

## Ploughing on with tradition

CHILDREN donned colourful outfits to take part in an ancient farming tradition.

Pupils from Swaffham Prior Primary School paraded around the village behind a plough to celebrate Plough Monday – a historic celebration of the beginning of the agricultural year.

Traditionally farm workers would haul a plough from house to house, singing songs and collecting money from villagers.

For the first year, the school decided to replicate the ancient custom by making their own trip around the village following a plough.

Sam Hayward, office administrator at the school, said: "All the children were signing local folk songs and year's five and six learned some molly dancing.

"Everyone had their faces painted and wore bright colours. It was quite a spectacle."

The morning was supported by the Museum of Cambridge, which has helped to teach pupils about the area's heritage.



TIMES GONE BY: Children at Swaffham Prior Primary School got dressed up for a Plough Walk. Pictures by Keith Heppell

# Work starts on heritage centre

**LIZZY BUCHAN**

WORK has begun on a multi-million pound racing heritage centre in Newmarket.

Construction started on Monday on the National Heritage Centre for Horseracing and Sporting Art, which will be based in the historic Palace House, the oldest surviving part of King Charles II's palace in Newmarket.

The £15 million heritage centre will see the National Horseracing Museum and British Sporting Art Trust move from their present location in High Street to the Palace House site and is expected to attract more than 40,000 visitors a year.

There will also be the space for the first time to accommodate horses from the Retraining of Racehorses charity at the five-acre site, which includes the derelict Palace House Stables.

Peter Jensen, chairman of the Home of Horseracing Trust said: "A huge amount of work has already taken place to get us to this point and after eight years of fundraising it is wonderful that we are now on our way."



WORK STARTS:  
From left, Cllr Warwick Hirst, Philip Vennin, Martin Flynn, Chris Garibaldi and Graham Snelling.

"This is the first part of the story – the actual building work will take a year and then following the installation of specialist exhibitions and displays the museum will be moving over 8,000 objects from its present home to the new site."

He added: "It is so exciting now to be out of the starting gate."

The heritage centre is expected to be completed by the end of 2015; opening to the public in spring 2016.

Cllr Warwick Hirst, Forest Heath Cabinet member for Health, Leisure and Culture, said: "The National Heritage Centre has gone from a dream to a drawing and then full-scale project – it can only

have got so far thanks to terrific support from a huge range of people and organisations who all recognise the importance of Newmarket as the international centre for horseracing."

The project will cost £15 million and more than £8 million has been raised from private donations and the remaining funds have been given by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Forest Heath District Council and Suffolk County Council.

Forest Heath District Council rescued Palace House by buying the site in 1992 after establishing that its special architectural and historic interest needed preserving.

## > in brief Marking event

MOTORISTS can have their catalytic converters marked to prevent theft.

Police will hold a marking event on Friday from 9am to 4pm at ATS Euromaster Ltd, in Bury Road, Newmarket.

The converters will be etched with the vehicle's registration number and marked with a heat-resistant silver spray which acts as both a deterrent to thieves, as well as identifying it to scrap dealers.

The event is aimed at vans and 4x4s.

Call (01638) 66252 to book an appointment.

## Elvis theme night

SPEND an evening with 'The King' at an Elvis tribute night.

Tickets cost £8 for the event at Memorial Hall, in High Street, Newmarket.

Doors open at 7.30pm on February 28.

Call Kay Dawson on (01638) 667227.

## Birthday walk

A RAMBLING group will come of age at the weekend.

Burwell Anchor Ramblers will celebrate its 18th birthday on Sunday with a walk along Burwell Lode at 10am.

All are welcome to attend.

For more information go to [www.anchor-ramblers.com](http://www.anchor-ramblers.com).

# MANCHETTS

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