



THE ROOSTER

Roos Village Newsletter

No. 13

August 1986

ROOS CHURCHYARD



Section of the exposed wall photographed in mid-June

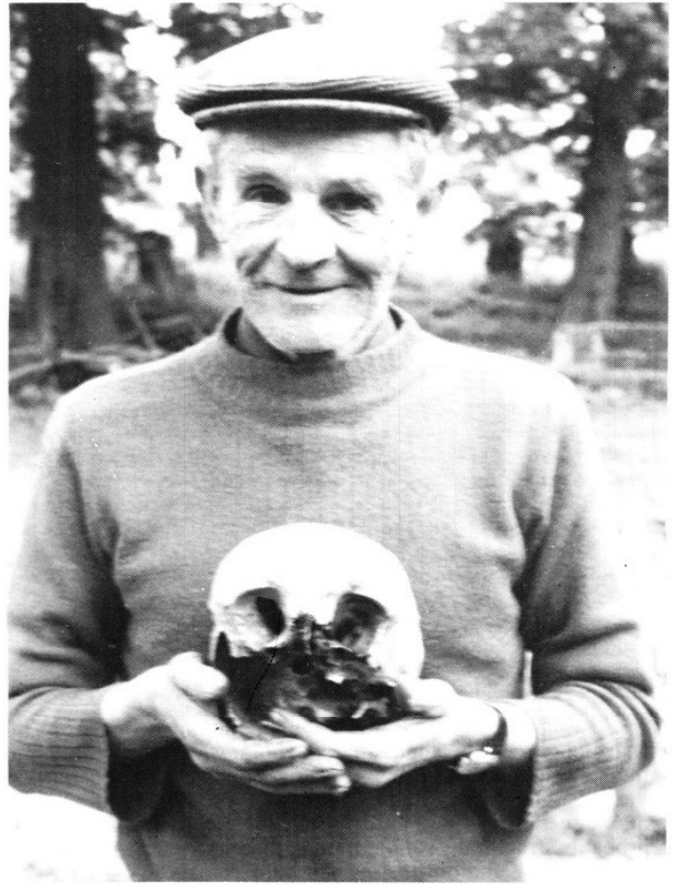
Work is nearing completion in the unconsecrated part of Roos churchyard. the two main tasks have been the drainage of this low-lying area and the uncovering and restoration of the ancient retaining wall to the south.



Kim Storey, one the the team, cleans up a section of the wall

Meanwhile, as was mentioned in the last 'Rooster', the digging of ditches to accommodate the new land drains has revealed some unexpected human remains. In addition to the fragments of three skeletons already passed to the police for examination, two bags of further bits and pieces have been collected - fragments of bones from apparently a number of different bodies. They were discovered cluttered together quite near to the surface.

In immediate charge of the work on site is Mr. Ron Bryant of Bannister Street, Withernsea, seen below holding the battered remains of a recently-uncovered skull. Mr. Bryant says that a feature of these remains is that many show signs of mutilation. The obvious inference is that the bodies either suffered a violent death or were damaged before or during burial.



Mr. Bryant holding skull

Until the police and their scientific specialists provide an official report no one can say how old these relics are, though they appear to be very ancient. One can only guess as to how they came to be left in unconsecrated ground where there is no record of official burials.

Were they victims of the plague - perhaps as early as the Black Death in the 14th century? It is known that Black Death victims do lie in some local churchyards - at Welwick, for instance. Communities infested by the plague had to get rid of corpses quickly. Does this account for the condition of the remains found at Roos? Were the bodies plague-infested corpses hurriedly and forcibly crammed together into a shallow common grave? Relatives or

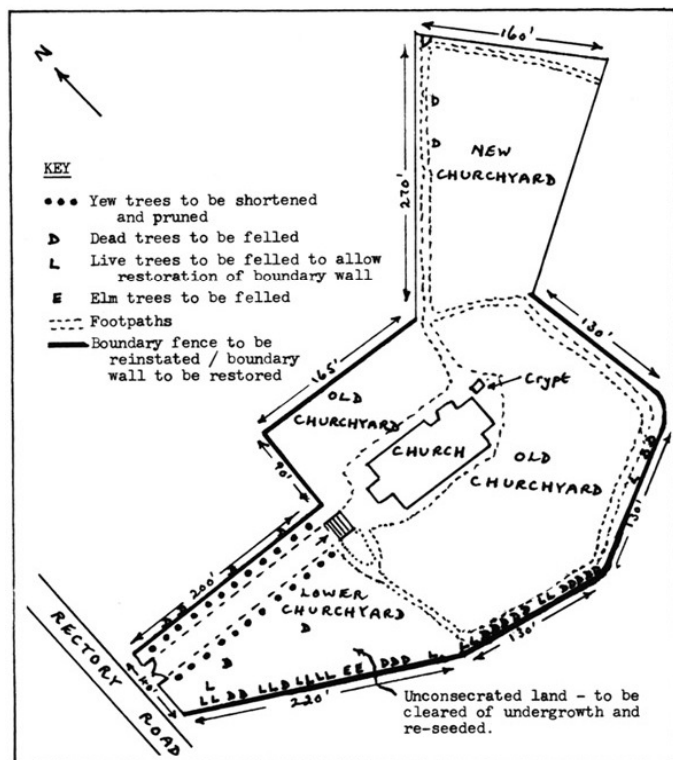
neighbours would be anxious to perform the grim task as quickly as possible for fear of becoming the next victims themselves.

Two and a half centuries after the Black Death - in 1588 - Roos suffered a 'Sickness' from 6th March to the end of May. There were 48 burials within the three months. At an average rate of four a week, no doubt in some weeks there would be far more than the average. It might have been a problem to dig single graves fast enough. It is possible that the pressure of such an emergency could have led to a number of bodies being buried in a common shallow grave. However, this hypothesis does not account for the fact that the remains found recently had been damaged.

Another possibility is that the remains were the result of a previous unintentional exhumation. In olden times - before reliable records of burials were kept - a gravedigger opening up what he thought was a new grave might come across evidence of an earlier burial. It was then the custom for the old bones to be thrown together into what was known as a charnel house, a repository for unidentified human remains, sometimes in or near a church crypt.

Whatever the explanation, further discoveries are unlikely. The land drains have now been laid and the trenches have been filled. Apart from re-seeding, the lower churchyard will remain undisturbed.

Mr. Bryant himself is less concerned about these finds than about getting on with the work that his team have been set to do. At present - in mid-July - there is still more of the wall to expose and to restore. The map below shows features of the scheme especially as far as the old churchyard is concerned. It indicates precisely which trees it was necessary to remove in order to gain access to the wall.



The map shows that it was originally intended to restore the wall along its entire length up to the point where the hedge along the new churchyard begins. It is now possible that only parts of the remaining extent will need attention. Previous reinforcement of one section was paid for by public subscription and this part is probably structurally sound, though there are places where some strengthening and buttressing will be necessary.

The workforce currently consists of sixteen people with provision to employ three more. Two members of the team - Mr. Bryant himself and another person with supervisory responsibility - are on site full-time. The others, including two girls, are mainly young people who would otherwise be unemployed and who each work for three days a week on a rota. The scheme is run by Community Rural Aid and is backed by the Manpower Services Commission as the funding agency.

The team's first task was to remove the undergrowth from the lower churchyard to allow drains to be laid and also to clear access to the wall by removing trees, some of which had grown into the masonry and caused its disintegration. At this early stage the first impression was that the team were intent on creating indiscriminate havoc.



Some of the team. Back row: Pat Robinson, Vic Davis, Paul Walker. Front row: Kim Storey, Roy Briant, Andrew Dennis, Mark Murray, Billy Hare, Mark Brown.

Missing from the photograph: Caroline Baines, J. Catt, Michael Gillingwater, Shane Karnon, Peter Marshall, Dave Roberts, John Thompson.

Indeed, many villagers were very upset at what they saw and it appears that some were openly critical of the team themselves. Many Roos residents have long associations with the church and a deep affection for the building and its attractive environment. It is understandable that people should be upset when they had no idea what was being attempted and why.

It is, unreasonable, however, for members of the workforce to be blamed for carrying out a scheme agreed jointly in advance by the Manpower Services Commission and the church authorities. The fact that most of us do not know any details of the agreed scheme is no reason to blame the people who are being employed to carry it out.

What is known in the village is that a Restoration Appeal was launched in May with the target of raising £5,000. Donations were invited from parishioners through a door-to-door envelope scheme. In addition, special fund-raising measures have been organised such as the bell-ringing day and exhibition and the waste-paper collection (At present the waste-paper scheme is in abeyance because the market price for waste paper makes it unprofitable).

Sadly, the total sum at present received from donations is very low. This is in spite of one or two very generous contributions. There have been only about forty donations. It may be that local people have been slow to contribute because they are not clear precisely what restoration work is to be done and how their donations would relate to the work in progress and to the cost of the scheme as a whole.

In view of the poor response to the Appeal, concern is being voiced in the village that funds will be exhausted in paying for work already done and that completion of the scheme as a whole will be in jeopardy. In addition to further work on the churchyard wall, it was originally envisaged that the fabric of the church itself would receive necessary attention.

Government funds are channelled through the Manpower Services Commission to finance work such as that undertaken in Roos by the Community Rural Aid programme. Strict control is exercised over public funds so committed. The work is constantly monitored and progress reports are required.

At the same time such community programmes lay a contractual obligation on beneficiary bodies - in this case Roos Parochial Church Council and the diocesan authorities. Beneficiaries must collaborate in ensuring that the scheme is carried out according to plans agreed in advance and also must fulfil a financial undertaking to meet the cost of materials and certain fees.

Of course, these wider issues are not a matter for the team working on the site. What concerns them is the job they have to do and the often contrasting attitudes towards it shown by different members of the community. For example, they are grateful to Mr. John Kirkwood for frequent practical advice and assistance and to Mr. Ken Grant for the loan of materials, transport and heavy lifting equipment - without Mr. Grant's machinery some of the tasks would have been extremely difficult if not impossible. On the other hand, they have been hampered by interference from vandals. While the trenches were open some of the soil was pushed back in and materials were tampered with.

Mr. Bryant is naturally annoyed at the consequent delays - not to mention the unnecessary expense of jobs have to be done afresh. He recently came one evening with his dog to see if he could catch the culprits and intends to come again. Some youngsters had already been cleared away by Mr. Grant before Mr. Bryant could get to them. Mr. Bryant spoke to another group

and warned them of the consequences if any were caught doing wilful damage.

Not long ago there was wilful damage to property on the playing field. Once more Roos residents have to face the fact that there are youngsters in the village who have no sense of responsibility - Mr. Bryant calls it lack of respect: no respect for place (some glue-sniffing teenagers camped in the churchyard on the occasion of the recent barn dance) and no respect for the worth of other people's work. These matters should concern us all.

ROOS MINI-MARKET

We should like to thank all who helped on 28th June: our Mr. Piano-Man shifters, Fred and Tom; Grant's removal van and its driver, Jennifers; Kath and Maureen (Yes, girls, your hats were GREAT!); Betty the Calomine Lady; Madge, Nancy and Topsy, our tea and raffle ladies; all those who provided goods to sell and those who parted with their money on the day. Last but not least, our thanks to Mike and Barry who put up with and help with our ideas and ventures.



We appreciate all the help we were given in raising the marvellous sum of £201.28 for the Memorial Institute Renovation Fund.

Pat & Margaret

ROOS PARISH COUNCIL

All Councillors were present for the meeting of 14th July. Councillor K.G. Grant took the Chair. Over twenty members of the public attended.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved. The only matter arising was the application by Mr. Ivor Ellis to extend his site at Sand-le-Mere by some sixty acres. Councillor G.E. Winter said that there had been a site visit by fifteen members of the Holderness Borough Council Planning Committee. Councillor John Quarby said that his own enquiries in Tunstall had revealed that the main concern of residents was the inadequacy of access roads. The Parish Council had already taken the view that approach roads would need to be upgraded if substantial additional traffic were to be accommodated. With no further information at present from the Borough, the Council passed to other business.

Correspondence

A letter concerning Health and Safety at Work had been received from Mr. B. Clinch, H.M. Principal Inspector of Factories in Hull. It was passed to the Playing Field Committee through Councillor Robert Clark.

The Council received notification of the transfer of the liquor licence at the Spar shop to the new proprietors, Mr. and Mrs. Bilton.

Mr. R. Taylor, Director of Development, Holderness Borough, had written about the Access to Information Act 1985. He pointed out that the Act permitted inspection by the public of documents submitted to the Council. This applied not only to principal documents but also to any background material submitted.

Another letter from the Borough Council offices thanked the Parish Council for its assistance with the petition against the dumping of nuclear waste in Humberside. The petition had recently been presented to the House of Commons.

Planning

The following applications had been submitted to the Parish Council for comment.

Dent's Garth, Keyingham Construction Company. Application for renewal of permission to use the premises at Dent's Garth for the construction of purpose-made joinery.

Memorial Institute. Details were supplied of the single-storey rear extension and internal alterations already approved in outline. There was no objection to this and the previous application.

The Elms, Roos. Mr. P.R. Smith sought 'Historical Buildings' consent to reconvert The Elms to its original state as two properties. Alterations would require the bricking up of four doorways, sub-division of the garden and the construction of a new driveway. Because the plan submitted was thought to be confusing, the Parish Council decided to seek more information and probably have a site meeting before taking a decision.

Glebe Farm, Hilston. An application in the names of R.M. Dennis and Chris Wardle sought permission for a change of use of an existing farm building to a joiner's workshop for sole use of the first-named, Mr. Dennis. Since the property was currently owned by Councillor Robert Clark, he withdrew during discussion of this application, which was approved.

Hela, North End, Roos. Mr. Roy Page had applied for outline planning consent for the construction of a residential building and provision of new pedestrian and vehicular access: entry would be from the Hilston Road north of the crossroads. Some Councillors argued that building at North End would be outside the recommended expansion area as defined in the draft Village Plan and that there was no business need (e.g. farming) to be satisfied at the site. A vote was taken. Six supported the application; three opposed it.

Land to the north of Pilmar Lane, Roos. Mr. John Kirkwood sought outline permission for residential development and pedestrian and vehicular access - the access point to be determined later. The application was presented by Messrs Frank Hill & Son. Among letters sent to the Borough Council opposing the application a copy of one from Mr. and Mrs. John Leeman had been passed to the Parish Council. The copy was noted but not discussed since it was regarded as council matter.

The Chairman referred to the Village Plan meeting held on 16th June. Both he and Councillor Winter thought that the applicant had jumped the gun before the Plan was finalised and that the Parish Council should not make a decision on the application until there was further news of the Village Plan. Councillor Winter argued that, although the land in question had been marked on the Village Plan map as appropriate for development, the Plan had not yet been made official. Other objections were discussed: there was no mention of the area involved (though it was estimated at about 3 acres), there were no details about access to the site, and no indication of likely housing density. There was unanimous support for the Chairman's suggestion that the application be referred back with a request for more details and that a decision be deferred until after the Village Plan was finalised.

In relation to the above application, a letter from Mr. C. Hogg, Assistant Director of Development, drew the Parish Council's attention to the possibility - if the application were approved - of including an amenity play area in the development. It could be made an obligation on the developer to provide such an area if the Parish Council were prepared to undertake responsibility for its maintenance. The suggestion was noted.

Elms Farm, Roos. The application - in the name of Mr. Michael Grant - provided further details in respect of an outline application already approved for the change of use of a coaching house to a private dwelling. The Chairman withdrew while the item was discussed. The details of the application were approved.

STRAWBERRY TEA

In spite of clashes with The School Sports and other events, the Strawberry Tea went ahead as planned on 16th July - at least it did not clash with the Royal wedding! On a sunny and enjoyable afternoon £50 was raised for the Memorial Institute Renovation Fund. Many thanks to the ladies who attended and to those who sent donations.

S.T.

Parish Meeting

It was agreed to hold the annual Parish Meeting on Monday, 4th August at 7.30 p.m. in the Memorial Institute. The monthly Parish Council Meeting would be held a week later on Monday, 11th August.

Questions and discussion reverted to the application by Mr. John Kirkwood to develop land to the north of Pilmar Lane. Mrs. Margaret Payne noted that both the Chairman and Councillor Clark had withdrawn from the meeting when planning applications affecting their own property were involved. She queried the propriety of Councillor Quarmby's taking part in discussion of Mr. Kirkwood's application because there was a family connection by marriage. The Chairman said that considerations of 'interest' were a matter of degree: Councillor Quarmby had no direct interest in Mr. Kirkwood's application.

Mr. John Waldron of 58 Pilmar Lane said that he was one of those who had written in strong terms to the Borough to oppose the application. In view of references during the meeting to the Village Plan, he reported that in a reply from the Planning Department he had been told that the Village Plan would not be finalised without a further public meeting in the village. Earlier, Councillor Winter had estimated that the Plan would not be finalised until August or September.

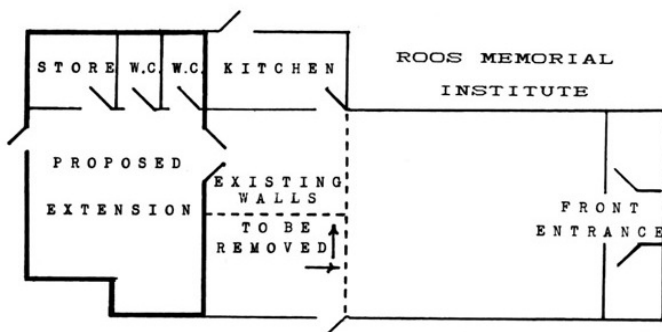
Mr. Leslie Helliwell observed that the draft Plan presented at the meeting of 16th June had been generally well received - he himself had thought it very sound. Although one could have genuine sympathy with residents whose properties would be affected if Mr. Kirkwood's land were developed, the land was likely to be developed sooner or later and it seemed illogical to approve of the Village Plan and yet oppose its implementation. Mr. Kirkwood's application might be premature but - in the light of the draft Plan - it could not be objected to on principle.

ROOS MEMORIAL INSTITUTE

Plans for the extension and improvements to the Memorial Institute have now been submitted to Holderness Borough Council for approval. Unless there are unforeseen problems, work on the building should begin shortly - at any time from September onwards.

Originally, the idea was merely to repair the present building and make minor alterations to improve facilities. The main problems, however, would have remained: (i) the hall is not big enough for large events or for sports such as badminton; (ii) without separate access, the billiards room would still be blocked by main hall bookings.

Then Philip Malpas, the Young Farmers' representative on the Committee, produced a rough plan that seemed to solve these problems. After the rest of the Committee had digested the enormity of demolishing a wall, moving the kitchen, and adding an extension, they became excited. It really did seem feasible. The original plan was refined and properly drawn out. Leaving the front view of the building unchanged, the scheme now provides a large main hall, a smaller kitchen, a separate games/committee room, improved toilets and a store room.



Needless to say, these more ambitious plans are going to be more costly but they will be well worth while. We are aiming for a target of £3,500 for materials with N.A.C.R.O. supplying the labour.

The Committee have been greatly encouraged by the support received. Pat Cheeseman and Margaret Payne have been doing a marvellous job. Their ideas and energy have raised the bank balance enormously. Their latest effort, the Mini-Market, raised just over £200. There was a constant flow of merchandise of every size, shape and description. Anything stationary for longer than five seconds was sold! The only permanencies were the dedicated band of stallholders who kept their posts throughout a sweltering day. Many thanks to everyone who helped.

All the groups that use the Institute are holding an event to raise funds and some have done so already. In addition, Mrs. Tyson held a Strawberry Tea which raised £50. Many thanks to her and her helpers. The Treasure Hunt, run by Jean Jackson on behalf of the Committee, was not very well supported but all who

took part enjoyed the chase. Everyone has now returned - by one route or another!

Events so far have raised a total of £800. We have applied for grants wherever possible. £250 has already been promised by our own Parish Council. Please continue to support our events. All donations gratefully received.

Please note the date of the Annual General Meeting - Thursday, 4th September at 8.00 p.m. in the Institute. This is one event that has never been a sell-out but it would be nice to give our reports to somebody!

On 19th September we are organising a Safari Supper - each course to be taken at a different location. Bring your own glass and cutlery. Vegetarian obliged. Tickets (£7.50 each) from any Committee Member. Menu (and stages):

1. Sherry
Pate/Egg mayonnaise
2. Boeuf Bourignon
(served with wine)
3. Sweet Trolley
4. Cheese, biscuits and coffee
in the Institute - plus a bar,
renovations permitting

We are also organising a sponsored walk on 19th October and an event for Bonfire Night on 5th November.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Memorial Institute. Monday, 4th August. 7.30

This annual open meeting provides an opportunity for electors to raise matters of public concern and question members of the Parish Council about their attitude towards local issues, past, present and future.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Memorial Institute. Monday, 11th August. 7.30

Members of the public always welcome

COPY DEADLINE

Please supply material for the September issue of 'The Rooster' to Leslie Helliwell, Lamb Lane, by:
Monday, 18th August

BANK HOLIDAY FUN DAY

Following the success of last year's Fun Day, Stuart Wilson, Chairman of the Playing Field Committee, reports that a repeat event is to be held on Monday, 25th August.

As before, the venue will be the village playing field. Sporting activity will centre on an "It's a Knockout" competition with teams from local organisations. There will also be a Tug-o-War and a wide variety of sideshows and individual competitions. Application has been made for a bar licence and light refreshments will be available to suit younger members of the family.

This will be a day for all the family to enjoy - available locally with no need to contend with long drives or traffic queues.

COMING EVENTS

August

- 4 Parish Meeting. Memorial Institute. 7.30
- 11 Roos Parish Council. Memorial Institute. 7.30
- 25 Bank Holiday Fun Day. (Playing Field Committee).

September

- 3 Roos W.I. Memorial Institute. 7.15. Sergeant Steadman: Crime Prevention.
- 4 Memorial Institute Committee A.G.M. 7.30. Public please attend.
- 19 Safari Supper. (Institute Committee)
- 23 Start of Adult Education classes. Roos School.