

Application for Membership

(Please complete both forms)

Membership year starts 1st June

Forenames (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms).....

Surname

Address

.....

.....

Postcode

Telephone

Email

We would like to keep in touch with you to let you know how your support is making a difference, and to advise you of forthcoming talks and visits. By supplying your email address you agree to The Bury Society contacting you periodically.

~~£10.00~~ ¹⁵ per year for a single person, or

~~£15.00~~ ²⁰ for a couple at the same address.

We would prefer you to pay by **Standing Order** by completing this form (or by cheque to The Bury Society)

To: (Name and address of member's bank)

.....

.....

.....

Sort Code

Account No.....

Please pay Barclays Bank, Bury St Edmunds (Sort code 20,16,12) to credit The Bury St Edmunds Society (account no 30225134) the sum of £..... **NOW** and on the first day of June each year until further notice

Signed

date

Send to, The Bury Society, The Risbygate Centre, 90 Risbygate Street, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 3AA

Acknowledgements

The Bury St Edmunds Society would like to thank all the people who have contributed to this Blue Plaque scheme especially the relevant owners of the properties concerned.

We are also indebted to the following organisations for their support:

The Angel Hotel, Bid4Bury, Bury Heritage Guides, Bury St Edmunds Registered Tour Guides, Bury St Edmunds Town Council, Carpetworks Ltd, English Heritage, St Edmundsbury Borough Council, Suffolk Record Office, Swaingrove Printers, The Curtain Girls, The Tourist Information Centre, The Sybil Andrews Heritage Society, Campbell River BC Canada, Wilcrofts Café and Bistrot.

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What is The Bury Society?

The Society is a charity open to everyone who cares about Bury St Edmunds' past, present and future. Our aim is to ensure that the town continues to grow and prosper while remaining a beautiful place in which to live, work or visit.

The Society believes that:

- Our heritage is worth maintaining
- Any change should enhance the town
- Collectively we can make a difference

Our objectives are to aid the enjoyment and appreciation of all who use the town by:

- Fostering its heritage and character
- Encouraging a balance of the old and the new

- Informing and engaging communities on issues that impact on our local environment

www.theburysociety.org.uk

THE BURY ST EDMUNDS SOCIETY



BLUE PLAQUE GUIDE

1 NORAH LOFTS

1904 - 1983

Northgate House,
8 Northgate Street

Norrah Loftis, née Robinson, was born at Shipdham, Norfolk, in 1904. In 1933 she married Geoffrey Loftis whose family were painters and decorators in Bury St Edmunds. Norrah and her family lived at 8 Southgate Street.

She was a confident and flamboyant person and became a prolific writer of the 20th century. She wrote over sixty novels mainly under her own name but also under the noms des plumes Peter Curtis and Juliet Astley.

The majority of her novels were historical fiction and some of the characters she created appeared in more than one novel. She also penned stories around the Tudor queens Katharine of Aragon and Anne Boleyn. Baidon, a fictitious East Anglian town loosely based on Bury St Edmunds, figured prominently in several novels. She entered into the world of mystery and suspense under the pseudonym Peter Curtis and several of her novels were turned into films: the first was Jassy in 1947, followed by Guilt is My Shadow in 1950 and The Witches in 1966.

Eminent American director John Ford used Norrah's short story Chinese Findle as a basis for his film Seven Women. Her reputation became international.

Norrah Loftis re-married in 1949. Her husband Robert Jorisch was an expert on sugar beet processing and helped in the creation of the sugar beet factory that now is a prominent feature of the Bury St Edmunds' skyline. They took up residence at Northgate House in 1955.

She absolutely loved the house even to the extent of writing "A home with a history," a few typed pages extolling her appreciation of its past and her hopes for its future.

Northgate House is now restored to its former Georgian glory. Norrah Loftis died in Bury St Edmunds in 1983. Her books are still in print.



In Bury St Edmunds in 1906/7 11 stone plaques were put onto buildings to commemorate various people who had connections with the town's heritage and history. Now, over a hundred years later, The Bury St Edmunds Society has celebrated 7 more people with Blue Plaques. Their association with our historic town is very important and consequently needed to be recorded to enable residents and visitors alike to appreciate them. Use the trail map to find the new plaques and in doing so discover the delights of our town.

2 CHARLES DICKENS

1812 - 1870

The Angel Hotel, Angel Hill

'The coach rattled through the well-paved streets of a handsome little town of thriving and clearly appearance, and stopped before a large inn situated in a wide open street, nearly facing the old abbey. "And this" said, Mr Pickwick, looking up, "is The Angel!"'

This is how Charles Dickens introduced his eponymous hero Samuel Pickwick and his servant Sam Weller to what is now the premier hotel in Bury St Edmunds. 'Sam performed his ablutions at the yard pump' alas no longer there.

Charles Dickens was born in Landport, Portsmouth in 1812. In 1815 his family (he was one of 8 children) moved to London and his father John was put into the Marshalsea prison through debt. It was visits to this place that caused the young Charles to see the darker side of life. His early working life was in a factory and his writing career started with short stories under the pen name "Boz"

He has become a much-loved world famous author. His observations of Victorian life from the very poor to the rich have left an indelible mark through his many novels and short stories. Many of them have been made into films and musicals.

Pickwick Papers was his first novel, it was serialised from 1836 - 37. Mr Pickwick, a wealthy old gentleman, and fellow members of the Pickwick Club travelled via coach and horses to out of the way places and he reported on their adventures. He had come to Bury St Edmunds from the fictitious Estenswill (Sudbury) looking for his adversary Alford Jingles.

Dickens came twice to Bury, in 1859 and 1861 staying in room number 15 (now 215) at The Angel. He also gave readings of his work at the nearby Athenaeum reading rooms.

Married life for Dickens was unconventional; he had 10 children with his wife Catherine, née Hogarth, from whom he separated in 1858.

He died at Gadd's Hill Place, Kent in 1870 and is buried in Poets Corner, Westminster Abbey.



3 LEWIS NOCKALLS COTTINGHAM

1787 - 1847

Norman Tower Cottage/House, Crown Street

He was born in 1787 at Laxfield, Suffolk. At an early age Lewis was apprenticed to a builder in Ipswich. In 1810 he moved to London where his artistic talents were put to good use in a firm of surveyors and architects. He started his professional career, becoming Architect to The Cooks Company in 1822. His first major commission was to build Snelston Hall in Derbyshire in the Gothic style in 1827, a style which would be synonymous with his work for the rest of his life. Snelston Hall, part of a model village, was demolished in 1951.

(The Bailiff's cottage is pictured above.)

Other important areas of work and restoration were at Rochester Cathedral, St Albans Abbey and Magdalen College Chapel, Oxford.

He was also employed at several Suffolk churches including Barrow and Horringer.

Augustus Pugin was aware of his work, as Lewis had published several drawings of Gothic ornamentation and had even set up a small museum in his house at Lambeth in London with a collection of pieces of medieval sculptured stonework, a catalogue of which survives.

In December 1842, Cottingham published a report with 18 drawings: now sadly lost, detailing the calamitous condition of the 700 year old Norman Tower.

Thomas Farrow, a Diss builder was employed to effect repairs and Cottingham oversaw this work.

Cottingham also drew up plans for a permanent home for the Bury Trustees Savings Bank which was founded in 1816 for small savers. The demolition of cottages abutting the Norman Tower led to the building of this very iconic gothic revival build with its diapering, oriel window and stone dressings in 1846/7. Incorporated in the brickwork are the Arms of Queen Victoria and the Borough Arms of Bury St Edmunds.



4 ROSE MEAD

1867 - 1946

18a Crown Street

Rose Mead was born at 15 Hatter Street, the daughter of a Bury St Edmunds plumber and glazier. The family moved to 16 Crown Street where Rose soon found she had a gift for painting.

She went to the Lincoln School of Art and then on to the celebrated Westminster School of Art. During 1896 Rose travelled to Paris where she was influenced by Auguste Joseph Delecluse, who specialised in still life and portraiture. To some extent she may also have been impressed by the Newlyn School of Artists when she visited them in 1929.

Her father died at the age of 71 leaving Rose to be the carer for her mother who died when Rose was 52. It was because of this devotion to her mother that Rose never married.

The Bury St Edmunds pageant of 1907 saw Rose's talents come to the fore, when she became the chief costume designer for the pageant.

However, it was with her portraits that she excelled. Two in oils that were completed around the same time, 1930.

encapsulate differing ends of society. One was that of her domestic helper Barbara Stone; her careworn face captured perfectly, whilst the other that of Mrs Eva Wollaston Greene, the wife of Edward Greene of the Greene King brewing family, who was mayor in 1928 and 1932. Her portrait was in full mayoral robes, complete with chain of office.

Moyses Hall and the Buttermarket is another of her pictures that captures life so well. It was said she would stop young girls in the street and offer to paint their portraits.

In the last few years of her life she lived at The St Edmunds Hotel next to The Angel Hotel although still painting at her studio at 18a Crown Street. It was here in 1946 that she was found dead, her neck broken, having accidentally fallen down the stairs.

Her obituary was published in the Bury Free Press on April 5th 1946.



before completion of the development.
His son Nockalls completed the work.

5 JAMES OAKES

1741 - 1829

81 Guildhall Street

Though not nationally known, James Oakes was one of the town's most famous sons; who could be described as the 'Mr Bury St Edmunds' of his day.

He started life as a yarn maker after inheriting the business from his uncle, Orbel Ray. The family combing sheds were in St Andrews Street South, but when the woollen industry went into decline James Oakes sought another business opportunity, banking.

For nearly 50 years from 1778 James kept diaries chronicling daily life and detailing much of the town's social life at the end of the 18th and early 19th centuries. Transcribed by Dr Jane Fiske they are owned now by the Suffolk Records Office.

James Oakes was Alderman (Mayor) of the town 5 times and spread his largesse widely. He treated his workers fairly and was a devout family man. He gave to the corporation the mayoral chain and purchased the Great Churchyard for it in 1798.

However, he was also shrewd. When the opportunity arose to become the Receiver of Taxes for the Western Division of Suffolk in 1787 he grabbed it with both hands as it allowed him to hold money on deposit at his bank for six months before paying it to the government.

In 1789 the notable Bank of England architect John Soane oversaw the building of extensions to Oakes's house, 81 Guildhall Street. On one side was a large banking hall and on the other a large dining room. The two wings complement each other perfectly.

The Oakes family bank was called the Bury and Suffolk Bank which stood where Lloyds Bank is now in the Buttermarket. It is the only Lloyds branch in the country where a Black Horse is not evident on its hanging sign. Instead there is an Oak tree for Oakes.

James was political agent for the Duke of Grafton and moved in the higher echelons of local society. He served the Borough as a JP for nearly 45 years and was also involved with several charities. Ill health curtailed his diary entries in October 1827. He died in January 1829.

James Oakes and his wife Elizabeth are buried in St Mary's Church.



6 SYBIL ANDREWS

1898 - 1992

Royal Bank of Scotland, 90 Guildhall Street

Sybil Andrews was born in the flat above Andrews and Plumpton's Ironmongers shop now the Royal Bank of Scotland. Her early homes were Greyfriars in Whiting Street and 117 Northgate Street.

Her grandfather Frederick Charles Andrews had taken over established ironmongers in 1862. His son, Sybil's father Charles, had married Beatrice Trigg in 1893 and they went on to have 5 children.

One of Sybil's earliest memories was the unveiling of the South African War memorial (subsequently the Boer War) on The Cornhill on the auspicious date of November 11th 1904.

Sybil studied at Heatherleys School of Fine Art in 1922 where she was influenced by William Kermode, who introduced her to block printing. She later attended the linocut classes of Claude Flight at the Grosvenor School of Art. It was this art medium that she would make her own. Whilst in Bury St Edmunds she worked alongside notable artist Cyril Power in the Crescent House Studios on Angel Hill and he was to have a major influence on her artistic future.

The first public exhibition of her works in 1921, mainly watercolours and pastels, met with critical acclaim.

During the 2nd World War she worked as a welder in a shipyard where she met her future husband Walter Morgan. Post war Britain offered few prospects, so they decided to emigrate in 1947, setting up home in Campbell River on Vancouver Island.

It was in Canada that she further established her importance as a great artist. She is really appreciated there. Her lino cuts, of 60 print runs on average, are very collectable especially those such as Days End and Tillers of the Soil which are a reminder of her Suffolk background.

Perhaps her greatest contribution to her birthplace is the wonderful banner to be found in the Cathedral Church of St James and St Edmund. It is silk on handwoven linen depicting the martyrdom of St Edmund. Sybil died in 1992.



7 FREDERIC GERSHWIN

PARKINGTON

1886 - 1952

Street Level restaurant, 29 Abbeygate Street

Frederic was born above his father's tailor's shop. As a child he took up the cello and soon won a scholarship to the Royal College of Music. He became prolific at arranging music and very early on in his career was in demand making music fit the new age of phonograph records. This was in the early 1920s. It was around this period he became fascinated by film and started collecting timepieces.

He formed what was to become a world-famous quintet and was very popular on the wireless. In the 1930s silver screen actors and stars from the music world were used by cigarette manufacturers to promote their brand. Frederic was feted in this way. It would seem you had reached the pinnacle of your profession if your activities were published in a set of cigarette cards.

When the 2nd World War came he toured the country performing for the armed services. It was the war that was so tragically to alter his life, his son, John was killed in the North Africa campaign.

Frederic Gersholm Parkington died in 1952. He is buried in Bury St Edmunds Cemetery.

In order to keep his son's memory alive, in his will Frederic bequeathed to the town of Bury St Edmunds in 1953 his fabulous collection of timepieces. Water, bracket, long case, lantern, mantle and table clocks are all in the

collection along with wrist watches and even sundials. Famous watchmakers like Tompion are represented as well as Bury St Edmunds makers Richard Rayment and the Hawkins family.

The first clock museum opened in 1954 at Angel Corner but after two burglaries in 1990 and 91 it was moved to the Manor House Museum. After this closed the collection was put in storage at West Stow although you can still see some of it in Moyses Hall.

