

The Felixstowe Society NEWSLETTER

Issue No.132 May 2023

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY

is established for the public benefit of people who live or work
in Felixstowe or 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**
- **Secure the improvement, protection, development and preservation of the local environment.**

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Cover photograph courtesy of Alan Boyle

Everything Felixstowe and Beyond

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SPEAKER'S EVENINGS 2023

Held in the Salvation Army Church, Cobbold Road. Doors open at 7pm and the Tuesday evenings start promptly at 7.30pm.

We encourage the wearing of masks.

Please note that admission charges are now £2 for members and £3 for non-members.

MAY 23rd

Our Annual General Meeting followed by

Henry VIII's Wives

by Julie Kilbey

SEPTEMBER 26th

Bawdsey Past and Present

Speaker to be advised

OCTOBER 24th

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission

by Bev Boyce

NOVEMBER 21st

Thomas Cavendish, Navigator or Pirate?

by Cathy Shelbourne

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY CONTACTS

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Keith Horn 01394 270845 *Joint Vice Chairman*

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Hilary Eaton 01394 286733 *Treasurer*

Website: <http://www.felixstowesociety.org>

The Felixstowe Society Newsletter is delivered by Roger Baker and his team of volunteers.

Our thanks go to Roger for organising deliveries and, of course, to his team. (See pages 16-17).

THE CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

GOOD AFTERNOON EVERYONE,
I hope that you all had a lovely
Christmas and New Year.

I can't believe that we are halfway through February already or how mild it is today. Went to the shops without a coat, mind you I was in the car! However, for the first time for ages, I can't write that I am sitting looking at a beautiful blue sky! All grey and miserable looking. Roll on the Summer and beautiful warm, sunny weather. Mind you, not everyone likes that, do they? Still, we can look forward to holidays, especially that of The Society at the end of May to Lincoln. Keith and Elizabeth have planned a wonderful trip, as usual, and Jon and I are really looking forward to it.

We have had a bit of a rough time in the last couple of weeks as Jon, who passed 90 at Christmas, was rushed into Ipswich Hospital ending up with a pacemaker. He now seems fine, all symptoms vanished, thank goodness.

Talking about health matters, we have sadly lost three more members since the Newsletter; Alan and Pam Cooper within a couple of weeks of each other, and Bernard Seeley. A representative of The Society attended all the funerals and we send our condolences to the families.

Felixstowe Societywise, we have had two excellent Speaker Evenings organised by Roy Gray, with another one to come by the time you are reading this. The new regime of pricing seems to be working well and my thanks go to Hilary and Elizabeth for manning (or womanning or even peopleing) the front table! We hope to see poor Roy back with us soon fully recovered from his dreadful sciatica.

Our next event will be our Annual Dinner to be held at the Golf Club on 24th April. At the time of writing we only have two places left so it is proving very popular. We hope to have the Mayor as a guest to grace the occasion. There are also plans afoot for another Social Night at

Harvest House; a walk around the old dock area in Ipswich by the Ipswich Society; a day visit to Thetford which includes a tour of the Guildhall; and another Archive Exhibition in the Palm Court at Harvest House.

I don't think I have much more news apart from the fact that it is the subscription season so, if you would like to stay a member and really value The Society, please pay our lovely Treasurer asap.

We do hope that you like the new design of the Newsletter for which we have to thank our new Editor, Peter Constable. I, personally, love it and feel that it should be called the *Felixstowe Society Magazine* rather than Newsletter. I would be interested to hear your views. Please email me if you would like to do so.

Once again thank you to everyone responsible for the running of The Society and Newsletter and those in Harvest House who give us free access for Committee Meetings and the Archive, although, unfortunately, we can no longer offer members access due to a change in Harvest House's Fire Insurance regulations.

Well, I think this is enough rambling for this issue, so I wish you all the very best as we hurtle into Spring.

See you all soon. Kindest regards.

Jan Garfield, Chairman

PHIL'S SUNDAY WALKS 2023 *by Bev Boyce*

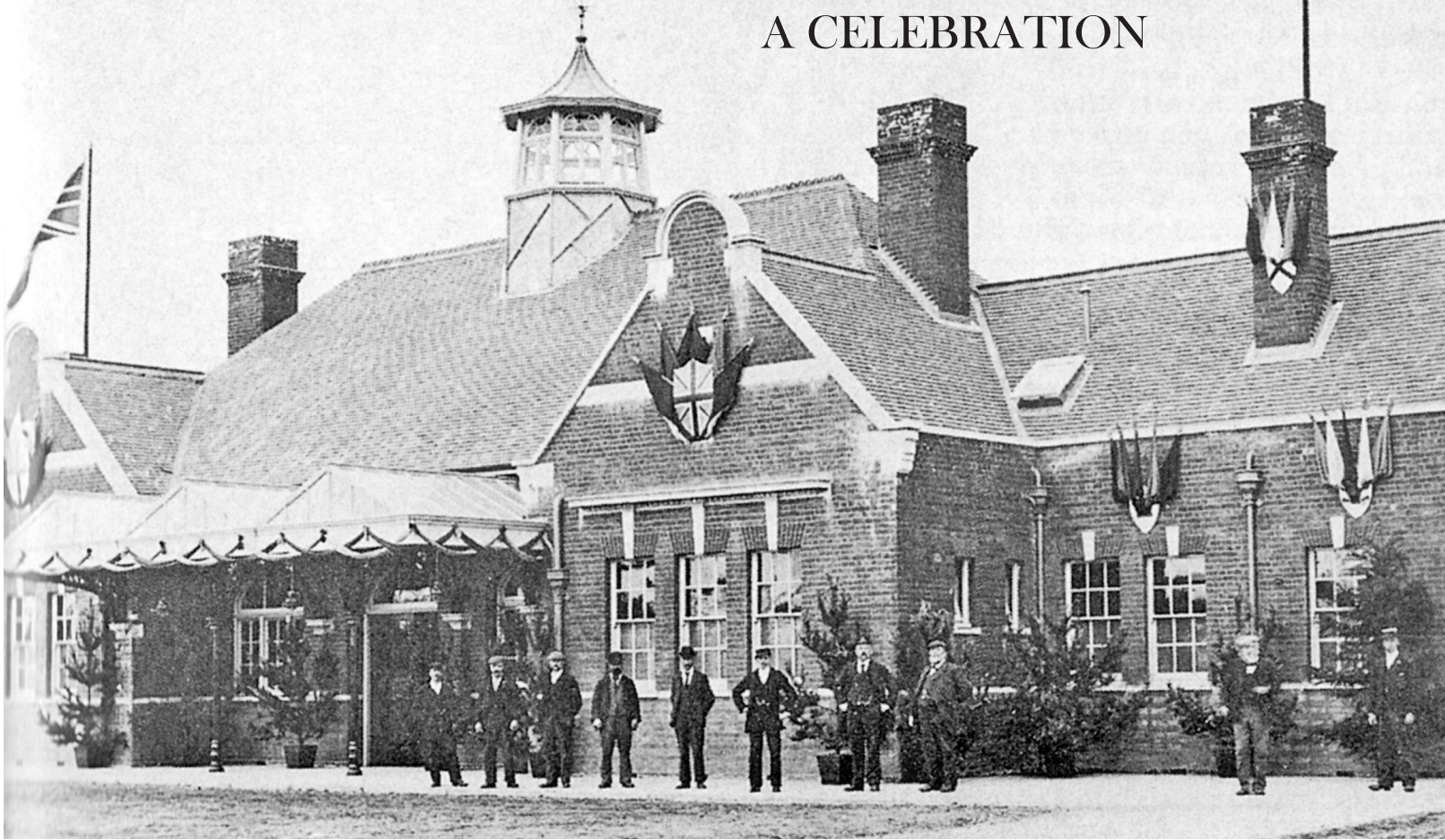
September 17: Landguard Heritage Starts and finishes at the bus shelter opposite Landguard Fort - stout shoes or wellies please.

October 15: The Cobbold Walk Starts and finishes in Brackenbury Leisure Centre car park.

November 19: Felixstowe in WW1 and WW2 Starts at Garrison Lane car park and finishes at the Town War Memorial on the promenade.

All walks start at 2.30pm and last 1-1½ hours.

FELIXSTOWE TOWN STATION - A CELEBRATION



ON JULY 1st 1898, Felixstowe's newest train station was opened by the great and the good of the Great Eastern Railway.

One hundred and twenty five years later, The Felixstowe Society is working with Felixstowe Travel Watch and the Orwell Hotel to commemorate this anniversary with events on Saturday, July 1st 2023.

Not many people seem to know that the station buildings are Grade II listed. This was designated in 1980, two years after British Rail had put up the buildings for sale.

The Society spent five years fighting to preserve the station alongside local residents and national organisations. Watch the local press and media for further details of the events.

Bev Boyce, Archivist



PLANNING APPLICATIONS

APPLICATIONS COMMENTED ON BY THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY NOVEMBER 2022 TO FEBRUARY 2023 (INCLUDING UPDATES ON APPLICATIONS PREVIOUSLY LISTED AS 'AWAITING DECISION')

Reference: DC/22/1983

The Triangle, Hamilton Road, Felixstowe

Proposal: Placement of beach hut for use as tourist information centre.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY objects to the proposal. The beach hut will appear out of context with the urban setting and will worsen the appearance of The Triangle. A preferable solution would be a digital information point in the form of a touch-screen display. This would also be more interesting to use for younger people and would be more sustainable than a hut full of leaflets which would inevitably end up as litter.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

Reference: DC/22/1996

**Kiosk Site near Bent Hill,
The Promenade, Felixstowe**

Proposal: Replacement Kiosk.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY has no objections to the proposal.

ESC DECISION: Permitted

Reference: DC/22/195

19 Margaret Street, Felixstowe

Proposal: Erection of two-storey terrace house.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY considers the proposal to be good use of a brownfield site.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

Reference: DC/22/1341

55-57 Undercliff Road West, Felixstowe

Proposal: Change of use of restaurant to drinking establishment.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY has no objections to the proposal.

ESC DECISION: Refused

Reference: DC/22/2963

Beach Village, Sea Road, Felixstowe

Proposal: Non illuminated Advertisement Totem pole sign.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY has no objections to the proposal.

ESC DECISION: Approved

Reference: DC/22/3266

Kiosk, Bottom of Bent Hill, Felixstowe

Proposal: Variation of condition 3 of DC/22/1996
THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY has no objections to the proposal.

ESC DECISION: Approved

Reference: DC/22/2159/FUL

Great Eastern Square, Felixstowe

Proposal: Placement of beach hut on old station.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY strongly objects to the proposal. The proposed development would have a significant adverse impact on a designated heritage asset. The beach hut would appear out of context and out of keeping with the station buildings.

A modern digital touchscreen information point would be a far better solution.

This proposal is backward thinking.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

Reference: DC/22/3374/VOC

Land At Junction of Garrison Lane and High Road West, Felixstowe

Proposal: Variation of Condition No. 2 of DC/21/2329/FUL -

Erection of new veterinary surgery and 3 residential units in two phase - Minor changes to site layout and changes to fenestration during detailed design of the new vets.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY has no objections to the scheme.

ESC DECISION: Approved

Reference: DC/22/3372/FUL

Friarscroft, Marcus Road, Felixstowe

Proposal: Alterations and extensions - (re-submission of previous application DC/17/2617/FUL).

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY considers that the scheme is acceptable on balance.

ESC DECISION: Approved

Reference: DC/22/3522/FUL

28 Roman Way, Felixstowe

Proposal: Single storey extension to front of bungalow, and replacement (steeper) roof over

existing bungalow.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY considers that the scheme is a well-designed proposal which improves the aesthetic quality of the property.

ESC DECISION: Approved

Reference: DC/22/3520/TCA

Drift Wood, Martello Lane, Felixstowe

Proposal: 1no. Acacia (T1 on plan) – Fell.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY has no objections provided that the tree is replaced with another specimen.

ESC DECISION: Withdrawn

Reference: DC/22/3491/FUL

The Priory, 2 Cliff Road, Felixstowe

Proposal: Cart Lodge in the grounds. Replacement French Doors and Windows to Garden Room (garden room is 1950's extension).

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY considers that the replacement doors are acceptable and that the cartlodge is very well designed.

ESC DECISION: Approved

Reference: DC/22/3646/TPO

71 Tower Road, Felixstowe

Proposal: 2no. Sweet chestnut (T1 and T2 on plan) - Reduce in height to half of existing height.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY has no objections to the trees being pollarded subject to the approval of the Council's Arboricultural Officer.

ESC DECISION: Approved

Reference: DC/22/4071/TCA

Belgrove, 3 Ranelagh Road, Felixstowe

Proposal: 1no. Silver birch (marked '1' on plan) - Fell.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY objects to the application.

The tree is highly visible from Victoria Street.

The loss of the tree would be regrettable.

The tree does not appear to cause any major issues.

ESC DECISION: Approved

Reference: DC/22/3983/FUL

68 Links Avenue, Felixstowe

Proposal: Two storey side extension, single storey rear extension and first floor front extension.

New detached garage. New front and side boundary walls. Render to front elevation.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY objects to the application and considers that the proposal would harm the appearance of the area.

The proposed boundary wall would be out of keeping with the frontages of properties in Links Avenue which are predominantly beech hedges.

Furthermore, the proposed extension would impact on the amenities of the occupants of

No 70A.

ESC DECISION: Approved

Reference: DC/22/4101/AD

Cotman House, Garfield Road, Felixstowe

Proposal: Non Illuminated Advertisement - New large advertising sign below existing clock feature.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY considers that the proposal would cause no harm to the significance or setting of the conservation area.

ESC DECISION: Approved

Reference: DC/22/4181/FUL

Tehidy House, 65 Orwell Road, Felixstowe

Proposal: Conversion of existing dwelling to five residential apartments, including external alterations and extension and formation of new access.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY considers that the proposal would cause no harm to the significance or setting of the conservation area.

ESC DECISION: Approved

Reference: DC/22/4418

Felixstowe Sea Front, Martello Park

Proposal: Relocation of beach huts.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY considers that the development would cause no harm to the setting or significance of the Conservation Area.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

Reference: DC/22/4556

Apartment 10, Martello Place, Felixstowe

Proposal: Replacement windows.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY considers that the development would cause no harm to the setting, character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

ESC DECISION: Approved

Reference: DC/22/4619

Belgrove, 3 Ranelagh Road, Felixstowe

Proposal: Work to trees.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY considers that it would be preferable if the trees were pollarded and retained.

ESC DECISION: Approved

Reference: DC/22/4662

39 Leopold Road, Felixstowe

Proposal: Single storey extension.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY considers that the development would cause no harm to the Conservation Area.

ESC DECISION: Approved

Reference: DC/22/4690

**1-4 Colburn Court, 11 Ranelagh Road,
Felixstowe**

Proposal: Works to trees in Conservation Areas.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY considers it would be preferable if the trees were pollarded rather than felled.

ESC DECISION: Approved

Reference: DC/23/0424

37 Ranalegh Road, Felixstowe

Proposal: Works to trees in Conservation Areas.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY has no objection to this proposal.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

Reference: DC/23/0507

11 Picketts Road, Felixstowe

Proposal: Insertion of dormer windows.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY has no objections to this proposal.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

Reference: DC/23/0422

Land to the rear of 361-377 High Street, Walton

Proposal: Erection of a pair of three bedroom houses and two bedroom bungalows.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY has no objection to this scheme.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

Reference: DC/22/4767

8 Orwell Road, Felixstowe

Proposal: Change of use from residential maisonette to 5 bedroom HMO.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY considers that the development would cause no harm to the character or setting of the Conservation Area.

ESC DECISION: Approved

Reference: DC/23/0534

Great Eastern Square, Felixstowe

Proposal: 14 Non illuminated billboards.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY strongly objects to this application.

The billboards will have a significant and detrimental impact on the setting of the station which is a heritage asset. The proposed development would cause less than substantial harm to the heritage asset but there would be no public benefits to outweigh that harm.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

Reference: DC/23/0433

Marden House, Martello Lane, Felixstowe

Proposal: Works to trees in Conservation Area.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY has no objections to this application.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

Reference: DC/23/0460

**Adjacent Town Hall, Undercliff Road,
Felixstowe**

Proposal: Alterations to public toilet block.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY has no objections to this proposal.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

Reference: DC/20/1860

Howlett Way, Trimley St Martin

Proposal: Erection of 310 dwellings.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY objects to this application.

The site is in the countryside and the Council has a 5 year supply of deliverable housing land and therefore there is no justification for the development.

The proposal would have a significant and detrimental impact on landscape character.

The regimented design of the layout is not suited to the rural location of the site.

For the reasons set out above THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY strongly objects to the application.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

Referene: DC/22/4750

165 Grange Road, Felixstowe

Proposal: Construction of annexe.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY believes that this proposal is permitted development and doesn't require planning permission.

ESC DECISION: Approved

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY ARCHIVE

by Bev Boyce

AN ARCHIVE is full of people – certainly in the form of photos and documents. It is an absolute delight to uncover photos and new information about residents of Felixstowe and the surrounding areas and it is this theme which forms one aspect of this year's Archive Exhibition.

From existing material in the archive and from kind donations, one exhibit will focus on notable and interesting 'characters' in Felixstowe and Walton. In particular, those Society members who attended Felixstowe Grammar School will remember the legendary Mr Vanstone. His daughter Helen has donated some fascinating memorabilia which helps to explain why Bill Vanstone was so highly regarded by staff and students.



Mr Vanstone in a 1948 school photo

2023 is 'The Year of the Pier' as designated by the National Piers Society of Great Britain so there will be plenty of photos, documents and plans which celebrate one of our iconic landmarks. Felixstowe's status as a resort with all it has had to offer over the decades will also feature. East Suffolk Council has donated some previously unseen research material which

features an aspect of the town's life which may surprise and bemuse, so members will have to attend the exhibition to find out!

As usual, the display on the grand piano will feature the more eclectic items to be found in the archive including copies of some recent Royal memorabilia which were donated by Roy Gray and a number of photos, never displayed before, which reflect the interesting personalities and events in the town.

Thanks to donations from Gill Hadwen, Michael Sharman and ex-students, the exhibition will feature photos, documents and trophies which tell the story of the development of the school which eventually became Orwell High School as some members may have attended this establishment in its former

incarnations.

It is hoped that this year's exhibition will provide as much pleasure and interest as in the previous two years.

The support of Keith Horn; Richard Goldsmith, a Director of Harvest House; and the House Manager, Mick Marlow, is always much appreciated.

THE SEARCH FOR THE BUS CONTINUES....

READERS WILL REGRET that our search to date has been in vain. Back in Autumn, Michael Thomas found press adverts for Everett, the coachman who in about 1900, bought a bus, transported it to Felixstowe for use between the town and Walton, but it was not the one. Chris Drewitt and Lianne Royall went to Milton Keynes to view Horse Buses there, but drew a blank. Michael has since made contact with the Ipswich Transport Museum; the London Bus Museum; Mr Nigel Papworth

of Diamond Mills who scoured the auction network; and The Society's founder, Cynthia Park, who showed much interest and named several members featured on photographs. We can now identify Michael, Allan Jobson, Tony Cox, Tim Richards, John Woollan, Keith and Barbara Slater and Bob Kindred who appear in various photographs.

Readers can help when visiting museums or auctions as we are anxious not to miss the bus!

The Editor



Felixstowe Beach Hut & Chalet Association

WE WERE very disappointed to learn that a judge at the High Court decided that our application for a Judicial Review of East Suffolk Council's decision to remove the beach huts from outside the Spa Pavilion should not be allowed to go ahead. As a consequence, the Council wasted no time in removing the huts and in doing so wiped out over 100 years of the history of Felixstowe.

Of the 44 huts concerned, 30 have been moved to new sites – which were allocated by way of a random draw made by council officials - and 14 are now housed in a compound on Golf Road car park meaning the owners are unable to use them. Unless new sites are found for them by the end of September, the owners will be instructed to remove them.

Most of the 30 have been accommodated on existing sites, but 18 have been placed at a contentious new site on the beach at Clifflands, close to the Golf Club. We have always contested that this site could be vulnerable to high tides and our request, made a couple of years ago, to place a hut there just to find out how it would be affected by the tides was turned down.

Already, a shelf is being formed in front of these huts in exactly the same way as it did in front of the Spa Pavilion some five years ago which led to the eventual moving of the huts. We have not yet seen the worst of tides, so our fear is that some of the huts will be washed away. One of our members expressed his fears to the Council only to be told that if he wasn't happy then he could take his hut

off the beach and surrender his licence. Not the best of Customer Service!

In our last report we referred to an application by the Council to place the 14 homeless huts in a second row at Manor End which, in our view, had the very real potential to cause catastrophic damage to them and the existing huts in a high tide. Fortunately, the application was turned down.

A new planning application has been submitted on behalf of the owners of the homeless huts to relocate them on a stretch of waste ground at Manor End, about 200 yards from where the application for a second row was refused and with a much smaller possibility of flood damage. As reported in our last article, a previous application by the Council for this site was turned down by the Planning Committee on ecological grounds. However, we have commissioned a new ecology report which states that, with proper management, the huts should be able to co-exist alongside the existing flora and fauna. We await the outcome of the application.

There have been frequent reports of 'boy racers' using the Golf Road car park in the evenings performing stunts. Antisocial behaviour to say the least. Our worst fears materialised when we were told that a hut owned by one of our members had been hit and badly damaged.

Needless to say, the culprit had made off long before the damage was discovered.

Trevor Mason



SPEAKER'S EVENINGS - 2022-2023

22nd November 2022

'TRAVEL AND TRAVELLERS'

A Talk given by Rachel Sloane

RACHEL EXPLAINED that she started her adult life by supervising children's play centres, but soon got into radio when she was asked to present a programme on her work, which started her interest in the media. She was able to come up with several ideas for a varied series of programmes.

She described one of her travel series for Radio Orwell, when she and her husband stayed at *The Swan* at Lavenham for a programme on activity weekends.

At Lavenham it was horse riding, so after a very comfortable night and an enjoyable dinner, she was up early to a very foggy morning and two horses were brought to the stables. Rachel and her husband had been carefully measured, so there was one large and one small pony. The groom said that the small one was very lively, so Rachel soon swapped with her husband. He was very tall, so his feet more or less touched the ground, and Rachel was terrified to be so high up. They went for a two hour 'hack', which exhausted both of them!

She also did a programme about water-skiing and another about hot air-ballooning, which she enjoyed very much, especially as she could hear all that was being said on the ground as they drifted over towns and villages!

Rachel also described a weekend with her



grandchildren staying at Freston Tower, just outside Ipswich, facing the River Orwell. As it is so tall and thin, there is only one room on each floor, and towards the end of the weekend her hip started to give trouble.

She discovered later that there was a running competition, to see who could run upstairs and back down again the fastest!

One of the most notable programmes was

one she called *Mosquitos and Medicine*, which covered a link between Ipswich Hospital and Beira Hospital in Mozambique. It was fascinating to discover the differences between the approaches of both medical systems and the influences of traditional medicine.

Rachel has also spent quite a lot of time on cruises, both as a reporter and often as a lecturer, mostly for the Fred Olsen Cruise Line. She described many amusing incidents aboard, and another occasion when a sick passenger had to be airlifted to hospital in a raging storm.

She covered many other incidents in her life as a radio presenter, such as her visit to Nettuno in search of Our Lady of Grace, and also her writing career with the *Suffolk and Norfolk Magazine* and other publications.

Rachel concluded her interesting and fascinating talk by telling us that she is shortly off on a cruise 'Round the World in 80 Days' with no reporting duties to undertake enabling her to relax for once!

24th January 2023

'THE ROYAL OBSERVER CORP

A Talk given by Catherine Buchanan

IT SOON BECAME quite clear that Catherine had to do a huge amount of research in preparation for her talk, as she started by giving an outline of air defences

before and during the First World War.

Before that War, there was simply a law that every Council had to have a warning beacon.

At that time the Royal Navy was responsible for defending the country, but they proved useless at the task, so in 1915 the Naval Air Defence was formed to defend London

specifically, and special constables were appointed to man observation posts and phone in their reports - a very difficult and laborious process, as telephones were not very numerous and the reporter had often to run or cycle to find one.

By that time Zeppelins were flying all over the country and in 1916, even in Bury St Edmunds seven people died as a result of dropped bombs, and there were complaints that the crews often dropped the left-overs from their picnics as well!

The Army then took over, but the system was very slow and bureaucratic, especially as it took an aircraft up to 30 minutes to reach the required height to fight, and the general response time was either poor or ineffective.

In 1925 the Observer Corps was formed, manned by male civilians, and as the threat of war increased, Air Marshal Dowding was appointed head of Fighter Command and he created an air defence system using radar.

At the beginning of the War the R.A.F. was

outnumbered 4.5-1 in terms of the number of aircraft, so it was essential to conserve the R.A.F. fleet.

Observation posts were set up (on the Felixstowe Martello Towers for instance), and

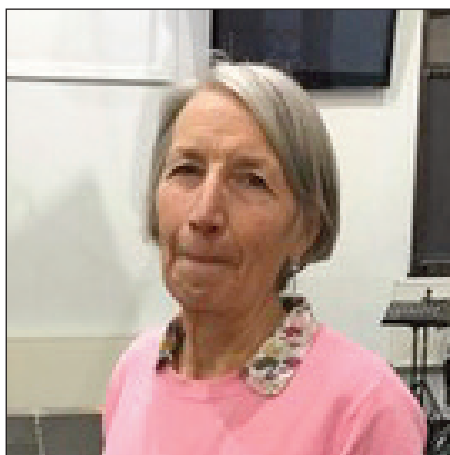
using a grid system, spotters were able to identify aircraft, their height and their direction of travel. It was discovered that women were excellent at this task!

After the Battle of Britain, the spotters became members of the Royal Observer Corps on the same employment conditions as men.

In 1943 they identified a huge and alarming invasion of enemy aircraft, which then turned out to be a flight of geese!

By 1945 they were able to spot damaged returning aircraft and assist them in finding the nearest runways to land.

Because there was so little documented evidence during the early days of the Corps, Catherine dug deep and came up with this most interesting story for us to hear.



21st February 2023

'POLE TO POLE'

A Talk given by Paul Whiting

PAUL WAS DESCRIBED by our Chair as 'Felixstowe's own Michael Palin' and so it proved, as he described the trips he has made by Hurtigruten ships to both the North and the South Pole.

He made visits in 2009 and again in 2020 to the South Pole regions, firstly leaving Ushuaia in Argentina just off the Beagle channel which is in the Tierra del Fuego region, but on the later trip via Punto Arenas in Chile.

On both occasions the sea was like a millpond, so they

went round Cape Horn two or three times, unlike other occasions when the weather can be very bad. On the second visit Paul travelled to the peninsular situated to the northeast of the South Pole, and saw many varieties of penguin and buzzards. The ship then took them to the Falklands, and the surrounding islands nearby.

Although Stanley has recently become a city, the total population of the islands is only around 2,100.

They visited West Point, Weddell, and Carcass Islands, and on the latter were given an enormous tea, provided in the kitchens of the islanders, of which there were only two or three. When they visited



Stanley it was over Christmas, so there were great celebrations and processions. There is a particular Bank Holiday named after Margaret Thatcher whom they credit with the survival of the island as British!

They also visited South Georgia, where there is an old abandoned whaling station, and where the grave of Shackleton the explorer is situated. They noted the abundance of penguins, sea lions and albatros in the area, and many icebergs of differing sizes.

In a subsequent year, Paul visited the Arctic, where Svalbard was their base. More people live there, and as the area is more habitable further north, there are roads and many more people. However, the temperature when they were there was 22 degrees plus in the hotel, and 22 degrees

minus outside, so there was much changing of clothing when they went for a meal!

Paul, as an amateur astronomer, visited at the time when a total eclipse was due, and they knew the exact spot where they needed to be to get the best effect. However, there was a great panic just before the eclipse as, due to the cold, the camera batteries failed, and there was a scramble to fit new ones in time! They succeeded and he took some excellent shots.

One thing we did learn from this talk which will stick in the memory - there are no polar bears in the Antarctic but there are penguins, and the opposite is true of the Arctic - no penguins, but there are polar bears!

All three articles by Haley Dossor

THE LOSS OF H.M.S. GIPSY

A STORY TO BE REMEMBERED by John P Cresswell (Captain retired) Part One

Background History

MY INTEREST in H.M.S. 'GIPSY' starts in the mid 1950's when I was a boy, my Father would take me on his many fishing trips to Felixstowe. We would travel from Ipswich by bus and alight at the dock basin at the old Pier Hotel. Then walk a short distance to the Landguard Garrison Guard House.

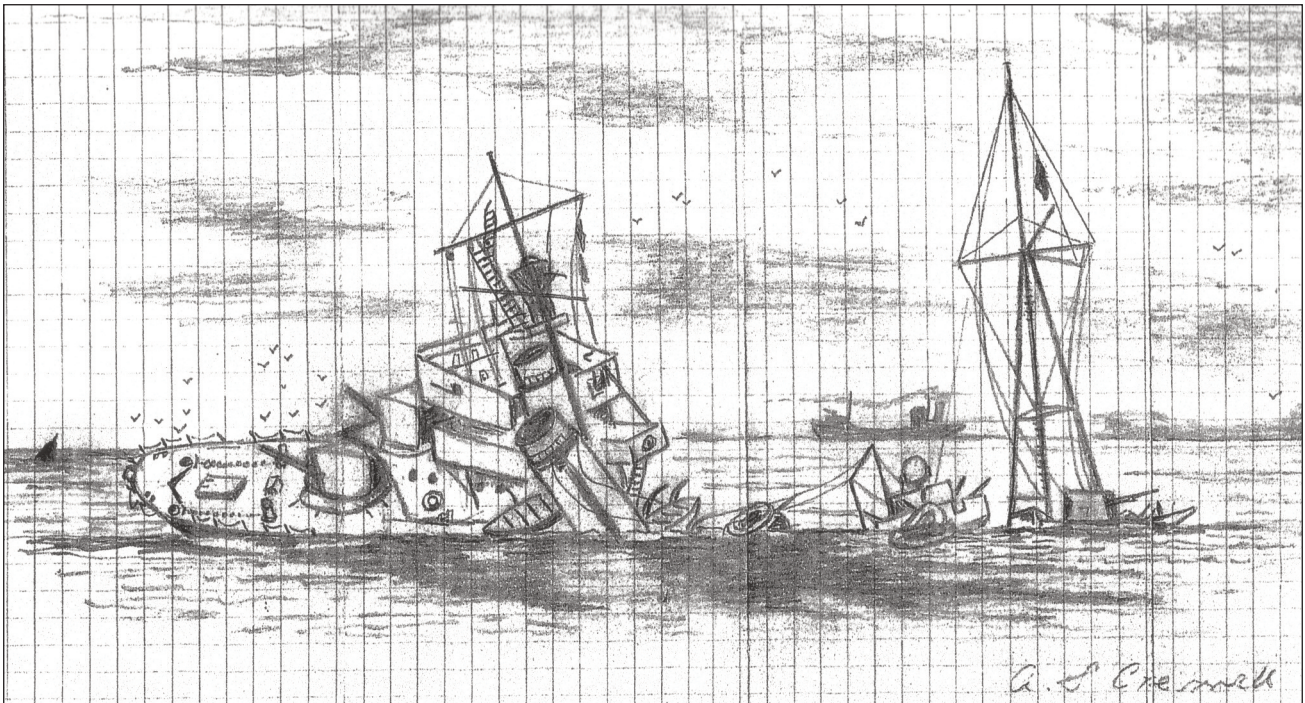
Father would produce his pass - it was never questioned - so we would pass through the busy camp, always stopping at the NAFFI Canteen for a cup of tea and a large slice of chocolate cake for me, (civilian rationing still applied). We would walk past rows of wooden huts or billets heading for either Landguard beach or harbour foreshore depending upon the weather. Father would set up behind the firing ranges and if no red flags were flying I was given my freedom, whereby I would head for Landguard Point jetty as the wreck of the collier 'SWYNFLEET' held a fascination for me.

The Ipswich bound steamer had activated a magnetic mine during the war and was then beached very close inshore, looking as though

she was untouched, still afloat with her funnel standing high. Whilst my Father was fishing in the harbour, I would wander along to the R.A.F. Seaplane Base. There was nearly always flying underway and I would watch with fascination as the large white 'SUNDERLANDS' took off or landed, or if the tall 'TITAN' crane was working.

Father always commented on the 'WALRUS' seaplanes, or 'SHAGBATS', as they were known when he was in the Fleet Air Arm. When I asked him why they were called that, he told me that the 'SHAGBAT' was a legendary bird, that flew in ever-decreasing circles, eventually disappearing up its own what not. My main treat was when the Landguard Battery was 'practice' firing. The noise was deafening as the rounds were fired over our heads and out to sea, the cordite fumes and smoke rolling down the earthen embankments.

On packing up for the day, by which time I usually had my pockets full of spent brass cartridge cases, and Father had gutted his catch of fish, we would walk back along the Landguard foreshore, where he would always



My Father's drawing of the wreck of H.M.S. GIPSY from Landguard - the dark patches may be oil

pass comment on the mangled wreckage which he said was from H.M.S. 'GIPSY'. I believe that it worried him that he had seen the mines layed and yet he could do nothing about it.

Many of these magnetic-acoustic mines lay unexploded on the seabed well after the war and are still being discovered, but although they no longer functioned, their explosive charges may still pose a threat. I was once told by a R.N. EOD Officer that only one sixth of all the German mines layed during the war had been dealt with. In 2017, one of these large magnetic mines was caught by a trawler off Bradwell and had to be dealt with by the Portsmouth-based R.N. EOD Clearance Divers. I was assisting the team when the mine was safely detonated by a controlled charge. Our safety boat was stationed some 500 metres away when detonation occurred, the underwater shockwave was alarming, followed by the explosion which sent a muddy plume of tons of water several hundred feet into the air. Imagine what this would be like directly under the keel of any iron/steel vessel exploding without warning.

Introduction

TO SET THE SCENE, at the outbreak of what some called the 'Phoney War' in 1939, I will quote from a chapter in

one of my old books, the *Story of Minesweeping*.

"Bobby" Harvey landed in the thick of it. He was a master mariner from the Merchant Navy who had left the sea to build up a smallholding, but at the time of the Munich crisis in 1939 he volunteered for the R.N.V.R. and was quickly made a sub-lieutenant. After a week's course at Devonport in the art of 'Oropesa' minesweeping, (Oropesa - a minesweeping type), he was then posted to Harwich, and found a shocking scene of devastation. Even at this early stage, only weeks after the start of the war, the Thames Estuary from Orfordness to the North Foreland, a distance of only 43 miles, was fast becoming a gigantic graveyard of wrecked ships'.

The 'SIMON BOLIVAR', within sight of Harwich had her masts and two big funnels standing above water to mark her grave, while down-tide from her, streamed a trail of fuel oil slowly oozing out of her broken hull. The magnificent Japanese liner, 'TERUKUNI MARU' lay on her side nearby like an enormous half-tide rock. A 10,000 ton tanker the 'SAN CALISTO', as I was proceeding her only a ship's length ahead in my armed trawler, suddenly detonated a mine with a terrific explosion and literally steamed to the bottom forward, though her stern stayed

afloat for some 24 hours. The previous day, I had stood by the Yugoslav 'GARCIA MALICA', as she slowly sank after a tremendous explosion six miles off Orfordness. The destroyer H.M.S. 'GIPSY' was blown up steaming out of Harwich harbour, sinking with a heavy loss of life. Ferrying survivors, passengers and crew, some badly injured, some dying, from these stricken vessels into Harwich became almost a routine task. The many dead that floated about from these ships as they were wrecked, we left the waters to engulf. So what had gone wrong? The puzzle was that all these ships had gone down in waters deemed safe from German moored mines.

The story starts with my late Father who at the time of this incident was a 24 year old very junior civil engineer awaiting call up, but presently seconded to the War Department - Directorate of Fortifications and Works, where he was tasked with overseeing the construction of pill boxes and gun emplacements around the Felixstowe area.

On Monday 21st November 1939, Hitler invaded Czechoslovakia, but it was just a normal day for Father and his gang of workmen, working on gun emplacements at Landguard Fort. During the late afternoon, just as it was getting dark, he and his gang first heard and then saw a lone floatplane flying very low and heading towards Harwich harbour. They watched the aircraft alight just off Landguard Point and go unchallenged, so they thought little of it and assumed that it was making its way towards the nearby seaplane base.

Father always said that he was pretty sure that the floatplane was down for between five and ten minutes. They lost sight of it in the increasing gloom and darkness until they heard the air-raid siren, by which time the aircraft had turned and came into sight and took off, turning again and flying over them firing its guns as it headed out towards the Cork lightship about 10-20 feet above the sea.

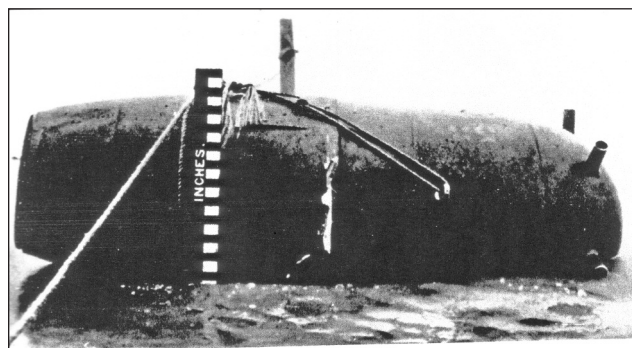
Father said that not a single harbour defence gun had opened up and he was told by an Army

Officer inspecting their day's work, that they could not open fire without permission from Harwich. Some minutes later, a few 'Hurricanes' from Martlesham he thought flew very high overhead in the wrong direction, his gang shouting and pointing towards the Cork in sheer frustration. They left work at 6pm for Ipswich thinking no more of the incident.

However, when they arrived by lorry from Ipswich at 7am the next morning they were shocked to find their site area closed off and under guard, and with much activity as it began to get light. They were told that the previous evening a British destroyer had been blown apart by a suspected magnetic mine, killing a hundred sailors. The actual total loss was later confirmed as fifty lost with many more brought ashore badly injured.

Post Observations

WHAT FATHER and his men had seen was a lone German Kriegsmarine Heinkel He59 twin engine seaplane laying mines. We know that the two mines laid were known as 'Hitler's Secret



The first unexploded magnetic sea mine found at low water at Shoeburyness on 23rd November 1939



The same type of mine that sank H.M.S. GIPSY, dropped ashore in error now shown safely disarmed

Weapon’.

These deadly devices were cylindrical and seven feet in length and weighed some 975kg, of which 660kg was high explosives. Once laid on the seabed they lay dormant until a passing vehicle, overhead or nearby, activated them by magnetic influence. They also had other means of evading minesweeping vessels, whereby the mine would allow perhaps one or more vessels to safely pass overhead before being activated. There was also a delaying device which caused the mine to explode amidships of any sizeable vessel, blowing her in two or at least breaking her back.

In early November, leading up to the H.M.S. ‘GIPSY’ sinking, eleven other vessels had been sunk in similar circumstances off the Suffolk

coast by these mines, with the loss of 112 lives. Two of these vessels were neutrals, the Dutch passenger liner ‘SIMON BOLIVER’, 8,309 grt, was mined off the Longsand Head, twenty-five miles off Harwich, and as she lay stopped some 15 minutes later, there was a second explosion tearing her apart, whilst 300 persons were rescued - 130 were lost. The Japanese passenger liner ‘TERUKUNI MARU’ 11,950 grt mined ten miles off Walton-on-Naze. Fortunately this large vessel remained afloat for 45 minutes, allowing enough time for her eight lifeboats to be launched containing 206 passengers and crew, including 13 British. This proved that not only was this new undersea weapon deadly, but also indiscriminate.

To be concluded in the next Issue, No. 133

OH! TO BE A CUSTOMS OFFICER

Part two *continued from Issue No. 131* by John Woollan

IN MAY 2003 I was seconded to Birmingham Airport for three months. Again, very pleasant and comfortable ‘digs’ were found for me just outside the city centre. The large Alsatian dog there befriended me and allowed me to take him on walks. I became quite enamoured with the countryside and thought it would be a good place to live - but that’s as far as it went! My duties were much the same - clearance of imported goods except that many were new to me, home computers. The EPU worked office hours, so I was able to drive home on a Friday night and back again on Sunday. The A45 was not built throughout at that time so the journey was complicated but interesting.

Upon my return I found myself back in Felixstowe to work on Exports for a year. This was shift work. The agents would submit their documentation to Customs for examination against a list of items that required a licence granted by the Department for International Trade. I should, perhaps explain that if we wished to examine the container to ensure that goods were as described on the documents, the

Dock company would deliver that container into an Examination shed and have the items we wish to see, unloaded. This was time-critical work as the intended ship was often in the process of being loaded.

Collection Officer duties caught up with me once again and I was sent to Norwich Airport for a few weeks on leave cover. ‘Digs’ were found for me just off the ring road. A number of flights to and from there were within the UK but for those from overseas we selected those passengers whose luggage we wished to inspect as they passed through the Customs Hall.

At the end of that time, I was seconded to R.A.F. Brize Norton in Oxfordshire for three months on summer relief. I nearly didn’t get there for my car developed a flat tyre at speed on the A40. Fortunately, it deflated slowly. I jacked up the car but was unable to remove the nuts holding the wheel in place. It was a fair old trek to the nearest roadside telephone to get help. When the AA man arrived, it was no problem for him to change the wheel. He explained that the nuts had been tightened

under pressure and couldn't be loosened with an ordinary jack.

Working on this military base was a whole new and formal experience to the U.S.A.F. bases at Bentwaters and Woodbridge. Most R.A.F. planes arriving were from the Falklands so there would be long queues to go through Customs and to pay duty on bottles of whisky! Some civilians were on board and had to produce their passports for examination and stamping. We were entitled to use the Sergeants' Mess for relaxation and meals. Once again, a billet was found for me in a public house at nearby Carterton where I preferred to take my meals.

About this time, I read in the Customs newsletter that applications were sought for VAT work in London. Interviews would be held for promotion to Higher Executive Officer. I applied and went for interview. Whilst awaiting the result another piece appeared for the post of Administrative Officer with VAT Tribunals in London. I sent in my application and, in due course was invited for interview. In the meantime, I learnt that I had been successful and would be sent to the VAT office at Southall.

Hard on the heels of this, I received a letter from VAT Tribunals saying that my interview was successful and I was to take up my appointment on 1st October for a three months trial period. VAT Tribunals shared a building with the Charity Commission in Marlborough Street near Oxford Circus. This was to mask the fact that an appeal against decisions by H.M. Customs & Excise were held in a building, part of which housed Customs personnel. The appeal judge was Lord Granchester. Because I was on probation and was ex-military, I booked in to the Victory Services Club near Marble Arch and walked to and from the office - about a 45-minute walk.

I found that I had an office in Edinburgh which I visited roughly once every two months. My staff booked me onto the 1st class midnight sleeper train from King's Cross to Edinburgh which arrived at 7am, just in time for me to have the included breakfast and walk to the office.

After a day's work there, I would take a leisurely stroll and catch the midnight train back. That way I was back in the office by 9am.

The London allowance covered my board and return train fare home at weekends. My probation ended before the three months was up and my promotion to HEO confirmed. As much as I enjoyed staying at the Victory Services Club, I missed my home life so I bought an annual season ticket and joined the happy band of commuters, catching the 06.25am train from Trimley connecting with the 07.05am from Ipswich to Liverpool St. and then the Central line to Oxford Circus. In reverse I left the office at 4.30pm and was usually home by 7pm.

When Margaret Thatcher became Prime Minister, she re-organised some Government Departments and VAT Tribunals was transferred to the Lord Chancellor's Department. Those Customs staff were given the opportunity to transfer but I elected to stay to serve my three years. Time was nearly up when my post was transferred to the LCD and a replacement arrived. I was posted back to Felixstowe.

On arrival, I was placed in charge of Checkpoints station with a staff of 30 spread over three checkpoints within the Dock where trucks and containers were presented for check sealing before onwards transmission to a Customs post near their destination. An EO was in charge of each checkpoint. The largest checkpoint operated for 24 hours daily. My hours were variable so that I could make unannounced visits at any time.

Again, the Customs' Newsletter called for volunteers - this time to take early retirement. As I was 59 by then I applied. The rest is history. Much Customs' work began to disappear, as more and more responsibility was placed on agents, to ensure that the correct duty was paid on goods and that their movements between port and destination was safeguarded.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 2023 Annual General Meeting
will take place on
Tuesday 23rd May at 7.30pm
in the Salvation Army Church,
Felixstowe.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence.
2. Minutes of the previous AGM
held on Tuesday 24th May 2022
and Matters Arising.
3. Discussion and acceptance of
Annual Accounts 2022.
4. Election of Officers, Executive
Committee and Independent Examine.
5. Any Other Busines.

The names of the present Committee
members are shown overleaf.
Nominations are invited for Office Bearers
and Committee Members.
Please complete the attached
Nomination Form and return it as soon
as possible, if you are interested in
joining the Committee.

- THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY
is established for the benefit of
Felixstowe and Walton to
- Stimulate public interest in these areas
 - Promote high standards of planning
and architecture
 - Secure the improvement, protection,
development and
 - Preservation of the local environment.
- Continued overleaf*

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY NOMINATION FORM 2023

I wish to nominate the folowing
person/s for Office
in The Felixstowe Society

.....
.....
.....
.....

Nominated by

.....

Seconded by

.....

I wish to nominate the following
person/s to serve on the Executive Committee
of The Felixstowe Society

.....
.....
.....
.....

Nominated by

.....

Seconded by

.....

Return details overleaf



Please return to

Jan Garfield
27 Rogers Close, Felixstowe,
Suffolk IP11 9DG
or email to
jongarf@ntlworld.com

COMMITTEE MEMBERS
(TRUSTEES)

Chairman Jan Garfield
Vice Chairmen Roy Gray and Keith Horn
Secretary Derek Bundock
Treasurer and Membership Secretary
Hilary Eaton
Members Phil Cobbold, Elizabeth Horn,
Michael Sharman, Peter Constable,
and Katy Topping
Plans Committee Convenors
Phil Cobbold, Peter Bridge, Eric Searle
and Monica Smith

RESPONSIBILITIES

Archivists Bev Boyce, Jean Macpherson
Committee Minutes Derek Bundock
Gulpher Duck Pond Keith Horn
Independent Examiner (Auditor)
Alan Middleton
Insurance Matters Keith Horn
Membership Secretary Hilary Eaton
Newsletter Editor Peter Constable
Newsletter Distribution Coordinator
Roger Baker
Proof Reader Susanne Barsby
Programme Organiser - Speaker Meetings
Roy Gray
Programme Organisers - visits
Keith and Elizabeth Horn
Poster Publicity/Tickets
Peter Constable
Press Publicity and Photographer
Keith Horn
Salvation Army Church Door Stewards
Elizabeth Horn and Hilary Eaton
Telephone Box Elizabeth and Keith Horn
Liaison with Civic Voice
Keith Horn

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION TEAM

Organiser Roger Baker
Mr & Mrs D Abbott/Simpson
Mr & Mrs R Baker
Mr & Mrs P Blemings
Ms B Boyce



Ms S Cameron
Mr & Mrs R Chapman
Mr H Dangerfield
Mr & Mrs M Elmes
Mr & Mrs B Entwistle
Mrs G Hadwen
Mr & Mrs J Harrington/Bell
Ms S Hazelwood
Mr & Mrs R Holland
Mr & Mrs A Lamberton
Mr & Mrs P Ling
Mr & Mrs R Love
Mr & Mrs T Mason
Dr & Mrs C Millar
Mr & Mrs A Rutterford
Mrs A Sutton
Mr & Mrs M Thomas
Mr & Mrs G Topping
Mr K Twinn
Mr & Mrs R Wright

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2022-2023

The Society has had a successful year returning mostly to normality following the Covid pandemic. Attendance at Speaker's Evenings has been fluctuating but seems to be improving. However, due to the almost doubling of hire by the Salvation Army for use of the hall and with speakers' fees increasing all the time, the Committee took the hard decision to increase the amount paid at the door to £2 per member and £3 per visitor from January 2023.

Unfortunately our membership has dropped from our high before the Pandemic of over 600. This can partially be explained by the demise of the Walking Group whose leaders decided to retire. This a salutary reminder that no-one can go on forever! Sadly no replacement came forward in this instance. Also there was the usual natural fluctuation and the reluctance of some folk to venture out following Covid. However, our fees are coming in for the 2023-2024 season.

During the year we had to say goodbye to our Magazine Editor, Gill Manning who moved to pastures new, and were very lucky to welcome a

volunteer, Peter Constable who took over to produce his first solo magazine in January 2023. This was a great success, so thank you, Peter.

Once again we had another lovely holiday in May 2022 organised by Keith Horn and this time to Winchester. This was superb as usual but was not without its headaches for poor Keith and Elizabeth! Didn't put them off though as we are off to Lincoln in May 2023! Keith also organised the Annual Dinner at the Brook Hotel in April 2022 and a Social Evening at Harvest House. In conjunction with our Joint Archivist, Bev Boyce, he also arranged an Archive Exhibition at Harvest House. Our last major event was the Heritage Weekend held biannually in Felixstowe. This was very successful even though some events had to be cancelled due to the very sad death on the Friday of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Speaker's Evenings have been excellent this year, thanks to Roy Gray, who has carried on despite developing severe sciatica last September and is still suffering, although improving. Roy also organised a very successful Quiz that was held in the Trades and Labour Club.

You may or not be aware that we take on the care and maintenance of Gulpher Pond and our thanks must go to Keith Horn and his merry band who clear it periodically and keep it under control.

Finally, to conclude this rather lengthy report, I want to give my personal thanks to every member of my Committee without whom the Society would not be able to carry on. I don't want to single anyone out as they all work hard. Also my thanks go to Roger Baker and his hard working band of deliverers without whom nobody would receive their magazine. I also want to thank the Management Committee of Harvest House and their wonderful caretaker, Mick, who allow us to use the building for our Committee Meetings and also house the Archive all free of charge.

Earlier in the report I remarked that no-one can go on for ever. This applies to your Committee and, if we don't get new blood

going forward, it will also apply to YOUR SOCIETY, so please think about volunteering.

Jan Garfield, Chairman

CONSERVATION MATTERS

We have maintained Gulpher Pond for many years and would welcome offers of help from our members to join work parties, as and when required.

If you are interested in helping with this work, please contact Keith Horn on 01394 270845 or email kjandehorn@btinternet.com

YOUR VIEWS PLEASE

We are always interested to hear from our members, so do let us know if you have any comments to make about the way The Society is run, or if you have any suggestions for speakers, events or new activities.

QUESTIONS FOR THE AGM

If you wish to raise any questions on the 23rd May, please note that they must be submitted in writing at least 10 days beforehand, i.e. by 9th May to Jan Garfield, 27 Rogers Close, Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 9DG.

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 2022-2023

I am pleased to see that we are now almost back to normal, even though our Speaker Evenings are not quite as well attended. Following the pandemic these have been free to

members. From January 2023 we will be charging £2.00 per person for entry as the fee charged by the Salvation Army for their hall has been increased. These evenings generally run at a slight loss. So please attend if you are able as we have had and will continue to find some extremely interesting and varied speaker topics.

Last year's Quiz was well attended making a profit of £460 for The Society. The Social Evening held in August and later Archive Exhibition raised a profit of £600. This was again donated to Harvest House as a thank you for the use of their facilities.

A donation of £200 was given to the Lions to assist with the Christmas Lights for Felixstowe. A poppy wreath was laid on Remembrance Sunday and a Felixstowe in Flower tub was given.

In the past year I have claimed Gift Aid for the years 2020 and 2021, receiving just over £1,000 from Inland Revenue. Thank you to everyone who donates Gift Aid to us. This was deposited in our Virgin Savings Account to earn a small amount of interest and to be held for good causes within the Felixstowe area.

We now have a card machine which will be at each speaker evening. Anyone wishing to use this method to pay for activities, membership or entrance fees may do so. Arrangements can be made to pay for activities using this method at other times by contacting myself.

Hilary Eaton, Treasurer

FELIXSTOWE MUSEUM NEWS

We have been working hard behind the scenes during the closed season, by the time you read this we are well and truly open.

New for 2023

- * Exhibition area remembering the 1953 Felixstowe floods.
- * Display commemorating the 1953 Coronation and reign of H. M. Queen Elizabeth II and the Coronation of King Charles III.
- * Port Room. Exhibits include timeline,

new container ship models, port model, selection of port operation equipment and associated memorabilia.

- * Enlarged cafe with new improved menu.

In addition to our new features, we are open more days, for longer hours too!

Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, also Bank Holiday Mondays. 11am to 5pm.

Last entry 4 pm. We hope to see you and your family soon!

*Paul Sanderson
Society Member/Museum Volunteer*



ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2022

The Felixstowe Society Financial Statement Year Ending 31st December 2022

2021	INCOME	2022	2021	EXPENDITURE	2022
£		£	£		£
3,036.00	Subscriptions	Individual 3,364.00	-764.00	Newsletters	-1,971.94
20.00		Corporate 20.00	-120.00	Activities Hire of Hall	-240.00
6.00		Donations 270.20	-115.00	Speaker	-360.00
0.00		Gift Aid 1,102.96	0.00	Outings	-850.00
8.00	Activities	Meetings 28.00	0.00	Quiz	-431.11
0.00		Outings 1,237.50	-300.00	Dinner	-821.00
0.00		Quiz 201.00	-726.61	Social Evening	-589.30
0.00		Dinner 1,135.00	0.00	Minibreak	-17,142.48
239.50		Raffle 260.00	0.00	Heritage Weekend	-1,467.00
		Social Evening/	-19.00	Beach Clean	-14.00
2,069.00		Archive Event 1,854.50	-126.56	Administration Stationery	-341.78
		Heritage W/E 1,000.00	-53.55	Postage	-186.33
100.00		Mini Break 14,032.00	0.00	Retirement Gifts	-53.50
10.00	Sales	Cotman Walk Book	-28.83	Website	-74.38
		32.00	-402.95	Insurance	-313.13
			-40.00	Expenses	-327.75
			-135.16	Hospitality	1,030.34
			-500.00	Repairs (Archives)	0.00
			-1,143.20	Archives	0.00
			-90.00	Plaques	-76.80
			-36.00	Subscriptions Protect Rural England	-36.00
			-65.00	Victorian Society	-65.00
			-402.95	Civic Voice	-1,000.00
			-325.00	Refunds Outings/minibreak	-746.50
			-25.00	Donations Poppy Wreath	-25.00
			-325.00	Coast Watch	0.00
			-750.00	Harvest House	-600.00
			-100.00	Mens Shed	0.00
			0.00	Felixstowe in Flower	-65.00
				Lions Club	-200.00
				Savings Virgin A/c Deposit	-1,000.00
			-6,593.81	Sub Total	-30,028.34
			1,105.31	Difference	5,491.18
			-5,488.50	TOTAL	-24,537.16
				Closing Balance at TSB Bank	1,411.79
				Closing Balance at Virgin	13,393.72
5,488.50	TOTAL	24,537.16		TOTAL	14,805.51

Certified as correct according to documentation provided

Independent Examiner Alan Middleton 31/1/23 Date

Treasurer Hilary Eaton 31/1/23 Date

A LETTER FROM OHIO

I HAVE A PHOTO of my grandmother, standing outside Keeper's Cottage, Riddlesworth, in Norfolk, probably taken in the mid-1940s. Was the photographer an upholsterer from Ohio? I'm pretty certain that my grandparents didn't have a camera...

To the best of my knowledge, my grandmother spent the first half of her life in Norfolk and the second half in Felixstowe, never travelled outside either county, and never had what you might call a proper holiday away from home. However, in the course of extended periods of research into my family history during various lockdowns, I discovered a letter to my grandmother from an American serviceman who had recently returned home.

Payne, Ohio

July 16, 1945

Dear Mrs. Tortice

Well, I arrived back in the States June 30 and got home July 6th. Everything went along smoothly and we didn't have any trouble at all. I haven't seen Bill as he left a day or two before I did. We all got a 30 day leave so I'll see him again when we go back to camp. Things are about the same at home except some people look older and foodstuffs are much harder to get due to the rationing. Still it isn't as strict as it is in England.

Been pretty rainy the last few days. When it rains here it really (illegible).

Tell Mrs. Curson I said hello! Bill said he saw her a few days before we left. I must be going now so thanks for everything you done for me. We really appreciated it.

Sincerely yours

M/Sgt. Paul Irelan

I decided to see what I could discover about the writer and his family, in the hope that I might learn more in particular about his time in East Anglia. I also wondered whether he had been billeted with my grandparents or whether, more mundanely, she had done his laundry for him and his friends or helped them in some

other way.

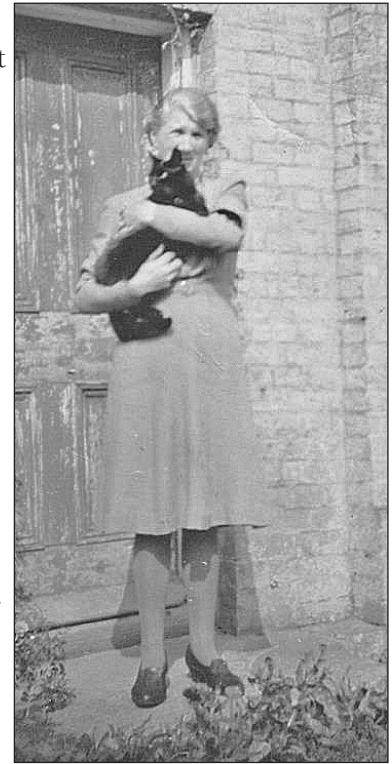
Master Sergeant Paul D. Irelan (service number 15102086) was a ground crew chief with the 560th Bomb Squadron, part of the 388th Bomber Group, which was based at Knettishall between 1943 and 1945. He was born on the 5th of January 1911 in Payne, Ohio and died on the 5th of December 1996 at the Highland District Hospital in Hillsboro,

Highland County, Ohio. He was buried with military honours in Glen Rest Memorial Estate following Masonic services at the Turner and Son Funeral Home in Hillsboro.

His career in the U.S.A.A.F. began on May 15th 1942 when he enlisted as a private in Fort Benjamin Harrison Indiana. He is mentioned in 'Wing Ding', the biography of Eugene T. Carson, who was a flight engineer/gunner with the 560th. On 13th October 1943, Carson returned to Knettishall after a raid on Schweinfurt:

As I climbed out of Tiger Girl, M/Sgt Paul Irelan our ground crew chief announced to everyone, "Wing Ding forgot his parachute". Dingle asked me if I had known it was on the ground. I answered "Yes, sir". He looked at me, shook his head and walked away, saying "Now I know why they call you Wing Ding."

('Tiger Girl' was lost during a raid on Bremen on November 26th 1943. It was Paul Irelan who broke the news to Eugene Carson when he



My grandmother, Leonora Tortice, taken in her late forties outside Keeper's Cottage, Riddlesworth

returned to Knettishall, having been on leave).

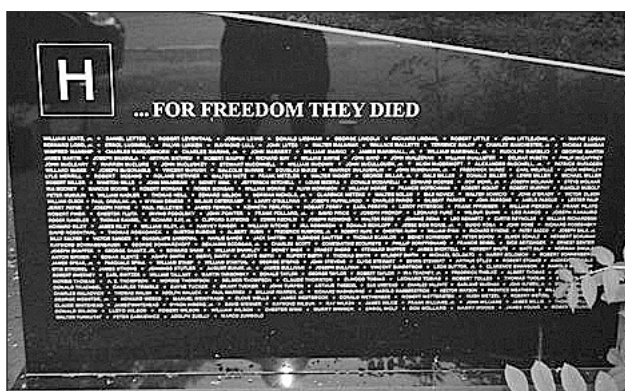
Paul Irelan and my grandmother clearly lived very different lives. After the end of World War 2, Paul returned to Ohio and to his job in the upholstery business, in which he worked for a total of 50 years, while my grandmother made what may well have been the longest trip of her life, from a keeper's cottage on the Norfolk/Suffolk border to Felixstowe. However, I suppose she can be said to have played a small, indirect part in supporting at least some of those American airmen who flew missions to Germany in those B-17 Flying Fortresses from Knettishall all those years ago. And that letter from Ohio obviously meant something to her, as it's one of the very few items of correspondence that she kept for the rest of her life.

Laurence McDonald



Above: John Irelan (far right) and his crew, photographed at Knettishall

Below: Tiger Girl



Above: The monument at R.A.F. Knettishall (which the US Army Air Force called Base 136), which names those who flew missions from there but did not return

A GUIDED WALK AROUND IPSWICH WATERFRONT

Commencing 10.30am

Wednesday 14th June 2023

John Norman, Chairman of

The Ipswich Society has very kindly offered to take a party of The Felixstowe Society members on a walk of The Ipswich Waterfront to tell us about the History of this part Ipswich - from the 7th century to the present day.

We will meet at Duke Orwell Quay Car Park, Duke Street, Ipswich IP3 0BF at 10.30 sharp and the walk will take approximately 90 minutes.

When parking your time starts when you enter the Car Park, not when you pay at the machine.

The current charge for parking as at February 2023 is £1.70 per hour for the first 3 hours. A day ticket costs £5.50. Please check nearer the date to ensure that these charges are correct.

Group numbers will be limited, and early booking is recommended. No Charge will be made for this visit.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Please complete the form overleaf.

Many thanks.

Keith Horn

THE SEASHORE VILLAGE

WORK IS NOW well underway on the construction of a new activity park and Seashore Village - previously known as the Beach Village - on the South Seafront in Felixstowe with an expected completion in July 2023.

The South Seafront has enjoyed significant investment and consequent redevelopment by East Suffolk Council in recent years with the restoration of the Martello Tower P on

Coastguard Green, the upgrade of two public shelters, a new car park on Langer Road, the provision of the very popular Martello Park play area and the landmark £1.5 million contemporary cafe@Martello Park.

The Council's intention is now to make the South Seafront even more welcoming for residents and visitors alike with the creation of the Seashore Village. It will consist of 27 traditional style beach huts together with a single storey accessible building but which can be

A GUIDED WALK AROUND IPSWICH WATERFRONT

Wednesday 14th June 2023
10.30am at Duke Orwell Quay Car Park

Please book.....places for me

Name.....

Address.....
.....
.....

Telephone.....

Please complete and return this form
to
Keith Horn
75 Ferry Road, Felixstowe IP11 9LU
or email me at
kjandehorn@btinternet.com



Paul Sanderson

divided into smaller rooms for hire. Access will be available from both the promenade and Sea Road and the site will be completely re-landscaped together with the provision of new fully accessible public toilets which will be available all year.

Additionally, to encourage exercise and physical activity leading to the improvement of both physical and mental well-being, the existing Trim Trail will be relocated and renovated and a new activity park provided with concrete table tennis tables, a climbing wall, chess tables, a petanque piste and an outdoor space for workouts. Accessible picnic benches will also be included.

Michael Sharman



AN UPDATE ON THE FUTURE OF HAMILTON ROAD

LAST YEAR, in an article in this Newsletter, I looked at whether the future of Felixstowe town centre shops was bleak or rosy. Since then, Barclays Bank has gone, Trespas, Papa Johns and KFC have appeared and some shops such as The Wool Baa and Scarboroughs Opticians have relocated to larger premises.

There have also been two major initiatives to improve the trading environment.

The formation of the Felixstowe Business Improvement District (BID) covers some 250 businesses within a defined zone stretching along the seafront, through the town and to some adjacent streets. Its main aim is to improve the appearance and appeal of the town and to increase the footfall, staying time and spend of both local residents and visitors, through marketing campaigns such as the Knitmas Tree project in December and Felixstowe in Flower. The BID can also offer business support and share best practice and intelligence with the aim to strengthen its members.

East Suffolk Council has been allocated £2.75

million from the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund to be used to support high streets and businesses and to develop workforce and community skills, in addition to helping those people who are struggling with the cost of living crisis.

Within its East Suffolk Investment Plan, the Council has developed the East Suffolk High Street Improvement Programme to cover a three year period. Grants of between £5,000 and £15,000 will be available for Felixstowe Town Council, groups and business associations such as the BID to improve accessibility, attract more visitors, and enhance the special character of the town centre with its Triangle. This would be through improvements to public areas, better signage and improvements to walking and cycling in town.

Additionally, to seek to increase visitors to the town, grants of between £5,000 and £10,000 will be available to support cultural, arts and heritage activities.

There is also a grant programme which sets out to enhance shop fronts. *Michael Sharman*



Paul Sanderson

FELIXSTOWE'S ANTI-TANK DEFENCES

IN MAY 1940, General Ironside, the new C-in-C Home Forces, did not have enough soldiers or equipment to mount an effective counteroffensive against an Axis Powers' invasion of the English Coast. Instead, he ordered a 'static defense' strategy, using available forces to build a coastal 'crust' of beach obstacles, mines, pillboxes and gun emplacements designed to slow down an enemy advance inland. The invasion of Norway had shown that the landing of tanks would be the main threat, and that the Germans had the equipment to do so successfully. As mentioned in previous articles (this Newsletter, Nos. 129 and 130, 2022), the Felixstowe Peninsula was regarded by military planners as a prime candidate for invasion both from the beachhead between Landguard and Felixstowe Ferry, and from the Estuary Levels by gliders, particularly from the Felixstowe, Rosier and Falkenham Marshes to the north of the Town. The Nazi invasion of Norway and Holland followed such a pattern. Much thought went into the construction of effective anti-tank defences in and around Felixstowe. The threat to nearby port and airfield infrastructures as well as the likely ease of an invasion force getting from here to London or the Midlands, made the static defence of the Peninsula a priority. This led to the construction of two of the most amazing pieces of engineering to be built around this time; Felixstowe's Anti-Tank Defences, consisting of ditches, excavated water-courses, natural barriers and concrete blocks.*

Little is known about this story, although Suffolk Heritage Explorer (heritage.suffolk.gov.uk/maps) points to photographs taken by the R.A.F. in 1944/45, now in the care of the Historic England Archive in Swindon. Other than these few aerial photographs, virtually nothing is left to identify the route and the content of defences. The purpose of this article is to present a summary picture of what was once in place to defend the peninsula, and the

nation, from attack.

The scale of the engineering challenge is immense; the routes of not one, but two, Anti-Tank (AT) ditch systems are evident from the photographs.



Figure 1 A typical Anti Tank Ditch

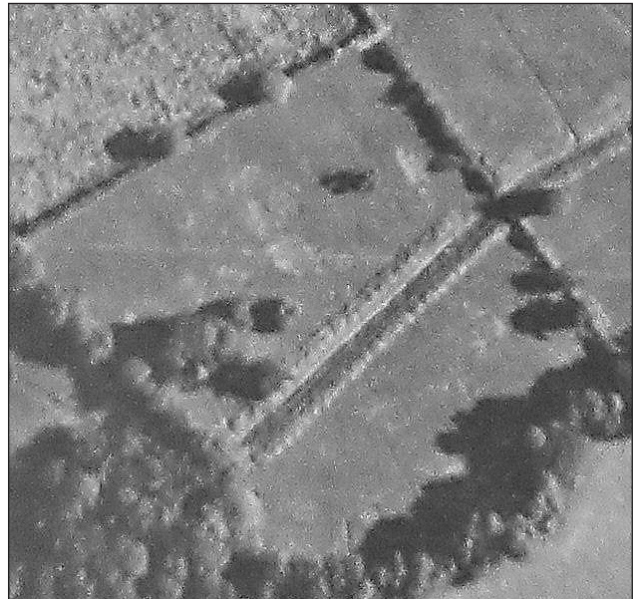


Figure 2 The dark blue AT Ditch in Figure 3, south of Capel Hall Farm

What is an Anti-Tank ditch?

We do not have a terrestrial photograph of part of the Felixstowe barrier, but an image exists from a contemporaneous structure in Surrey (*Figure 1*). Assuming the young soldiers

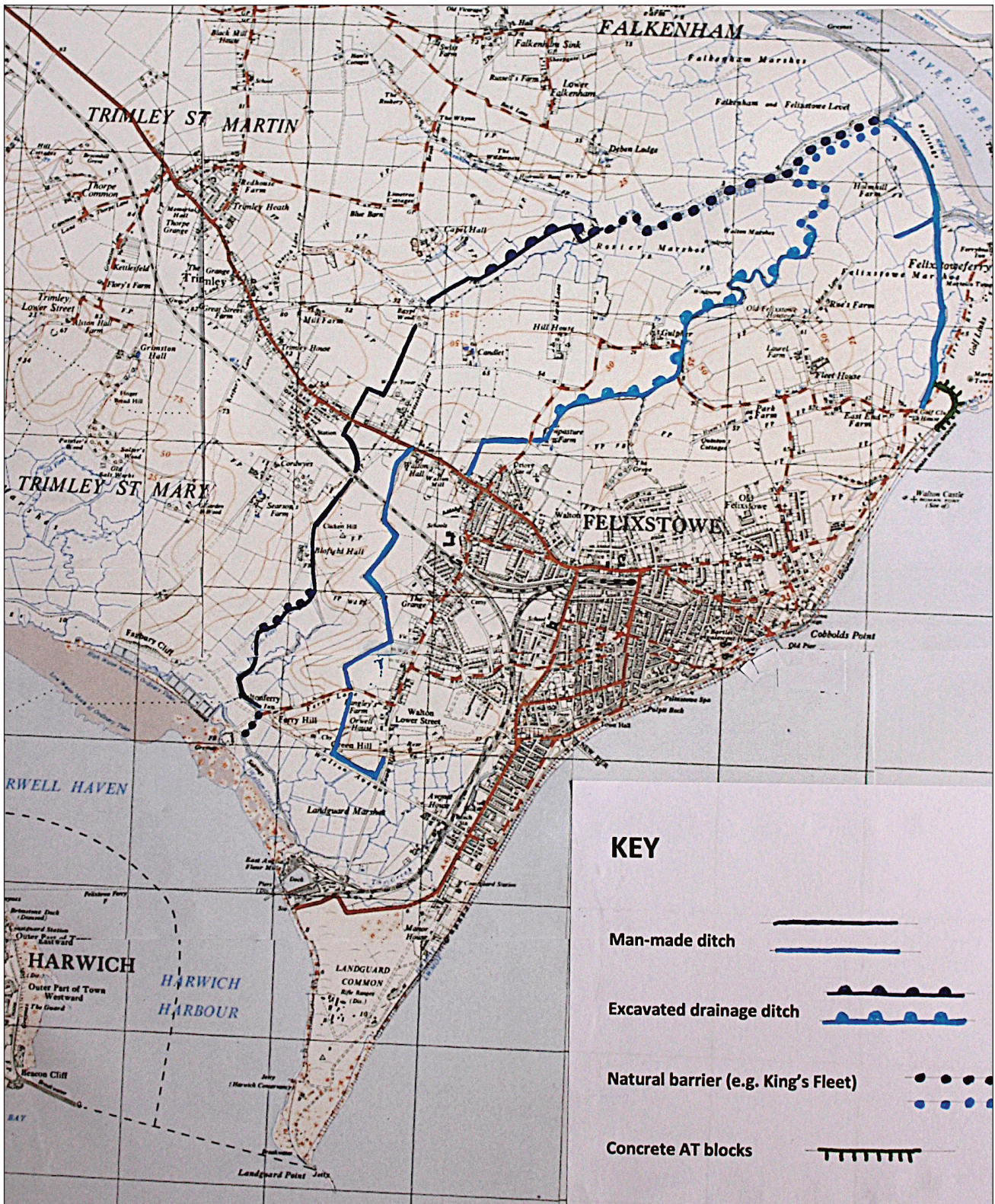


Figure 3 AT ditches and obstacles around Felixstowe on map circa 1939

were about 5'8" tall, it can be estimated that the ditch was about 18 feet wide and about 12 feet deep. In some cases, the spoil from the excavation was piled up on the top of either bank to provide an additional barrier. Sometimes interspersed with natural features such as existing drainage ditches, this was what

the AT defences looked like. Some critical parts of the chain were defended by strongpoints, using pillboxes, AT guns, 'hedgehogs'** and barbed wire.

Where were the lines?

The dark blue ditch (author's terminology, see Figures 2 and 3) traversed the entire peninsula

from what is now Dock Gate 2 on the Byle Marshes (now concreted over), to beyond Capel Hall Farm to the Rosier Marshes. The line penetrates Egypt Wood, but it is not known if any remnants of the ditch remain covered by the woodland. The idea was to stop any tanks moving from the landing-grounds at Felixstowe up to the higher ground of the peninsula towards Ipswich or Martlesham. It effectively sliced the peninsula in two, crossing the High Road just east of Trimley Station where Faulkener's Way (east) now exists. The length of this structure was approximately 5km, with strongpoints in evidence at the southern end and also near to where the ditch crossed the High Road and railway line. This ditch may have been positioned in this way to deter an assault on the Port from the landward side.

The light blue ditch (also shown in *Figure 3*) had the different purpose of completely encircling the Town and also isolating Felixstowe Ferry. It started at approximately where Dock Gate 1 now stands (a heavily-fortified area with Anti-Aircraft (AA) guns and balloon sites), progressing through what is now the Grange Farm area to just to the west of Walton Hall where it crossed the High Road. A section seems to be missing north of the road, but this was where the HQ of the Home Guard, with rifle range and probable AT strongpoint, was stationed. The area north and south of the road was heavily fortified. The track of the light blue ditch is picked up again a few hundred yards east heading towards the ponds at Cowpasture Farm. From that point, it is a fair conjecture that the water-course from there to Gulpher formed a good anti-tank defence, continuing onto the Felixstowe Marshes to the north of Rue's Farm. From there the route of the ditch is a bit unclear, but we know of a post-war report of an east-west ditch being filled in at the northern end of the Tomline Wall. This sea-wall was modified as an AT ditch terminating south just opposite the Felixstowe Ferry Golf Clubhouse. This area was bristling with military strongpoints. To complete this impressive defensive feat, a line of

Anti-Tank (AT) concrete blocks was put in place between the end of the Tomline Wall and the start of the cliffs to the east of the Golf Clubhouse. Thus both Felixstowe Town and the hamlet of Felixstowe Ferry were completely encircled by an impressive system of Anti-Tank structures. This was a total of about 7km in length. Such an obstruction was designed to prevent the break-out of troops and tanks landed by sea or by glider south of King's Fleet. There is also photographic evidence (1) that at vulnerable parts of the beaches between Landguard and Felixstowe Ferry, rows of anti-tank concrete blocks, mines and other anti-invasion defences were located, as well as gun emplacements pointing seaward at sea level - eleven in number in the short distance between the Pier and Cobbold's Point (2). Any full-scale assault on the peninsula landing at Felixstowe would have presented the invaders with formidable obstacles to success.

It is a pity that such heroic efforts to defend the peninsula and the nation are all but obliterated except for some fragile aerial photographs, but we should be thankful that the defences were not used in anger thanks to the heroism of 'the Few' in the Battle of Britain, which put an end to Hitler's plans of an invasion of our shores.

(1) *A Guide to Second World War Archaeology in Suffolk* by Robert Liddiard and David Sims. Barnwell Press, 2014, p8, available at https://heritage.suffolk.gov.uk/media/pdfs/ww2_guide-book3_orford_to_felixstoweweb.pdf

(2) *Ibid.* p9.

(3) *For defences around the Golf Clubhouse see (heritage.suffolk.gov.uk/Monument/MXS19263). Permission to reprint part of R.A.F. photograph 106W/LA/1 4026-4028 18-APR-1944 (Figure 2) by English Heritage is gratefully acknowledged.*

** Most likely, built by men of the 55th (West Lancs) Infantry Division and local private contractors.*

***A 'hedgehog' was a barrier of cross-metal spikes set in concrete.*

Colin Millar

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY
Day Visit to Thetford
Monday 10th July 2023

We hope that you will join us
for this day visit to Thetford
leaving Great Eastern Square,
Hamilton Road, Felixstowe
(opposite the Orwell Hotel) at 9.00am.

We will arrive at Thetford at about 10.15am
for a Guided Heritage Tour
which looks at the History of The Guildhall
and the History of its Assizes Court.

We will then have time
for a cup of tea or coffee followed by
a 45-minute play about two of Thetford's
most famous convicts.

From about 12.15pm
we will have free time for lunch
and to explore Thetford before returning
to The Guildhall for Afternoon Tea
which will be served at 3.00pm.

We will leave Thetford at about 4.00pm
for our return to Felixstowe.

The cost for the day will be
£40.00 per person and everything
will be included except lunch
and a tip for our driver.

Early booking is recommended as we
will be travelling in a 28-seater coach,
and I look forward to receiving
your completed Application Form
and your payment.

Looking forward to seeing you.
Best wishes,

Keith Horn

APPLICATION FORM
Day Visit to Thetford
Monday 10th July 2023

I would like.....Tickets for the
Visit to Thetford on Monday 10th July
at £40.00 per person.

The names of those attending are

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.....

I enclose a cheque for £.....
made payable to The Felixstowe Society.

Name.....

Address.....
.....

Telephone Number.....

Email address.....

Please return this Form, Payment and a
Stamped Addressed Envelope to
Mrs Susanne Barsby,
1 Berners Road, Felixstowe, IP11 7LF.



FELIXSTOWE AND DISTRICT COUNCIL FOR SPORT AND RECREATION

Please make your cheque payable to
The Felixstowe Society and return it
with this form and include
a stamped addressed envelope
to

Mrs Susanne Barsby
1 Berners Road, Felixstowe IP11 7LF

Many thanks

PROBABLY BEST KNOWN for its annual Mr. Cobbler Sports Awards, which recognise achievement by local sports players and club officials, this award-winning local Sports Council is the umbrella body for some 30 affiliated sports clubs with around 5,000 players.

Founded in 1964 to develop sports facilities in the town, this aim continues through the Executive Committee of 12 volunteers, with two members of grant-aiding Felixstowe Town Council and one each from Trimley St. Martin and Trimley St. Mary Parish Councils.

This area's sporting, recreational and play needs are reviewed and development is encouraged by lobbying East Suffolk Council, particularly in respect of a replacement for Felixstowe Leisure Centre and Brackenbury Sports Centre, due in 2027-2028, to provide facilities at sports hubs for football, cricket, hockey and rugby and to improve play areas.

Encouragement is given to greater participation by all sectors of the community – especially to younger and older people.

The Inter-Town Sports Challenge between Felixstowe and Woodbridge, is organised annually for some 200 participants in indoor and outdoor activities.

Over £100,000 of fundraising has provided the community with basketball courts at Cavendish Park and Walton Recreation Ground, the Eastward Ho Fitness trail, many 5-aside football pitches on green spaces and other equipment.

For an annual subscription of only £5, affiliated clubs can seek advice on fundraising, volunteering and a small annual grant for basic equipment together with access to interest-free loans.

Further information is available at www.felixstowesport.co.uk and 01394 213071.

Michael Sharman



THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY
Social Evening
Friday 21st July 2023

We are pleased to inform you that we are holding another Social Event at Harvest House and hope that you will be able to join us. We are extremely grateful to the Directors of Harvest House Ltd for again allowing us to use their facilities.

A buffet supper will be provided but please bring your own drink and glasses.

To provide entertainment this year we welcome Suzanne Hawkes and friends who are members of the Black and White Productions of Felixstowe. Suzanne's friends are Bill and Stephanie Stoddart. Bill will be playing the Grand Piano and/or Keyboards, Stephanie will be singing, and Suzanne will be acting and entertaining.

As usual we will be holding a raffle and would welcome raffle prizes, please.

Prizes can be delivered to me at 75 Ferry Road, Felixstowe, IP11 9LU or I will be pleased to collect by contacting me on 01394 270845 or email at kjandehorn@btinternet.com

The evening will commence at 6.00pm sharp and the cost will be £23.00 per person. (the first increase since 2019) and as usual early booking is recommended as we are sure that Suzanne, Bill and Stephanie will be very popular.

Please note that this event is for Felixstowe Society members only. However, if you have friends who you would like to bring, then get them to join. Annual Subscription £10.00 for a Single Person and £15.00 for two persons living at the same address.

Dress code for this event is smart casual please. I look forward to seeing you. *Keith Horn*

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY
Social Evening
Friday 21st July 2023

I would like Tickets for the Social Evening on Friday 21st July at £23.00 per person.

The names of those attending are

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

I enclose a cheque payable to The Felixstowe Society for £.....

Name.....

Address.....
.....
.....

Telephone No.....

Email.....
.....

Please return this form and payment with a stamped addressed envelope for the return of your tickets to
Mrs Susanne Barsby
1 Berners Road, Felixstowe IP11 7LF



Please complete the form overleaf
and return with your payment
and a stamped, addressed envelope
to receive your tickets
to

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

Many thanks

THE FELIXSTOWE AUTOTEST

ORGANISED BY Eastern Counties
Motor Club Ltd, the Felixstowe Rally
was first held in 1951 as a 250 mile
event, which combined timed road sections and
special tests. If unusually there was a tie in the
final results, then two tests were set up in the
car park of the former Cavendish Hotel in Sea
Road.

Over time, these tests were developed into a
specialised sport in their own right, together
with the introduction of 'special' cars of
various shapes and sizes which had such
features as 'fiddle brakes', so that a car could
achieve a spin by the use of a hand-operated
brake to lock one of the two rear wheels.

Challenged drivers had to show their prowess
by such timed tasks as tight turns and precise
stops near markers.

From the 1970s to the 1990s, the Felixstowe
Autotest gained a national reputation as the
best in the country and so attracted
competitors from all four home nations and the
Irish Republic. Large crowds were attracted at
various venues along the seafront, where
challenging courses were created outside the
Spa Pavilion, the Pier Bight and on Ranelagh
Road and Landguard car parks. These
attendances in turn helped to gain local
sponsorship for the event, with presentations
made after the afternoon's results were
announced.

Such was the popularity of the Felixstowe
Autotest, that the story goes that one Sunday
lunchtime the former Radio Orwell in Ipswich,
had to broadcast an appeal that people should
NOT go to Felixstowe, as between them, the
Autotest and the Old Vehicle Run had already
attracted such a crowd that traffic was
stationary right back to the Trimleys, with no
parking space available anywhere in the town.

Michael Sharman



THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY
Archive Exhibition
At Harvest House
Sunday 20th August 2023

This popular event is being held,
once again, in the glorious surroundings
of the Palm Court in Harvest House.

There will be plenty of photographs,
documents, maps and objects to enjoy
particularly as 2023 is
'The Year of The Pier,'
so tribute will be paid to the history
of our iconic Pier.

In addition to the Exhibition,
you will be able to visit the Private Gardens
and enjoy a secluded and peaceful walk.

The Exhibition will take place
on Sunday 20th August 2023
between 2.00pm and 4.30pm and
as last year the Exhibition will be held
in The Palm Court and refreshments
will be served in the Dining Room.

As in previous years 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 .
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 at Harvest House.

There is ample street parking
or at Ranelagh Road Car Park.

The cost for this event is £8.50 per person
to include Entry to the Exhibition,
The Gardens and Refreshments.

Keith Horn

APPLICATION FORM
Archive Exhibition
At Harvest House
Sunday 20th August 2023

I/We would like.....Tickets
for the Archive Exhibition
at Harvest House
on Sunday 20th August 2023
between 2pm and 4.30pm
at a cost of £8.50 per ticket

The names of those attending are

Name/s.....

Address.....

Telephone No.....

Email Address.....

I/We include a cheque
made payable to The Felixstowe Society
for £.....

Please return your completed form
and payment to
Mrs Susanne Barsby,
1 Berners Road, Felixstowe, IP11 7LF

Please include a stamped addressed envelope
to receive your tickets.



Please return your completed form
and payment to
Mrs Susanne Barsby,
1 Berners Road, Felixstowe, IP11 7LF

Please include a stamped addressed envelope
to receive your tickets

Many thanks

Book Review

‘THE FELIXSTOWE FLOODS OF 1953 - NEVER TO BE FORGOTTEN’

This book is by Jean Macpherson, who was born in Felixstowe, and after gaining her degree, taught at the Deben High School for some 37 years, becoming a keen local historian on the way.

The book is dedicated to the 41 people who lost their lives in the Flood, and also commemorates the 70th anniversary of the event. Jean has researched the circumstances of many of those who died in the floods, which are sad but interesting to those who weren't there.

She explains in the book that there was no expectation of flooding on the fateful night of Saturday 31st January 1953 - just severe gale warnings, but in the end 307 people from the East Coast, and 1,800 from the coasts of Holland and Belgium lost their lives.

Part of the problem was the speed of events, and the lack of quick communication systems, so no warnings were received in Felixstowe, although they were given to the citizens of Harwich, who were able to take action. It is difficult to realise that during the 1950's the giving of warnings was very rudimentary. This lesson was taken on board by the authorities and since then good warning systems have been put in place.

In fact the water came into the lower lying parts of Felixstowe along Langer Road from the port area rather than over the beach, so higher standing premises along the coastal road were places of refuge for those surviving, foremost among them, the Cavendish Hotel.

The book gives the timeline of events as they happened and there are some harrowing stories of those who died, and those who survived.

Surprisingly four members of the military lost their lives, including Raymond Pettitt, aged 28, who was on leave to visit his wife and two



children living in a prefab in Orford Road. They all perished. The prefabs had been erected to provide emergency housing after the losses during the War, but many were on low-lying ground and were therefore prone to the flooding which cost so many lives.

John White, the current harbourmaster at the Ferry, recalls how the *Ferry Boat Inn* was flooded to the depth of 5 feet, with the barrels in the tap room bumping against the ceiling. The book details the work of the Ferry community rescuing people stuck in houseboats, ramshackle bungalows and even an old repurposed bus. The one casualty at the Ferry was Vera Broom, who lived in Knowle Cottage, but was unable to escape. She was eventually rescued and taken to the *Ferry Boat Inn*. A doctor was called, who managed to get there via the higher ground of the Golf Course, and Vera was transferred to Felixstowe Cottage Hospital where she died 12 days later, her death attributed to her

horrendous experiences.

The clean-up afterwards was a daunting task, but the public reaction to the flooding was immediate and generous, with gifts of toys, clothing, accommodation and cash raised by public donation. Many well loved but ruined items were soon replaced.

Today, as well as the memorial on Langer Road which has recently been refurbished, we can see the empty Holmhill Farmhouse on the field near Felixstowe Ferry, which was never again occupied after salt water ruined the land for several decades.

Jean has written a wonderful book as a result of her meticulous research which is well recommended to those interested in this major incident in Felixstowe's history

*Published by Jean Macpherson,
printed by Colour print of Norwich.*

*All profits will be donated to Langer Primary Academy.
Haley Dossor*

ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND SCHEDULED MONUMENTS

ALTHOUGH TECHNICALLY there are Ancient Monuments and Scheduled Monuments, in practice, the terms are inter-changeable. Both are nationally important archaeological sites or historic buildings.

Scheduling is the United Kingdom's oldest form of heritage protection and goes back to the 1882 Ancient Monuments Act currently updated by the 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act. The latter Act states that designation cannot be applied to a building used as a dwelling nor to a building used as a place of worship.

However, designation is available to protect heritage assets from damage and destruction because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest. This extra legal protection against unauthorised change exists for about 20,000 scheduled monuments in the United Kingdom, representing some 37,000

heritage assets.

Any building or structure, cave or excavation on the land or on the seabed within territorial waters, or the remains of one, can be a scheduled monument. Purely natural sites are designated under other legislation. Accordingly, a scheduled monument does not have to be ancient or even above ground.

The original schedule of ancient monuments comprised almost exclusively pre-historic sites such as Stonehenge, Grimes Graves and Avebury. However, nowadays there are some more recent monuments which are scheduled such as World War Two military fortifications and abandoned collieries. So it is that the terms Ancient Monuments and Scheduled Monuments are in practice interchangeable.

The owner of a Scheduled Monument, who wishes to carry out works either above or below ground to the monument must apply for prior written permission from the Secretary of State



The site of Walton Old Hall in Dellwood Avenue Sports Field, a Scheduled Monument



Paul Sanderson

The Church of St Andrew, Felixstowe a Listed Building

for the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

Locally, Landguard Fort is an Ancient Monument whereas the site of Walton Priory near Ataka Road, Walton and Walton Old Hall site in Dellwood Avenue Sports Ground, Martello Tower T at Felixstowe Ferry Golf Course and Martello Tower U at Felixstowe Ferry are Scheduled Monuments.

AN UPDATE ON LISTED BUILDINGS

LISTED BUILDINGS have special architectural and historic interest and are under the consideration of the local council's planning department, so that they can be protected in the future and cannot be demolished without special permission.

The National Heritage List for England, maintained by Historic England, contains a variety of listed buildings in Felixstowe, ranging from exceptional Grade I building Landguard Fort to Grade II* important buildings of more than special interest such as Walton Hall, High Street and the Church of St Andrew to Grade II

special interest buildings such as Harvest House and Martello Tower Q on South Hill.

Now, architect Will Arnold, in an article in the *Architects' Journal*, has advanced the idea of a Grade III listing for all many millions of every previously unlisted building. Mr Arnold wrote that this automatic status application would 'come with just one rule: the property may only be demolished if structurally unsafe or given special dispensation.'

Many architects have supported the idea that there should be exploration of the prospect of buildings being refurbished before they are demolished. Not only would this be a quick way to provide somewhere for work, leisure or much-needed housing, but new lease of life would also be given to previously unsightly structures and further neglect avoided.

The requirement to consider whether every Grade III building had the opportunity for re-use would save many historic buildings from demolition. It would also have the real benefit of being environmentally friendly, by cutting carbon emissions from their demolition and removal of rubble.

Both articles by Michael Sharman

