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# WESTHALL VILLAGE NEWS

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Contact: [secretaryracehorse@gmail.com](mailto:secretaryracehorse@gmail.com)

November 2021

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## A message from The Racehorse Community Pub

### Pub Community Ownership Fund Success

The Racehorse has been successful in our application for a grant of £96,600 to buy the pub! We were absolutely “gobsmacked” (in the words of Chris Punt!) when calls from Radio Suffolk and the East Anglian Daily Times told us the news had been announced in the Budget.

This will make a huge difference in securing the future of the pub as it means that we can now proceed with the purchase without a mortgage, enabling us to renovate the flat upstairs and develop the business without having the additional expense of the repayments. A real game changer for the Racehorse and cause to celebrate!

All our shareholders and subscribers can give themselves a big pat on the back as this has been a real team effort, an effort that at times required a great deal of patience! So, a massive thanks to you! Our focus will be now be on a speedy purchase and we have already started on the conveyancing.

We will keep you posted on our immediate plans once we have digested the good news.

On a much sadder note, Stu Read, our vice-chairperson and a founder member of the Racehorse Committee, passed away a few days before. It would have been fitting and lovely if he had been able to share our good fortune.

In the meantime, we are busy preparing for the colder months following a very successful summer-our turnover was well above our expectations. Our quiz nights with quiz master Chris Punt, are proving very popular, Steve Thorpe is hosting Open Mic nights. And we have plans for several other events.

**The Racehorse Committee**

Westhall receives  
**£96,600**  
to save  
**THE RACEHORSE INN**



## Running the Racehorse

The Westhall Community Pub Society have now been running the Racehorse for nearly 2 years. We are now looking for kitchen and bar staff that could work for us. If you know anyone that might be interested, please let us know.

Contact us on  
[info@westhallpub.com](mailto:info@westhallpub.com)

# Apple and Pumpkin Fest

Huge thanks to everyone involved in bringing off a wonderful community event on Saturday! Despite - or perhaps because of - the rain, we had an amazing afternoon. It was great to see so many families coming out for good old-fashioned fun and games and to see the Village Hall and the pub working so seamlessly together. The Dedication of Tony Whatling's Memorial Bench at 2pm seemed to set the tone for the afternoon's proceedings, and we couldn't help but feel Tony's presence throughout the afternoon - he would have been proud of what we achieved together.

None of this would have been possible without us all working together and everyone put a huge amount of effort in to making it all run so smoothly, despite the weather throwing everything it could at us! Special mentions must go to the Church team's refreshments which were amazing (as ever), Aileen and Shaun's work in putting pumpkins at the heart of the afternoon, the mystery person/s who deposited pumpkins around the village, Rodney and Co's brilliant Fantasy Pumpkins, support and enthusiasm from the Community Council, Richard Bassett's deft compering of the afternoon, "Professor Scatter-brain" (aka Richard Dwelly) and his bicycle-powered apple-pressing team, Jim from Clarke's Lane Orchard and his lovely display of locally grown apples, Natasha and her team from the Sicon Foundation who supplied trees for the Pleasure Ground and joined in the digging of holes, all those who gave their time so willingly to do a talk and/or practical demo (especially Paul out in the rain!), Sally and all who organised games as well as the lovely Cinderella's coach but (for me) above all, Colin's whose tractor display and "people pulling a tractor" competition brought in lots

of different people and whose enthusiasm and energy was infectious and set the bar high for all of us!



Sadly, **Pat Foat** passed away peacefully on October 6th at the grand age of 103.

Pat had moved to Westhall with her husband Fred in 1960. They farmed at Stradbroke Town Farm until 1985 when they moved to Orchard House.

Pat continued to be an active village resident after her husband sadly passed away in 1988. She will be greatly missed by her family and all that knew her.

# Remembrance Day Church Service



St. Andrews Church is holding a service on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> November, starting at 10:45am.

The new car park beside the church is now able to be used.

## Westhall's Fallen

On the subject of Remembrance Day, I thought it best that this section – normally reserved for a small segment on the history of our village – be dedicated to those from Westhall who made the ultimate sacrifice in the two World Wars:

**Herbert James Sones** was born in Halesworth on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February 1897, and lived with his mother Minnie and father Thomas in *The Barracks*, Westhall. Before the war, he enlisted as a *Signal Boy* in the Royal Navy and was assigned to the HMS Pathfinder. Just over a year later, on the 5<sup>th</sup> September 1914, his ship was torpedoed by the German U-21 just outside the firth of Forth. It was the first ever ship to be sunk by a self-propelled torpedo. Out of nearly 300 men, only twenty were known to have survived. Herbert's body was never recovered, and his name is recorded on the Chatham Naval Memorial. He was seventeen years old.

**George Bertie Goff** was born in Strumpshaw, Norfolk, in April 1891, and lived at Hill House on School Road. He signed up as a volunteer in 1915, and served with the Bedfordshire Regiment, before being transferred to the Royal Welsh Fusiliers in mid-1916. On 24<sup>th</sup> March 1917, they were stationed on the Boesinghe Front, along the canal just north of Ypres, when an artillery strike wounded George severely. He was taken to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Casualty Clearing Station, where he sadly died two days later. His body is buried in the Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery.

**George Henry Bloomfield** was born in Westhall sometime in 1896, and lived with his widowed father, sister and their servant, in one of the Greyhound's rooms. He enlisted at Halesworth in 1915 as another of *Kitchener's Volunteers*, and served with the 92<sup>nd</sup> Brigade of the Royal Field Artillery. He was killed in action in the early hours of the 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1917, when his howitzer battery was fired on in retaliation for its attack on a German Army working party around the French town of Vraulx-Vrancourt the previous night. His body now rests in the Queant Road Cemetery.

**Sidney Lawrence Baker** was born in Westhall in mid-1894, and was living in Wangford at the outbreak of the Great War. He enlisted at Shoreditch in Middlesex, and was assigned to the Bedfordshire Regiment, serving in various battles at Ypres and The Somme throughout the next few years. On the 28<sup>th</sup> June 1917, the battalion took over an area known as *English Wood* – on the outskirts of Ypres – from the exhausted 20<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the King's London Regiment at midnight. Baker was among those employed to fix an area of the trench damaged by a recent raid. He was struck in the neck by a sniper's bullet in the early hours of the morning. His body is buried in the Dickebusch New Military Cemetery Extension.

**Ernest Smith** was born in Westhall on 11<sup>th</sup> March 1886. At the outbreak of war, he enlisted in the Royal Navy, working his way to the rank of Leading Seaman aboard the HMS Vanguard. Shortly before midnight on the 9<sup>th</sup> July 1917, at Scapa Flow, *Vanguard* suffered a series of magazine explosions. She sank almost instantly, killing 843 of the 845 men aboard. Ernest's body – like most of those killed – was never recovered, and the wreck was designated a war grave in 1984. His name is recorded on the Chatham Naval Memorial.

The five names and lives listed here make up a miniscule proportion of the lives lost during the Great War, but show a seemingly sleepy village's enormous contribution to the most destructive period in human history. Aside from these names, a further 40 men and women served. Next issue, we'll take a look at the Second World War, and how Westhall played a part.

## Your Local History Club

We meet once a month in The Racehorse for about an hour (generally on every 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday) at 7pm.

Meetings are very informal and friendly and we discuss many different subjects relating to history of Westhall. So far topics have included a visit to St Georges and Moat Yards, and listening to a recording of Tony's memoirs.

There is no meeting in December, but we will resume in January to hear part 2 of Tony's memoirs.

We would love you to join us.  
-Linda Clifton

## St. Andrews Day

St Andrew's Church has played a big part in Westhall village life for hundreds of years. Baptisms, weddings and funerals hold particularly significant memories for many families. To celebrate St Andrew's day on Tuesday 30th November we would love you to come to the church, 10am-12, to share your memories and photos, if you have any. Tea, coffee and hot chocolate will be served and you may like to light a candle in memory of a loved one.

## Westhall News Editorial Group

Despite hard and troubling times, we will always keep Westhall informed with this newsletter. As always, we are very keen to accept contributions and ideas for future newsletters. Contact us on:

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Oliver Riches 07508 667150  
Email: [secretaryracehorse@gmail.com](mailto:secretaryracehorse@gmail.com) or [oriches2304@gmail.com](mailto:oriches2304@gmail.com)

## Racehorse Events

The Racehorse has many events going on in this last part of the year, and many more planned for the next:

### November:

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> – Cocktail Night

Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> – Book Club

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> – Open Mic Night

### December:

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> – Games Night

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> – Bingo Lunch

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> – Quiz Night

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> – Old glory Morris Dancers

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> Door Step Carols

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> – Book Club

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> – Festive Lunch



**OPEN MIC NIGHT**

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> November  
7:30 p.m.

**'turn up, tune in!'**

Guitar, Ukelele, Piano, Banjo and Woodsaw duo, Coconuts, just a voice.

**Join in or just come along to hear 'local' musicians (wanted!).**  
(that is musicians are wanted, not musicians who are wanted criminals)

The Racehorse Inn, Westhall