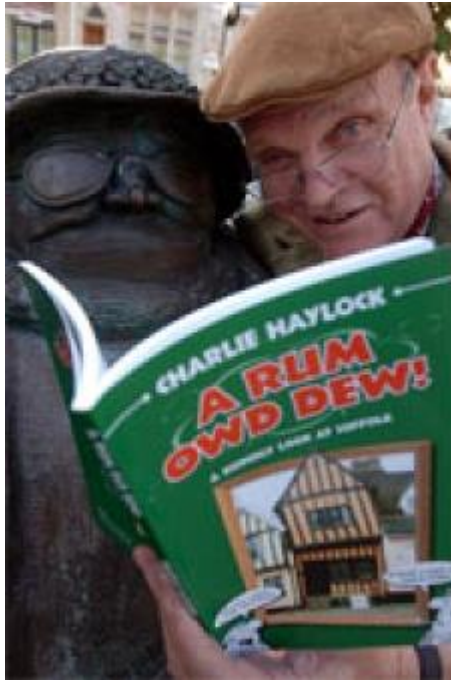


Win a copy of Charlie's new book

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Charlie Haylock is pictured with his new Suffolk book "A Rum Owd Dew" at the Giles Statue in Ipswich



Silly Suffolk? Not on your nelly. You can sell good old squit by the yard. There's a ready market. Steven Russell talks to someone who champions the county: author Charlie Haylock

COOD blarst me, bor - it looks like he's going to do it again.

A couple of years ago Charlie Haylock took the publishing world by storm with his book *Sloightly on Th' Huh!* - a humorous look at Suffolk dialect. Nearly 20,000 copies were sold in the eight weeks before Christmas 2004. The publishers had to order a reprint every week in the month before December 25.

Even better, it became the top-selling book in the county, shifting more copies than *The Da Vinci Code*, even. And it became the best-selling release in the 30-year history of Countryside Books.

Now he's brought out another book in similar vein, and it looks destined for similar success. With more than 6,000 copies already sold in the first week of publication, that record looks under threat.

A Rum Owd Dew! - A Koindly Look at Suffolk is, says Charlie, a serious book about Suffolk, its places, people and way of speaking, and its humour, and is largely written in a gently humorous vein - "as opposed to being a funny book, if you see what I mean".

It's liberally illustrated with photographs (and chuckle-inducing dialect-based captions) and cartoons by Barrie Appleby.

The book has a quick look at the history of Suffolk, celebrates the idiosyncrasies of local grammar and expression, uses old pictures to highlight how traditional trades have changed over time, doffs its cap at the Suffolk folk scene and has fun with landmarks such as *The House in the Clouds* at Thorpeness and Orford Castle. (Wonder if sculptor Maggi Hambling will be amused by a cartoon character's comment about her Scallop on Aldeburgh beach . . .)

Some of grandma's remedies you'd resort to only if desperate. There's a look at some ancient Suffolk surnames, some wry examples of Suffolk squat (illogical logic), and it also keeps alive memories of both traditional harvest-times and Christmases.

Charlie lives near Sudbury and was raised in a traditional Suffolk family, though he's lived part of his life "abroad", in Essex and London. His new publication also slips across the county border: it's on sale in shops from Chelmsford to Norwich.

He says the success of *Sloightly on Th' Huh!* was a pleasant surprise.

"I think why it was successful was that I interviewed a lot of people for it and asked on the radio for people to send in photographs and memories. It was a Suffolk book about Suffolk people, so I think readers related to that. It looked, really, as though it was their book."

One spin-off was a big rise in calls for Charlie to appear at clubs and pubs, to take his one-man show to theatres and village halls, and to keep Suffolk wisdom and ways alive by talking to children at schools such as King Edward VI School in Bury St Edmunds.

"I've given lectures to year 11/12 English classes," he says. "That's sixth-form to you and me, 'cos I haven't gone metric yet."

One engagement even took him across the Thames to Dartford. “Glad t'git back hoom agin,” he quips.

“I get many requests for after-dinner speaking - ranging from locals Wis to Masonic functions, from rugby club dinners to local history societies, and from private parties to more public occasions - to spread the word, the Suffolk word, with my 'mardles' and monologues.”

Last week he was on ITV Anglia's Country Days - a programme that apparently attracted 300,000 viewers.

Charlie feels very strongly about his native country and the things that make it special.

“Suffolk is the first page of English history, after all,” he says, referring to the Anglo-Saxon heritage of Sutton Hoo. He's proud of the fact that three local finds figure in the British Museum's Top Ten British Treasures: the Hoxne Hoard of more than 14,000 coins, jewellery and tableware; the 4th Century silver platter known as the Mildenhall Treasure; and the Sutton Hoo find, which takes prime position.

As long as there's a Suffolk, there will be a Suffolk dialect, he says - but he recognises it will change over time. You can't preserve a language in aspic, he points out; they'll eventually die - like Ancient Greek and Latin. Languages and dialects have to be allowed to evolve, or they'll end up on the scrapheap, too.

“The dialect in the future will be vastly different to the one we know now,” he explains. “That's why we have to record it, our grammar and the way of life and our wit, any way we can - on paper, on CD, on film, in song. If we don't do that, then it will die out.

“Then, when we're gone, you and me both, children of the future can press a button, or do whatever they do then, and read and hear and watch what life used to be like.”

And don't fret about incomers diluting the local idiom, he advises.

“I know people complain about 'foreigners' coming in to live here, but if it wasn't for the 'furreners' coming here in the first place, we'd have no Suffolk dialect to defend. The people who came to these shores - the Angles and Saxons, the Danes and the Normans, and all the others - have helped make us what we are.”

A Rum Owd Dew! is published by Countryside Books at £6.99. ISBN 1846704010-X

CHARLIE Haylock has at least 30 signing sessions lined up at East Anglian bookshops.

They include - September 30: Waterstones, Ipswich 10am-noon; Browsers, Woodbridge 1pm-3pm. October 7: Waterstones, Bury St Edmunds 10am-noon; BJ Butcher, Clare 2pm-4pm. October 8: Corn Craft, Monks Eleigh 10am-noon. October 14: WH Smith, Ipswich 11am-1pm; Magpies, Felixstowe 2pm-4pm.

A rum 'un or two: a few words of Suffolk wisdom from Charlie Haylock's new book

It's common in Suffolk speech to substitute “on” for the word “of”:

Rum funny tayste. What's 'iss 'ear cayke mayde on?

Dew yew is a common expression among old Suffolkers - used as an instruction, rather than a question:

Dew he goo caref'll on 'at owd boike, else hee'll fall arse oover hid 'n ' hut hisself

It's common for the "s" to be left off plural words in Suffolk speech:

Allbra (Aldeburgh) is 'bowt sev'n moile off th'ay twelve (the A12)

In Suffolk grammar, says Charlie, t'gather is a common form of address to people. "It does cause some amusement to 'em 'air furreners."

"Ken we hav yew awl gitt'n on th' bus, one at a toime t'gather."

"Oi want yew awl t'stand in single foile t'gather."

Placenames: Framlingham - Fraam, Grundisburgh - Grunzbra, Sudbury - Subbree

Grandma's Remedies:

Common cold - 1. Sip a full bowl of onion gruel. 2. Place feet in a mustard bath. 3. Place three drops of eucalyptus on a handkerchief to sniff regularly

Earache - Place a hot onion, cut in half, behind the ear

Piles - Get an old leather boot; set fire to it and let it smoulder. Put it into an old metal bucket. Sit down on bucket, exposing the delicate area to the smouldering. Wait till the smouldering stops. Charlie says: "Think I'd rather have smoked bacon!"

Ancient surnames: A large number of English surnames were first recorded in Suffolk, says Charlie, because the county was once densely populated. Many Anglo-Saxon names refer to the elf or the wolf; the elf was seen as noble and the wolf as powerful

Burridge: strong fort. Cates/Kates: happy, jolly. Garnish: nickname for someone with a moustache

We've got five copies of A Rum Owd Dew! to give away, courtesy of Countryside Books. To enter, simply send your name and address to Steven Russell, Suffolk Competition, Features Department, East Anglian Daily Times, 30 Lower Brook Street, Ipswich, IP4 1AN, or email steve.russell@eadt.co.uk

Closing date is noon on September 21, when five winners will be selected at random.