

My Somerset Life

A diary by Brian Snellgrove

- My Somerset Life
- Diary Entries
- Writing a diary
- About, and User's Guide
- Creative Listening service
- Privacy Policy
- Contact
- Thoughts
 - Blood clots
 - Enlight and Godlight
 - Interacting with others + the disadvantage of being nice.
 - Is Jesus only our local hero?
 - Loneliness or enjoying your own company?
 - Mobile phones – neutrinos and everything
 - People of different nationalities – the myth of separation
 - Personal energy and life readings
 - Quantum Entanglement
 - Sanity and Insanity – where do we go when we die?
 - The Second Coming of Jesus – where is he?
 - The twisting of space and other matters
 - What is sin?
 - What is the brain?
 - What vibrations can improve our lives?
 - Will the truth survive?

Notes on a visit to Norfolk

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I don't want to bore people to death with standard tourist stuff but this was my impression of the various places we visited well on our journey within East Anglia. For some reason, Norfolk miles take longer than miles elsewhere so do allow extra time. That is only partly a joke.

NORWICH It was 1962 since I was last there and I hardly recognise the place apart from the market, the town hall, and of course the cathedral. My goodness this has become a sophisticated and well managed town – actually it is a city because it has a cathedral. It also has a large and thriving University.



yours truly outside his classroom (Class of 1960)

I visited the classroom which I used in my sixth form in other words when I was 16 and 17 . The exterior has not been touched due to strict conservation laws no doubt and the interior was now an office and I spent some nostalgic moments there.





Presented by Cadbury's the chocolate people. This originally held liquid chocolate mix. and is now a font.

The cathedral staff welcomed people warmly . It is a very ecumenical place without the ghastly rainbow colors that I have come to associate with LGBT etc . Adjacent to the premises there was a very nice open and airy coffee bar which I would have stayed in had it been less crowded. Money is everywhere and this is reflected in the price of property.

Sitting by the permanent market, we met a university graduate who was going to go to Japan to be a translator. He told us that the language was very difficult to learn, and there were over five thousand six hundred characters. The meaning of a word depends on the context and also who you are speaking to so I imagine you needed a particular type of visual memory to learn this language.

The stores are up market and we went to Jarrolds, one of the

most up market establishments with a cheese department to die for. We did succumb and bought some outrageously priced cheese.



There is also a huge space age library near the Town Hall which incorporates the BBC East Anglian Studios.

Norwich is definitely worth a visit and if you can stay overnight, so much the better.

GREAT YARMOUTH.

This is a very seasonal town which means that out of season to put it mildly it is a bit scruffy. You can tell that the season is very profitable because there are many restaurants adjacent to the main drag (American slang) but outnumbered by the almost continuous amusement arcades that are along the sea front.



There is an excellent leisure centre adjacent to the beach with two swimming pools, a big wheel many entertainment facilities for children so I could recommend it to families with young children but not in the case of retirees because there's not an awful lot to do. It is well placed to visit the many other seaside and inland resorts.



CROMER

– a very posh though not up market seaside town with bustling main streets which is obviously used to having customers for 12 months a year. There is enough money around to support

vegan restaurants and quaint of beat specialty shops. The place to go for fresh fish, oysters etc.



An all year round series of shows on the pier. Well done town for punching above your weight.

There is a RNLi boat station with a very good Museum free to enter. No matter how much TV you see, it is very difficult to appreciate the size and the implied power of a lifeboat of which there are six classes. The exhibition is free and it is really worth a visit.



There was a Victorian Hotel de Paris which had a great view, it was very traditional and looked a bit faded but has many years of life in it. The two main points were the church and the museum but unfortunately both were closed for refurbishment. We bought a generous crab sandwich to console ourselves



Well designed garden on the front

SHERINGHAM

One main street led from the bus station directly to the sea and had a variety of art and novelty shops and the usual charity outlets. Fish freshly caught from the sea is enough to please even the most fussy fish eater. We went for a walk along the beach and were told that in 2016 a great storm took down all the beach huts on the site and all had to be replaced. They have since been chained up to stop the same thing happening again. There is an emphasis on bargain novelty shops and I bought two back massagers at a total cost of £3.

I also bought an ice cream in spite of the cold wind. The local ones are the best and only ice creams because all the others have additives in them and make me sick in short order. I do not do pig fat



There is a tiny little residual single track line that takes you to London. It is a branch line. Single ticket £66. Attached is an historical station which was part of the North Norfolk Railway.

I am sure this feature is beloved by train enthusiasts but it was closed for the winter until the Easter weekend and we were a few days adrift.

NORFOLK BROADS



These are very famous and have a whole industry of visitors spending a week or so on them. I did not go on this trip because I wanted a day for ourselves which we did wondering around the town, basically enjoyed not having any pressure or demands on us and try not to think of the journey home the next day.

No doubt a major attraction throughout the season.

LOWESTOFT

We took a local bus down to the next town on our day off, Thursday. It does not have a beach as such though I'm sure it is there somewhere it is mainly a port and is used for business, some fishing, some import export. We escaped from the very cramped and constricted bus station through an ordinary shopping center and from thence to Wetherspoons. My goodness was it heaving with people. I treated myself to a

class of white wine. At the bar I met a Red Pill person (don't ask if you don't know what that means – think Matrix) comments about the real world for about a minute. I love meeting kindred spirits especially those who are not afraid to speak out. We had a very good fish and chips for £10 a head in a little pub by the sea.

We went into the British rail station to find an exhibition of period art which was part of a school project. This took me right back to memories of the old Metropolitan line posters in London in the 1920s and 30s



Graphic illustrations of local trades and politics

Then back to Great Yarmouth on the bus to some lovely rainbows.



No this has not been photoshopped.

Back at the ranch we had some drama in the hotel Street. A woman who we estimate to be in her mid 60s lost control of herself and started smashing windows in her third floor room. Eventually six police cars turned up and they had to physically drag her off.

The journey back took 8 hours. Evidently the M25 lived up to its reputation of being Europe's largest car park so we took a Northern route via Cambridge and south of Birmingham. There we sat and waited in a traffic jam for one and a half hours waiting the removal of a car that had ended up on its roof for some reason. Our driver said dryly that people should adapt their driving styles to the conditions. It was wet for part of the time.

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