

## Breckland Headline social media report October – December 2020

*Compiled January 2021*

### Audiences

Gressenhall Farm & Workhouse have gained over 400 new followers across the three platforms since the last report in September, with a total 13,902 across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram – a very healthy 3% increase in three months.

Ancient House Museum of Thetford Life have gained 170 new followers, representing an excellent 4% increase since September. They now have a total of 4482 followers across the two platforms (Facebook and Twitter).

### Engagement & Reach

Tracking engagement and reach/impressions tells us how many people are seeing our content and engaging with it. Facebook and Twitter calculate the engagement rate slightly differently, but expressed as a percentage it's an indicator of how many of the people who saw our content (reach/impressions) went on to interact with it by liking, commenting, sharing, visiting our profile etc (engagements/engaged users). Generally speaking, an engagement rate of between 1% and 3% is considered good engagement from our followers.

#### Twitter:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Impressions</i>	<i>Engagement Rate</i>	<i>Link Clicks</i>	<i>Retweets</i>	<i>Likes</i>	<i>Replies</i>
<b>Gressenhall</b>	132.1k	1.1%	109	148	639	38
<b>Ancient House</b>	225.5k	1.8%	129	445	1700	103

#### Facebook:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Engaged Users</i>	<i>Reach</i>	<i>Engagement Rate</i>
<b>Gressenhall</b>	7462	132,809	5.6%
<b>Ancient House</b>	4857	77,657	6.3%

### National and NMS-wide Social Media Campaigns

#### Black History Month:

**Ancient House** shared on social media the stories of Black abolitionists who lectured in and around Thetford, as well as other famous figures such as Bamba Muller, Allan Noel Minns, and children born to British women and Black American GIs during and after the Second World War. They also delivered an online event 'A Glimpse of Thetford's Black History' on 28 October.

**Gressenhall** shared the exciting news of a decolonisation collaboration with the University of East Anglia, where three UEA History MA students will help the museum seek and tell new stories for 2021.

### **Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day:**

**Gressenhall** remembered those affected by war, including Sergeant Ernest William Freezer, who died on 10 April 1918, and the women involved in the Women's Land Army.

**Ancient House** shared items from their collection, including a large bronze plaque in memory of Frederick Ernest Crick of Thetford, who died in WW1, as well as retweeting a post from South Asian Heritage Month honouring the over 1.3 million Indian soldiers sent to fight for Britain during WW1.

### **November's #ThanksToYou campaign with the National Lottery Heritage Fund:**

**Gressenhall's** Katy Sheard, a participant in the Kick the Dust project, thanked National Lottery players for the opportunities available to her through their support: *"Being part of this has been so valuable, I've gained so much confidence and acquired new skills for my CV"*.

**Ancient House** were delighted to thank National Lottery players for funding some of their amazing projects, including Flint Rocks, Forgotten Soldiers, Festival of Norfolk and Punjab and Teenage History Club's Pride Project.

### **#MerryNMSmas**

In December NMS celebrated the festive season on our social media platforms using the hashtag #MerryNMSmas:

**Ancient House, partnership with Lynn Museum**, made their own advent calendar (an object a day) running up to Christmas itself, plus a 12 Days of Christmas theme to run from Christmas day until 12th Night with historic information about the 12 days and associated traditions.

**Gressenhall** posted daily festive content throughout December, ranging from craft activities, objects from the collections, quizzes, throwback images and Christmas jokes from Father Christmas.

### **Online Events & Activities**

#### **Gressenhall:**

The 30<sup>th</sup> **Apple Day** event at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse, a beloved event of both staff and visitors, was held online this year. 'Apple Day Online' was held Sunday 11 October, sharing videos, creative craft ideas, delicious apple recipes, an apple variety quiz and more to enable visitors to enjoy this event from home.

The **More Than Oliver Twist** project set out to discover the real stories of people in the workhouse system through the 1881 census returns. Researched and interpreted by volunteer researchers at six workhouse sites across The Workhouse Network, the stories have been used to create an amazing on-line exhibition. Working with artists, Morgan Tipping and Mel Rye, [a digital exhibition has been created](#) that explores 6 of these lives and the contemporary echoes of these historic experiences. Using recordings with researchers and people experiencing similar issues today, created during the first pandemic lockdown, the exhibitions encourage reflection on these universal issues and on how we support those in need today. The project has also created the largest database of poor individuals and

families yet constructed to shed light on the diverse experience of the poor. The project created over 325 biographies of these everyday people who experienced hardship and support under the very first system of national welfare. This is the [largest national database of biographies](#) of people known at the time as “paupers”.

For some time Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse has had a fruitful **research and digital collaboration with Carleton College, Minnesota, USA**. Recently an article entitled '[Reconsidering Poor Law Institutions](#)' was published by the Historical Journal, which grew out of the collaboration. The work is also featured in the Cambridge Core blog in the post '[Bringing the Past to \(Virtual\) Life](#)'. Gressenhall is acknowledged in both, with Susannah Ottaway, Professor of History at the College, kindly describing the partnership as a 'phenomenal experience'.

Unable to host our **Victorian Family Christmas** at Gressenhall this year, the team provided a host of festive activities to enjoy from the comfort of home. From printable colouring and craft activities to cookery videos, jokes and storytelling hosted by Scrooge himself, viewers could create their own Victorian Christmas at home.



*Father Christmas with Bowler the Suffolk Punch at Gressenhall Farm & Workhouse*

### **Ancient House Museum of Thetford Life:**

Ancient House was chosen as a hub for **OUTing the Past 2021**: an International Festival of Lesbian Gay Bisexual & Trans History comprising events throughout the year and around the world, and a conference and gathering for academics and activists once a year in February. Ancient House joins other hubs across the UK and the world. The conference programme will be selected by Teenage History Club building on their Pride of the People work and will run on 19 February 2021. Due to the ongoing uncertainty over Covid-19 the conference will run digitally. Melissa Hawker, Learning Officer is working with LGBT+ History Month to run a teachers' CPD session and Primary Pupils Conference alongside OUTing the Past in February too.

A digital event, **A Glimpse of Thetford's Black History**, was held on 28 October as part of Black History Month, highlighting aspects of Thetford's Black history.

Ancient House has been 'beaming into classrooms', with opportunities for schools to **interact with costumed characters including a Roman soldier and a Stuart woman**. For Forest Academy, we talked to three classes about Garbology, the study of ancient rubbish, and with support from the curatorial team was able to help them identify the objects they had excavated from their Forest Schools site, including a crucible and a range of Victorian perfume and medicine bottles.

Ancient House and Lynn Museum took part in **UK Parliament Week** in November. Melissa Hawker, Learning Officer gave a talk on Votes for Women with a focus on Norfolk women's contributions to the fight for women's rights, including Helen Dexter (pictured above) and the Duleep Singh Princesses. The talk was delivered via a Zoom webinar and attendees came from across Norfolk, the Midlands and some from India. One of the participants emailed this feedback: *"Just to say how marvellous last night's Votes for Women presentation was. A most interesting talk (really enjoyed the "local" connections). I appreciated all the "graphics" too - they made the historical aspect so pertinent. Thank you again and I look forward to - hopefully - more events like this."*

An online talk '**Did the Victorians invent Christmas?**' was held via Zoom on 9 December, focusing on the many Christmas traditions which have their origin in the 1840s, including crackers and Christmas cards. The participants particular enjoyed the more unusual Christmas cards, for example one featuring children riding bats!