



Letters to the editor

► Axholme connections

I am writing to say how excited I was to read the article on the Isle of Axholme in your March edition. The part of the draining of the Isle by Cornelius Vermuyden fascinated me because whilst tracing my family tree, I discovered that I was descended from the Brunyee family who were Dutch and fled to England to escape religious persecution in their homeland in the seventeenth century. It is not known if the Dutch Brunyees were directly involved in the drainage of the area but it is known that they were farmers working on the drain farms.

From their humble origins the Brunyee settlers went on to own great houses such as Crowle House and are reputed to have owned the very first car on the Isle of Axholme.

I visited the church of St Oswald in Crowle and was shown splendid stained-glass windows dedicated to members of the family, one of which was to the Revd Brunyee, vicar of Belton, in the 1700s, who was an MA from Cambridge. The church is magnificent and well worth a visit.

The Brunyees of Dutch origin changed the landscape of Axholme and became part of its history. I have now traced my family history from Matthew Brunyee in 1610 down to my own family. Naturally I am proud to have belonged to the family and found the article of great interest.

Stella Hopkins, Lincoln.

► Grimsby book

I was pleased you made David Peasgood's new volume about Grimsby your book of the month in the May edition of 'Lincolnshire Life'. It confirms once more that you fully regard us as being part of Lincolnshire. However, I feel you were a little too critical about the tome's content.

For I did a publication on Grimsby for Francis Frith several years ago, and was sent copies of the pictures I could choose from. They automatically included Cleethorpes images, along with a multitude of snaps showing trawlers on the docks. Fine maybe for a specialist effort like the Roy Roberts book you also review, but far too many to feature in a general town history.

So I explained matters to Frith's, and

they let me cover Cleethorpes, which does adjoin Grimsby directly without any geographical gap. I presume David Peasgood did likewise, in order to have a varied book – a wise decision I believe.

Still, it is good that our town is continually being written about!

Tim Mickleburgh, Grimsby.

► No cultural desert

I feel I must take issue with Joan Wilson of Spilsby whose letter in the May edition of 'Lincolnshire Life' complained of the lack of cultural activities in the county.

A quick trawl through my own desk diary reveals two visits to the European Ballet, both in Lincoln, an evening of Flanders & Swan at the Wickenby theatre, a visit to the Arts Cinema at Gainsborough, a concert by the Cathedral choir boys at Leadenham in May, three visits to the Stamford Shakespeare Company in the summer, plus a trip to Thorpe Tilney for the annual visit of Pavilion Opera. The Hallé Orchestra will be giving a concert in the Cathedral later this year and there are regular concerts there given by organists of world renown. We are also fortunate in having our own Lincoln Shakespeare Company which gives performances in the outlying areas.

In addition, there is now an attractive programme of events at the Drill Hall in Lincoln and the University has public lectures on a regular basis. I accept that most of these are in Lincoln but Spilsby is not so very far away. Certainly Lincoln is easier to reach than London, Sheffield or Nottingham.

Mrs Wilson's comments might have been justified thirty years ago, which is when we moved to Lincoln, but now? No culture? Surely not!

Margaret Campion, Lincoln.

► Theatre on her doorstep

I was really surprised to read Joan Wilson's letter in the May edition of 'Lincolnshire Life'.

Coming from Spilsby she is very fortunate in having her own town theatre right on her doorstep which attracts some very unusual professional performers from all over the world. I can't think

of any town I know of a similar size which offers something of this calibre,

Mrs J Parker, Gainsborough.

► The cycling salesman's company

I am aware of the correspondence regarding a Mr Geoffrey Nowers and his cycling exploits on behalf of our company (Lincolnshire Life, March and May). I have been involved as a director of Witham Oil and Paint Ltd for more than forty years and my mother, who is now aged ninety-two, is aware of Mr Nowers through my father. To the best of my knowledge he was an authority on chickens and was a judge and steward at many shows.

The company, incidentally, was started in 1921 by the Smith family as Witham Oil & Candle Co, selling bicycle oil, carbide and other ancillary products. It then became Witham Oil & Grease Co Ltd and more recently Witham Oil & Paint Ltd due to the manufacture of lubricants and paint. We feel the company is unique as the Smith family is still involved with a fourth generation being employed as well as my own family which have two people involved from the third generation.

The exploits of people such as Mr Nowers has led to the growth of our company which now employs more than fifty people through our three companies. We recently carried out a survey and the average length of service was approximately fourteen years. Still the old values are maintained within our companies, of service, value for money and care for our people.

If any readers have any other recollections of our company, please would they be kind enough to forward them to our head office at Lincoln.

Geoff Bottom, Chairman, the WOCO group of Companies, Outer Circle Road, Lincoln, LN2 4HL. Email: enquiries@withamoil.co.uk

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