

MOVING TIMES

The Annual Newsletter from
Dakin Estates Ltd

A Very Merry Christmas
and Happy New Year to all.

2012/2013



DAKIN ESTATES



A belated farewell to Alan Horne, "Big Al" who retired from the company just before Christmas 2011 – just late enough to miss the deadline for last year's Moving Times Newsletter!

We wish him a long and happy retirement – naturally, he remains on the MT circulation list!

Dakin Estates has sold the final barn at Garboldisham and is currently finishing "Parlour Barn," (so called because it was a milking parlour!) at Barnham Broom which will be going on the market in the New Year.

Dakin Estates are currently involved in negotiation on several new build and refurbishment projects in

Cambridge as well as long term land bids on land in Suffolk and Derbyshire.

We are always interested in looking at possible refurbishment and newbuild projects and will always consider options, joint venture, profit sharing ventures and, indeed, any other arrangement ventures that landowners and their agents would care to suggest.

See our Website for details of present and past projects as well as previous copies of Moving Times Newsletters.



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THE DANCE HALL'S TALE

Agents say that the most difficult to value properties are those slightly out of kilter with their surroundings i.e. a large house with a small garden or a tiny house with an acre of garden or even a very large country house that is semi-detached.

Spare a thought for our old ally Tim Sheridan, ("the hero of M'boko gorge"), of Sheridans Estate Agency in Bury St Edmunds who recently had to value a small townhouse in Northgate Street, Bury St Edmunds ... with a dance hall.

Yes, that's right, a dance hall.

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THE DANCE HALL'S TALE

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The property formed part of a former pub called The Sword in Hand and in the 1930s the landlord had built a dance hall which is still there today as part of a private house.

According to the book "Old Inns and Beerhouses of Bury St Edmunds", by Gerry Nixon, "The Sword" which had been the site of an inn since at least the 1720s was, at one time, "notable for its Friday night jazz evenings" presumably in the dance hall itself.

The owner, at the time of Tim's inspection, had, however, a particular use for the dance hall as it housed his collection of antique and



collectable toys. Tim reports that he could happily have spent all afternoon browsing through the contents of the dance hall were it not for another valuation appointment which curtailed his nostalgia trip. Happily, Tim's valuation held up and

the property, with its dancehall, sold without problem.

(The Sword in Hand is one of no less than 65 "lost" pubs in Bury St Edmunds, (six in Southgate Street alone), listed on the website of "The Lost Pubs Project.").

MICHAELMAS TALE

Listening with interest to a woman on the radio saying that she always considered September, not January, to be the turn of the year gave ND a bit of a "Road to Damascus" sort of moment.

For ND realised that he, too, had always subconsciously regarded September, not January, as the turn of the year.

The end of January looks little different to December, albeit without the Christmas cheer, but the end of September looks and feels very different to August particularly in the countryside – perceptible change has come, sometimes overnight.

Harvest and holidays are long over, nights are drawing in, new schools and new terms have started and the weather has turned...winter is on the way.

To our rural forebears, too, September, was a very significant month with Michaelmas Day marking an important turning point in the rural year.

Michaelmas Day is officially 29th September except in Suffolk where, obdurately, it falls on October 4th, oh, and in Norfolk where it is traditionally October 11th.

On Michaelmas Day, with the harvest over, agricultural rents became due, accounts were finalised, farming

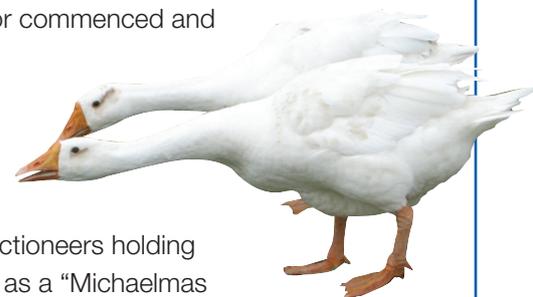
leases terminated or commenced and farms and farm machinery was bought and sold. Even today, one occasionally sees local agricultural auctioneers holding auctions described as a "Michaelmas Sale" at around this time of year.

This once very significant day was traditionally marked by the giving, receiving or eating, (or, indeed, all three!), of a goose – not for nothing does Nottingham Goose Fair fall around this time of year.

The austerity of recent years has bought nostalgia for traditional values. Not only have sales of fountain pens, old fashioned sweets and comfort foods all risen, so as has the sudden popularity of home baking.

In addition to these trends, surprisingly, the food halls of Harrods and other big London shops all report a sharp rise in sales of geese around Michaelmas Day over the last few years.

Could Michaelmas Day be about to make a comeback?



wrongmove

TC once read a science fiction short story, written in the 1950s, in which mankind builds a giant computer, called Multivac, into which all the knowledge of the world is input.

The programming complete someone tentatively asks the computer the first question.

"Is there a God?"

"THERE IS NOW", responds the computer and its power switch fuses into the "ON" position.

Has something similar happened to Rightmove and the property market?

Many househunters seem to regard Rightmove as something of an all knowing deity and think that looking on its website and doing "driveby" viewings from the information thereon is all they need to do by way of looking for a house.

"We are looking hard – we check Rightmove everyday", is something we hear quite often nowadays but these "Rightmove Drivebuyers", may be missing out on some of the best properties not least because the suitability of many houses cannot be accurately appraised by a driveby viewing.

The other drawback to this style of househunting is that if you see it on Rightmove, it's too late! – everyone else knows about it too.

There is a lot to be said, still, for committed housebuyers going around Estate Agents in person, getting on lists, building up rapport and contact with individuals, making proper viewing appointments and giving feedback and generally keeping in constant touch with agents.

There is a gap of up to a fortnight between an agent taking a property on and it appearing on Rightmove. During this period it is those serious buyers who have made the effort to establish contact and give feedback whom the agent will telephone and appraise of any new properties that he/she thinks might suit them – long before they appear on Rightmove.

Old fashioned? A partner of Savills recently wrote in the local press that, for an agent, "...an up-to-date contact book of buyers who are ready, willing and in a good financial position remains as important today as it was a generation ago."

It may be no coincidence that some of the most desirable properties in the most sought after areas come on to Rightmove with an "UNDER OFFER" or "SOLD STC" sticker already affixed.!



CHRISTMAS COMES ...



... but once a year. Yet, it seems to start earlier and earlier each year. Even so JD was astonished to notice an advertisement for a "Christmas Country Show" at Brandeston Hall, Suffolk.

This "Victorian Christmas" event offered "Christmas steam train rides", "Christmas Workshops", (whatever they are), plus assorted other entertainments including "Carol Singing".

... and the date of this festive yuletide event?

The 3rd of November!

Penny for the Guy anyone? ...



THE HARRIERS' TALE

In November 2011 a party took place in a Cambridgeshire village hall. It was hosted by The Cottenham Racecourse Club, (formerly the Cambridge Harriers Hunt Club), to celebrate the upcoming 50th anniversary of the late Mr Hugh Gingell purchasing the Point to Point course at Cottenham in 1962.

Not that, in 1962, Hugh would be any stranger to Cottenham which had been a racecourse since time immemorial with records going back to University steeplechases in the early 1800s.

The Gingell family of Horningsea and the Cambridgeshire Harriers have been synonymous with hare hunting and point to pointing for over half a century with Hugh's wife, Betty Gingell, being the longest reigning Master of Hounds in the country from the 1940s up to her, and Hugh's, demise in the 1990s, in the saddle almost to the last.

After this "The Harriers", with their distinctive bottle green livery, disbanded as a hunt leaving a large gap in the lives of many people.

ND recalls talking to one old man who remembered going to a Harriers Hunt Ball in the 1950s which was held in both the Cambridge Guildhall and the nearby Corn Exchange, the two venues being connected by a marquee, with hunt horses and hounds being run around the floor of the Corn Exchange with hunting horns blowing in exuberant display in what, at the time, was one of the highlights of Cambridgeshire county social life.

Those days are long gone but memory and tradition are still kept alive by Hugh and Betty Gingell's son Michael and his running of point to points races at Cottenham Racecourse.

At the 2011 party much of The Harriers historic memorabilia was on display including programmes, trophies, artefacts and photographs including this one which shows Mr Hugh Gingell

as a young man in rather old fashioned jodhpurs jumping a fence at Cottenham on a horse called "Wakefield" in 1948 in what was the first point to point since the war – not just the first at Cottenham but the first in the whole the country.

At the party was one old lady who had been present at that point to point in 1948 and the story was told how, on the morning of that race meeting, that particular horse, "Wakefield", had obdurately refused to enter his horsebox at Horningsea Manor for transport to Cottenham. Exasperated, Hugh Gingell simply jumped on "Wakefield" and hacked him all the way to Cottenham racecourse, rode him in not one, but two races, winning both and then rode the horse all the way back to Horningsea.

Horses were tougher in those days but one thing was probably for sure, we doubt "Wakefield" ever refused to get in a horsebox again!

**Cottenham Racecourse racing fixtures
Sunday December 30th 2012 11.30am**

Saturday 9th February 2013 12am.

**See WWW.COTTENHAM-RACECOURSE.CO.UK
for more information and history.**



*Celebrating the 50th Anniversary
of Hugh Gingell buying Cottenham*