



# The Felixstowe Society Newsletter

**Issue Number 95**

**1 September 2010**

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**Registered Charity No. 277442**  
**Founded 1978**





# The Felixstowe Society

The Felixstowe Society is established for the public benefit of people who either live or work in Felixstowe and Walton. Members are also very welcome from the Trimleys and the surrounding villages. The Society endeavours to:

**stimulate public interest in these areas,  
promote high standards of planning and architecture  
and secure the improvement, protection, development  
and preservation of the local environment.**

**Chairman:** Philip Johns, 1 High Row Field, Felixstowe, IP11 7AE, 672434

**Vice Chairman:** Philip Hadwen, 54 Fairfield Ave., Felixstowe, IP11 9JJ, 286008

**Secretary:** Trish Hann, 49 Foxgrove Lane, Felixstowe, IP11 7SU, 271902

**Treasurer:** Susanne Barsby, 1 Berners Road, Felixstowe, IP11 7LF

## Membership Subscriptions

Annual Membership - single	£5
Joint Membership - two people at same address	£7
Life Membership - single	£50
Life Membership - two people at same address	£70
Corporate Membership (for local organisations who wish to support the Society)	
Non - commercial	£12
Commercial	£15
Young people under the age of 18	Free

The subscription runs from the 1 January.

The **Membership Secretary** is Betty Woollan, The Pines, Manor Road, Trimley St Mary, Felixstowe, IP11 0TU.

Members are reminded that the Society's booklets **The Cotman Walk** and **Walking around Felixstowe** are available from the Magpie Book shop, the Tourist Information Office, and the Reunion Gallery.

The next **Newsletter** will be distributed by the delivery team at the beginning of January.

**Editor:** Tony Hughes

## Notes from the Chairman

Welcome to our September Newsletter and I hope you have all enjoyed your summer breaks this year. We have always said how very lucky we are to live in Felixstowe as this part of the Suffolk coast does enjoy its fair share of good weather. Both son and daughter with their respective spouses and children are always happy to spend a summer break with us, we are pleased to say, although I am not sure if such visits are to see doting grandparents or a trip to the seaside on a very cost effective holiday. I suspect the latter.

A warm welcome to our new members: Guy & Rosemary Pearse, Robert & Elizabeth Corker, Vicky Westren and Stella Bacon.

Last year the Civic Trust, which was the national body that represented Civic Societies such as ourselves, went into administration and was disbanded. As a result a new national charity called Civic Voice has been formed to represent Civic Societies throughout the country. There are many advantages to belonging to a national body and I am glad to report that the committee has agreed that we should join.

The 2010 AGM was held on Tuesday 18 May and copies of the Agenda and 2009 Annual Report were circulated with our previous newsletter. Those of you who attended the AGM may remember that a question from one of our members concerning subscriptions and gift aid caught me out in the absence of our Treasurer. I was unable to provide a full answer. However, the reason for lower subscriptions in 2009, despite an increase in members over 2009, is that in 2009 we only received life membership from 2 separate members (2 at £50) whereas in 2008 we received life membership from 5 joint members (5 at £70) plus 2 separate members (2 at £50). Therefore Life membership subscriptions for 2008 = £450 and for 2009 = £100. With regard to Gift Aid this has been claimed every year since its inception in 2001. If a longstanding member suddenly decides to complete a form, then it is always claimed from the date of joining if that is after 2001 or from 2001 if the membership started before that date. Gift Aid can only be claimed for those members who are taxpayers and who agree to complete the relevant form. Some members do not agree with Gift Aid and therefore do not wish to subscribe to it. Nor can we assume that all our members pay income tax. I have, of course, written to the member concerned with the above explanation.

Any questions for the AGM may of course be submitted to the Chairman or Secretary in writing prior to the meeting.

The final round of consultation on the Local Development Framework Core Strategies, with regard in particular to the Housing Settlement Policy, was planned for June but has been deferred awaiting directions from the new Secretary of State resulting from a change of Government at the last General Election, to which the Chairman was heard to mutter loudly "I told you so".

Although The Society's finances are in good shape and it is important that we keep a healthy balance, our income in the main comes from members' subscriptions which have not been increased for seven years. Our necessary costs (newsletter printing, insurance, affiliations etc) have increased year on year and it has become necessary to increase the cost of membership. Such increase will be decided at the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

I end with reminders that Beachwatch is on Saturday 18 September and full details are shown on page 13. Our next speaker evening is on Thursday 28 September when Michael Thomas will explain the part golf has played in the development of our town.

**Philip Johns**

## **Annual General Meeting 2010**

The following officers were elected:

Chairman – Philip Johns  
Vice Chairman – Philip Hadwen  
Secretary – Trish Hann  
Treasurer – Susanne Barsby

The following Committee Members were elected:

Alan Coombes, David Crawford, Judith Hedges, Elizabeth Horn.  
Gillian Hughes and co-opted members Linda Bunn, Keith Horn  
and Malcolm Stafford.

Peter Brown was elected as the Honorary Auditor.

Award for the Enhancement of the Environment: No awards were made for this year.

Following the AGM, David Tolliday gave a talk on Felixstowe during World War I. This talk is reported on page 6.

### **Walk the NEW Conservation Area!**

On Sunday 19 September the Felixstowe Society will be conducting a guided walk around the Tomline Conservation Area.

The tour will start from the front of the Leisure Centre at 3 pm and we will proceed up South Hill, walk around the roads behind Q tower, take the steps of Snow Hill to Manning Road and then examine various properties in Granville, Cavendish, Russell and Holland Roads and Beach Road West.

The whole tour should last about 90 minutes.

Please join us; your company would be most welcome.

**Phil Hadwen**

# **Felixstowe Museum**

## **Talk by Colin and Sue Todd, and Ann Trewick Tuesday, 23 March**

This was the first talk of its kind, to a Society, given by the volunteers of the Felixstowe Museum.

Colin spoke first giving a brief history of the building which had been built by Royal Engineers in 1878 for use as a Submarine Mining Establishment and is the last surviving purpose built structure for submarine mining in the country. In 1905 water borne defence was taken over by the Royal Navy, the system used in the original building was scrapped in 1910, but then reinstated in 1914 by the Royal Marine Submarine Miners. The building was renamed the Ravelin Block after WWI and is still known by that name today.

It originally had only 9 rooms but had been divided into the existing 25 rooms when the Museum was opened at Easter 1982. In 1978 the Felixstowe History and Museum Society was founded and in 1980 the building was renovated by the Department of the Environment. In 1996 English Heritage acquired the building and the Landguard Fort Trust was formed. Income at the Museum is from admission, donations and subscriptions. In 2003, after a great deal of hard work the Museum was granted Registration Status.

Ann then took over. Her main interests are archaeology and pre-history. She described many of the exhibits ranging from a Neolithic axe head, through a Bronze Age beaker pot and on to Roman coins and Mediaeval times. She showed a photograph of Felixstowe's most exciting find – a Roman Samian vase which is housed in the British Museum.

The archivist, Sue, then described the Museum as it is laid out today. She showed slides of many of the rooms including the Wiseman Room which houses all the RAF memorabilia from 1913 onwards, the St Audry's Hospital Room, St Audry's having closed in 1993 after 226 years and the reference room/library. She explained how the costumes are stored and it was good to see units from both Burt's Grocery Store and the Alexandra Restaurant which have been utilised in the Museum.

The Museum is staffed entirely by volunteers who put a great deal of time and energy into keeping the historical aspect of our town alive. They attend "Away Days", fairs and go into schools and it was interesting to note that almost everyone in the hall had been to the Museum at some time despite the fact that it has been described as Felixstowe's best kept secret.

Many members stayed behind to look at the information stands and artefacts that the volunteers had brought along and we would like to thank them for an informative evening.

**Susanne Barsby**

# Felixstowe during World War I

## Talk given by David Tolliday after The Felixstowe Society AGM on Tuesday, May 18

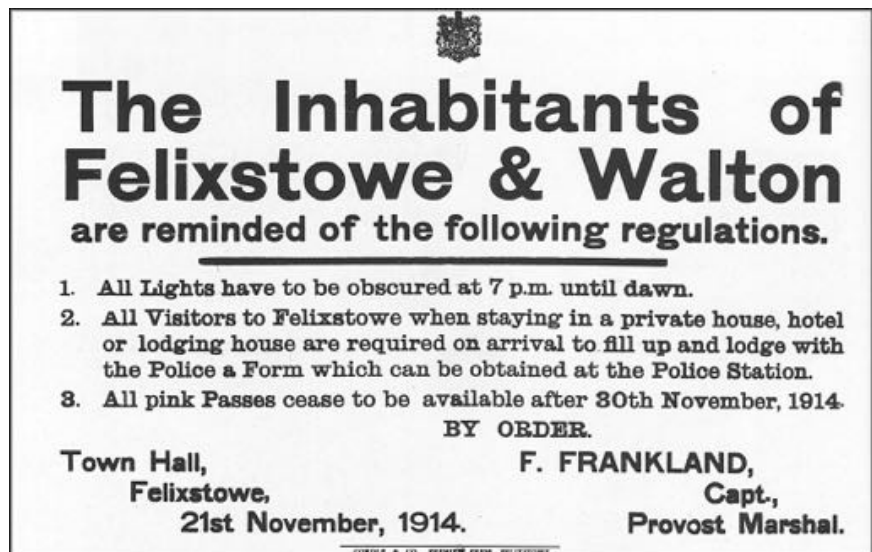
At the outbreak of World War I, on 8th August 1914, the town had close to 2,000 houses, a population of 9,500, with 1,928 people on the Electoral Roll. Its annual rate income was £16,000 (a one penny rate raised £257). Since the formation of the Local Board in 1887 and Colonel Tomline's death in 1889 Felixstowe had undergone rapid development and had become a thriving seaside resort.

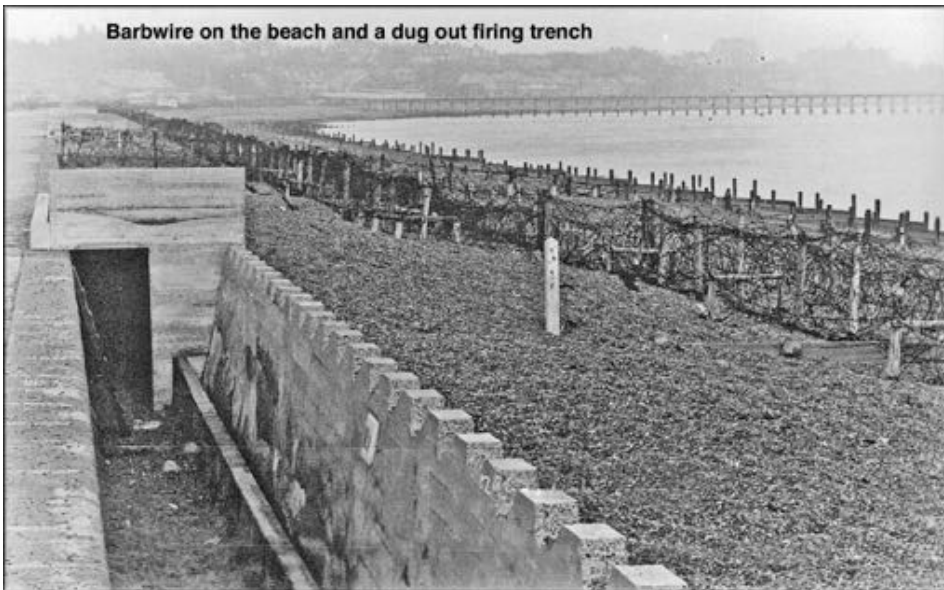
The military had plans for the zoning of the area up to Ipswich as a restricted military area, of which there were only a few in the country. It appears that the local authorities knew nothing about this and on the declaration of war it was enacted. It involved, among other things, the appointment of a Provost Marshall (Captain Frankland), who was under the command of the G.O.C Harwich Garrison. He became the civil power. The first thing he did was to commandeer the Town Clerk, Montague Humphrey's office and second the two senior clerks into army service, initially to process the issue of security passes to all authorised local inhabitants. Harry Clegg, the town's surveyor was also transferred to his staff. The GOC headquarters were moved in April 1916, to the Felix Hotel, so that the Town Clerk's office could be returned.

Training battalions of the Suffolk, Norfolk, Bedfordshire and 5th North Lancs' regiments were posted to the Felixstowe Urban District Council (FUDC) area and the Essex and Cambridgeshire's followed in 1916. All remained for the duration of the war, these, with the resident RA Garrison at Landguard Fort, the RNAS base and a Navy detachment at the dock meant that there were between 20,000 and 30,000 military stationed in the town for the next 4 years, which caused considerable difficulties and problems. Between 200,000 to 300,000 men passed through the town during the conflict!

The civilian population, common with that of the country in general, had no experience on war conditions and just wished to carry on as usual. A meeting of the FUDC Traders and Advancement Associations held on 14th August 1914 agreed that it would be a disaster not to continue with providing resort facilities and entertainments, which remained the policy throughout the war, despite defence

installations etc. being erected. The beach, pier and many resort activities remained open for business. The Provost Marshall was helpful in achieving this.





A mammoth operation started to provide billets and services such as refuse disposal, sewerage, washing, disinfecting etc. for the incoming troops. The standard for accommodation was 400 cubic feet of airspace per man, though in practice only half to three quarters of this was provided, much to the objection of Dr Conford, the Medical

Officer of Health, who was responsible for ensuring that the requirements were met. The large number of troops meant that many of the billet spaces had to be in the poorer classes' houses, few of which could provide anything but poor facilities. The payments to the householders were welcomed, as the poor of the time were really poor! (The town rate was 4/11d in the pound with a 3/- poor rate on top of this in 1914).

The FUDC decided that they wished to undertake the refuse disposal function, which included the emptying of earth closets, which was a night time activity. The dumping ground was a field of Charles Durrant in Garrison Lane. The going rate was 6/9 per day with extras at 10/- a night for horse, cart and man, though this was to rise quite dramatically with the number of horses required by the Army in France. £20 each was the purchase price in 1914, but by 1918 the council was paying 147 guineas each for the animals. A measure of the scale of this function was that prior to the war there was a cost of £754 for the year 1913-14 which rose to £2,130 (of which £1,248 was for the military) in 1914-15, £3,869 (£3,098) in 1915-16, £3,592 (£2,726) in 1916-17, £3,036 (£1,323) for 1917-18 and £3,455 (£2,302) for 1918-19.

The lack of public baths was also causing problems, as the only ones available were those in Cage Lane. Their opening hours were extended to 9 pm daily, excepting Fridays, which was reserved for ladies. The Norfolk regiment asked for sole use, which was not granted, and a plea was made to build more. A facility was eventually provided using the disinfector at the Outfall works.

On 7th October 1914 the Provost announced that 900 men were immediately arriving to erect wooden huts for the incoming soldiers. These encampments were situated throughout the town, Landguard Common, Mill Lane, Crescent Road, High Road, Cliff Road and Marsh Lane being among the locations. This exercise was being carried out without any reference to local planning bye-laws. It was intended to connect these huts to the town sewerage system. It was normal procedure for the FUDC to apply for a loan sanctioned by the Local Government Board in order to buy capital items, however, the Provost was able to circumvent this and a disinfector (£147 plus £122 to install) and an isolation hospital hut (£25 for the old Tennis Club pavilion plus £24/5/- to move and install), which was erected at Rues Farm, Marsh Lane and saved much time in purchasing them. The huts were eventually sold by auction in 1920.

The Brigadier GOC ordered the closing of Public Houses between 9 pm and 5 am daily, and the banning of street lighting in areas visible seawards (Promenade, Wolsey and Hamilton Gardens, Sea Road, Golf Road and Manor Terrace). This caused difficulties, for which the FUDC asked for extensions, but these were refused. The Gas Company subsequently had financial problems because of this as their contract was to supply 302 lamps to 11.00 pm and they now only had to provide 76 until 7.00 pm. The times in question being enforced under Martial Law, but the deadlines for these were logistically difficult to meet!

The collection of rates was always a difficult operation with the town having a high proportion of arrears debtors, and with a new right, not to pay if occasioned by the war, many more sought to take advantage of opportunity of the concession. Only £6,709/11/4d of £8,030/6/4d was collected in the half year to September 1914, so the accountant's cash flow was a problem. Also the military were not paying anything! The problem got worse as the war progressed.

By December 1914 training facilities were coming into daily use. One area was the Felixstowe Ferry golf course, which had been converted into a rifle range. The road from the Ferry was unusable when the range was active as the soldiers fired across the road. The original agreement was to cease firing for an hour at mid-day to allow the Ferry residents to use the road; however this was not always possible because of certain weather conditions. Fog, mist or extremely heavy rain at times delayed the start of firing, or caused an interruption, so the Ferry inhabitants were sometimes unable to leave the area! A request for the military to provide a new road across the marshes to connect with the bottom of Marsh Lane was not accepted so it remained a problem all through the war.

In February 1915 the Traders' Association asked for more policemen as the number of burglaries had increased dramatically, together with complaints of soldiers urinating in the streets, etc. The GOC had ordered all Public Toilets to be closed at 8 pm.

The war, which was originally predicted to be over by Christmas, was not going well and the obvious need for more men in the forces became an urgent requirement nationally, though this was still on a volunteer basis. A registration act in July 1915 put the onus on local authorities to ascertain the names, ages, etc. of all men living within their districts. The council had no spare men to undertake this task and volunteers, of both sexes, were sought to do work. Fourteen ladies were then appointed to do this task, an act which did much to advance the cause of universal suffrage, not only here but throughout the country.

It was considered prudent to insure some of the council's property against war damage and for reference I list the assets held in July 1915 and their insurance value where appropriate:- Town Hall (£2,900), South Beach Shelter, Spa Pavilion (£4,800), West End Band Stand (£300), Electric Works (£15,000), Fire Station (£2,400), Outfall Works (£5,100), Jubilee Shelters, Spa Well Shed, Serpentine Steps Shelter, North Cliff Steps, Walton Recreation Ground Pavilion, Weather Record Board, Beach Chairs, Promenade, Ladders, Stacks of Hay, Council Depot, disinfectant, Walton Baths, Various Public Conveniences and the Isolation Hospital. A national compensation scheme in February 1916 obviated the need to insure.

National disquiet over the war was becoming apparent in August 1915 and the Prime Minister proposed a resolution, to be adopted in each local authority, 'that the war be continued to a glorious victory'. The people of Felixstowe declined to support this. Another



example of the mood of inhabitants was the resolution not to sound the fire buzzer between sunrise and sunset, excepting in a great emergency. 1915-1916 was the period of Zeppelin raids and on hearing hostile aircraft the alarm was sounded for the purpose of getting firemen to the station. This was no longer to happen at night! A move to reduce the gas pressure for safety reasons during air-raids was also declined, as was the application to reduce electricity voltage.

Following the result of the registration of men in 1914 an attempt at recruiting more volunteers, by Lord Derby, had been furthered by serving notice on them. The Council's employees refused this on the grounds that they were not prepared to leave their families on army separation allowances, and the FUDC issued the instruction that no employees volunteer without the sanction of the council! It is worth noting that where employees joined the forces the council was making payments to them for any difference between the forces' pay and their council wages. An example would be the two clerks: Mr. Woodcock received 14/-, from which 2/11d was deducted for rations, leaving him with 11/1d (I presume he was single) and Mr Dow was paid 7/-, from which 3/6d was deducted for separation. Mrs Dow received 12/6d. In both cases the council paid them an extra 5/- weekly. This practice was discontinued in July 1917.

From January 1916 a system of relief for seaside boarding houses was introduced. This was called the Canadian Fund as it was sponsored by the government of that country. Felixstowe was allocated a fund of £7,000, from which it could make grants. These were made on an individual basis to applicants with a maximum of £30 towards rent or mortgage in cases of hardship. In 1916 296 cases were considered and £1,500 paid out from the fund. A Mr James Langton did the work and was granted £30 as Secretary. 1917 produced 419 applications of which 320 were granted £2,399.

In February 1916 the Lord Derby boards to consider military service exemptions became defunct; this was granted under the Military Service Act 1916. The council had to appoint a committee to oversee the appeal procedure which consisted of the original 5 councillors, 3 labour representatives (Messrs Fenton, Jackson and Vincent) and two others (H G Porter and W F Cross). Their first case was Mr H E Brown, who was employed at the Outfall Works and who had attested to being a conscientious objector and an essential worker; views that were upheld by the new committee. The truth was that he was encouraged to do this by his employer! However this was overturned and he was passed fit for 'field service at home' and despite an appeal by the FUDC, he had to join the army.

Mr Haylett Horner was re-elected FUDC Chairman. Horner was a very active man in the town, including being a platoon commander in the 4th Volunteer Battalion Suffolk Regiment, who were the World War 1 equivalent of the Home Guard. This body of men included several other councillors – in peace time really a gentlemen's shooting club, but during the conflict doing such duties as a 24 hour guard on the new pier.

It was apparent that the nature of the training given to the new recruits, and the later conscripts, was changing and recognised the nature of the trench warfare of the western front. More trenched areas were being dug, including the land adjoining the Town Hall and in the gardens. Both attack and defence of these was taught. Complaints were received from beach hut owners that this activity was disturbing their peace and 'could they not do it when we are there', etc. The beach was barbed wired as part of this training, but gaps were left so as to allow bathing to continue.

The inflationary effect of the war was starting to be reflected in wage increases to employees, such as 7/- weekly on 37/- for a foreman at the Outfall, and 4/- on 27/- for stokers. This trend continued to the end of the war, particularly in 1918 when very large increases were given. It was also becoming clear that foodstuffs were becoming scarce and a Cultivation of Land Act 1916 was introduced to encourage people to grow food on surplus pieces of land. In the first tranche some 11 acres, 149 rods, of land behind the Orwell Hotel was zoned for this and about 50 applications were received. Seed potatoes were also ordered from ECF (Eastern Counties Farmers), though they were never delivered due to excessive demand. In the following 3 months the numbers doubled and 25 acres were put to use.

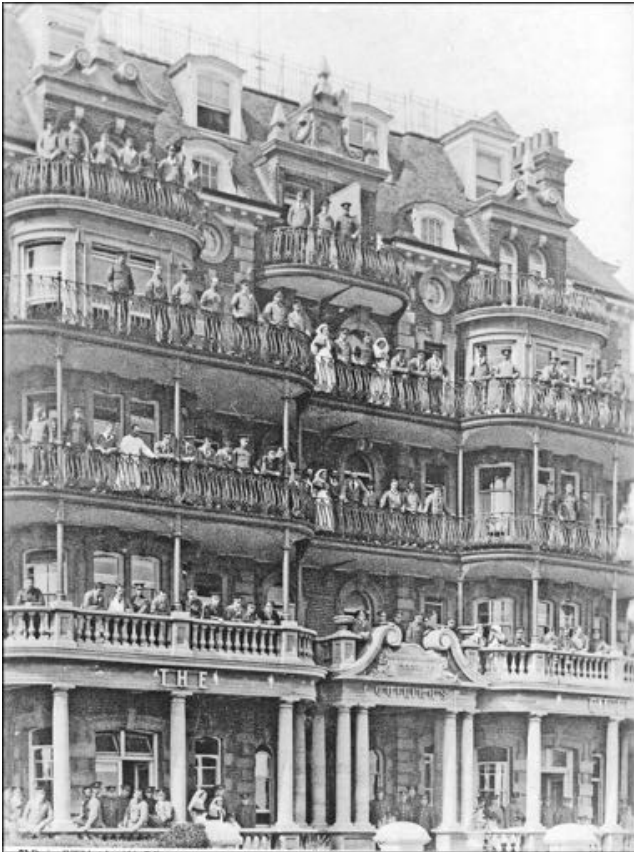
A new National Service Act was introduced which extended a form of conscription to men exempted from active service. The council was accepted as the Chair and Secretary for this group and other bodies were consulted and public meetings were arranged for April 1917. The council to implement this Act was suggested as being comprised of 15 persons: 3 councillors, 3 builders, 3 traders, 3 trade unionists and 3 ladies; however the trade unions declined and only one lady could be found to serve on this body.

Mr R H Robinson of Queensland, Australia had offered a quantity of foodstuffs for distribution to the poor and needy, which was accepted and this was distributed in the summer of 1917 by Mr Gort and Mr Porter. Food shortages continued to grow more serious and councils were encouraged to form committees and take immediate action against waste. Dr Elliston and W G Clarke proposed that this function be passed to the dustmen who had hands-on knowledge of where waste was occurring. A J Haward wanted price controls and sited local traders, who were profiteering from the shortages. The council decided to seek advice on the matter which resulted in a food control committee being formed of 6 councillors, 2 ladies, 1 co-op representative and 2 outsiders. This amounted to the virtual rationing of sugar, bread and meat. A request was made by the county agricultural board to plough up the Eastward- Ho golf course, which was refused. A fishing initiative was introduced nationally to encourage persons to catch, and share fish, to ease the shortage. Later fuel supplies were also rationed.

From June 1917 the German Air Force was able to mount raids using bomber planes, and Felixstowe, particularly the air station, was an early target. In the first instance an attempt was made to re-introduce the warning hooter but this was not accepted. During July there were several raids causing considerable loss of life, particularly to military personnel. In excess of 20 were killed and there



was damage to properties in Quinton's Lane, High Roads East and West, and Garrison Lane. It was then realised that no procedures were in place for dealing with any civilian casualties as local doctors were acting for the military. By August it was established that



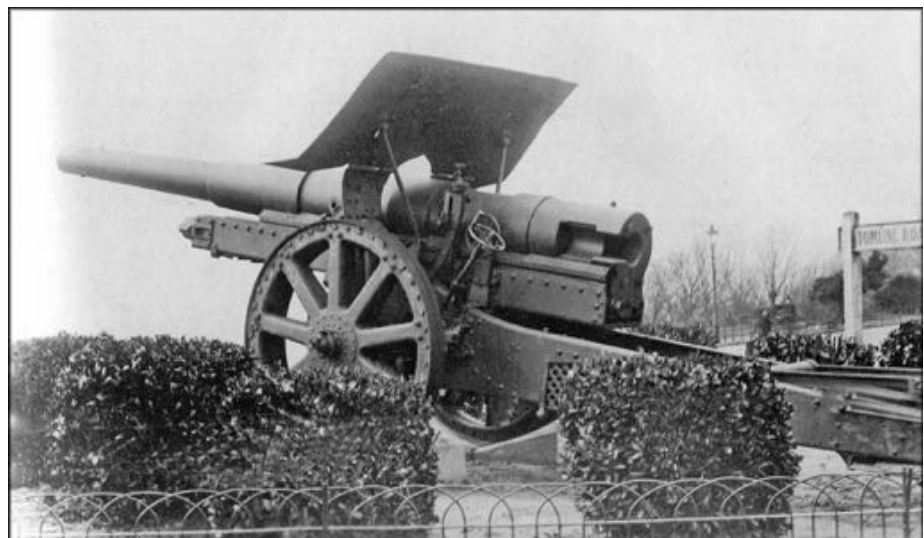
military hospitals would treat civilian casualties, and a system of air-raid warnings introduced, this, however, did not cover the whole area. There were several military hospitals in the town, the convalescent homes were utilised with the cottage hospital, and a large establishment at the Cliff Hotel, which was treating the repatriated injured from France. A problem arose over the burial of men who died who had no known relatives. The practice had been to bury them in the paupers' cemetery in Walton churchyard, these being communal graves, as there was no one to pay the 21/- fee for burial in Felixstowe new cemetery. The authorities agreed to pay 10/6d for such military burials in future.

During September the first overtures were made about purchasing land on which to build housing for the working classes after the war, Lloyd-Georges' 'homes for heroes', and the FUDC decided to build 50

such houses. This was later amended to 100 and land was purchased from Captain Pretyman in Church Road, Grange Road and Garrison / Mill Lane. However only 34 were completed in Church/Grange Roads as the government fund ran out of money. Pretyman bought back the Garrison Lane site after the funding dried up. 1919 was an expensive time to build houses as there was an acute shortage of materials available, the houses cost £950 each and the rents were 11/- weekly so the occupants had to show a weekly income of 60/- to be granted one of the 34 houses, so many of the 'heroes' were excluded. No council housing existed before this.

The town's most famous 'son', during World War 1, was Field Marshall Allenby, whose mother still lived in Felixstowe House. Allenby, the Middle East commander, had just taken Jerusalem from the

Turks. When congratulated on this she wrote, 'she is deeply thankful to God for this wonderful success which is in answer to the prayers of many friends and those of millions of others who have long looked for the freedom of the holy city from Turkish rule. I acknowledge with severent gratitude the part granted to her



son in being selected for this great honour. The hand of God is evident in the rapid progress of the British force and especially the capture of the holy city without damage to any of the sacred buildings'. A large photograph of Allenby entering Jerusalem was presented to the FUDC at the end of the war and, I am told, still exists. Allenby also presented a captured German gun, which was housed on the triangular piece of land at the top of Convalescent Hill, where it remained until World War II, when it was sold for scrap for 50/-.

In 1918 substantial grants started to be received from His Majesty's Government. £2,500 was for rates on vacant properties, £389 on rates and £1,984 on rates for the Air Station. Of the receipts £2,000 was given to the poor law guardians. £2,917 arrived in April 1919 from East Coast relief. The FUDC ended the war with a very healthy bank balance largely due to these later receipts.

The Great Eastern Railway, from June 1918, extended the frequency of passenger trains from London with mid-day services on Wednesdays and Saturdays and another on Tuesdays. It became apparent in early 1918 that there was an urgent need for men to serve in France. A new Military Service Act came into force with very rigid terms for granting exemptions. The FUDC asked for only 11. Harry Clegg, the surveyor, asked to be released to join a new engineers corps, as an officer, rather than risk being drafted into the combatant ranks. This was granted following a vote by the full council in May 1918. A 2 month duty was also offered to men in volunteer battalions, with local men relieving the 9th Essex cyclist corps at Bawdsey, allowing the full time units to go to France. Nationally some 350,000 men went overseas in this period, who otherwise would have stayed in the UK. This helped to defeat the German advances in early 1918, a time when we were really close to losing the war. Money was also raised on a localised basis, War Weapons week, with a target of 50/- per head of population, raised £23,150. The Trimley parishes were so good they had 2 aircraft named after them – Mary and Martin.

A large campaign was mounted for the destruction of rats as they were becoming a great nuisance; it was an extension of the campaign started in 1910.

Some postscripts to the peace of November 1918:

It was "all go" to have a 1919 season for which arrangements were put in place. This reflected the mood that 'winning the war means we go back to how it was before it began' which was never to happen. Peace Day was 19th July 1919 with an expenditure of £511/11d- spent from the rates fund. All children were presented with a commemorative mug as part of this. The military authorities, prompted by Captain Pretzman, the MP (and land owner), sent a large number of German POWs to the area to reinstate the land which had been used as training grounds so as to be immediately available for agricultural use. And lastly, and, I think, sadly, a representation was received from the demobilised sailor's and soldier's association (forerunner of the British Legion) urging the council to get Baron von Blissing to leave the town. Von Blissing had been a naturalised Englishman since 1906 and was married to a parson's daughter. They had 2 children. At the outbreak of the war he was interned in Islington workhouse and later on the Isle of Man. He was found to be an exemplary citizen and was an early release at the war's end. He came for a holiday soon afterwards. The problem was that his brother General Von Blissing, the military governor of Belgium for WWI, was thought to be a "butcher". The cartoons of bayoneting babies are images of Von Blissing and he was also blamed, probably incorrectly, for the death sentence on the East Anglian nurse Edith Cavell.

Economically inflation was rife, there was no employment for our returning heroes and we were soon into the ramifications of the general strike. A local effect of this was that the newly reinstated street lights were left on as no one would cross picket lines to turn them off.

#### SOURCES USED.

FUDC minute books for council and sub-committees and accountants books.  
East Anglian Daily Times.  
Quarterly journal of the 4th Volunteer Battalion Suffolk Regiment.  
Signals log of the Coastguard.  
Various private and internet sources.

## **Beachwatch on Saturday, September 18**

The Society will once again be taking part in this year's Beachwatch which is organised by the Marine Conservation Society and locally by Suffolk Coast and Heaths. We will be cleaning the same stretch of beach as last year and will be meeting on the promenade in front of Seagull and Seashell Cottages and will be working south towards the Spa Pavilion.

We will be meeting at 9.30 am for this year's Beachwatch and will be collecting and recording rubbish for about 2 hours.

Last year our group of 15 (including 2 children) collected 7 bags of rubbish weighing 22.5 kg.

Please join us if you can. Even if you can only come along for a short time you will be most welcome.

If you would like to help with this worthwhile event please contact me on 01394 270845 or email at [kjandehorn@btinternet.com](mailto:kjandehorn@btinternet.com)

**Keith Horn**

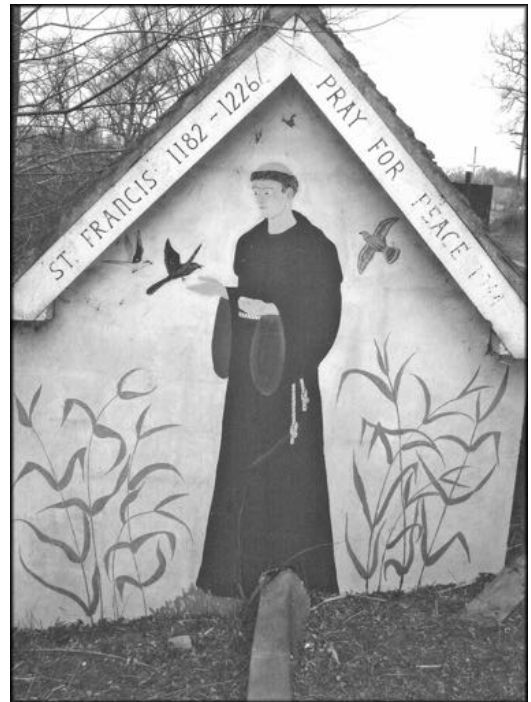
## Eastward Ho! Beside the German Ocean

When I was 11 years old I cycled from Woodbridge along the A12 to St Edmund's Hall School in Kesgrave, which is now Milsom's Hotel. I took a short cut down a little track past a pond called 'The Sinks'. I was astonished to see a life sized painting of St Francis of Assisi on the south wall of the pump house. He stood barefoot in his brown habit preaching to a congregation of birds, who were drawn by the Saint's empathy with God and nature. Above it was an inscription – 'Pray for Peace 1944'. This unusual mural became one of my childhood memories.

When I retired to Felixstowe I was pleased to see that the pump house and pond were still there. However, the original painting had been eroded by sand from a quarry. The mural had been repainted in a different style. One of the workers told me there had also been an attempt to paint St John the Baptist on the north wall, but this had also been eroded. He directed me for more information to Mr Patrick Jolly of Grange Farm, whose family built the pump house to water his farm.

Mr Jolly told me that during the war the Hall had been used as a recovery home for USAAF airmen. His great aunt, Mrs L Rope, had commissioned the mural in memory of her husband, Squadron Leader Michael Rope, who was tragically killed in the R 101 airship disaster. She had asked a Sergeant Irving Smith to paint St Francis as an apostle for peace.

Smith was recovering from injury at the Hall. As a keen Roman Catholic and former commercial artist from Washington, he relished the commission. His work was profound in its simplicity with quiet colouring, surrounded by the waving reeds and a flock of birds. It was a far cry from painting roundels and sharks teeth on American bombers, but the perfect antidote for bringing hope in the midst of despair. The point about publishing this article here is that Mr Jolly also told me about his connections with our town through his great grandfather.



### Mr William Jolly MP

Mr Jolly was a wholesale grocer who had come to Ipswich from Yarmouth in the 1870s and ran a flourishing business in Princes Street. When the railway came to Felixstowe in 1878 he and Mr A J Bugg saw the possibility of a fine seaside resort. They attracted investment capital and bought the land west of Hamilton Road, acquired from Colonel Tomline and the Conservative Land Society. This was advertised as the **Eastward Ho! Estate beside the German ocean**. It soon became new Felixstowe with churches, shops and schools. Early in the scheme Mr Jolly became director of the gas company and the waterworks at Trimley. He gave to the town the gardens in front of Wolsey Terrace and the South Cliff Shelters. He worshipped at the Evangelical Free Church, now the Wycliffe Hall and became Chairman of the Urban District Council and was a Justice of the Peace.

The 1905 Obituary below is a worthy read.

## **The original 1882 Sales Plan of the Eastward Ho Estate (on page 17 )**

This was beautifully drawn and coloured by Mr William Eade FRIBA, of Post Office Chambers, Ipswich. It has detailed line drawings in three corners. One is South Beach Mansion, another is the elegant Beach Cottage opposite, both still standing at the top of Bent Hill; also a miniature map of the River Orwell showing the new railway. Mr Patrick Jolly had offered it to the Council some years ago, but had little response. However, with a renewed interest in our history, largely generated by The Society, there may now be a demand for such a formal work of art. It would complement the many seaside paintings which our town inspires, should enquiries be forthcoming.

Messrs Jolly & Bugg's estate proposed some 170 leasehold and 64 freehold plots between Martello Tower 'Q' along the cliff top to where Cobbold Road joins Undercliff Road. The inland extent of the map is along Hamilton Road up to Tesco's, with several roads missed out or relocated. E G Hogg Lane is now Bath Road. The pier and Harvest House had not yet been built, although an arrow points to the proposed Bath Hotel, close to what is now the Bartlet Hospital. The Bath Hotel was destroyed by fire in the Suffragettes' campaign for getting the vote for women.

The family also developed new estates at Kesgrave after the war and built the church on the corner of the main road. Mr Jolly showed me round this beautiful building with its model R 101 airship. The windows have RAF motifs and were designed by Mrs Rope's niece, a professional worker in stained glass.

## **Richard Moore**

### **Obituary, East Anglian Times, April 2 1905**

#### **Mr William Jolly**

#### **A pioneer in the making of Felixstowe**

The death occurred on Monday evening, at his residence, Felix Caverna, Sea Road, Felixstowe, of Mr William Jolly, after a period of suffering of which only those in close association with him were fully aware. For a considerable time past Mr Jolly had been medically treated, both locally and by specialists in the profession: he had evidently gained considerable relief by the treatment followed, and by visiting various health resorts, and it is understood that he had in contemplation a sea voyage, from which still more beneficent results were anticipated. In the closing days of last week, however, he suffered from violent internal troubles, and the measure of business activity he had so courageously maintained compulsorily ceased. From this time he gradually sank, life ebbing away during Monday evening.

Mr Jolly may be rightly described as one of the makers of Felixstowe – to him and his associates were due those steps which, soon after railway facilities had been provided, opened up this now rapidly extending pleasure resort. But ere he became so closely allied with Felixstowe, the deceased spent a long period of business life in Ipswich. He came to the borough from Yarmouth some 30 years ago, and became engaged in what proved to be an extensive business as wholesale grocer. As trade developed under his assiduous attention, more extensive premises than those he occupied at the corner of Provident Street became absolutely necessary: hence the acquisition of a site in the upper part of

Princes Street, upon which imposing warehouses were erected, and in which a large business was transacted. In later years the concern was amalgamated with that of Messrs Burton, Son and Sanders Ltd and after having a seat upon the Board of Directors for a short time he relinquished the position in favour of his son, Mr W O Jolly. It was about the year 1880 when Mr Jolly turned his attention to Felixstowe. In the development of this place he was associated with the late Mr F J Bugg. These gentlemen acquired from the Conservative Land Society, and from the late Colonel Tomline, a considerable area of land which henceforth became known as the **Eastward Ho! Estate**.

This estate lies along the western front of Felixstowe; at the time the area passed into the possession of Messrs Bugg and Jolly it was little more than agricultural land, not a roadway existing west of the fine thoroughfare now known as Hamilton Road. The two business gentlemen in collaboration saw the possibility of a fine seaside resort in the locality, and by the steady investment of capital changed the face of semi-cultivated arable land into an area of mansions and comfortable homes, while large business establishments were raised and quickly occupied by keen business men attracted to the district. The enterprise of their fellow townsmen was duly noted by many commercial and professional gentlemen in Ipswich, who did not hesitate to invest in what soon proved to be a remunerative undertaking. Thus the Eastward Ho! Estate became new Felixstowe, with churches, residences, business establishments – every element indeed required to make up a thriving township.

Early in the progress of the scheme, due provision for water and lighting had of course to be found. In the formation of the Felixstowe Waterworks Company and the Felixstowe Gas Company, Mr Jolly took a prominent part – he was a director of the Gas Company from the beginning: the gas lighting of the town is now challenged to a considerable extent by electricity, yet the gasworks remain a prosperous concern, while the Waterworks have been brought up to the requirements of the place by extensive new works at Trimley, Mr E G Pretzman, MP, having in the interval become largely interested in the Company, being elected to the chairmanship of the Board of Directors. Few of the thousands of visitors who during the season rest and refresh at the South Cliff Shelter are probably aware that for this opportunity they are largely indebted to the gentleman now deceased. Mr Jolly was a strong advocate of the conveniently placed shelter, which plays so large a part in the life of Felixstowe during the excursion season, and he gave to the town the gardens along the adjacent cliff, in front of Wolsey Terrace. As the outcome of the movement for providing the shelter, Mr Pretzman gave the necessary land for the building and gardens and the cost of the shelter, etc was borne by the community. Needless to say, Mr Jolly became very closely associated with the public governing body of Felixstowe – for some time he was Chairman of the Urban District Council and a member of the Woodbridge Board of Guardians, becoming JP ex-officio. He was afterwards permanently appointed to that position by the Lord Lieutenant. He definitely retained his business connection with Ipswich as a Director of the Permanent Benefit Building Society. During the early years of his residence in Ipswich Mr Jolly was associated with Crown Street Congregational Church, this being the time of the ministry of the Rev John Saunders BA. After his removal to Felixstowe he joined the Evangelical Free Church which for many years worshipped at the old building not far distant from his residence, but which is now transferred to the Wycliff Hall.

The deceased gentleman, who lived to the age of 71, leaves a widow, four daughters and a son. The funeral will take place at Ipswich Cemetery on Thursday afternoon at 2.30.



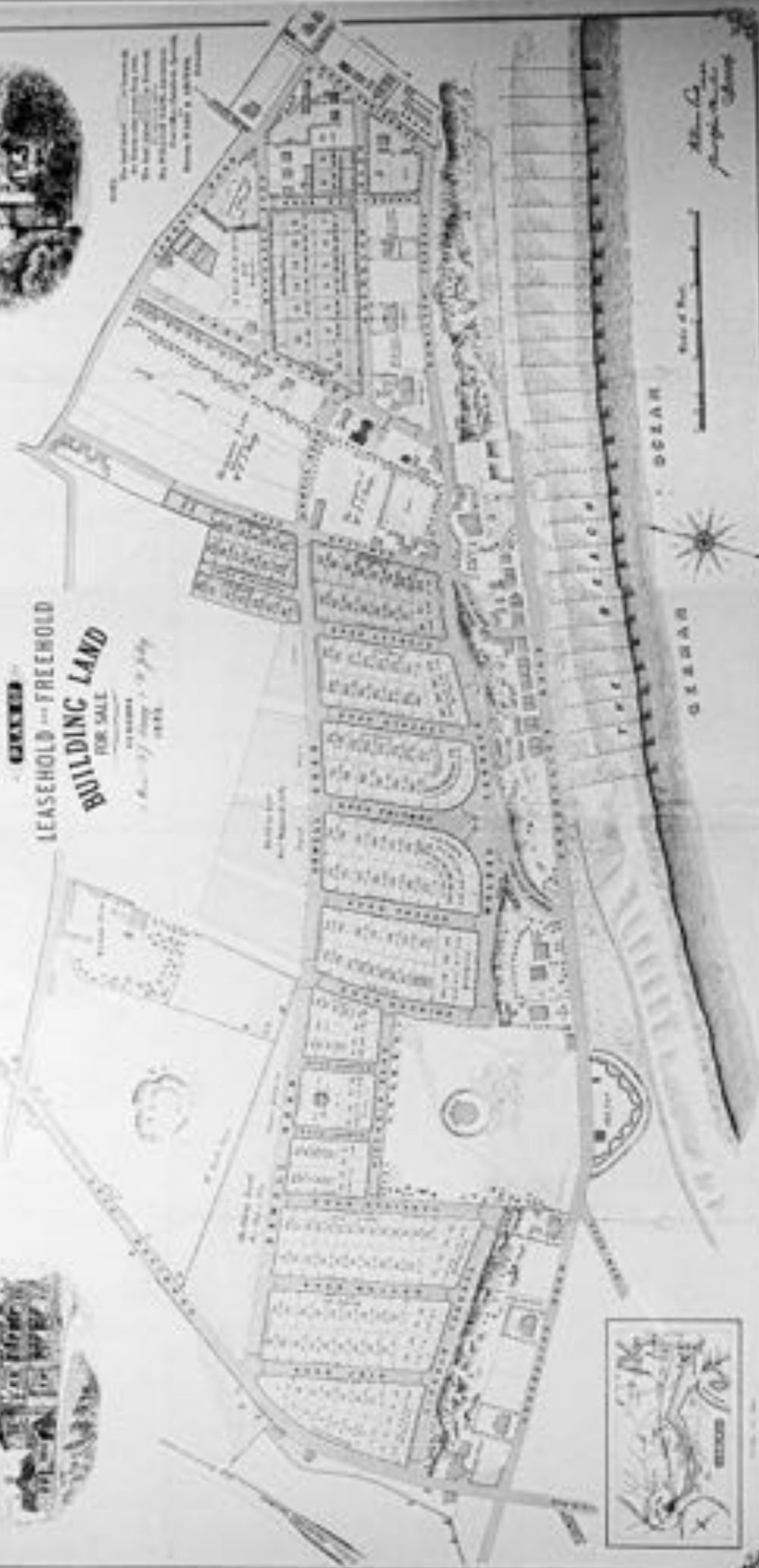
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Scale of Feet



# The Bawdsey Steam Chain Ferry

In 1884 William Cuthbert Quilter bought a very large area of land on the Bawdsey side of the river Deben, and shortly afterwards began the building there of what was to become Bawdsey Manor. A sandy track led from the north bank of the river to Woodbridge, ten miles away, whereas Felixstowe was very much closer but on the other side of the river.

A ferry boat service seems to have existed for many years, as a ferry house can be seen on old maps of the area. One house called Ferryman's, later Manor House, dated from the 17th century, but was demolished in 1937. However, any previous ferries would have been man-powered, and naturally not suitable for horses or vehicles.

At this time Quilter was considering to popularise Bawdsey as a resort, promoting development on his own land in the same way that Tomline had endeavoured to do in Felixstowe. Quilter later abandoned this project.

An improved river crossing would open up better access to Felixstowe. The town was growing rapidly following the German Royal visit in 1891, and it now had a Great Eastern Railway service to Ipswich, Lowestoft and elsewhere, and later through trains to London. Beach station was less than four miles away from the Ferry and following the opening of the Town station in 1898, the journey would be less than three miles. There was a plan to extend the railway line from Town station to the Ferry, but the project was never carried out.

It was said that Quilter asked 'eminent engineers' to draw up schemes for the Deben crossing, including tunnelling and bridges, but the final decision was for a floating connection, or ferry bridge, as it was called by locals. This meant a steam powered chain ferry boat, and the order was placed with iron founders in Plymouth, Willoughby Brothers Ltd. When completed the structure was towed round from Plymouth and installed.

The mechanism consisted of two strong chains stretching across the river. These were secured at the ends to metal counterweights that could move up and down in four large iron cylinders that were buried nine feet deep in the river banks. On each side of the vessel was an six feet diameter sprocketed wheel on which the chains were engaged. Two steam engines provided the power to rotate the wheels and drive the vessel along on the pre-determined course across the river.

The vessel, which was not named, was approximately fifty feet long and twenty three feet wide, plus a ramp at each end, which could be raised and lowered by steam or by hand. It had a clear roadway of twelve feet and a draught of four feet six inches. Emphasizing the width of the roadway, one newspaper drawing of the opening day showed two carthorses standing abreast on the ferry.

Another newspaper reported, 'a large and representative gathering of County folk' at the formal inauguration of the ferry service, performed by Lord Rendlesham on the 15th August 1894. On board, in addition to the important guests, were 'a pair-horse carriage, a brake and about one hundred passengers.'



**Newspaper drawings illustrating the report on the inauguration of the ferry service. Four, presumably white lights, are seen.**

Guests who had been invited to luncheon in Bawdsey Manor included Lord Rendlesham, the Hon. Stanhope Tollemache, the Hon. W Lowther and Quilter's eldest son, who had come of age, then twenty one, on that very same day.

In his after-luncheon speech Quilter, who was himself a small boat sailor, pointed out that the river could be far from tranquil and, in adverse conditions of tide and wind, a manned crossing might need three, or even four men to row. In urgent cases of sickness or accident north of the river, access to medical facilities in Felixstowe would now be much improved.

The ferryman employed by Quilter was Charles Brinkley, who was well recognised as having a hook for his right hand, having had it amputated at Ipswich hospital following an accident with an air-pump operated shot gun. Two years later occurred the only known accident at the ferry.

A horse having landed on the Bawdsey side, suddenly turned back toward the river and knocked a boy into the water, which was twenty five feet deep, and the current strong. Brinkley dived in and retrieved the boy. He was rewarded with a new watch by Quilter, his own one having been ruined by salt water, and presented with a bronze medal by the Royal Humane Society. Many years later, a young man travelling on the ferry told Brinkley that he was the boy he had saved. He too was displaying a hook for a hand, which he had lost in the war as a soldier in France.

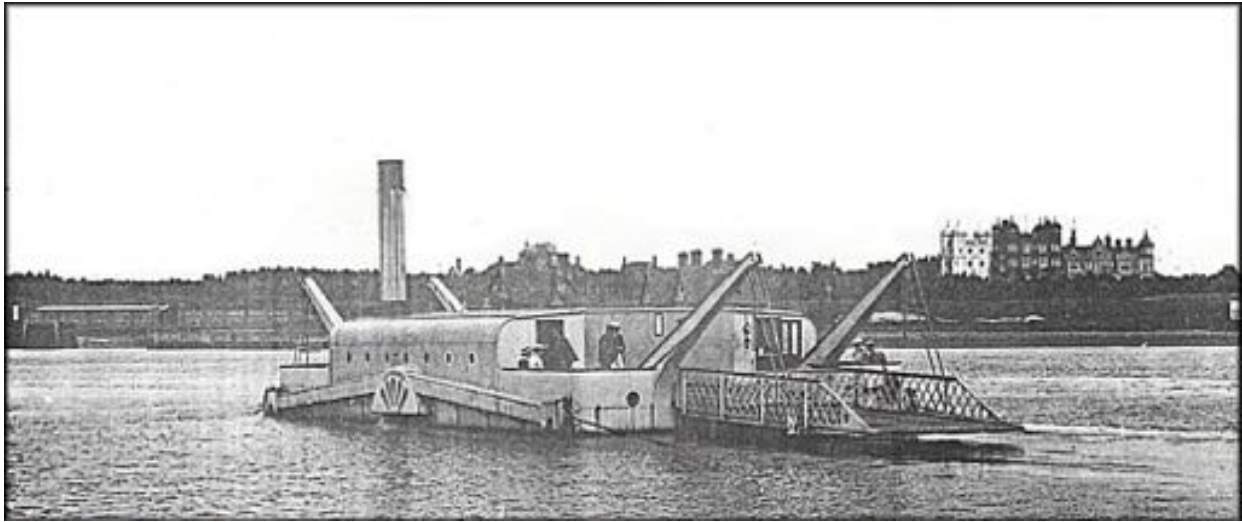
Later there were two vessels on the river, named Lady Quilter and Lady Beatrice, the titles because Quilter had been awarded a baronetcy in 1897, and the Beatrice was named from the wife of Pretyman, the successor to Tomline at Orwell Park. The smaller vessel, Beatrice, was used for the winter service, the larger vessel for the summer.



**The Lady Beatrice with Charles Brinkley**

It is not clear whether both these vessels were new, as it is possible that the Lady Beatrice was perhaps the same unnamed but modified vessel that had started the service. Unfortunately, it seems that none of Willoughby's relevant records of these dates have survived. Early photographs and a drawing made on the opening day show lights at each corner of the vessel, which are not apparent on later photographs of the Lady Beatrice.

The Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea did apply to the ferry, and it was required to display navigation lights of one white at masthead, and red and green for port and starboard.



**The Lady Quilter with Bawdsey Manor on the far side**

Adhering to these rules meant that, since the ferry was double ended, the red and green lights had to be interchanged after every crossing. Since the lights were probably oil lamps this must have caused some inconvenience. The only known major breakdown of the ferry service occurred in March 1897, when both chains, each about three hundred yards long and weighing about three tons, snapped. It is not known how the problem was resolved, but it seems there were no tragic consequences. Sir William Cuthbert Quilter died suddenly at the Manor in November 1911, and was buried in the parish churchyard, with his son inheriting the title.

During the 1914-18 war substantial British forces were kept in East Anglia because of a perceived threat of a German invasion. No doubt for this reason, both vessels were laid up on the Bawdsey shore, and vital parts were removed against the possibility of their use by the enemy.

Sir William Eley, Quilter's eldest son and heir, maintained the ferry until the recognition in 1925 that its upkeep was becoming an increasing financial burden on the owners, the Bawdsey Manor Estate. A survey was carried out for the years from 1920 to 1925, and he decided to close the ferry. The survey showed that the usage in those years was for 12,583 foot passengers, 2,675 public and estate vehicles, 5,599 bicycles and 150 animals.

Sir William approached Suffolk County Council, which was responsible for the County's bridges, asking whether they would accept responsibility for the ferry. He agreed to stay his hand on the closure while discussions with other authorities such as Felixstowe Urban District Council, took place. There was a protracted series of meetings, including one with the Chief Engineer of the Ministry of Transport, and long delays. No agreement was reached, but he continued the service for several more years. The economic downturn of the great slump may have proved to be the final straw, and he decided to close the ferry down. The annual loss was then £600 (about £30,000 in today's money). On 31st October 1931 the ferry ran for the last time.

Both vessels were laid up on the Bawdsey shore and broken up for scrap in the 1939-45 war.

**Leslie Ramsey**



## Felixstowe Revisited

I recently had a very pleasant week in Felixstowe seeing friends and neighbours. It is good to see that The Felixstowe Society continues to go from strength to strength. I was able to go to the talk by Phil Hadwen in St Andrew's Church Hall on 'The history of the Felixstowe Photographic Books' which was an added bonus.

I had a conducted walk in Abbey Grove and was so impressed by all the work which Bob Stoner and Judith Hedges and their 12 volunteers are doing there. Many thanks to Judith for arranging this for me.

I had a quick visit to the Landguard Viewing area and saw the new car park. A bus drew into it whilst I was there which must be a helpful development.

I also visited the Gulpher Pond and had a chat to a visiting cyclist. He regularly rides past it and was very knowledgeable about it. At one stage there were 12 little ducklings but they all disappeared. Currently there are a further 4, so one wonders if they will survive.

I was pleased to see that the Station Plaque has been replaced and resited within the foyer of the Station. It looks very good and hopefully should not be vandalised in that situation. I was not impressed with the road re-alignment at Bent Hill, whereas Convalescent Hill is a great improvement. One has visions of motorists having to stop and having difficulty doing a 'hill start'. It would seem more logical to carry on the traffic from Hamilton Road DOWN Bent Hill rather than UP (I thought that was the original idea years ago – Down Bent Hill and up Convalescent Hill?).

On leaving Felixstowe it was good to buy some strawberries from Gosling's Farm Shop for my overnight stop with friends in Epsom.

**Barbara Reid,  
June 2010**



# Felixstowe in 1894

## Letter home from a visitor to the original owner of 1 Clarence Villas and his imaginary family In Felixstowe In 1894

Dearest Papa and Mama,

May 19th 1894

Albert and I arrived here safely by train yesterday and we were met at the Beach Station by Uncle William Adams, Aunt Maud and their four children, whose ages range from seven to sixteen.

Luckily there were plenty of hands to help carry our luggage to the Adams' house, a distance of about three quarters of a mile. Since Felixstowe is only slowly developing as a town, there is, as yet no regular public transport. However, after the noise and bustle of London all seems very peaceful and we enjoyed our walk along the beach.

Uncle William and Aunt Maud are the first owners of this house, 1 Clarence Villas in Russell Road and moved in February two years ago. They tell me that in the previous September, 36 plots were laid out in a square in the area between Langer, Russell and Manning Roads and Beach Road West and that theirs was one of the first to be completed.

### Growing family

Before that they were living in Ipswich, but when they heard of the new homes to be built, it seemed to be a better place in which to bring up their growing family and uncle managed to arrange a posting to nearby Walton Police Station. He says that the daily cycling uphill to Walton Police Station keeps him fit! But I think that he is hoping that Felixstowe will be large enough to have its own police station in the not too distant future.



I was woken early this morning by the unusual quiet and at first wondered what had happened to the usual cacophony of traffic and street-vendors' cries which normally wakes me in London. It was a strange feeling to open the curtains and to see so few houses around. We can see the Ordnance Hotel at the foot of the cliffs and there are one or two large buildings along the Sea Road, while in the distance a cluster of houses can be seen around the Beach Railway Station. Apart from that there are just vast stretches of sand, grass and low vegetation.

As we are some distance from the shops in both Felixstowe and Walton, it is fortunate that local tradesmen like the milkman, baker, butcher and greengrocer will deliver to the door. However, Aunt Maud had a few other purchases to make so she and I and the two girls decided to walk along the sea-front this morning and up Bent Hill to the shops.

Before doing this, we managed to borrow a bicycle for Albert as he and the two boys propose to spend the day fishing. Apparently their favourite spot is on the Kings Fleet and,

as this will turn into a whole day's outing, we packed up some bread, cheese and a bottle of cold tea to sustain them until the evening meal.

We had a pleasant walk along the beach, and as it was a fine day there were several families with young children playing on the sands. The two girls begged to be allowed to ride on Mr. Rattle's donkeys but this treat was postponed until we had completed our purchases.

Some buns in the window of Mr. Holder the baker, at the top of Bent Hill, caught their eye. Two of these apiece kept them quiet, while we left a watch to be repaired by Mr. Croydon, the Jeweller, in the Victoria Parade. I was sorely tempted by some of the items in the window of Mr. Downing, the antique dealer, but told myself firmly that our parlour at home was already too crowded! Miss Keast, the milliner, had a very fetching display in her window. I must see if I can persuade Albert to buy me a new bonnet as a remembrance of our visit here.

Finally we left an order for groceries with Mr. Ward at the bottom of Ranelagh Road, to be delivered this afternoon. I notice that he also runs a post-office, so I will eventually purchase a stamp for this letter from him. There is so much to see and describe here that I fear this letter will be several days in the writing.

The girls were now clamouring for their donkey ride, so while they enjoyed themselves, aunt and I strolled along the beach, and in doing so met several of her friends, who, like her, worship at the little tin church of St. John the Baptist on the beach.

### **Invitation**

Albert and the boys returned late in the afternoon, full of their exploits and when uncle returned home this evening he brought with him an invitation from P.C. and Mrs. Gildersleeves of Walton to join them in watching the special celebrations for her Majesty's 75th birthday in five days' time. More of this later. Aunt Maud says that this house is named after the Queen's elder grandson, which will give a more personal note to the celebrations.

As I write the lamplighters are busy at work in the street and this reminds me of home. The sea air and exercise has so tired me that I must to bed early as I hear that we have an outing planned for tomorrow.

### **May 20**

This morning we walked along the beach to the pier station and boarded the paddle steamer for a day trip to Clacton, Southend and back. Not being a good sailor, I was somewhat apprehensive beforehand but luckily the weather was clement and we had a calm sea. It made a very pleasant outing to sit on deck, listening to the band, and to see Felixstowe, Harwich and the Essex villages from a different angle.

### **May 21**

Today we decided to be more energetic. The whole family set off on our bicycles for a morning ride to the villages of Kirton and Falkenham. On the way we called in to visit Mary Williams and her father William at Hill House Farm, who are friends of Aunt Maud. A drink of milk, fresh from the cow, was a refreshing novelty for us city dwellers. It was interesting, too, to cycle through the village of Walton, with shops of every description and a population, so I'm told, larger than that of Felixstowe. Aunt, who takes an interest in such things, tells me that there was a settlement here at the time of Domesday Survey, called



Waletuna. Today, many of the shops and houses were already decorated in preparation for the celebrations on May 24th.

### **May 22**

A visit to the seaside must, of course, include a dip in the sea. This is still a comparatively new venture here and so is strictly regulated. There are four bathing stations on Felixstowe beach and, although mixed bathing is permitted, there are separate dressing tents for men and women. We decided to hire a bathing machine, just for the novelty, and, having changed in the machine, a carthorse pulled it into the sea. We ventured down the steps rather hesitantly but soon found the experience to be so refreshing that we were loath to come in when our time limit of 30 minutes expired. On our way home we passed a Punch and Judy show on the beach and stopped to watch.

### **May 23**

We so enjoyed our cycle ride to Kirton the other day that today, when uncle had a day off, we all joined the local Penny Farthing Cycle Club, which was founded last year, for a ride to the Ferry. Part of our route lay across the Golf Links, where both men and women were playing. It was the first time that I had seen the game being played and I could sense that Albert was longing to join in. Suddenly we had to make way for a coach and four, driving past at full speed. Later we saw it boarding the Chain Ferry and discovered that you could cross to Bawdsey, still on the coach, and then drive on to Woodbridge for lunch.

### **May 24**

Today we were up bright and early ready to celebrate the 75th birthday of our gracious sovereign Queen Victoria. First we walked to St. John's Church to join the congregation in giving thanks for the life and reign of our Queen. When the Gildersleeve's family arrived, we set off and walked along the beach and across Landguard Common, where a large crowd had already gathered near the fort. At 12 noon, we were nearly deafened by the firing of cannon from the fort. This was followed by a ball and shell practice given by the Royal Artillery, who are stationed there. Then, led by the band, there was a grand parade across the Common. It was very stirring to watch and made us feel proud to be British. The Gildersleeves returned home with us and in the evening we all went to a concert at the Victoria Hall in the Victoria Parade where the high standard of the performers provided a fitting end to a memorable day.

### **May 25**

This morning we had a final walk along the beach and passed a group of children playing on the sand. Aunt said that they are all staying at Dr. Barnardo's Convalescent Home for children in Ranelagh Road. It is good to think that they too can enjoy the sea air and sunshine. We then went to Mr. William Archer's Photographic Studio, overlooking the beach, where several photographs were taken as a memento of our first visit to Felixstowe. We hope that it will not be too long before we return, as we have both greatly benefited from a week of bracing sea air. I hope to come and see you soon after our return home and to give you further details of our visit here.

**Your loving daughter  
Victoria**

(This letter home was written by Vicki Westren who lives at  
17 Russell Road, previously 1 Clarence Villas)

## Research Corner No. 10

### Felixstowe Ferry Memories - Albert Aldous

Photographs of Felixstowe are plentiful - from the very times of the late 1800s to yesterday - but one aspect of the history of our wonderful town is the personal memories of our "characters". Not only that, but everyone who has lived in this area has at least a few memories about aspects of Felixstowe outside photography. Whether it is some story concerning the shops in Hamilton Road or the small local business communities that existed in various parts of Felixstowe until a few years ago, or maybe it is some event they witnessed or took part in, but there are as many memories in the town as there are photographs and surely before it is too late we should try to record them for posterity.



One area that has produced a whole collection of anecdotes is Felixstowe Ferry.

Albert Aldous immediately springs to mind when tales are told about the Ferry and they illustrate a way of life, now lost, but full of pathos and humour! Albert was famous for his very slowly driven bus service operated by two extremely dilapidated buses, one might even say charabancs! He once had both coaches broken down and marooned at the side of the road and he phoned Bawdsey Manor, where the RAF were stationed and working on Radar. He suggested that they should turn off their "death ray" as it had paralysed his buses. Of course with Radar in its early stages of development a host of rumours circulated about what the Boffins were actually doing. On a totally different tack I believe the word Boffins was coined about those experts working at the Manor!

The bus service that Albert operated was from the Ferry Cafe to Wolsey Gardens, at the top of the cliff in Felixstowe. He carried a shotgun at the front of his bus and when he spotted a rabbit on the golf course he would stop and take a pot shot hoping he had obtained his evening meal. Also he was known to stop by a field of cabbages, take a knife and cut himself one for his supper.

These tales are always told with such relish and you really can get a flavour of the person as well as imagining it happening. Albert was extremely loyal to his regular passengers and they also fully supported him. If one of his regulars wanted any shopping done the order would be given to Albert and he would try to deliver it on the return journey. Although he had specific stopping points he would help anyone by pulling up right outside their house and usually he would look out for certain customers and pick them up from their garden gate! This was rewarded in subtle ways. There were times when Albert fell foul of the local constabulary and his name would appear in the Felixstowe Times as well as the fine levied. Usually when this happened one lady, who regularly used his bus, would hand him a small brown envelope as she boarded the bus. It was the money to pay the fine! Apparently this happened on several occasions.

Once when Albert was driving his bus across alongside the golf course a golf ball hit one of his passengers. The windows were open as it was a hot summer. Albert immediately drove the lady to the hospital in Constable Road and left her there for treatment. As he drove away he exclaimed that this accident was a bit of good luck for him, and when asked why he said that if the window had been closed it would have been broken by the golf ball! There are stories linking him with the service personnel who were stationed at RAF Bawdsey. He always ran a late bus at the weekends and many of the airmen used to come into Felixstowe to enjoy themselves. Late one Saturday night he was parked in his usual spot, Wolsey Gardens, waiting for the last stragglers when he informed those already boarded that he must use the public conveniences near the Town Hall. Off he hurried forgetting that he had left his keys in the ignition. The RAF boys needed no prompting and drove the bus to the Ferry themselves, leaving poor Albert stranded. It was said that the bus travelled faster that run than it had ever done before! Nothing has ever been said about how Albert got home.

For me the best story about Albert also relates to the last run home on a Saturday. It so happened that when Albert ran the last bus back to catch the last ferry across the Deben he always used his really dilapidated charabanc. When asked why, because it would be more likely to break down and in those days help would be harder to come by, he explained that it was a better payer! What he actually



meant was that the passengers would have had a few drinks and generally had a good evening and would be unaware that the seats on this bus leant back a little more than his other one. Therefore when he arrived at the Ferry everyone rushed off to catch the last ferry across the Deben and he went around the bus collecting all the change that had fallen out of his passengers' pockets. It was obvious why it was a better payer!

These are just a few stories that still survive so long as there are people to relate them, but unlike photographs they don't outlive the teller, unless they are recorded. I think it would be wonderful to have a collection of members' memories in our fine Society Newsletter each time so that these lovely tales are not lost.

Incidentally Graham Henderson and I are trying to compile a book about Felixstowe Ferry which will look at this local beauty spot through the eyes of the characters and the buildings and if anyone has even one story we would love to use it. Please contact us if you can help.

**Phil Hadwen**

# Planning Applications

## 18 March to 4 July 2010

### SCDC has granted Permission for the following:

#### *Previous Applications*

**The Triangle, Hamilton Road:** Demolition of existing Public Toilets.

**8 Undercliff Rd West:** Change of use from furniture store to fish & chips takeaway.

**Orwell High School Development.**

**34 Queens Rd:** Alterations to existing dwelling and erect a detached dwelling.

**Amusement Area opposite the Marlborough Hotel, Sea Rd:** Redevelopment of site & new refreshment kiosk.

**17 Quilter Rd:** Erect conservatory.

#### *Recent Applications*

**29A Albert Walk:** Replacement windows (resubmission). We are delighted to see that the replacement windows will now be of wood. The proposed design will do much to restore the original appearance of this important Conservation Area frontage. This will be an improvement to the Conservation Area.

**Brook End House, Brook Lane:** Two storey side and rear extension etc. These alterations will have little effect on the Conservation Area.

**Car Park, Crescent Road:** Erect toilet block. The Society objects to this proposal for the reasons given below.

The lack of proven necessity to relocate the existing Triangle Toilets, the limited new facilities offered to the public and the costs of constructing this block do not justify this application.

The proposed design as costed above appear to provide minimal male toilets, it lacks roof overhangs to shelter queuing patrons and it lacks perimeter privacy screening.

**135 Undercliff Rd West:** Sunroom and Balcony. The Society has no objection to this proposal. We believe that the proposed designs, which replace an existing room and balcony arrangement, will enhance this part of the Conservation Area.

### Applications awaiting a Decision

**Maynell & Foxgrove Homes, High Road East:** Alterations and Extensions. The Society objects to this application for the reasons given below. Please note that we discuss the proposed new building works on this site in our reply to Application C10/1139.

We object to the proposed destruction of the cart-lodge type building of very distinctive architectural character. We would withdraw this objection if the outbuilding is moved on the site to a position clear of the proposed new buildings.

**Maynell & Foxgrove Homes, High Road East:** Alterations and Extension. The Society supports the objective of increasing accommodation at Maynell & Foxgrove Homes but we have commented regarding the proposed new extension which is explained below. Please note that our objection to the demolition of the outbuilding on the site is detailed in our reply to Application C10/1141 LBC. With the objective of preserving the architectural integrity of Maynell & Foxgrove we feel that this is an opportunity to insert a block of “modern” architectural style.

**Allotment Land, Phillip Avenue:** Construct 10 dwellings and landscaping. The Society objects to this proposal for the reasons given below. Whilst the Society recognises the need for additional affordable housing in Felixstowe and is pleased to see proposals coming forward, we cannot support the take up of designated allotment land for house building unless an equal amount of new allotment land has been brought into use in the same area. Bringing into use means that it is prepared for domestic agriculture, suitably fenced to deter vandalism and leased out in plots to competent persons.

**Convent of Jesus and Mary, Felixstowe:** Erect 60 dwellings. The Society objects to this proposal for the reasons given below. We believe that the single residential access road to this 60 dwelling site is inadequate.

**Cobbolds Point, Felixstowe:** Essential protection works to the existing sea wall. The Society sees the urgent need for these works in the Conservation Area and we support this application. We also regret that it appears that earlier remedial work in this area seems to have had an adverse effect on this projecting part of the coastline.

**52 Hamilton Rd:** Erection of internally illuminated fascia and projecting sign. The Society objects to the fascia part on this application. The proposal for this sign indicates that it projects forward over the street and does not respect the façade. It appears to obliterate the corbels and thus does little to enhance the Conservation Area.

### **These alterations will have little effect on the Conservation Area:**

**Clumber Cottage, Chevalier Rd:** Erect conservatory on first floor veranda.

**11 Hamilton Rd:** Replace all windows with UPVC.

**35 Hamilton Rd:** Replacement Illuminated Fascia Signage.

### **Other Applications**

**9 St Felix Court:** Replacement Windows. REFUSED by SCDC.

**David Crawford**

## Programme for late 2010 & early 2011

### 2010

Saturday 18 September

**Beachwatch.** Details shown on page 13 of this Newsletter.

Sunday 19 September

**Walk the New Conservation Area.** Details shown on page 4 of this Newsletter.

Tuesday 28 September

**Golf – a legacy for Felixstowe.** Michael Thomas explores the part golf has played in the development of our town.

Tuesday 26 October

**Felixstowe's New Conservation Area.** Robert Scrimgeour explains his latest conservation scheme.

Tuesday 23 November

**The Sutton Hoo Burial.** Mark Mitchel's fascinating account of this major discovery.

Tuesday 7 December

**A Christmas Celebration.** An evening of readings and music to celebrate the delights of Christmas.

### 2011

Tuesday 25 January

**Suffolk Fortifications.** Well respected Society member, George Buckland, gives us an illustrated talk about some of the forts in our area.

All speaker meetings are held in St Andrew's Church Hall at 7.30 pm  
Members £1 Visitors £2

**If you wish to join The Society, cut these last two pages from the Newsletter.** Complete both columns on this page and send to Betty Woollan at the address given on the back page with a cheque payable to *The Felixstowe Society* for the correct subscription, and enclose a stamped addressed envelope.

Full names .....

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Address .....

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Post Code .....

Telephone .....

I/We could give occasional help with -- please tick

Artwork

Archives/Exhibitions

Litter clearance

Monitoring planning applications

Newsletter delivery

Organising activities

Survey work

Secretarial work

Maintenance work at Abbey Grove and Gulpher Pond

Have you any relevant technical/professional expertise or special interests, for example, computer skills?

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**Gift Aid Declaration** (for individuals).

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1. You can cancel this declaration at any time by notifying the Treasurer.
2. You must pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax at least equal to The Society's reclaims on your donation in the tax year.
3. If in the future your circumstances change and you no longer pay tax on your income or capital gains equal to the tax The Society reclaims, you should cancel your declaration. See note 1.
4. If you are unsure whether your donations qualify for Gift Aid tax relief, ask The Society, or ask your local tax office for leaflet IR65.
5. Please notify The Society if you change your name or address.

## If you wish to join The Society please read on

The Society has many different activities and almost everyone can give something to, and get something from, The Society.

### Meetings

The Society holds meetings which usually include a talk on some matter of interest; arranges outings to places of interest in East Anglia; holds exchange visits with other societies.

### Projects

The Society organises exhibitions; carries out surveys; works closely with schools on various projects; monitors planning applications; tackles specific issues as they arise; gives Awards for the Enhancement of the Environment; is actively involved with Abbey Grove and Gulpher Duck Pond.

### Publications

The Society issues a regular Newsletter and has published the 'The Cotman Walk' and 'Walking around Felixstowe' which are available from the places listed on page 2.

### Joining

To join The Society please complete the Form and the Gift Aid Declaration on the previous page, **cut these last two pages from the Newsletter** and send with your membership subscription plus a stamped addressed envelope for the return of the receipt to,

Betty Woollan  
Membership Secretary  
The Pines  
Manor Road  
Trimley St. Mary  
IP11 0TU

### Membership Subscriptions

Annual Membership - single	£5
Joint Membership - two people at same address	£7
Life Membership - single	£50
Life Membership - two people at same address	£70
Corporate Membership (for local organisations who wish to support the Society)	
Non - commercial	£12
Commercial	£15
Young people under the age of 18	Free

The annual subscription runs from the 1 January.

**Gift aid** is tax relief on money donated to UK charities. HM Revenue & Customs treats donations as if the donor had already deducted basic rate tax from them. The charity can then reclaim this tax to increase the value of a donation. The Society is a charity and the membership subscription is a donation.