



The Monthly Newsletter  
of the First Friday  
Breakfast Club, Inc.

# First Friday News & Views

November 2016

Volume 21

Issue 11

## A Word or Two on Undocumented Immigration

By Jonathan Wilson

*COVER: A Word or Two  
About on Undocumented  
Immigration  
by Jonathan Wilson*

### *Inside This Month*

*October's Speaker,  
Jim Mowrer By Bruce Carr*

### *Briefs and Shorts*

*McCoy Report*

*Flashback by Jonathan  
Wilson*

*My Perspective on This  
Election by Bruce Sanders  
Lehnertz*

*Talent Limited by Gary  
Kaufman*

*The Sea is Quiet Tonight.*

*Don't Breathe by Gary  
Kaufman*

*Oh To Be in England  
by Steve Person*

### *Calendar*

▼ The next FFBC Meeting is 7:00am,  
Friday, November 4, 2016, at Hoyt  
Sherman Place, 15th & Woodland,  
Des Moines, IA

▼ RSVP by November 2 to  
[JonathanWilson@davisbrownlaw.com](mailto:JonathanWilson@davisbrownlaw.com),  
or phone 515-288-2500

A solution to the phenomenon of undocumented (okay, illegal) immigration into the United States, and dealing with the millions who are already here illegally with American citizen children, is hiding in plain sight.

Don't get me wrong, I'm all for securing borders; we can't have a sovereign nation if we can't or won't control who comes and goes across our borders. That said, the fact is that only about half of the undocumented immigrants in the US entered by illegally crossing the border. The other half entered legally but over-stayed their legal status. So, tightening border security, even with a mile-high 2700 mile-long wall, won't do the trick. It's simplistic to a fault and, at best, only half a solution. We've ignored this issue through countless Republican and Democratic administrations and the problem has only gotten worse.

The perfect solution will almost certainly elude us in the near term; the perfect solution is the one we have with Canada along our northern border. That border is said to be the longest undefended national border anywhere in the world. It has generally not been problematic for two reasons. First, in outward appearances, Canadians look quite a bit like what has historically been our predominantly Caucasian population. "Them" looking more like "us" makes passage to and from Canada less conspicuous and, frankly, less threatening to our Caucasian majority. With the browning of America that is undeniably occurring, this complicating element will diminish over time.

Second, the Canadian economy largely mirrors that in the United States. The macro-economic forces at play along our northern and southern borders are decidedly different. The typically lesser-skilled labor force south of the border is, inevitably (even inexorably) drawn to greater opportunities in the United States. These are not rapists and murderers as they have been wrongly characterized by Donald Trump; there is no shortage of potential rape and murder victims south of the border -- they needn't come here if they're predisposed to commit such crimes. In fact, law enforcement in Mexico is almost certainly less sophisticated and less effective than it is in the US. If you're a murdering rapist, I can make a pretty compelling case for staying out of the US to commit those dastardly deeds. No, it is economic opportunity that is attracting remarkably courageous, hard-working Hispanics who want to work diligently at lower skilled, difficult jobs in order to provide their families with a brighter future than is available in their home countries.

Continued, Page 2

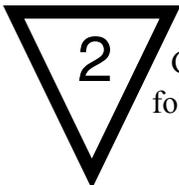
The perfect solution lies in removing the disparities in economic opportunities across our southern border. That may happen eventually, but not for a long time. So much for the perfect solution. Moreover, that perfect solution still leaves unaddressed the issue of immigrants already here illegally.

So, what other alternative is available? There is one with which we are already familiar. It lies in our long-standing use of statutes of limitations in restricting the prosecution of crimes. With a few exceptions -- notably, murder, for example -- there are statutes of limitations for the vast majority of crimes. The number of years that must pass before a criminal can no longer be prosecuted varies from state-to-state as well as by the perceived severity of the crime. The lesser the offense, the shorter the limitations period. When the crime is committed, whatever it is, the statute begins to run. If the culprit is not caught and prosecuted within the applicable statute of limitations they could openly confess to the offense and still avoid prosecution.

That is where current law needs to be changed when it comes to illegal immigration. Currently, and regardless of how someone got here illegally, it is also a violation of the law to *be* in the United States without proper documentation. A statute of limitations has no applicability for an offense that is made continuing in nature, because every day such an offense is recommitted. It would be like making not only bank robbery a crime, but also making it a *continuing crime* to be in possession of robbery proceeds or not returning them. That is not how it works -- if the robbery occurs the statute of limitations immediately begins to run. And it has been so for pretty much as long as there have been criminal laws.

We could simply keep illegal entry into the United States a crime, as it is now, whether accomplished by crossing the border illegally or overstaying a legal entry; assign a suitable statute of limitations for the timely prosecution of that crime; and eliminate as a continuing offense the act of *being* in the United States without proper documentation. The debate could then become one of deciding a suitable limitations period for the crime of illegal entry; I'd suggest ten years.

Whatever period would be chosen, those who are here without proper documentation could wait that period of time, stay out of any other trouble with the law in the meantime, and then simply go into any immigration office with proof about the length of residency, and request permanent status or even citizenship. If the proof is there and there's a lack of any other criminal activity -- GRANTED. Make it easy; we could let folks do this at any post office.



## Briefs & Shorts

Be sure to RSVP by November 2 for the November 4, 2016, meeting by calling 515-288-2500, or on line at: [JonathanWilson@DavisBrownLaw.com](mailto:JonathanWilson@DavisBrownLaw.com). **Our speaker** on November 4 will be Dr. Maria Filippone talking about the Gaza Strip. You may want to invite some of your friends to attend!!

Thanks to Senator Matt McCoy for introducing our October speaker Jim Mowrer, candidate for the US House of Representative in Iowa's 3rd District. Thanks to Brian Taylor Carlson for his terrific work updating the FFBC website ([ffbc Iowa.org](http://ffbc Iowa.org)). Thanks to the members of the Board of Directors who took several hours out of their weekend recently to lay groundwork for planning FFBC's future.

You can join with other FFBC members giving \$100 to the David Hurd memorial scholarship; we just need 2 more in order to match his last gift of \$3000.

Be sure to peruse the front table for a book you might like to read. **Book donations are always welcome.** Thanks to Scott Kuknyo for helping coordinate the book exchange.

Consider a tax deductible contribution to the FFBC scholarship fund, or a tax exempt testamentary gift, or both. Contact Jonathan Wilson for details.



Save the Date. The next PROS meeting is November 19.



*Joey H: My father used to say: "Don't raise your voice. Improve your argument."*



## Jim Mowrer, by Bruce Carr

Our guest speaker on Friday, October 7, 2016, was Jim Mowrer, a Democrat who in the last election lost a hard-fought challenge for the House of Representatives against U.S. Rep. Steve King in Iowa’s Fourth District. Mowrer is on the ballot again this year, this time in the Third District (which includes Polk County), bidding to replace one-term Congressman David Young -- who spoke at our gathering earlier this year.

Mowrer gave us some convincing arguments for how the incumbent has not earned reelection, including his numerous votes to repeal the Affordable Care Act, voting to defund Planned Parenthood, being the only member of the Iowa delegation to vote against the bipartisan highway bill. He was particularly scathing about Young’s failure to represent Iowa voters when he kowtowed to pressure from Republican House leaders in May of this year, changing his vote to defeat a measure that would have protected gay rights.

“I want to serve in Congress,” Mowrer said, because “we don't have a Tom Harkin there any more, we don't have a great champion for the underprivileged and people with disabilities.” He has said he thinks he'd have a knack at navigating the partisanship that too often causes gridlock: “Congress isn't working. What we need is leadership willing to put Iowa's middle class before parties and politics — that's exactly why I'm running and what I'll do,” he said. Here are some of his specific policy proposals:

**Social Security & Medicare:** He supports lifting the cap on contributions to reach full funding of Social Security.

**Standing Up for Workers and Families:** He knows that parents have to choose too often between caring for a sick child and supporting their family. That’s why he’ll fight for paid family leave.

**Cutting Waste:** During his time in the Pentagon, he worked to establish the Army Office of **Business Transformation**. This office implemented business best practices within the bureaucracy of the Army, and is credited with saving \$3.5 billion by improving efficiency.

**Keeping Our Promise to Our Veterans and Service Members:** He will work from the day he is sworn in to ensure that the VA is given the resources it needs in order to update its systems and improve VA service delivery.

=====

*Jim Mowrer began life on a farm in Boone County. When he was just seven, his father was killed in a farming accident, leaving his mother to raise him and his sister by herself. Jim graduated from Boone High School and joined the Iowa National Guard; in 2005, his unit was mobilized and deployed to Iraq.*

*While serving in Iraq, Jim finished college in between missions, earning a degree from the American Military University, and going on to earn a Masters of Public Policy from George Mason University outside Washington DC, where he was then working at the Pentagon. Always identifying as an Iowan, Mowrer came back home to challenge Congressman Steve King for the Fourth District of Iowa in 2014, and he served as vice chairman of the Iowa Democratic Party.*

*Jim and Chelsey Mowrer and their two sons now live in the Waveland neighborhood of Des Moines. He can be reached at <jimforiowa.com>.*

---

## P o n d e r      T h i s

---

Some 2 cent’s worth is worth more than 2 cents: *Two guys enter a bar. One is a bad guy with a gun; the other is a good guy with a gun. You’re the first police officer to arrive on the scene. How do you tell which one is the bad guy?*

*Every day may not be good, but there is something good in every day; look for that.*

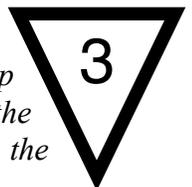
Norman Lear (paraphrased): *Two pillars to live by: “over” and “next.” When it’s over, it’s over; now what’s next? The hammock stretched between those two is the act of living in the present.*

Maya Angelou: *“People will forget what you said. People will forget what you did. But people will never forget how you made them feel.”*

Sign supporting a candidate for county treasurer: *I won’t steal, and I can add and subtract. That about says it all in very few words.*

*A car’s windshield is so large and the rear view mirror is so small, because our past is not as important as our future. So, look ahead and move on.*

*God has no hands but our hands. Stop planning on God to intervene and do the right thing. Instead, get busy doing the right thing.*





Local elected leaders joined U.S. Congresswoman Gabby Giffords in Des Moines on Monday in support of commonsense gun safety legislation. We cannot afford to become numb to gun violence. It claims the lives of 30,000 Americans each year. Gabby was the victim of gun violence herself and lived to tell. Now she advocates for expanded background checks, preventing domestic violence homicides and putting a stop to gun trafficking. I'm with Gabby on this important issue.

## IOWA IS GOOD FOR BUSINESS

Senate Democrats are working to expand Iowa's middle class and build a stable economy for all. We're spurring long-range growth and prosperity across Iowa by:

- Ensuring Iowans have opportunities for job training
- Offering incentives to Iowa businesses
- Boosting quality of life in our communities

These efforts are producing good results. Iowa is again one of the [top 10 states for business](#), according to CNBC. The latest analysis spotlights Iowa's low cost of doing business, low cost of living and great quality of life. We also have the best possible credit rating and have shown steady growth.

A few of the initiatives we've championed in recent years that have helped Iowa achieve this success include:

- Improving Iowa's roads and bridges to move goods and provide services more efficiently.
- Phasing in the largest property tax cut in the state history by providing tax relief to owners of commercial and industrial property.
- Providing a tax cut to thousands of Iowa small businesses and farmers by aligning Iowa's tax code with many federal tax changes.
- Offering incentives to businesses that locate and expand in Iowa, particularly when they commit to making a strong contribution to the local economy and creating good jobs for residents.
- Investing in innovative programs at our state universities that spur economic growth when they work with communities and businesses to improve technology, marketing and entrepreneurship.
- Establishing tax credits for industries that turn byproducts from biomass feedstock into higher-value chemicals.
- Exempting from sales tax supplies and replacement parts used in manufacturing, research and development, data processing and recycling. These are known as "consumables."

For a complete review of our bipartisan business initiatives over the last couple of years, go to <http://wp.me/a6hw7R-5Oy>.

### Additional information

*This is a legislative update from Senator Matt McCoy, representing the west part of Des Moines, portions of West Des Moines and northwest Warren County.*

*For newsletters, photos and further information, go to [www.senate.iowa.gov/senator/mccoy](http://www.senate.iowa.gov/senator/mccoy) or [www.matt-mccoy.com](http://www.matt-mccoy.com). Follow Senator McCoy on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/senatormccoy](http://www.facebook.com/senatormccoy).*

*To contact Senator McCoy during the week, call the Senate Switchboard at 515-281-3371. Otherwise he can be reached at home at 515-274-0561. E-mail him at [matt.mccoy@legis.iowa.gov](mailto:matt.mccoy@legis.iowa.gov).*

*Senator McCoy is an Assistant Senate Majority Leader, chair of the Transportation & Infrastructure Budget Subcommittee, and vice-chair of the Commerce Committee. He also serves on the Appropriations, State Government, Transportation and Ways & Means committees.*

*FLASH BACK: The following article appeared in the First Friday Breakfast Club Newsletter in October 1996. Our readers might find it interesting how things have changed and how they have remained the same!!*

## **We've Got a Problem** By Jonathan Wilson

Over 75% of the general public support the idea of gay equality in the workplace and about the same percentage believes that discrimination based on actual or perceived gender orientation is already illegal. Nothing could be much further from the truth. In fact, such discrimination is perfectly legal everywhere in the United States of America except in nine "great states:" California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Wisconsin. Everywhere else, including Iowa, you can be fired with utter impunity just for being perceived as gay or lesbian. You can miss out on a well-deserved promotion or be denied a plum assignment. You can be insulted; be shunned; do a great job; and have no job security.

With so many believing otherwise, it's no wonder that when we talk about gay rights most people think that we must be talking about "special rights." So the logic goes: if gays already have protection against unequal, discriminatory treatment at work, their desire for gay rights must involve "special rights." That misperception is, of course, cultivated by our detractors. "Special rights" is code for affirmative action and quotas, neither of which is well understood and both of which are unpopular because they offend, at least superficially, fundamental principles of nondiscrimination and equality of treatment in the workplace. That they have represented important tools in redressing the residual impact of past, lawful discrimination is not greatly appreciated by those in our society who have not known discrimination personally.

It is a cruel irony that these buzz words are disguised with the label "special rights" and used to resist efforts to achieve gender orientation equality. It is made the more pernicious by the fact that gender orientation quotas applied to some occupations would actually work to the disadvantage of gay employees who are "over represented" there. A correlation exists, for example, between higher educational attainment and same-gender orientation. Among occupations requiring higher levels of formal education our numbers tend to exceed our numbers as a percentage of the general population. I don't speculate here about why that is true; it just is. Being true, we could hardly be advantaged by gender orientation quotas, and should be expected to actively oppose them, and we would.

So what do we do about our problem? It would help if we could be more disciplined in our language. I for one prefer talking about gender orientation rather than sexual orientation [Ed: *I've given up on this one at this point, but that's where I was coming from in 1996.*]. It means the same thing but it is easier to swallow. Everyone believes that sex, which is a particular hang-up among Americans, has no place in the workplace, so we would do well not to frame our cause in sexual terms.

It would help if we would talk about pursuing simple equality rather than civil rights. There is nothing wrong with pursuing civil rights, but the terminology plays into the hands of our detractors' repeated references to "special rights." It's difficult to so manipulate simple "equality."

It would help if we were better disciplined in our political organizing. Progressive groups, because they tend to attract more independent thinkers, are a lot like a wheelbarrow full of bull frogs; no sooner do you have hold of the handles and are ready to go, one of them jumps out, and on and on.

What would solve the problem would be the enactment by the United States Congress of the Employment Nondiscrimination Act (ENDA). That single piece of legislation (with an ironic exemption for churches) would bring the entire country in line with the nine "great states" and put into the law of the land what the vast majority of folks believes is there already and also supports. It's time to pass ENDA. [Ed: *Now, 20 YEARS later, the passage of ENDA is only a dream. After the Orlando massacre in 2016, a surviving patron shown in news coverage could be legally fire in Florida the following Monday merely because they were perceived to be gay.*] It's time to end the incongruity between what people support and what they think exists. It's time to end needless anxiety that is inhibiting otherwise productive members of the workforce. It won't give them special rights, but it sure will be special when it happens.

---

### **Tribute to Larry Hoch**

Long-time FFBC member, Larry Hoch, passed away unexpectedly and too soon on Friday night, October 21. He died peacefully in his sleep. He died with the distinction of being one of the co-plaintiffs in the Varnum case that brought LGBT Iowans and others equal access to lawfully recognized marriage. He is survived by his two children and by his husband, David Twombly, who is also a long-time member of FFBC. Condolences can be sent to David at 2305 Linda Circle, Urbandale, Iowa 50322-5206, or by email at [larryhoch@mchsi.com](mailto:larryhoch@mchsi.com).

**Talent Limited:  
Des Moines' Hidden Gem**  
By Gary Kaufman

**The Sea is Quiet Tonight**  
Meet the Author: Michael Ward  
Beaverdale Books  
6:30 PM, Friday, Nov. 4

Since gay and bisexual men are stereotypically considered to be more into theater than heterosexual men, I thought that perhaps some of our members might enjoy being part of Talent Limited.

Talent Limited is a group of Des Moines theater enthusiasts that, on the second Sunday of every month at 5p.m., meet and have Hors D'oevres, then they put on a play, and then they have desserts, and you can drink throughout! Soon as I heard that format, I knew it was for me. There are many good cooks in the group, and a number of the members have been active in theater all their lives, including one who performed on Broadway. It was originally the "south of Grand" type of club and the plays and parties were in people's homes. However, now the bulk of the members are in condos or senior living places so, often, the gatherings are held in club houses. Each member is expected to host an event or direct a play over a 2 year period.

You are only limited by your creativity and . . . er . . . a . . . talent. The plays are readings, so you don't have to learn the lines, just rehearse them. If you always wanted to get the lead in a play or musical, here is your chance! Direct and cast yourself in the lead. The organization is gay friendly, and has had three members of First Friday Breakfast Club join. If you would like to explore this group and see if it is for you, contact me and I'll sponsor you as a guest. The cost per year, only \$10! That's like \$1 per party. You can't beat that! I'm in the phone book if you would like to check it out! Or you can contact me through Jonathan Wilson.

---

*Light travels faster than sound. That is why some people appear quite bright – until you hear them talk.*

*A man got hit hard in the head with a can of 7up. He's alright, though. It was a soft drink.*

In this insightful and inspirational memoir, Michael Ward returns to the early years of the AIDS epidemic, when so little was known and so few who were diagnosed survived. He chronicles in candid detail his partner Mark's decline and eventual death. By looking back on these devastating events, the author not only honors a generation lost to the illness but also opens a vital window onto the past, before medication helped save lives and when HIV/AIDS was usually a death sentence.

Michael H. Ward is a retired psychotherapist. He was instrumental in the development of **The Shared Heart** (William Morrow, 1997), which presents the portraits and coming-out stories of forty gay and lesbian teenagers. **The Shared Heart** won the American Library Association's Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Book Award in the nonfiction category in 1998. It was also on ALA's Best Books for Young Adults list in 1999.

Michael grew up in Omaha, has roots in Iowa, and currently lives with his husband on Cape Cod.

---

**Wilson (Cover Story),** Cont'd from p. 2

Families would be strengthened, folks could live without constant fear of being arrested, there would be upward pressure on wages for lower-skilled workers -- immigrant or native born, and the problem, which is not otherwise going away in the lifetimes of those already here illegally, would be solved.

In truth, this problem is really all about politics. If it were perceived that legalized immigrants, by whatever means, would vote with Republicans rather than Democrats, the debate would be a whole lot different and, likely, the roles would be reversed. Cynical, I know, but true.

## **Don't Breathe**

Review by Gary Kaufman

The film opens with an aerial shot of a desolated street with someone slowly pulling an object down the street. As the camera gets closer you can tell it is an old man dragging the object. Finally, we can tell that the object being dragged is an unconscious young woman whose face is cut and bruised; then appears the instructional title, "Don't Breathe". What follows is probably the most intense thriller I have ever seen. Once it kicks in it does not let up until its conclusion, or sort of a conclusion. If your heart is not beating faster at the end of the picture than it was in the beginning, perhaps you are dead.

Our "heroes" in the film are young adult burglars. One of their fathers runs a security company who has keys to their victim's premises. They get in, rob the place, and then exit making it look like a break-in. But, as is often the case, it just isn't enough. They need that one big haul so they can quit doing this and move on. They find out that a blind war veteran who was awarded \$300,000 for the accidental death of his daughter does not trust anyone and keeps the money in his home which is the only non-abandoned townhouse in this row of Detroit townhouses. They decide to break into the man's home. The blind man, who looks amazingly similar to that "Most Interesting Man in the World" in the ads, does not think much of it.

Now for you who think that a blind man could not put up much of a fight with his three predators, think again! As the action intensifies the audience feels what it is to be trapped and experience terror. It is indeed an intense ride.

This ride of terror was directed by Fede Álvarez, a Uruguayan film director and was partially funded by the Hungarian Film Incentive (remember when Iowa had a film incentive?). His only prior feature film was the remake of *Evil Dead*. But his use of imagery and sound created this masterpiece of terror; I'll definitely try to catch his next work, "Monsterpocalypse".

I highly recommend seeing **Don't Breathe**, unless, of course, if you are faint of heart.

## **My Perspective on this Election**

by Bruce Sanders Lehnertz

This year marks the 12th time I have cast a vote in a Presidential Election.

I take it very seriously, because the wrong candidate sitting in the Oval Office can wreak havoc for years after s/he has left that office. On the other hand, the right candidate, in the same situation, can have a positive impact for decades.

In this particular Presidential race, I have the unusual opportunity to share some personal history involving one of the Candidates.

I moved to New York City in 1990, for a job with TIAA-CREF in their Investment Department, financing commercial real estate in the Northeastern quadrant of the US. My immediate superior was universally acknowledged as an icon in the industry, and I was active in Industry associations, as well as serving on Investment Committees for the Real Estate Board of New York, and a non-profit educational fund.

My boss, Carol, arranged a meeting with Donald Trump at his office in Trump Tower. At the time, he was building hotels and casinos in Atlantic City, in the early days after casinos were legalized in New Jersey.

We had an aggressive investment program that was seeking to invest upwards of \$1 billion annually in large projects -- by financing those projects, as well as acquiring signature properties.

The meeting was surprisingly short.

Once we'd presented our interest in participating in his projects, as either investor or financier, he simply dismissed us. "What do I need you for? I've got all the money in the world."

Though a little stunned at his response, we both agreed that his ego and dismissive attitude did not represent the type of sponsorship that we wanted to invest in.

Through the succeeding years, as he stumbled over his own ego, losing the hotels and casinos that we'd attempted to invest in, it became abundantly clear that his "business acumen" was significantly dulled by his own shortcomings. Those don't just affect his net worth. They reveal his character. And "Unfit" is his best fit.



# FFBC

First Friday  
News & Views

Des Moines, Iowa

November, 2016

First Friday  
Breakfast Club

In Service

Board of Directors

KENT DONALDSON	210-0466
RYAN CRANE	515-414-9860
KEN HANSON	515-783-3597
BRAD HOLLAND	707-3494
BYRON HUFF	371-6117
SCOTT KUKNYO	284-0880
RICK MILLER	274-5518
GARY MOORE	988-8490
TIM SCHRECK	422-6496
BRIAN TAYLOR CARLSON	971-2254
PHIL WILLIAMS	418-1937
JONATHAN WILSON	288-2500

Officers

KENT DONALDSON, TREASURER  
BYRON HUFF, VICE PRESIDENT  
JONATHAN WILSON, SECRETARY & PRESIDENT

Newsletter

BRUCE SANDERS LEHNERTZ,  
PRODUCTION EDITOR  
ARTHUR BRUER, WEBMASTER

WEBSITE: [WWW.FFBCIOWA.ORG](http://WWW.FFBCIOWA.ORG)

PUBLISHER, FFBC BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
©2016 FIRST FRIDAY BREAKFAST CLUB, INC

MADE ON A  MAC

## OH, TO BE IN ENGLAND

By Steve Person

Getting out of the United States during election campaigns is the thing to do. September brought me back to England for my annual pilgrimage to the United Kingdom. How nice it is to have friends--who are more like family--to visit when I am there! The man I consider to be my brother-in-law, Graham Wingfield, chauffeurs me all around that lovely country. Last year it was Devon and Cornwall in southwestern England. This year saw us in East Anglia in the county of Norfolk.

My membership in The Royal Oak Foundation (the American offshoot of the UK's National Trust) allows me to visit the stately homes that once belonged to the aristocracy, so perfectly portrayed in the recent televised series **Downton Abbey**, for no additional fees other than my annual membership. Properties visited this year included the Blickling Estate near Aylsham; Felbrigg Hall near Norwich; and Oxburgh Hall near Swaffham. Both Blickling and Felbrigg contain lavish interiors although the former is much more imposing from the outside than the latter. Unfortunately, Oxburgh, built around a moat, we were unable to see inside because a part of the roof of this imposing fortified manor house collapsed about a month before we were there.

From those three properties, we motored to the most impressive of all (although not a National Trust property)—Sandringham House, the Queen's private home situated in 7,000 acres near King's Lynn (see photograph). The Queen opened the house to the public in 1966. She resides there during the winter holidays and stays for about two months of the year. She does not own Buckingham Palace or Windsor Castle, both reserved for the exclusive use of the monarch, but she also owns Balmoral in Scotland. Of the parts of the house open to the public, the most impressive is the drawing room. It contains personal belongings such as Queen Mary's miniatures in silver and her collection of jade carvings. Indeed, what makes Sandringham special is its feel of "family." Yes, the house is grand, but it also has a cozy feeling. Aside from the entry hall, the rooms do not have vast ceilings. The paintings are mostly portraits of its current and past inhabitants along with photographs. The entire house feels like anyone could be its inhabitant, not just royalty.

The vast stables now contain a museum of the various modes of transport used by the royal family from the 1860s to the present and also include a small restaurant. Strolling the grounds and gardens make for an entirely restful day.