

MARY EVELYN RHODES – born 1925, died 19 Feb 2018

This month's 'OBJECT' is a new Plaque that has been commissioned and fixed to the outside wall of the Heritage Centre in Northgate, in memory of **Mary Evelyn Rhodes 1925 to 2018**, a local author who was 'born and bred' in Hunstanton. Her books were mostly about the Town. Firstly, in 1990, there was 'Hunstanton Born and Bred' which was about her childhood. Then in 2003 came Hunstanton 'The First Fifty Years' and then in 2008 came 'A Hunstanton Miscellany'.



Between those three books you would learn all about the history of Hunstanton.

She also wrote about 'The Great Surge of 1953' and another about a cottage she lived in with her Husband, and what they found in the loft!

As a researcher myself, I appreciate the immense amount of time she must have spent in Libraries and the Records office, whereas today we have the benefit of the internet, Mary did not and did it the hard way, and for that we are eternally grateful.

I first met Mary in 2010 after I had started researching the Soldiers from Hunstanton in the first World War, I had written a short booklet of story's that soldiers had reported in the Lynn News when home on leave.

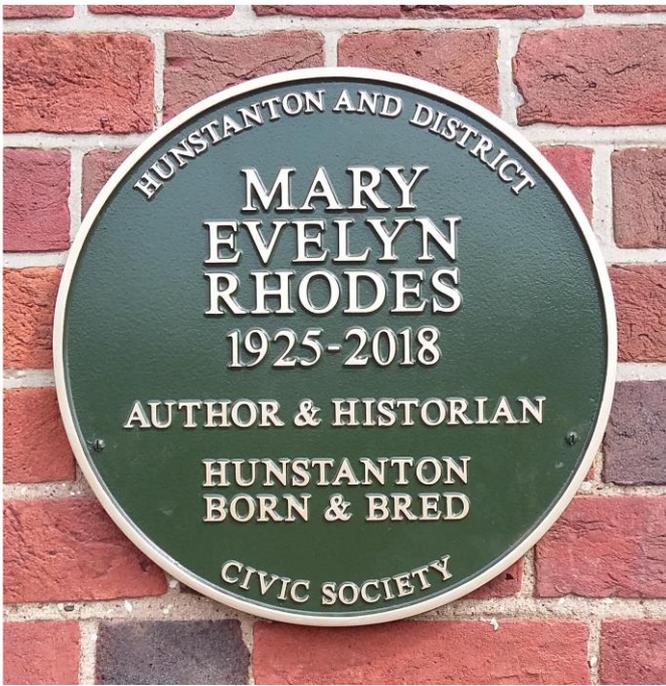
I asked Mary if she would proof read my work and correct any mistakes which she certainly did. It came back with more inserts, out takes and writing that filled the margins. She taught me a lot in those early days, so much that I nicknamed her my Teacher, although some would say of my writing, she never taught me enough.

She was very open minded and asked me to research her ancestors.

I found that Licenced Victualler / Publican / Inn Keeper kept showing up, even a widowed Great Great Grandmother running a Pub.

I felt uneasy in telling her my findings, but she kept reminding me so I had to tell her, she replied 'that explains why so and so (a relative) turned to drink in later years, and his wife had what today we call Dementia' followed by 'we never knew which came first, did the Drinking cause the Dementia or the Dementia caused the Drinking'. Not the response I was expecting.

And in all this time she was not a well person, but you would never have known it.



Following her death, there was found to be a stock of her books that she had not sold. Her daughter Penny asked if we could make good use of them in Hunstanton (the 'we' being myself, John Smith & Christine Earnshaw, as representatives of Hunstanton at her Green Funeral).

We thought that selling them at a very attractive price would raise some monies for a Plaque to be made in her honour, many people donated a little extra and over the last couple of years we collected enough to pay for the Plaque.

It now is fixed to the Northgate wall of the Heritage Centre.

It is a Memorial to a great lady who never forgot her home town.

R.I.P.

*Researched and written up by Tony Armstrong,
Heritage Centre Volunteer.*

'TILL NEXT MONTH