

The Felixstowe Society

NEWSLETTER

Issue No. 126

May 2021



Registered Charity No. 277442

The Felixstowe Society is established for the public benefit of people who live or work in Felixstowe and Walton. Members are also welcome from The Trimleys and 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.

Cover photograph courtesy of Alan Boyle -  Everything Felixstowe & Beyond

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THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY CONTACTS

Jan Garfield	Chairman	01394 210887
Hilary Eaton	Treasurer	01394 286733
Roy Gray	Vice Chair	01394 285827
Keith Horn	Joint Vice Chair	01394 270845



CHAIRMAN'S NOTES



Good Afternoon, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I hope that this finds you all well and feeling a little happier that we seem to be coming out of our third lockdown and gradually controlling this dreadful virus. I expect, by now, most of you will have received your first dose of the Coronavirus Vaccine and are waiting for your second. We have been very fortunate in Felixstowe, to have our vaccinations at the Grove Medical Centre. The organisation and friendly efficiency are wonderful, especially as they not only had to cope with Felixstowe patients, but those in Trimley, Kirton and surrounding villages and Martlesham. We came third in the country last week due to the Practice Manager, Kate Bloomfield, and her wonderful staff. They were quite rightly awarded a Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk's Certificate of Excellence signed also by the High Sheriff.

I am afraid that I haven't very much to say as nothing much has happened. Keith, with my blessing, decided to postpone the holiday to Winchester from May 2021 until May 2022. Hopefully, everything will be OK by then! Those involved will have heard from Keith. I really must express my personal thanks for all that he has had to do to reorganise this holiday, three times now!

As I am writing this, the sun is shining from a brilliant blue sky, although the wind is whistling around. It makes me think of brighter days to come as the crocuses stretch their petals to the sun and the daffodils and polyanthus are coming out. Also makes me long for a holiday. We have decided to stay in the UK this year as have most of the population, judging by the number of bookings being made online the other day. Anyway, we have bitten the bullet and booked for the Warner's Hotel near Sherwood Forest at the beginning of October. Should be safe enough, I hope!!

You are receiving this online again, as we don't feel that it is safe enough yet to ask our volunteers to be out delivering. Hopefully, it will be the last one, but we shall just have to play it by ear and the R rate! Actually, we have had quite a few people saying how much they enjoy reading it online but, on the other hand, other folk like to read a paper copy. There are also people who don't have email addresses so we deliver to them.

We just want to thank all of you who have stuck with us through the last year and we are trying to think of ways to reward you. We have already decided not to charge for Speakers' Evenings until May 2022 but are still thinking what else we can do to say thank you.

Anyway, members, that is enough from me. Hope that you all stay well and can look forward to a more "normal" life.

Kindest regards,

Jan Garfield
Chairman



OUR A.G.M. AND THE COMMITTEE

Once again, we are unable to hold the Annual General Meeting as scheduled for May 18th. Your Chairman and Committee have all advised that they are prepared to remain on the Committee for the coming year.

Committee Officers:

Chairman - Jan Garfield

Co Vice Chairman - Keith Horn, *responsible for holidays, trips, beach cleans, etc.*

Co Vice Chairman - Roy Gray, *responsible for Speakers, Heritage Weekend, etc.*

Treasurer - Hilary Eaton, *responsible for subscriptions and membership*

Secretary - Derek Bundock

Committee Members:

Phil Cobbold (*Planning*)

Laurence Gilbert (*Walks*)

Elizabeth Horn, Michael Sharman, Peter Bridge and Katy Topping.

We also have Bev Boyce - Archivist and Gill Manning - Newsletter Editor.

Unless there are any objections, received by the Secretary by May 10th, the Committee will continue for the forthcoming year.

Secretary's e-mail details: derekbundock@gmail.com

Sadly we have to report the deaths of two long standing members of The Felixstowe Society.

Reg Dixon was for many years the representative for the Trimleys on the Committee. He would listen quietly and calmly to all discussion and his comments were always succinct, to the point and worth listening to. He also, over the years, took part in many Society activities including Beach Watch when it first started.

Many of you will know that he was also a well-respected and loved headmaster of Trimley St Mary Primary School and an active member of the RSPB and Suffolk Wildlife Trust amongst many other interests in his adopted county.

Pat Goulborn was the Auditor for The Felixstowe Society when I became Treasurer in 2000. He was meticulous in his work and I was rather in awe of him at the beginning but he was always helpful and we grew to know each other quite well.

He and his wife Wyn, came to Felixstowe after his retirement from the RAF. They had a large family of whom they were inordinately proud and he would always stop and chat about his family, whenever we met. Even into their 90s they were taking an active part in The Society whenever they could.

Reg and Pat were both gentlemen in every sense of the word and will be much missed both in The Society and the wider community.

Susanne Barsby



IMPORTANT MESSAGE REGARDING HERITAGE WEEKEND SEPTEMBER 2021

We regret to inform you, that due to the Covid Pandemic and possible ongoing problems, your Committee has decided *not* to hold the Heritage Weekend planned for September 2021. Hopefully, we will be able to hold this event in September 2022.

Bearing this in mind, we really do need help from you, our members, because without your help we will be unable put on an event next September. We urgently need members to volunteer to serve on a Sub Committee to plan Heritage 2022 – how about putting your name down, as without your help The Felixstowe Society will be unable to participate in the September 2022 Heritage Weekend.

Please let us know, by contacting Roy Gray or Keith Horn, whose details can be found on the inside page of this Newsletter. Thank you.

Speakers For 2021

The following speakers have been booked for 2021. These are all subject to Covid-19 restrictions being lifted. Any changes or cancellations will be advised as soon as is possible.

May 18th A G M Roy Gray The Bevin Boys

CANCELLED

September 21st B. Van Loon Street Names

October 19th Geoff Kay The Great Exhibition

November 23rd Ray Semper The River Deben

N.B. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, we have not been able to date, to hold any Speakers' evenings this year but are hoping, subject to Government regulations, to start in September.

Roy Gray

SEPTEMBER 2021 NEWSLETTER

Would you like to write an article for the next Newsletter? We welcome new contributors. If so, could we please have your contribution by **Friday 30th July**, in Microsoft Word format if possible.

The email address is: felixsocnewsletter@outlook.com or, if sending by post the address is: 6 Harvest House, Cobbold Road, IP11 7SP

Thank you.

Grateful thanks to all our contributors and to Susanne Barsby for proofreading. My thanks go also to Keith Horn for his help.

TREASURER'S REPORT

I would like to remind you that membership renewal was due in January in order to continue receiving newsletters electronically or otherwise and also to receive details of any ongoing meetings, outings and other information regarding The Society, once we are able to get back to normal. As with all other organisations we can only wait and hope for normality to return.

ALSO, PLEASE REMEMBER THAT BY RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP YOU WILL ALSO BENEFIT FROM FREE ADMISSION TO OUR SPEAKERS' MEETING EVENINGS UP TO MAY 2022 (AS MENTIONED BY OUR CHAIRMAN JAN GARFIELD IN OUR SEPTEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER).

We are hoping to hold an AGM later in the year, obviously awaiting the lifting of restrictions. It has been a quiet year, although we were lucky enough to hold the quiz before the lockdown. We are looking forward to holding other events later this year which Keith will be informing you of separately.

As stated above, Speaker evenings will remain free to members for the foreseeable future and I hope many of our members will be able to attend once these are up and running.

I note that membership appears to be down for this year. If you have not yet renewed, a separate note will be added to your email to remind you that we are still open and operational. If you do not wish to renew your membership could you inform me by email so that I may take you off my list. Thank you.

Hilary Eaton hilaryeaton53@icloud.com

Winchester 2021

Our holiday planned for this year has definitely been cancelled, but we do hope to run it next year. 51 people paid a deposit and 48 of them have confirmed to me that they would like The Society to continue to hold these deposits, as they wish to go to Winchester in May 2022.

If anyone is interested in this holiday and would like to put their names down on the waiting list, then please contact me for details.

Keith Horn 01394 270845

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS LISTED IN PREVIOUS NEWSLETTER AS
AWAITING DISTRICT COUNCIL DECISION**

REF	ADDRESS	PROPOSAL	SOCIETY COMMENTS	ESC DECISION
DC/20/3816	22 Hamilton Road	Change of use of 14 offices to 5 flats	The Society considers that the proposal will cause no harm to the significance of the conservation area.	Permitted
DC/20/3634	8 College Green	New garden room	The Society has no objections in principle but raises concerns in respect of the flue for the woodburning stove.	Permitted
DC/20/3451	101 Undercliff Road	Building of new dormer in rear aspect of roof	The Society considers that the dormer window would be out of scale with the existing building and would harm the conservation area. Two smaller dormers would be a preferable design solution.	Withdrawn
DC/20/3303	64 Constable Road	Single-Storey rear extension	The Society considers that the proposed extension represents overdevelopment of the site and would be out of keeping with the character and appearance with the area.	Withdrawn
DC/20/4288	8 Gainsborough Road	Works to trees	The Society considers that the proposal does not appear to have any tree surgeon's documentation to support the work.	Permitted
DC/20/4188	12 College Green	Removal of conservatory and addition of ground floor and first floor extension.	The Society considers that the extension is a well-designed and integrated addition which will cause no harm to the significance of the conservation area.	Permitted
DC/20/4054	87 Ranelagh Road	Fell Cherry Tree in rear garden	The Society would prefer the tree to be pollarded not felled. If this is not possible then a suitable replacement should be planted.	Permitted

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMENTED ON BY THE SOCIETY
6 NOVEMBER 2020 TO 26 MARCH 2021**

REF	ADDRESS	PROPOSAL	SOCIETY COMMENTS	ESC DECISION
DC/20/4724	27A Albert Walks	Conversion of disused shop to single apartment	The Society considers that the proposal will cause no harm to the significance of the conservation area	Awaiting decision
DC/20/4671	16 Beach Road East	Replacement windows and doors	The Society considers that the loss of timber sash windows is unfortunate but on the whole it is considered that the proposal will cause no harm to the significance of the conservation area	Permitted
DC/20/4677	108 Queens Road	Pollarding Lime and Sycamore	The Society considers that the pollarding will cause no harm to the significance of the conservation area	Permitted
DC/20/4386	58 Maybush Lane	Garage extension	The Society considers that the proposal will cause no harm to the significance of the conservation area	Permitted
DC/20/4070	Pavilion Court, Hamilton Gardens	Retention of pergola structures	The Society considers that the pergolas cause no harm to the significance of the conservation area	Permitted
DC/20/4735	Brackenbury House, Marcus Road	New dwelling	The Society considers that the modern design would not be out of keeping with other modern infill approved nearby. The Society considers that the dwelling will cause no harm to the significance of the conservation area	Permitted
DC/20/5243	The Marlborough Hotel, Sea Road	Amendments to approved plans	The Society considers that the minor revisions will cause no harm to the significance of the conservation area	Permitted

DC/20/5086	The Bartlet, Undercliff Road	Works to trees	The Society considers that the tree works will cause no harm to the significance of the conservation area	Permitted
DC/20/5008	The Lodge, South Hill	Works to trees	The Society considers that the works to the trees will cause no harm to the significance of the conservation area	Permitted
DC/21/0018	41 Westmorland Road	Single-storey and first floor extensions	The Society is concerned that the design and form of the proposed development would be visually jarring. Whilst not objecting in principle to contemporary architectural solutions, The Society considers that in this instance the marriage of the proposed extensions with the existing property will appear awkward and unsuccessful.	Withdrawn
DC/21/0829	17 Beach Road East	Works to trees	The Society considers that the works to the trees will cause no harm to the significance of the conservation area	Permitted
DC/21/0731	19 Manning Road	Demolition of workshop and replacement with 1no detached dwelling, alterations and extension to existing building to retain shop/office and provide 2no one bedroom first floor flats and 1no two bedroom dwelling. Amended scheme to previously approved	The Society considers that the proposal is an improvement on the previous scheme both in its visual impact and parking. The proposal would conserve the character of the conservation area.	Awaiting decision
DC/21/0513	27 Quilter Road	Conversion of 2 flats to 1 dwelling	The residential area has a mixture of styles and tenures.	Permitted

			The Felixstowe Society considers that the proposed change to a single family dwelling would cause no harm to the significance of the conservation area	
DC/21/0541	Former Deben High School, Garrison Lane	Construction of 45 apartments and maisonettes and 16 houses in buildings ranging in height from 2 to 3 storeys, conversion of retained assembly hall to provide 250m ² community space, 16 residential car parking spaces, 1 car park space for community hall, 137 cycle parking spaces, highways and public realm works, hard and soft landscaping, access and associated works. Redevelopment and extension of retained sports' hall to provide indoor bowls facility and cricket pitch with pavilion, 32 car parking spaces, 24 cycle spaces, landscaping and associated works.	The Society objects to this proposal. Although not in the conservation area, this is an important site within the town. The stark housing blocks proposed would be wholly out of keeping with traditional form, scale and character of existing housing in the area. Furthermore, the proposal would result in an overdevelopment of the site leading to inadequate space about the buildings, inadequate private and public amenity space, inadequate parking provision and loss of privacy to existing residents, whose properties adjoin the site. In summary, the scheme appears to have been designed in isolation with little regard for the local context or the amenity of neighbouring properties.	Awaiting decision
DC/21/1074	58 Maybush Lane	Works to trees	The Society considers that the works to the trees will cause no harm to the significance of the conservation area	Awaiting decision
DC/21/1056	16 Beach Road East	Works to trees	The Society agrees that the trees are in need of pruning and lopping but considers that the proposed pollarding	Awaiting decision

			of lime would be severe. The trees will be unattractive for some time.	
DC/21/1043	Saville Court, Victoria Road	Works to trees	The Society considers that the works to the trees will cause no harm to the significance of the conservation area	Awaiting decision
DC/21/0808	Land East of Bent Hill	Temporary change of use for one year to allow adjacent businesses use of public open space for tables and chairs for the consumption of food & drink outside.	The Society supports this application on the basis that it will help businesses that have been significantly affected by Covid. A temporary permission will enable the use to be monitored and its impacts assessed should a proposal for permanent use be submitted in the future.	Awaiting decision

A Local List for Felixstowe?

By Michael Sharman

Quite apart from well-known buildings such as Landguard Fort and Harvest House, Felixstowe has others which are all synonymous with the town's landscape. Such buildings are not deemed significant enough to be granted Listed status, as those above, so they are open to threat without much protection, even though of importance to the town. One example would be the former Felixstowe Tourist Information Centre next door to Felixstowe Town Hall. This was unsuccessfully sought as a listed building with English Heritage, by Felixstowe Town Council, when the building came up for sale a few years ago. Another example might be a Victorian house threatened by huge revision or even demolition, but outside one of the conservation areas in the town.

An Ipswich Local List was started by the Ipswich Society in 1984 and now totals well over 300 buildings or structures of historical, architectural or cultural importance. Included are: Ipswich Rail Station, St Clements Hospital, Spring Road viaduct and The Cricketers public house on Crown Street. There are many precious buildings in Felixstowe which help to create civic pride. If you know of any, please contact me ((01394 213071) so that The Felixstowe Society may develop a local list for the town and the Trimleys.



Felixstowe Beach Hut & Chalet Association

Those with a good memory will recall the photo in our last article showing the wooden steps from Manor End sailing away in a storm. In case you have forgotten, this is it.

By an amazing coincidence one of our members, who is also a member of The Felixstowe Society, was sailing near Margate on the following day and saw them go floating past! Goodness knows where they may have ended up. The good news is that they will be replaced for the summer.



There was an interesting article about beach huts in The Felixstowe Flyer recently, by Charlie Papworth of Diamond Mills. He points out that the pandemic has led to an increase in the value of huts and those at the East Beach site (the ones on wooden platforms in front of the Fludyers) are now expected to be worth up to £50,000. That is a staggering amount but shows how popular huts are now that holidays abroad are less accessible. To bear this out, an advertisement on the back of The Flyer shows a beach hut at Clifflands (near the Golf Club) which was sold for more than the asking price of £35,000. Not many people buy their hut as an investment, but I'm sure owners will be delighted to know that the value has gone up – not that we are intending to sell.

Trevor Mason

FELIXSTOWE MUSEUM

Felixstowe Museum is aiming to re-open on the Bank Holiday Sunday/Monday 30/31 May, in a covid-secure environment.

Any volunteer help, both before opening and during the season, would be much appreciated.

Please contact via email or telephone felmuseum@btopenworld.com: **01394 674355**

www.felixstowemuseum.org

Felixstowe Museum, Viewpoint Road, Felixstowe IP11 3TW

BRACKENBURY FORT

Although known locally as Brackenbury Fort, this fortification was in fact no more than a gun battery, named after General Sir Henry Brackenbury, a former Director of Army Intelligence.

It was strongly built in April 1915 to house two 9.2 inch guns, with the intention to cover an area of the North Sea, which Landguard Fort was unable to adequately police, should a German cruiser or other large enemy ship take-up station there to bombard Harwich Harbour at long range. Indeed, at the time these were the most powerful pair of guns on the whole East Coast and were capable of firing a 380 pound shell up to a distance of almost 10 miles.



9.2 inch Gun drill (posed!) at the Battery.
(Courtesy Felixstowe Museum Collection)

The First World War battery itself, consisted of gun emplacements, with guns and their carriages placed in concrete pits and magazines to store the heavy shells, plus rooms for the gun crews. Earth mounds were constructed behind the emplacements to provide some protection, with barracks for the garrison sited to the rear. This whole area was surrounded by a ditch and fencing.

During the interwar years, Brackenbury battery was earmarked as somewhere for the Territorial Army to practise with heavy guns, much to the annoyance of people living in the neighbourhood, who suffered inconvenience from the noise and vibration when firing took place. Indeed, by 1930 the gun barracks were so worn out that they had to be replaced.

The refitted battery was then placed on a care and maintenance basis. The guns were incapable of being fired until 1938, when the threat of a possible war with Nazi Germany meant that gun practise began again. So it was that by the start of the Second World War in September 1939, the battery was immediately available to make a contribution, if need be. Trenches were dug and other steps taken to enhance the battery's defensive strength.

However, the addition of blast walls around the gun emplacements had the detrimental effect of actually reducing their arc of fire. A further difficulty was that the two guns were unable to operate during darkness, as they had no searchlights to assist them. It was not until 1941 that searchlights were added within concrete emplacements at the cliff base. As it turned out, it soon became clear that the threat of a large German naval vessel in the sea around Felixstowe was highly unlikely.

Accordingly, Brackenbury battery was returned to a care and maintenance basis in 1943 when coastal artillery was reviewed and reduced. After the Second World War ended, the battery was retained on an active footing to enable the Territorial Army to continue to practise firing - albeit on an occasional basis.

However, in 1952 it was decided that the installation was surplus to requirements. Its two guns were dismantled in about 1956 and the local council took over responsibility for the land and its structures. In 1969 Brackenbury Battery was finally demolished, although the task did not prove at all easy.

Michael Sharman

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY ARCHIVE

In the last year the archive has developed considerably. Its collection of photos, maps and documents has expanded with the kind help of a number of contributors and recent publicity has brought the archive to wider attention in the local community.

Grateful thanks are due to Gill Hadwen who has donated so many of Phil's colour photos of his walks around Felixstowe to document the architectural landscape of the town. It is quite poignant to see photos of buildings which have been demolished and these provide a valuable record for researchers. How many of you remember this building – 'The Pink House' in Cambridge Road?



This house was demolished to make way for the McCarthy and Stone development. We also have photos of Bull's Cliff and Mrs Simpson's Tea Room- happy days!

The archive has received a number of donations during the last year which reflect the history and development of this town. Roy Gray donated some beautiful glass items including an elegant decanter commemorating the expansion of the Trinity Container Terminal in April 1996.

Two further donations from the collection of historical documents acquired by the late Graham Henderson reflect the wartime history of the area and the development of a site associated with WW2. A handwritten letter, dated 23 December 1959, was written by Claude Rush, a Police Inspector in Felixstowe during WW2, to Giles, the cartoonist, who had enquired about American aircraft which crashed in the local area; a fascinating read. The other item consists of two drawings, dated 22 July 1961, which show proposals for the development of the Brackenbury Fort area. The drawings indicate a café/restaurant with a terrace, a fountain, paddling pool and a considerable number of beach huts. Would planning permission be granted today?

A particular pleasure for archivists is to be asked to play detective in response to requests from members of The Society and members of the public for information on a variety of subjects. Recent requests have included the Lawn Railway, St Felix School, Sir Cuthbert Quilter's yacht and Felixstowe's part in the Kindertransport.

Some of the requests we receive are difficult to answer; the Lawn Railway was a case in point but eventually we were able to provide details of the miniature steam railway which opened in 1960 and located opposite hotels in Sea Road.



A member of the public wanted information about St Felix School and sent us an evocative Emeny photo, above, of students at St Felix. Sudbury Museum was researching Sir Cuthbert Quilter's involvement in town affairs as he was MP for Sudbury for two decades. They were particularly interested in Quilter's passion for sailing and we were able to fulfil this request. Another member of the public wanted to know the location of the hotel which housed children brought from Europe to Felixstowe via Harwich. Kindertransport enabled thousands of children to escape from Europe between 1938 and 1940. With the help of Society member David Curtis the hotel was located; it is now flats.

The archive contains thousands of photos and documents which means it can generate publications which highlight aspects of the town's history. A booklet is being prepared which collates photos and information about the plaques and information boards dotted around Felixstowe, Walton and Trimley; there are currently 30.

Two of the plaques can only be viewed inside the Port, as seen on the right.



Plaques commemorating the rich history of the town in aviation and radar development include Keith Wood who worked on radar at Bawdsey and Harry Fensom who was involved with Bletchley's 'Colossus' machine.

Michael Thomas has recently produced an enlightening booklet on the history of Eastward Ho Golf Club which was located in an area of the town which is now a popular walking route. Thanks to Michael's donations we now have a collection of prints showing the history of Felixstowe Town Golf Club. We also house the Grammar School WW2 War Memorial and it is hoped to produce a booklet detailing the poignant stories of the '36 Boys', some as young as 19, commemorated on the memorial.

The archive was recently involved in 'rescuing' items from the Garrison Lane building before it is demolished this year.



The picture, left, shows Jean unscrewing a corridor sign which proves that an archivist does have to know how to use a screwdriver.

This project has generated interest from former students and staff who retain affection for this 1930s building.

The archive exhibition planned for the summer, if it goes ahead, will showcase a large number of items from our collection. There will be lots of photo albums and displays of photos never seen before which reflect the changing

landscape of the town. For those members who attended the Grammar School, there will be a trip down 'memory lane' and for those whose interests involve sport, maps, aviation and quirky aspects of Felixstowe and Walton, there will be plenty to see.

Members will also have the opportunity to read copies of Newsletters from issue 1 onwards; a charming and surprising insight into the activities of The Society from 1979. The problem for the archivists will be in the selection of items for display; there is so much of interest and it is the principle of the archive that all material should be available for members to see.

We think members will be surprised to see the range of archive material in the exhibition which will be located in the recently refurbished Palm Court in Harvest House.

[Bev Boyce and Jean Macpherson](#)

[The Felixstowe Society Archivists](#)

Raedwald's Rivets and The Dig

Memories of the Re-Excavation of the Sutton Hoo Ship Burial

Many of you will have seen the film 'The Dig', about the original excavation of the Sutton Hoo ship burial in 1939. This stirred some memories for me. In 1965, whilst at Woodbridge School, there was a quiet request for volunteers to help at the re-excavation of the Sutton Hoo ship burial. I was the only boy to respond. I had recently passed my motorcycle driving test and thought it would be a more interesting way of passing the summer holiday than the previous year (spent bagging and loading tons of malting barley!).

At that time, access to the site was down a very sandy track from the junction of the Hollesley and Bawdsey roads. Tranmer House and where the National Trust Visitor Centre now is were completely off limits. The re-excavation was conducted in some secrecy to avoid the site being affected by sightseers and treasure hunters. This worked well until the tail fins of a WW2 mortar/incendiary bomb were discovered near the stern and reported. Woodbridge Police arrived followed by reporters! The Bomb Disposal Squad later removed a small mortar bomb without any damage to the ship.

On my arrival, some excavation had already started and the outline of the western (stern) end of the ship, with the iron rivets still set in the ghostly impression made by the long



'Further progress by 1966. Looking west towards the stern, the shape of the boat, its ribs and rivets are clearly visible. Note the timber beams provide the datum for measurements, the walkways allow access down the sides of the ship for barrowing away spoil, recording finds and measurements, as well as the cover for weather protection.'

©'Copyright The Trustees of British Museum'

decayed wooden planks, had started to be exposed. The re-dig was directed by Rupert Bruce-Mitford, the Keeper of Medieval and British Archaeology for the British Museum, assisted by Valerie Fenwick and others. Occasionally Paul Ashbee visited, who I think was more interested in the whole of the Sutton Hoo site, than specifically in the ship burial. Amateur volunteer archaeologists helped with the digging as well as people like me who provided volunteer labour. Ingram Smith, the Woodbridge builders, provided heavy duty construction support in moving spoil, providing timberwork, building a shelter over the ship, site hut etc.

When the 1939 dig was closed down in August as war loomed, the exposed impression of the ship's planks and ribs, together with all the rivets, had been covered with bracken and then a layer of sand as protection. We were told that the mounds, including the ship burial mound, had then been used to train army personnel to drive on rough terrain! The excavated artefacts were stored in Aldwych underground station to avoid bomb damage. The main purposes of the re-excavation were to; investigate the 1939 dig with

more advanced forensic skills than were available in 1939 (looking for evidence of human remains); to make a better record of the ship itself and to seek missing pieces of artefacts.

The spoil from the 1939 dig had partly been tipped over the sides of the ship mound and partly beyond the bow and stern of the ship. Some of this was in the wood to the west of the ship near our site hut which served as tool store and mess hut. The hut stood roughly where the recently built viewing tower is now. An old single decker bus, which was used as the archaeologists' finds' store and record office was parked nearby.

The non-archaeologists, like me, were primarily involved in removing the spoil from the re-excitation, as the experts cleared it from the ship with trowel and brush, in order to re-expose the outline of the planks and the remains of the rivets. This all had to be done in a way that avoided anything falling back onto the fragile mould of the ship, or damaging the edges of the impression of the ship's top planks. We also helped to record the exact positions of the plank edges, ribs and rivets. To aid us, was an arrangement of large timber beams spanning from one side of the ship to the other. This provided a grid from which positions and levels of findings could be measured and recorded. One of the issues was ensuring that the grillage was consistent for line and level from one day to another, so that all the measurements could be accurately related to each other. This was essential to allow an accurate 3-D model of the shape of the ship to be produced.



1967 Dig. View east towards the bow showing dig leader Rupert Bruce Mitford and the casting of the moulds to record the ship's shape and encapsulate the rivets.' (With thanks to Woodbridge Museum)

When there was no measuring or barrowing to be done, we dug out and sieved that part of the spoil from the 1939 dig which had been deposited in the wood. No record had been kept of whereabouts in the excavation these spoil heaps had originated, so there was no expectation of where particular missing pieces of the artefacts were likely to be found. In the 20 years following the war, the British Museum had reconstructed some artefacts, like Raedwald's famous helmet, that had been crushed when the 'burial chamber' of the ship had collapsed due to the rotting of its timbers and the weight of the burial mound soil above. Various pieces of the artefacts were missing and they were thought to be in the excavated spoil. The hope of finding something significant kept us going during some very hot weather!

After I left, I understand that this dig continued, with the whole ship eventually being re-exposed. 1m² plaster casts were taken of the whole ship, to record the shape and outline of the planks which incorporated the rusty remains of the iron rivets. There was a plan to make a full-size replica of the ship using these casts to make a mould.

It was a privilege to have been involved in the 1965 dig. There were some distinguished archaeologists who brought quite a serious academic air to the site in their discussions, about the Anglo-Saxon archaeology and how the dig should proceed. It was all done with good humour and I remember occasional lunchtime pub trips for the whole team to slake our thirsts at what is now The Wilford Bridge and I think was then called The Railway. It certainly had a picture of a steam train on its sign! Happy Days!

Guy Pearse

LOCAL ORGANISATIONS.....

THE LEAGUE OF FRIENDS OF FELIXSTOWE COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

The League started life between the first and second World Wars but disbanded in 1971, reformed in 1977 and became a registered charity. The League's constitution has one objective 'To raise funds for the purpose of supplementing the resources of the Felixstowe Community Hospital and Community Health Services in Felixstowe', until the closure of the Bartlet it included this hospital as well.



Felixstowe Community Hospital

During the year the League hold coffee mornings, a cream tea and the main fundraiser, the Summer Fete and Grand Draw. The Committee meets regularly and the Matron of the hospital provides a list of items they would like the League to fund. These requests are considered by the Committee and in recent years, the League have purchased; electric beds, heavy duty self-propelled wheelchairs, an ultrasound machine plus televisions for every ward/room. The League has recently paid for the refurbishment of the patients' lounge/dining area and had a wall mounted television installed in the lounge. Currently we are arranging for the purchase of six new wheelchairs for the ward.

One of the highlights of our year is the visit to the hospital on Christmas Day distributing presents to all patients.

The League have offered to part fund a new x-ray unit, as the current one is coming to the end of its life, and are in discussions with Ipswich Hospital about this offer.

If you are interested in joining the League, our subscription is one pound per year. Please contact the Membership Secretary Mrs B. Woollan on 01394 210271, or, the Chairman Roy Gray on 01394 285827.

FELIXSTOWE & DISTRICT FUCHSIA SOCIETY

The Felixstowe Fuchsia Society was formed in 1988 following ten years of fuchsia displays put on by Felixstowe folk at the Orwell High School. Our late Chairman Ted Stiff was instrumental in driving forward interest in the fuchsia, ably assisted by Brenda (formerly Goulding) and an enthusiastic committee. Ted was the hybridiser of 50 new varieties, some of which were named with distinctive local touches 'Felixstowe Display,' 'Orwell High,' 'Trimley Bells,' and 'Walton Jewel.'

Displays at the Orwell High School took a week of preparation and five evenings of dismantling. Two people were assigned 'coach welcoming' duties and visitors arrived from all over the country. As stunning as the decorated display areas were, it became unsustainable in terms of manpower, so in 2007 we moved our 'Fuchsia Fantasia' to Trinity Methodist Church.

It proved to be a wonderful location with lots of people coming over the threshold, even if they weren't necessarily fuchsia lovers. The draw of fuchsia displays, plant sales with tea and cake meant that 600 visitors attended on that first weekend. The Sunday Morning Services still took place, although we just had to make sure the Minister didn't suffer from hay fever! Our last Fuchsia Fantasia at Trinity Church was in 2018, our Fuchsia Society's 30th Birthday and what fun we had, deemed our best show ever at the Church!



An Annual Fuchsia Fantasia

In 2019 we joined the Felixstowe Garden Club (formerly Felixstowe Horticultural Society) to stage a Members' Show, where members could compete against each other. Their Annual Show normally takes place on the third Saturday of July at the OFCA Hall, Old Felixstowe. It worked brilliantly, was manageable and we hope the Club will invite us again (sadly not this year though).

The Society's aim is to grow, enjoy and promote fuchsia growing. However, members enjoy many activities, which may include talks from guest speakers on a

wide variety of subject material, practical demonstrations on fuchsia culture, quizzes, visits out and a social gathering at Christmas. Our quarterly newsletter aims to keep members up to date with all aspects of The Society.

The Felixstowe & District Fuchsia Society meets on the second Wednesday of each month (March through to December), on hold until Covid restrictions allow. The venue is the United Reformed Church on Tomline Road (side entrance) and meetings commence at 7.30pm. We are a very friendly group of people and you will be made most welcome.

If you would like further details regarding the Felixstowe & District Fuchsia Society, please contact: Heather Carpenter on 01394 278239, or by email at: heatherdavecarpenter@hotmail.co.uk

A Light-hearted look at life.....

'We are Survivors' (for those born in the 1940s)

We were born before television, before penicillin, polio shots. frozen foods, Xerox, plastic, contact lenses, videos, frisbees, ballpoint pens, before dishwashers, drip dry clothes, air conditioners, electric blankets, credit cards, tumble driers and before man walked on the moon.

We got married first, then lived together (how quaint can you be?). We thought fast-food was what you ate in Lent and a 'Big Mac' was an oversized raincoat. We existed before home-husbands, computer dating and when 'meaningful relationships' meant getting along with cousins.

We were born before day centres and disposable nappies. Sheltered accommodation was where you waited for a bus! We had never heard of FM radio, tape decks, electric typewriters, word processors, artificial hearts, yogurts or men wearing earrings!! For us timesharing meant togetherness, a chip was a fried potato, hardware meant nuts and bolts, and software wasn't a word.

In our day cigarette smoking was fashionable, grass was mown, coke was kept in the coal house, and a joint was a piece of meat you had on a Sunday, pot was something you cooked it in and Rock music was a grandmother's lullaby.

We who were born in the 1940s, must be a hardy bunch when you think of the way in which the world has changed and the adjustments we have had to make. No wonder we're confused and there is a generation gap today!

(Excerpts from a poem by Joyce Gibson, WW2 People's War)

(sent in by R Gray)

MEMBERS' CAR MEMORIES

In this edition we have John Woollan recounting his memories of borrowing his brother's 1936 Standard 8 for a very special time in his life.

My younger brother bought a 1936 Standard 8 whilst serving in the RAF and kindly loaned it to me to use on our honeymoon in 1954. We clocked up just under 1,000 miles in those two weeks touring Devon and Cornwall.

The first incident occurred on the way down to our overnight stopover in Exeter when a tyre deflated. Fortunately, we had a spare but I had never changed a wheel before so didn't know how to lift the car to do so. I tried putting the crank under the running board with almost a disastrous result! Eventually, some kind person pointed to the slot into which to feed the crank.

The next incident was whilst ascending a very steep hill when I made a complete hash of doing a double-de-clutch from second to first gear. Luck was on my side as nothing was behind me and as the car started to roll back, I managed to stop it by steering into the bank. No need for a double-de-clutch then to get going again.

Later on in our Devon and Cornwall tour we found ourselves in St. Ives, a town of numerous narrow streets. I mistook one for a way out of the town only to find at the top that I had to cross the pavement to join the main road. Yes, I had driven all the way up on a footpath. I got away with it!



On our way back home we stopped for bed and breakfast near Newquay. This has nothing to do with the car but was very amusing. To two twenty-year olds we reckoned that the landlady was in her sixties. She said the charge would be 12/6d but that breakfast would only be served after her husband had finished in the bathroom. It transpired that he was 20 years her senior. We thought that the price was very reasonable so agreed and had a late breakfast.

Following on from this, I had been posted to Freshwater, I.O.W. and had rented half of a bungalow with separate entrances. We loaded the car with our possessions and moved from Reading, afterwards returning the car to its owner with no discernible damage.

Quite a feat for an 18 year old car!

John Woollan

Let the editor know if you own - or have owned - an interesting classic vehicle which you would be willing to write about in the Newsletter.

FELIXSTOWE SEAPLANE BASE 1913-1924

1. Seaplane Terminology and Felixstowe Airbase's First Three Commanders.

The terminology of waterborne aircraft should first be explained. A seaplane is the generic name for all aircraft designed to land on water. A floatplane is an aircraft, often an adaption of a land based design, equipped with floats instead of wheels. Conversely, a flying boat has a hull designed for landing on water with wingtip floats, or a waterline stub wing stabiliser. They were boats that could fly rather than aeroplanes that could float.

Felixstowe air base was commissioned on the 5th August 1913 under the command of Lieutenant Charles Erskine Risk of the Royal Marine Light Infantry (RMLI) (1883-1926) as Seaplanes Felixstowe and he was followed by Lieutenant Charles Edward Henry Rathborne (RMLI) (1886-1943) in 1914. It was not until the 1st July 1914 that the Naval Wing of the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) was renamed the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS).



Henry Farman F.22A (licence-built by the Aircraft Manufacturing Company (Airco), Hendon). It was at Felixstowe by May 1914 but it crashed off Gt. Yarmouth 28/7/1914 and was written off. The Lieutenant, smoking, on the right, wears the uniform of the Royal Marine Light Infantry (RMLI).

Lieutenant John Cyril Porte (1884-1919) was posted to Felixstowe from the command of a training unit at Hendon in spring 1915, becoming the third commanding officer of the base in September 1915. It quickly became clear to him that the unit's assortment of single engined floatplanes lacked strength and endurance. He had worked with the U.S. designer Glenn Curtiss on the 'America', a twin engined flying boat designed to cross the Atlantic, which the outbreak of war prevented. Porte had been selected as its pilot, and he persuaded the Admiralty to buy from Curtiss' company an eventual total of 64 H4 Small Americas, 1 H8 and 70 H12 Large Americas as well as 75 of the much improved H6 type of flying boat. Once assembled in the U.K., larger engines were fitted and Porte and his small team at Felixstowe pursued a series of incremental changes that resulted in a new, stronger, more seaworthy type of hull.

2. JC Porte's Experiments & the Development of the Ideal Flying Boat Hull

The first conversion of a Curtiss H4 (3580) became the sole Felixstowe F1. Similarly, the solitary H8 (8650) conversion became the Felixstowe F2 which, slightly modified, entered service in late 1917 as the F2A, about 100 (of 175 ordered) having been built by November 1918. Confusingly, they were also often referred to as Large Americas. The Felixstowe F3 was introduced during 1918 in areas outside the North Sea where greater range and bomb load were needed, again, about 100 (of 182) were completed during the war. The prototype F5 (N90) was built at Felixstowe and 55 F5s just missed the war, remaining in RAF service until 1925. The war's end saw widespread cancellations, but some F2s and F3s were completed as F5s and U.S. and Canadian firms built 227 F5s for the U. S. services. Ironically, in all this time, there had been little change to the wing structure since 1914. Hiro Naval Arsenal and Aichi built 50 in Japan, some second-hand British machines were also supplied to Japan, Chile, Spain and Portugal. Only the prototypes were built at Felixstowe, with production being undertaken elsewhere, including 12, or possibly 18, F3s (out of 50 ordered there) being built at Malta Dockyard.



Felixstowe F2A Before June 1918



Felixstowe F2A after June 1918

During 1918 shortages of Rolls Royce Eagle engines held up production of new boats and many Felixstowe based Curtiss H12s called "converts" were given Felixstowe F2A hulls to make use of engines and wings already available, making them virtually indistinguishable from F2As. At Felixstowe, in particular, by autumn of 1918, the early enclosed cockpits, made from an

early type of plastic which was highly susceptible to yellowing by sunlight and salt spray, were being replaced by open cockpits with small windscreens. These modified boats were known unofficially as F2Bs. Two F2Cs (N64 and N65) built at Felixstowe in 1917 did not show sufficient improvement to be worth mass producing. One of these (N64) became the prototype F3.

3. World War 1 Operations

Despite its shortcomings the Curtiss H12 clearly established the case for large flying boats over floatplanes. This flying boat policy was continued by the RAF right up until the last Short Sunderland was decommissioned at Singapore in 1959. The famous 'Spider Web' patrol flown by the boats of Felixstowe air station was begun by H12s. On the 13th April 1917 an H12 made the first patrol over the imaginary octagonal figure which, centred on the (Dutch) North Hinder light vessel, effectively and drastically hampered U Boat operations in the 4000 square miles covered by the patrol. The eight sectors of the web covered an area of around sixty miles in diameter and four aircraft, each searching two sectors in five hours could cover this vast area. There was a good chance of a surfaced U Boat being spotted in the ten hours that it took to transit this area. Submerged, it would take twice as long and would need to surface to recharge its batteries after 75 miles. Also, U Boat commanders would often wireless to base and, unknown to them, these signals could be picked up by British direction-finding stations and a fix obtained.

During 1917, Felixstowe based boats sank UC1, UB20 AND UC6 and also brought down



F2A Crews often had to land and reconnect dislodged fuel pipes. Here one has been caught by a Hansa Brandenburg W29.

the Zeppelin L43. L62 fell to a Killingholme (Lincs) based Felixstowe F2A in 1918. The UB and UC series boats were coastal submarines, the latter being minelayers, designed for North Sea use. The small early ones were reassembled by the Cockerill yard, Antwerp, after transport in sections from Germany. The longer ranged U series boats were used in the Atlantic and Mediterranean. In contrast World War 2 U Boats simply had a U prefix. The prefix L for Zeppelins stood for Luftschiffe (Airship). Increased opposition from Hansa Brandenburg two seat fighter floatplanes, designed by

Ernst Heinkel (1888 – 1958), led to Large America flying boats having their hulls painted with distinctive individual high visibility markings. Pilots were allowed to paint their machines as they desired. White hulls were overpainted with either red, blue or black geometric shapes. Begun at Felixstowe, this practice spread to other East and South coast stations. This made downed aircraft instantly visible and also identifiable in action. The previous muted green and brown hulls had been indistinguishable, from one another.

To be continued.....

Andrew Halliday

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY ARCHIVE EXHIBITION – 22nd AUGUST 2021

In our January 2020 Newsletter, you may have read that thanks to the Directors of Harvest House, The Felixstowe Society archive is now in its new home in one of the basement rooms of this iconic building.

To enable members of The Felixstowe Society to view archive material, we have decided to provide archive exhibitions from time to time. You will see from the article entitled 'The Felixstowe Society Archive' in this Newsletter, that an exhibition has been put together by Bev Boyce and Jean McPherson and will hopefully take place on Sunday 22nd August 2021 between 2.00pm and 4.30pm **The Exhibition will be held in the recently refurbished Palm Court and refreshments will be served in the Dining Room.**

Please note that this event will be for Felixstowe Society members only and numbers will have to be limited. We must also respect the fact that Harvest House is a privately occupied property.

If you would like to attend please complete the application form below. **Tickets will be issued and will have to be produced on arrival at Harvest House. Please remember that you will not be able to park your cars in the grounds of Harvest House. There is ample on-street parking or in Ranelagh Road Car Park.**

The cost for this event including refreshments will be £6.00 per person.

Keith Horn.

Cut-----

APPLICATION FORM FOR THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY ARCHIVE EXHIBITION AT HARVEST HOUSE on Sunday 22nd August 2021 between 2.00pm and 4.30pm

I would liketickets for this event at a cost of £6.00 per ticket Total £.....

Name.....Address.....

Telephone No.....Email address

Names of all other persons attending who must also be Felixstowe Society members

.....

PLEASE RETURN YOUR FORM AND PAYMENT TO:

Mrs Susanne Barsby 1 Berners Road, Felixstowe, IP11 7LF.

PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO ENCLOSE YOUR STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE TO RECEIVE YOUR TICKETS.

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A Felixstowe Society Social Evening at Harvest House – Friday 3rd September 2021

Following the success of our Summer Event in 2019 we have decided to hold another evening at Harvest House and hope that you will be able to join us and enjoy the company of other members of The Felixstowe Society. **Please note that this event is for Felixstowe Society members only.**

Music will be provided by Anne and Ian Clarke who play as a duo called 'In Tandem' and they will be joined by David Tempest on violin.

We would like to thank the Directors of Harvest House, who have agreed to let us have the use of their facilities free of charge and to Ian Clarke for agreeing to entertain you also free of charge. In return, we will be sharing the profits from the evening, between Harvest House in recognition of all the help they have given The Society regarding The Felixstowe Society Archive and to Felixstowe Coastwatch being one of Ian Clarke's chosen charities.

We will be holding a Raffle on the night and whilst we do already have some raffle prizes, we would welcome additional prizes if possible please. Prizes can be delivered to 75 Ferry Road, Felixstowe, IP11 9LU, or, I will be pleased to collect. Please contact me on 01394 270845 or email me at kjandehorn@btinternet.com

This year, the evening will commence at 6.00pm sharp and the cost will be £18.00 per person. As in previous years, we expect this event to be extremely popular and early booking is recommended.

A buffet supper will be provided **but please bring your own drink and glasses.** Please note that you will not be able to park your vehicles in the Harvest House car parks, but there is ample parking in the area.

Dress code for this event is smart casual please.

Keith Horn

Cut-----

A Felixstowe Society Social Evening Event at Harvest House – Friday 3rd September 2021

I/we would like Tickets for this event at a cost of £18.00 per person.

I enclose £ (Cheques payable to The Felixstowe Society)

Member(s) Name(s)

Telephone No.....Email address.....

PLEASE RETURN THIS PART OF THE FORM AND YOUR CHEQUE TO:-

MRS SUSANNE BARSBY, 1 BERNERS ROAD, FELIXSTOWE, IP11 7LF

PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO ENCLOSE YOUR STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE.

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