

Plaques recall two men of passion

By **LUCY CLAPHAM**
lucy.clapham@archant.co.uk

A LEADING ballet dancer and choreographer and a campaigning environmentalist are set to be honoured in their home town of Great Yarmouth with a pair of commemorative plaques.

Sir Kenneth MacMillan, whose passion for ballet was nurtured in the town, and Andrew Lees, who helped protect habitats across the country through his career as a conservationist, both grew up in Great Yarmouth and will be remembered through the blue plates, that are being placed by the local History and Archaeological Society.

Sir Kenneth's plaque will be fixed to the Hollywood Cinema in Marine Parade, which formerly housed Great Yarmouth's Little Theatre where he took dance lessons with Miss Jean Boulton.

Mr Lees' plaque will be placed at the Pub on the Prom in Marine Parade, and opposite the Hollywood Cinema, near to where he lived.

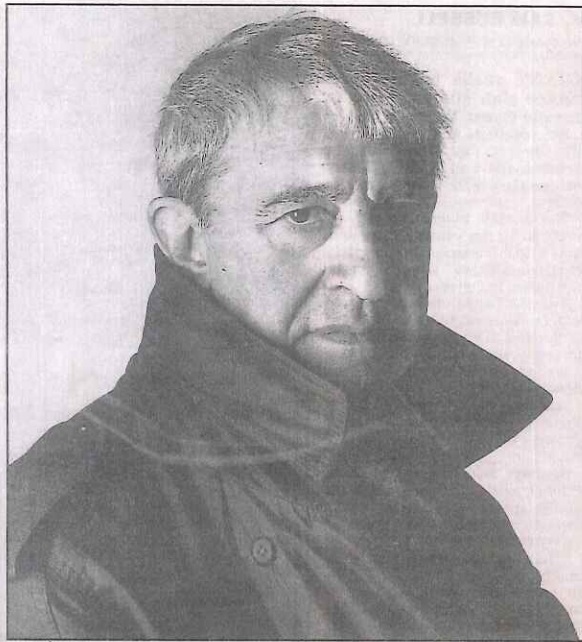
Although born in Scotland, Sir Kenneth's family moved back to their native Norfolk due to their impoverished circumstances and moved in with his aunt in Runham Vauxhall.

He attended Northgate Junior School and from an early age showed a love of dancing.

As a youngster he would busk for tourists and holidaymakers in front of the Garibaldi Hotel with displays of the country dancing he learnt in Scotland.

He won talent competitions at the Britannia Pier and took up lessons with Miss Boulton, but it was the death of his mother that led to his move into professional work.

A noted dance teacher, Miss Phylliss Adams, recognised his great talent



BALLET SUPREMO: Sir Kenneth MacMillan.

and became his surrogate mother, encouraging him to pursue his dream career in ballet.

At 15 Sir Kenneth auditioned at Sadler's Wells Ballet School and won a scholarship.

He went on to perform for several years, including a tour of America, and gained critical acclaim.

But he was prone to stage fright and turned to choreography, making an international name for himself with his moving works.

Sir Kenneth died in 1992 aged 62 after collapsing back stage at the Royal Opera House during a performance of his three-act ballet *Mayerling*.

Mr Lees was born at Sandown Nursing Home in Yarmouth and was a true son of Norfolk who had a great passion for its big skies and low-lying landscape.

Most of all he loved its rivers, streams, dykes, marshes and fens and it was on the Broads where he was happiest.

Keen to explore the science of the natural world he enrolled at the University of Wales to study zoology, botany and philosophy and after graduating with honours went on to work as a field scientist with the Nature Conservancy Council, which had the responsibility of protecting Britain's natural environment by designating areas as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

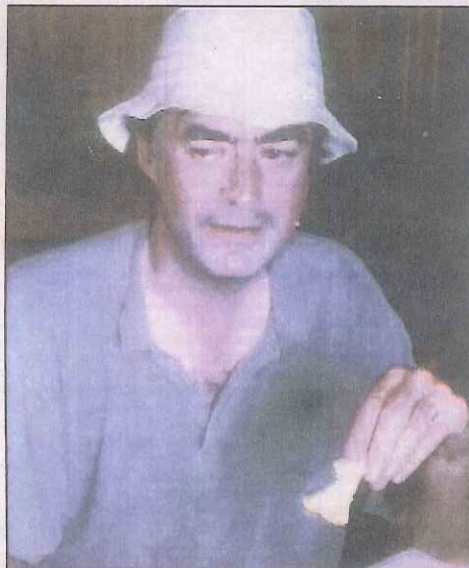
Through his work he stopped Crymlyn Bog in Wales being turned into a rubbish tip and he successfully campaigned to get it recognised as an SSSI.

This was his first environmental campaign success and after returning to his native Norfolk he went on to lobby government to protect Halvergate Marshes and other areas of the Broads.

Just before Christmas in 1994 he travelled to the island of Madagascar to make a documentary film as part of a campaign and tragically died, aged 45, while out on a shoot.

On New Year's Eve he set out into a forest alone to film a final sequence but he failed to return.

An autopsy later showed he died from heat exhaustion.



SON OF NORFOLK: Andrew Lees had a passion for the big skies and tragically died at the age of 45 while making a film.

Calm and Breath Easy
ng the basics of Tai Chi
class starts 9th January
ro pay at the door then followed
week full foundation course.
rning step by step Tai Chi
Gorleston Tai Chi Centre
03 789992 for more details
Visit our website
www.taichi-qigong.net
Established 1995

Needlecraft
& cross stitch specialist

Celtic Christmas!
still on offer for a
limited time

Sessions: MON-FRI 2PM-4PM
Classes: WEDS - 7.30PM - 9.30PM

8 Northgate Street,
Yarmouth, Norfolk NR30 1BY
01493 843604
northgateneedlecraft.co.uk

As & Wyllys
we help?

LAW SPECIALISTS
ce & Relationship Breakdowns
ren Issues • Financial Disputes
ort initial interview *on request* at
rmonth and Gorleston offices.
01493 855555 (Yarmouth)
01493 663124 (Gorleston)

PROBATE SPECIALISTS
preparation of Wills & Tax Planning
Lasting Powers of Attorney
on Administration of Deceased's
Estate & Inheritance Tax
01493 855555 or **01493 663124**

PERSONAL INJURY LAW SPECIALISTS
by Local Experienced Lawyers
compensation • No Win - No Fee
Freephone 0800 9151867

Call us or call in to:-
Yarmouth, NR30 2QJ Telephone **01493 855555**
Gorleston NR31 6AQ **01493 663124**

For local news online: go to www.yarmouthmercury24.co.uk