



Jamie's opener

At the beginning of the year great friends of mine moved in to a lovely Grade II listed house a few miles away from Sculthorpe air field, originally built as one of the satellite airfields for RAF West Raynham. Sitting outside enjoying a cold beer with them a week ago, our conversation was stopped in its tracks by the bellowing noise of an oncoming V22 Osprey. As the noise increased it wasn't long before the bulk of the 58 feet long 'heli-plane' came into direct view immediately above our heads. It would have been amusing to an onlooker, this tiny group of people, all craning their necks and mouthing excitedly (the universal 'mute' button pressed until the £43 million pound aircraft had passed). I suddenly felt like an unexpected extra in some action movie, the whole scenario such a dramatic contrast to sitting in a cosy cottage garden, shooting the breeze with friends while munching on a salad nicoise...



"We had no idea about the planes when we bought the house, which I suppose was a bit silly of us really" Gemma said, "The Hercules airlifters are even noisier...but we find it quite exciting!". For the rest of the evening I couldn't quite decide how I would feel if I lived here, and another three or four planes passed over us in the space of an hour. "It's like something out of Patriot Games - I keep expecting Harrison Ford to appear around the corner or abseil down the wall..." I quipped. "Hmmm" Gemma replied. "Harrison" past it now - how about Channing Tatum? In full camouflage kit, running through the fields, leaping over fences and then having to stop here to have a wound on his chest dressed by an able first aider....which would be ME!". Her husband smiled sympathetically at her at her at this point, amused by her delusion and the fact that Gemma is technically old enough to be Channing Tatum's mother. As I left that evening, I realised that 'Each to their Own' is a great expression - not remotely fussed by the occasional visit from low flying aircraft, their home is nestled in the middle of idyllic woods and fields, close enough to Fakenham and Holt and not far from Kings Lynn and Norwich train stations - all big plusses for any house in this part of Norfolk.

Jamie Jamieson

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Holkham Estate – Bringing Big (and not so big) Business to the Norfolk Coast

I attended a networking breakfast the other week. The event took place at Holkham Studios, Longlands, an award-winning new commercial development on the Holkham Estate. Offering a 21st century working environment within Grade II listed former agricultural buildings, Longlands is home to international jewellery designer Monica Vinader and her staff of 45, who currently occupy 9,000 square feet - expanding by another 3,000 square feet imminently. I was really interested to learn how Monica has enticed many of her London staff to Longlands. The offices sit beautifully in the heartland of the estate, and have been designed, in the words of the Telegraph last year, to 'evoke an aesthetic more akin to a weekend retreat in the Cotswolds that the headquarters of a jewellery brand'. Well, I would replace the Cotswolds with the North Norfolk coast, but the analogy is correct nonetheless. The estate has worked hand-in-hand with their first tenant to create a compelling environment with home-cooked lunches provided everyday as well as circuit training (optional - phew!) once a week. Rather than treating their tenants as tenants in the feudal sense, the estate has approached them as customers and is committed to providing them with a complete, almost holistic, experience. One of the biggest issues acknowledged by estate manager James Bracey is housing - and the dearth of local affordable rented housing to support rural businesses. This estate is looking to address some of this local housing shortfall by considering building smaller properties in

The estate has embarked on Phase 2 of Holkham Studios which will enable Monica Vinader to expand her business premises plus allow a new surveying practice to establish another office from its Hertfordshire base. The remaining office space is being converted to provide smaller, fully serviced offices available on month-to-month arrangement with capacity for sharing. The offices have all been exquisitely converted from original farm buildings, are set within a stunning parkland setting, have shared access to 200MB broadband and offer the coast a mere stone's throw away. For anyone with a second home in Norfolk who, until now, hasn't had an appropriate alternative to the London office, this is surely a compelling proposition.

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Norfolk **IN** focus

This week we take a look at Swaffham

This year we will be looking some of the different towns that make up our lovely county, focusing on areas of architectural interest. This edition we focus on Swaffham.

Swaffham is one of Norfolk's market towns. It rose to prominence during the peak of the wool trade during the 13th and 14th centuries but remained an important local town until the beginning of the 20th century. As a result it has some fine Georgian buildings and a large market place.



Across the UK there are many stately homes that have fallen into disrepair, with Lost Heritage putting the number in England at just under 2,000. The Swaffham area boasts the remains of one - Didlington Hall. It is here that Howard Carter discovered his passion for Egypt and started down the path towards the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun. The hall was originally built in the 17th century but was remodelled by the Tyssen-Amhersts with distinctive Italianate influences. William Amhurst Tyssen-Amhurst inherited the hall and set out to showcase and add to his impressive collection of Egyptian antiquities and library of rare books, becoming patron to Howard Carter. Unfortunately this treasure trove was dispersed owing to mismanagement by the estate agent, who had embezzled the estate funds for his own uses. The Tyssen-Amhursts were forced to sell the collection and eventually the house as well. It was requisitioned during the second world war and badly damaged by the quartered troops. Owing to its size, the number of staff needed to run it and the amount needed to return it to a habitable state no one could be found to take it on and it was demolished in the early 1950s.



The stable block - one of the few remaining buildings from the old hall.

Jamie's quiz

And to finish...the quiz, with a Swaffham flavour this time. Once again a big thank you to William Mason Fine Wines who are providing the prize of a lovely bottle of wine. You can enter by sending your correct answers to the email address below.

Should you wish to become better acquainted with William Mason Fine Wines then clicking on their logo will take you to their website.



-  What is the name of the statue on top of the market cross?
-  Which society was created in Swaffham in 1776?
-  Which pub was renamed 'The Startled Duck' in the TV series Kingdom?

 Which famous archaeologist spent much of his childhood in the town?

 Which British Championships were held in Swaffham in 2008?

Think you know them all? Send your answers to Maddie »



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