

**Friends
of the**

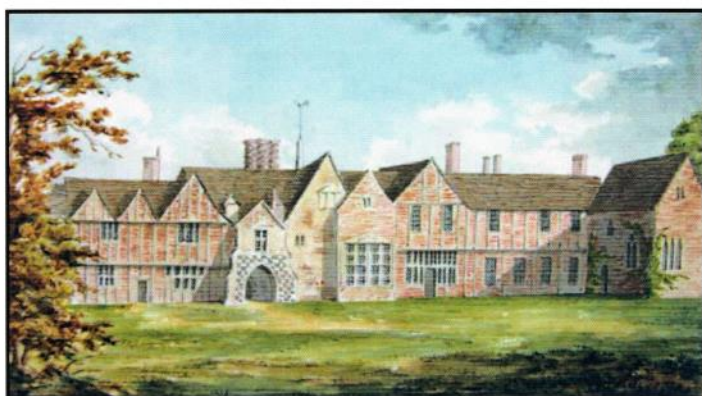
*Suffolk
Record
Office*

Registered Charity
No 288042

Newsletter of the Friends of the Suffolk Record Office

March 2009

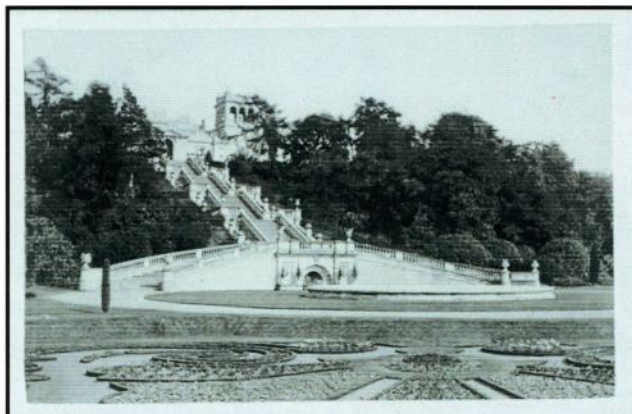
Shrubland Hall Photographic Collection Appeal



The old Shrubland Hall, 'from a drawing made by Mr Repton', volume 1 of *Heraldic Monumental Remains* by Mrs Ann Mills of Stutton, from the Joan Corder Collection
SROI/HD2418/51/1

In the August 2008 newsletter the Committee was pleased to announce that the Friends had purchased the Shrubland Hall Photographic Collection for £3,855. The money for this acquisition has severely depleted the Friends' Purchase Fund. We urgently need to build this up again in case other major collections appear on the open market. Any contribution, however small, will be most welcome and will ensure not just that these photographs are safeguarded, but that the Friends can continue to purchase Suffolk collections at risk.

If you can help us, please send your contribution to the Secretary at the address on page 4. Cheques should be made payable to the Friends of the Suffolk Record Office. Further details about the importance of the collection are available on page 3.



Carte de visite showing the Descent, 100 steps which lead down from the Hall to the Panel Garden
SROI/K839:14621

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Suffolk Record Office Staff Structure

Members will recall that a temporary staff structure was put in place in August 2007 following the retirement of Gwyn Thomas. The structure has now been confirmed with Kate Chantry as the Record Office Manager, Bridget Hanley as Collections Manager, Jason Siddall as Heritage Information Manager and Judith Stephenson as Searchroom Services Manager. Louise Clarke and Stuart Tyler's posts as Ipswich and Bury archivists have also been made permanent.

New searchroom staff have also joined the teams. Phyl Pope has taken up the role of relief Searchroom Assistant at Bury while Sally Whiffing has joined the Ipswich team as a Searchroom Assistant. The Bury team said goodbye to Emma Kates, who had worked as a Saturday Searchroom Assistant since 2004.

Cataloguing Project

You will probably have read about the excellent 4 star status gained recently by the Suffolk Record Office in The National Archives Self Assessment. One of the major factors preventing us improving further is our cataloguing backlog, and we are delighted to announce that Suffolk County Council has allocated additional funding to the Record Office to help us start to address this problem.

We have just advertised a 13 month fixed term contract for a full-time Cataloguing Archivist who will be able to tackle some of the large, intractable collections that remain un-catalogued. In addition we are going to appoint a part-time Volunteer Co-ordinator, who will catalogue some of the less complex collections and supervise volunteers in all three branches to do the same.

We have chosen collections from across the three branches and covering a wide range of types and classes of records including photographs, business archives, maps and more ephemeral collections. These include the West Suffolk Oddfellows, Board of Trade Marine Maps, and Bush Boake Allan Ltd of Long Melford, wholesale manufacturers of galenicals, essential oils, food flowers and chlorophyll. Volunteers will also be involved in numbering and packing catalogued archives and inputting information from paper catalogues into the computer database. The finished catalogues will be added to our online catalogue Suffolk Heritage Direct.

If you are interested in joining the group of volunteers in this innovative project to increase access to materials held in Suffolk Record Office, please contact Collections Manager Bridget Hanley on 01473 584531 or by E mail at bridget.hanley@libher.suffolkcc.gov.uk. Initially we will be looking for 4 or 5 volunteers in each branch when we start in April, but will hope to grow that number as the project progresses.

Bridget Hanley, Collections Manager

Local Government Review Update

The Boundary Committee is now due to make its recommendations on the structure of local Government in Suffolk on 15 July 2009. Following this there will be four weeks where representations may be made directly to the Secretary of State. Further information can be obtained from the Suffolk County Council website or the Boundary Committee website.

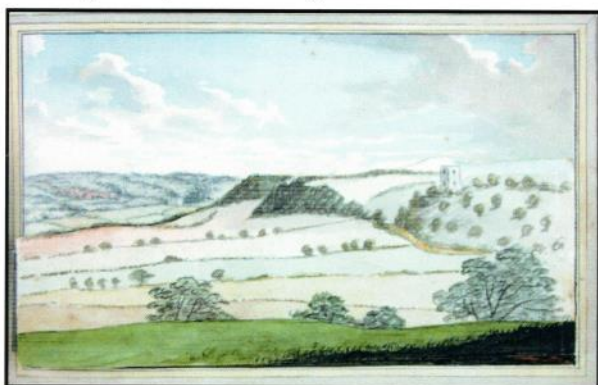


Shrubland Photographic Collection Appeal

Shrubland Park and Gardens are registered Grade I on the English Heritage *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest* and are probably the most important designed historic landscape in Suffolk. They have cultural associations with some of the greatest architects, designers and gardeners. The Grade II* listed hall was originally designed by James Paine and later remodeled by J.P. Gandy Deering and Sir Charles Barry. It occupies an unusual position astride a steep, chalk escarpment overlooking the Gipping Valley. Successive garden designers from Humphry Repton, Alexander Roos, Donald Beaton, Sir Charles Barry and William Robinson have taken full advantage of this natural feature. In the mid-nineteenth century it was dramatically exploited to create splendid Italianate gardens with a grand descent, loggias, pavilions and statues. The gardens are dominated by architectural features (many of which are Grade II or II* listed) and by the landscaping of terraces, steps and balustrades.

The scale of the gardens, their complexity and beauty, quickly caught the imagination of the public who were invited to visit them on special charity days. Their fame was such that another great Italophile builder, Prince Albert, creator of Osborne House on the Isle of Wight, visited them in 1854.

English Heritage commented that they had not seen a photographic collection on this scale that illustrates national developments within architectural and garden design through the evolution of one country house and its landscape from the 1860s to recent times. This stunning collection of photographs includes: a series of large format albumen prints recording work undertaken on the house and gardens from 1830s-1850s; albums of prints of the interior, exterior and grounds taken by Palmer Clarke, Photographer of Bury St Edmunds; Kodak Panoramas of c1908; prints of art works and much more. They are a significant link in the chain of archival evidence charting the evolution of the house and gardens stretching back through Repton's delightful watercolours of 1789 to a fine map of 1688.



In December Suffolk Record Office was allocated three Humphry Repton Red Books for Shrubland Hall, Livermere Park and Broke Hall. These have been preserved as national treasures through the Acceptance in Lieu Scheme, administered by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA), on behalf of the government. The Red Book for Shrubland Park is especially important as it was Repton's earliest Suffolk commission.

According to Professor Tom Williamson of the UEA 'his style was particularly well suited to the kind of small to medium sized estate with which Suffolk abounded'. Repton's proposals for Shrubland included the creation of an extensive pleasure ground of grass, gravel paths and shrubs and a new drive providing a striking approach to the house. Many of these features are still discernible in the photographs and on the ground.





Suffolk Record Office Contact Details

For any queries or comments about the Friends please contact the secretary or treasurer.

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Website address: <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/sro>

The AGM will be held at the Lowestoft branch of the Suffolk Record Office on **Friday 25 September 2009**. We hope to encourage a number of speakers from local societies and groups to come along and tell us about what they do. If you belong to a local group and would like to get involved, please contact the Secretary—details on page 4.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Suffolk Record Office Events

The Record Office will be running a full programme of talks, walks and workshops over the next few months. Details of all the events can be found on the events page of the website: www.suffolk.gov.uk/sro

Selected highlights include:

RE-CREATING THE PAST

Who created Lowestoft Record Office's archives? Why did they do so? How useful are they to historians today?

The Lowestoft branch of the Record Office is pleased to offer a new 10-week course by David Butcher. Using Lowestoft archives the course will teach the skills needed to reconstruct aspects of Early Modern life (1550-1750). Fieldwork sessions in historical Lowestoft are included. The course starts on Thursday 7 May and runs until Thursday 6 August (there will be two weeks of holiday—dates to be confirmed at the first meeting). The course costs £55—to book your place please contact the Lowestoft Record Office on 01502 405357 or lowestoft.ro@libher.suffolkcc.gov.uk.

Kill or Cure — Suffolk's Age of Agony; medicine 1660-1830 **Dr Pat Murrell** **£5.50**

Saturday 9 May at 2.30pm in Bury

Tuesday 12 May at 2.00pm in Ipswich

In an age before anaesthetics, antiseptics or antibiotics, this lecture considers quackery, home curers, local epidemics, the medical fraternity and the County's first General Hospital.