to both eat and drink. Although our first residents must have been somewhat bemused by the near chaos, I am pleased to say that they have already paid many return visits.

As is often the case in a new business there were some initial teething troubles and Matthew Rees, who was initially brought in as manager, left us at the end of July. For a time, we had Tom Coke doing his daily management rosta and Polly serving the

breakfast, much to the delight of the guests. Christoph Brooke, who had helped to set up The Victoria, and his right hand man Mahmoud, then joined us on a part-time basis. This combination saw us through the busiest time of the summer including Carnival Week, which was a great success. The 55 empty barrels of beer suggested that there were some satisfied customers about.

At the end of the summer holidays, Steve Loakes, the Bar Manager at The Victoria, joined The Globe management team and Paul Brown added responsibility for The Globe to his role as General Manager at The Victoria.

Now, with a settled staff and having been through a steep learning curve we can look to the future with optimism. We are pleased to see many customers returning to us on a regular basis and as a consequence have started a loyalty card, which is transferable with The Victoria. If you would like to know more details come in and see us and we will be delighted to explain it to you over your meal. We now have a Steak Night every Wednesday, a Thai Night every Friday and a Quiz Night on Sundays — so we hope to see you all at The Globe soon.

Peter Hudson
Assistant Manager



ENERGY WATCH — BIO-DIESEL

IN Issue No.9 of the Holkham Newsletter, this time last year, the Agent outlined on page four, the five Holkham objectives.

For each objective, we laid out milestones to be achieved in year one (the end of 2005), year three and year five. Two of our year five (2010) milestones for the conservation and environment objective were;

- “To reduce dependency on non-renewable energy sources by 25%.” and
- “To reduce overall energy consumption by 10%”.

Central government is bound by the Kyoto Agreement to reduce Carbon emissions incrementally by 2010, then 2015 etc to a 60% reduction by 2050. Unfortunately, our present government appears to be falling behind and it is becoming apparent that private industry and a few enlightened Councils are having to do the running. It will not have escaped your notice that we are setting ourselves higher targets than government.

I passionately believe that we should be doing our bit to try to stem the flow of global warming. Figures released by the University of California state that the world has enough oil to last it another 33 years. Some other sources say there is 50 years' supply, but frankly what is the difference? Rather more disconcerting, is that if everyone on the planet used as much oil as the USA, oil would run out in six years.

One of the most obvious areas where we at Holkham can do our bit is to look at the fuel we use to run our vehicles.

LPG

Some of you may be aware that for four years my cousin James Basset, (who farms at Quarles) and I have been trialling a different form of fuel. We have been running our cars on Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) – a much cleaner (less polluting) fossil fuel than both petrol (20% less CO₂) and diesel (on urban roads, one diesel vehicle emits the same amount of particulates as 120 LPG vehicles). It also has the advantage of not being taxed by government, so costs less than half the price of petrol or diesel (typically 42p on the forecourt). It does, however, have one or two disadvantages: a reasonably expensive conversion of your engine and, as happened to me, the engine can blow up! Despite being a relatively clean fuel, it will still eventually run out.

BIO-DIESEL

The Holkham Estate owns 35 vans and Land Rovers, which are all diesel powered. Last year, they used approximately 45,000 litres of fuel. To put that in to perspective, the farm used about 100,000 litres of diesel in its tractors.

New fuel spillage legislation was introduced in the autumn decreeing that all diesel fuel tanks had to be double banded (to capture any leakages). Our old diesel tank at Longlands did not comply, so with the purchase of a new one, with a proper electric pump, it seemed the ideal opportunity to start using a bio-diesel mix.



ABOVE: Filling the jeep with LPG.

It would have been problematic to have bio-diesel put straight into an existing diesel tank as it “cleans” the fuel, just as it does with the diesel in the diesel tank of the van. This can cause problems for the first 200-400 miles in an old vehicle as sediment from the bottom of the fuel tank can be sucked through the system so drivers will need to be vigilant during this period, and in particular, regularly check and possibly change the fuel filters.

But, after that, the engines should; a) run smoother, b) be less polluting as 100% bio-diesel does not produce particulates that fossil diesel does, c) Using a renewable, recycled product. Another handy factor is that it only costs 88p/litre, which is seven pence cheaper than conventional diesel. I do not see the prices of fossil fuels coming down much from \$50 a barrel and with increased consumption from China and India I am sure prices will continue to rise as world supply dwindles.

Initially, we shall start with a 20% bio-diesel mix, meaning 80% conventional diesel mixed with Bio-diesel. The Bio-diesel we use is converted from chip fat oil by a Norfolk company, Global Commodities at Shipdam, near Watton. They plan to increase production by starting to use virgin rapeseed oil as well.

If all goes well, and none of our vans encounter problems, it will be my intention to increase the mix to a 50:50% mix, further enhancing our environmental credentials and showing us to be a leader in the area.

“Energy Watch” will be a regular feature in the Holkham Newsletter. I will be very interested to hear from any of our readers of any ideas you may have for saving energy and helping us achieve our 2010 milestones.

In issue No.8 we read about Stephen Temple's new bio-mass (Wood chip and grain) boiler he uses to heat Copys Green Farm, but initiatives do not have to be as advanced as that. Try switching off the lights when rooms are not being used, or switching your vehicle off instead of leaving it to idle.

Viscount Coke

Finance Department

AS A drunken student, I spent too much time watching Marx Brothers films. I love the brilliant one-liners and silly puns. Our two cats, Hungadunga and Hackenbush are named after Marx Bros characters.

Strangely at a recent budget meeting I was reminded of a scene from one of their films. Groucho was the President of a country presented with a report on the economy and said, "Why, a four year old child could understand this report... run out and find me a four year-old child. I can't make head or tail of it!"

I am conscious that we all lapse into our professional jargon. Accountants (and farmers!) are prime culprits. We work with figures every day, we understand the terms but we write it in our language. What we do not supply is a four year-old child. But in the absence of child labour we are doing our best to assist. Budgets are not just rows of figures and are compiled in a consultative manner. The Finance Team spend time with business managers, explaining and



ABOVE: Jane Bloomfield collects her new accountancy qualification with and her husband Paul.

interpreting. We use graphs and charts to illustrate and explain. At every level we continue to simplify reporting, in a bid to make the figures more understandable and relevant to managers.

This also holds for our commitment to drive businesses forward through performance indicators. It is becoming an increasingly common theme. We will, with managers, identify simple measures of business performance and monitor progress accordingly. Frankly if we don't do this we can never be said to run our businesses properly. Think about it — how do you know if you or your department did well today? How should your business judge this?

This is vital for the estate. Our business and money management is key — even if Groucho Marx did say, "What's a thousand dollars? Mere chicken feed. A poultry matter."

*Mike Wyard
Finance Director*

PAYROLL GIVING

PAYROLL GIVING (GAYE) is an easy and convenient way to donate money to charity. All Estate employees can now do this through their wages as the Estate has set-up one such scheme.

There are advantages to the employee and the charities concerned with this method of donation as the government has said that it will match any employee donation pound for pound up to a maximum of £10 per month for the first six months. It is cost effective — because of tax relief a £10 donation will only actually cost the employee £7.80 (or £6 if they pay the higher rate income tax) relief is immediate and at source.

You can donate to any charity, local, national or international, be it The Air Ambulance, which is of much benefit to us in this rural area, or the NSPCC, which is nationwide. You decide which charity and how much, it can be a one off donation or an on-going agreement, and then fill in an employee form and the payroll department will do the rest. You can also cancel the arrangement at any time.

If you also already give to a charity, changing the way you donate by doing so through your wages will again benefit the charity greatly. If you are interested in joining this scheme then please contact me here at the Accounts Office, tel: (01328) 713110 or come in and see me.

**Teresa Fowle
Payroll Officer**

RIGHT: Cherry Case makes a point about early morning breakfast meetings by turning up for one in her pyjamas!



Holkham People

Welcome to:

HOLKHAM ESTATE OFFICE: PAUL GRAY, our new Events Manager, who joins us from the National Trust at Blickling Hall.

HOLKHAM FARMING CO: Tractor driver and sprayer operator, STEPHEN RETCHLESS, who has moved to the Estate from Wisbech.

GARDENS: Welcome to NEIL WAKEFIELD and CARL BALDING.

THE VICTORIA HOTEL: ROBIN WIGHAM, Restaurant Manager, and his wife ALLI, who has taken on Events Management at the hotel on a part-time basis to allow her time to look after their young family. Douglas Codman's wife, JEAN CODMAN, who has joined the Housekeeping Department; ROBERT DODMAN, Sous Chef; SHARON GALVIN, waitress; plus barmen, JONATHAN ANDREWS and MATTHEW ABBEY.

THE GLOBE INN: PETER HUDSON, the new Assistant Manager; STEVEN LOAKES, who transferred from The Victoria to be Bar Manager at The Globe; barman, NOEL ANTHONY, who worked at The Victoria three years' ago; JAMES BUSHELL, barman; JAYNE COOPER, part-time barmaid; PETER MIOZGA, bar and cellar man; TANYA BUNTING, barmaid; barman STEPHEN FOSTER, who is back with Holkham for his third stint — is this a record? VALERIE ROBERTS, BEN JONES, AMY MILLAR in the Housekeeping Department. Waitresses DANIELLE POYSER, DALE POPE and TRACY RAISBURY. Head Chef, RYAN GALVIN and his team of chefs, SIMON DODMAN, CHRIS WOODGET and MATTHEW HAWKINS. Plus Kitchen Porters, GARY DOUGLAS, TOM WOODHEAD and AARON POYSER.

HOLKHAM BUILDING MAINTENANCE: Bricklayer, DAVID HIGH and painter, MATTHEW GIBSON, who have become full-time employees, having worked for us as sub-contractors.

Farewell to:

MARILYN FRANKLIN, Lord Leicester's secretary, who left the Estate Office after 29 years, on Lord Leicester's retirement. Marilyn will continue to work for Lord Leicester on a part-time basis and remain a font of knowledge on everything to do with the Estate! ROBIN OWEN, a bricklayer with Hector's Housing Ltd, who has left the company after four years' service. CHRIS HAMEL-COOKE, long-serving church organist at St Withburga's, who is leaving Norfolk to run a fruit farm in Argentina. LUCIA CHARLERY, former Pastry Chef at The Victoria who has returned to her native Canada.

Congratulations to:

Gamekeeper, RICHARD BAILEY and JULIA MUNRO, who are engaged to be married next year. Holkham Country Fair Secretary, SARAH JOICE, who recently became engaged to RICHARD GREEN.

Births:

Congratulations to TOM GREEN and his wife JOANNA, of Grove Farm, Warham, on the birth of their daughter, EVIE MAY, on the 29th September, weighing in at 9lb 2oz and to TIM ALLEN and his wife, HOLLY, of Morley's Farm, South Creake, on the birth of their twins, ELIZABETH ALICE and CHARLOTTE EVE on the 21st September.

Deaths:

LADY SILVIA COMBE, last surviving sister of the fifth Earl of Leicester, who died peacefully at the age of 96 at Bayfield Hall, with her son, grandson and granddaughter at her bedside. All the fascinating records that Lady Silvia kept, detailing her experiences of life at Holkham, have been passed on to Holkham Archivist, Christine Hiskey and will become part of the Estate archives. There will be a Celebration Concert in memory of Lady Silvia, at Wiveton Church at 2.30pm on 4th February, all friends and family are welcome.

CEDRIC ROWE, former cattle man for Wroth brothers.

MRS PEEL and MRS HALL, long-standing Estate tenants in Warham.