

The Felixstowe Society MAGAZINE



Issue No. 133 September 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.

CONTENTS OF THIS ISSUE

Front Cover

Photograph courtesy of Alan Boyle
Everything Felixstowe and Beyond

- 1 The Chairman's Notes
- 2 Planning Applications
- 4 More Memories of My Time Working at Harvest House
- 6 From the Forth Bridge to Ladies Corsets While Seeking the Source of the Nile
- 9 Speaker's Evenings 2023
- 11 Gulpher Pond
- 12 The 125th Anniversaries of Felixstowe Town Station and The Orwell Hotel
- 14 It Must Be In The Genes
- 16 It Had To Be A Steam Locomotive!
- 17 ...But Just Fourteen Days Later
- 18 Paul Sanderson's 'Cigarette Cards'
- 19 Felixstowe Museum - 3 for '23
- 20 The Loss of H.M.S. Gipsy, part 2
- 23 An Embarrassing Predicament
- 24 Felixstowe Beach Hut & Chalet Association
- 25 We Hand Over the Lamp of Life
- 28 Nurse Training in the Fifties
- 30 Phil's Sunday Walks and Graffiti
- 31 The Society's Holiday to Lincoln 2023

Inside Back and Back Cover

Photographs of the Lincoln Holiday

SPEAKER'S EVENINGS 2023-2024

Held in the Salvation Army Church Hall, Cobbold Road. Doors open at 7pm for 7.30pm.

Admission charges

£2 for members and £3 for non-members.

SEPTEMBER 26th 2023

The Eyes of the Few - a brief history of radar by Keith Willetts of Bawdsey Group

OCTOBER 24th

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission by Bev Boyce

NOVEMBER 28th

Thomas Cavendish, Navigator or Pirate? by Cathy Shelbourne

JANUARY 23rd 2024

Antarctica by Charles Parfitt

FEBRUARY 27th

The Suffolk Punch Trust by Barry Bloomfield

MARCH 26th

The Royal Year by Ken Stone

APRIL 23rd

Architecture by Brian Ansell

MAY 28th

The AGM followed by a talk by Derek Peters
subject to be advised

SEPTEMBER 24th

A talk by Lynn Mortimer
subject to be advised

OCTOBER 22nd

An A to Z of Ipswich by Sarah Doig

NOVEMBER 26th

Details to be advised

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY CONTACTS

Jan Garfield 01394 210887 *Chairman*

Roy Gray 01394 285827 *Joint Vice Chairman*

Keith Horn 01394 270845 *Joint Vice Chairman*

Derek Bundock 07739 146964 *Secretary*

Hilary Eaton 01394 286733 *Treasurer*

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

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

Our thanks go to Roger for organising deliveries and, of course, to his team.

THE CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

HELLO EVERYONE, I am thrilled to be writing these first notes for The Felixstowe Society MAGAZINE. However, those of you who have sharp eyesight will have noticed that we are carrying on with consecutive numbers. We had considered starting at number 1 but it was pointed out that it is an historic number from the start of the Newsletters and it would be a shame to interrupt this. We have decided to call the Newsletter, The Magazine, as we all thought that it was just too professional to call it a Newsletter. Thank you to all who contacted us with your views. All positive I might say. So again thanks and congratulations go to Peter Constable and his sub committee. However, I have been asked to say that, to keep up the standard and interest, we need articles from YOU the members and friends. Send these to **design.constables@btinternet.com**

I do hope that you are all enjoying the Summer. An amazing June and a not quite so good July. As I am writing this it is raining but the gardens certainly need the water! I watered the garden this morning and my neighbour said "I don't know why you are doing that, we are forecast rain later". He was right! What I do miss during the Summer months are the Speaker's Evenings. We had some cracking ones to finish the season, thanks to Roy, and he tells me that he has a full programme starting in September. Incidentally, it is so nice to welcome Roy back after his long time of incapacitation and he seems to be improving every day.

However, with no Speaker's Evenings, the outings and entertainments come into their own so brilliantly organised by Keith and Elizabeth Horn. Jon and I went on the holiday to Lincoln on a hot weekend in May. It was an amazing trip and thoroughly enjoyed by all. I think Lincoln Cathedral can hold it's own against any in the British Isles. However, with all the wonderful places that we saw, my most strange moment was when our lovely lady coach driver took us down a lane with grass growing down the middle and which was getting narrower and narrower! We then came to a T junction where she had to turn this great vehicle left with

ditches on each side. We made it!

Back in April, we were approached by Travel Watch to give them some advice on the 125th Anniversary of the Felixstowe Station as they wanted to have a small celebration. Five of us went along to the first meeting in the lounge at The Orwell and, after some discussion it was decided to ask the Hotel if they would like to join in as it was their anniversary as well. They agreed. Anyway, the idea grew like Topsy and ended up with an amazing celebration on 1st July, which was enjoyed by hundreds of people. Thanks to Bryan Frost from TravelWatch for his original idea and to their Committee, led by Richard Holland, who ran with it.

We are now looking forward to the Summer's entertainments. Unfortunately, Keith has had to postpone the first outing which was the trip to Thetford. Apparently, the whole of the Town Hall tower is unstable and is now covered in scaffolding which also compromised the cafe where we were to have tea. Hopefully this trip can be rescheduled when the scaffolding comes down. Sorry to everyone who were looking forward to it but am sure you understand. We still have our Social Evening at Harvest House with a Buffet Supper and Entertainment by Suzanne Hawks and Friends on Friday 21st July and the Archive Exhibition in the Palm Court of Harvest House on Sunday 20th August.

Lastly, we have co-opted two more committee members since the AGM. These gentlemen were both VOLUNTEERS so we invited them along to a Committee Meeting to see whether they were still interested after they had seen what went on! They were so it was duly agreed to co-opt both of them. They are David Gledhill, ex managing director of the Port of Felixstowe and Chairman of the Felixstowe Museum and Darren Aitcheson, Town Councillor, Chairman of the local branch of the British Legion and organiser of the Festival of Lights for Remembrance etc. We welcome them both together with our other new member who was elected at our AGM, John Smithson. It is wonderful to have some new blood.

Jan Garfield, Chairman

PLANNING APPLICATIONS
COMMENTED ON BY THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY
FEBRUARY 2023 TO JULY 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/22/1955

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/22/2159/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/22/4418

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/23/0424

37 Ranelagh Road, Felixstowe

Proposal: Works to trees in Conservation Areas.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY has no objection to this proposal.

ESC DECISION: Approved.

Reference: DC/23/0507

11 Picketts Road, Felixstowe

Proposal: Insertion of dormer windows.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY has no objections to this proposal.

ESC DECISION: Approved.

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: 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: Approved.

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: Approved.

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: Approved.

Reference: DC/23/1773

Brandeston, Golf Road

Proposal: Alterations to garage/outbuilding.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY has no objections to this proposal.

ESC DECISION: Approved.

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.

Reference: DC/23/1683

22-24 Hamilton Road, Felixstowe

Proposal: 2 external window awnings.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY has no objections to this proposal.

ESC DECISION: Approved.

Reference: DC/23/1635

91 Western Avenue, Felixstowe

Proposal: Single-storey and rear extensions.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY would prefer to see a scheme with a larger extension to the rear to avoid conflict with the footpath.

Withdrawn.

Reference: DC/23/1612

109A Hamilton Road, Felixstowe

Proposal: Conversion of upper floors to self-contained flats.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY has no objections to this proposal.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting Decision.

Reference: DC/23/1614

30 Maybush Lane, Felixstowe

Proposal: Works to TPO tree

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY objects to the application as no justification for felling the Holm Oaks is provided.

ESC DECISION: Approved.

Reference: DC/23/2353

Homeorr House, Felix Road, Felixstowe

Proposal: Works to trees in conservation area.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY comments it is difficult to give comments on application involving works to trees when no plans are provided or posted on the public access.

However, in this case as they are apple trees, it is unlikely that it would have any significant impact on the Conservation Area.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting Decision.

Reference: DC/23/2291

109 Undercliff Road, Felixstowe

Proposal: Works to trees in conservation area.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY has no objections provided by that the Council's Arboriculturalist is satisfied that the works are necessary.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting Decision.

Reference: DC/23/2249

St Marys, Undercliff Road East, Felixstowe

Proposal: Installation of replacement UPVC windows.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY objects to the proposal on the basis that it is not clear what colour UPVC is being proposed.

The Felixstowe Society does not have an objection in principle to the use of UPVC in this particular instance but is concerned that the colour has not been specified.

ESC Decision: Awaiting Decision.

Reference: DC/23/2089

Undercliff Road West, Felixstowe

Proposal: Reinstatement of 14 beach huts.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY fully supports this proposal.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting Decision.

Reference: DC/23/2045

34 Maybush Lane, Felixstowe

Proposal: Renovation of existing detached 1970's building with replacement

UPVC windows and conversion of garage to studio.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY considers that this application would have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of the neighbouring property.

The Felixstowe Society recommends the application be refused.

ECS DECISION: Awaiting Decision.

Reference: DC/23/1986

Glenfield Court, Glenfield Avenue, Felixstowe

Proposal: Demolition of garages and erection of 6 flats.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY objects to the proposal. The proposal will represent overdevelopment of a back land site with inadequate access.

The flats on the upper floors would also overlook existing residential properties.

ESC Decision: Awaiting Decision.

DC/23/1945

The Firs Residential Home, 186 Grange Road, Felixstowe

Proposal: Replacement UPVC windows and doors

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY has no objection to this proposal

ESC Decision: Awaiting Decision.

MORE MEMORIES OF MY TIME WORKING AT HARVEST HOUSE

IF YOU LOOK at the Harvest House brick wall boundary, near the Bath Road junction, you will see two small sections cut out of the brickwork. These are examples of Second World War 'Loopholes', designed to be used to repel invaders and protect the defenders. Quite why they are in this particular position defies logic. I can only guess that someone at the Felix Hotel thought the Germans would invade by marching down Bath Road!

However, during my time as Services

Manager with Fisons, my involvement with this particular area of Harvest House was something completely different.

During the infamous 1978 'Winter of Discontent', there were widespread national strikes that impacted on every aspect of social and business life in this country. Lorry Drivers were not driving, Grave Diggers were not digging, Railways were not running, Miners were not mining and Bin Collectors were not collecting. This resulted in severe disruption and

shortages of absolutely everything.

Electricity supply to homes and businesses was restricted to specific time periods each day. The use of candles in homes and offices became commonplace. Just to make conditions even worse, the winter of 1978 was one of the coldest and snowiest for 16 years.

Despite this chaotic situation, it was essential that Fisons Fertilizer Division HQ at Harvest House was kept operational. Continuity of power for the computer system, which supported the central services for the entire Division including the many UK Manufacturing Sites, was particularly critical.

To help ensure a continuous power supply to Harvest House during the designated power 'blackout' periods, a large diesel Standby Generator and Storage Tank was purchased and sited inside the brick wall. The Diesel filler pipe went out through one of the 'Loopholes' and the exhaust pipe out of the other.

As the weather worsened, Harvest House became populated only by staff who lived locally in Felixstowe. Cars and buses could not get through from Ipswich on the old A45 (this was before the A14 was built). Gritter Drivers were on strike and six foot snow drifts had built up at Levington, making the road impassable. The paths and roads in Felixstowe were covered in deep snow and I would pull on my Wellington Boots and trudge to and from Harvest House each day.

The fact that the majority of Fisons Directors and Senior Managers could not get through to Felixstowe initially produced a period of light relief. I was able to get on with some proper work, rather than spend time on 'special projects' and 'assignments' that invariably never got completed and came back to bite me at Annual Review Time !

Everything was under control (or so I thought). My trusty spread sheet recorded the Diesel Deliveries and Daily Usage. The records indicated that our stock of diesel was adequate to see us through to our next scheduled delivery. My routine daily phone call to a Senior

Manager, safely tucked up in his cosy home in Ipswich, reassured him that everything was running smoothly.

And so it was, until a red faced George Horsley (Maintenance Supervisor) appeared at my office door and announced that the gauge on the Diesel Tank for the Generator was showing that we were close to running out. My initial reaction was a mixture of shock and disbelief. The impact of losing power to the building would be disastrous.

I donned my wellies, coat and scarf and went down to see for myself. Sure enough the gauge showed the diesel level was critical and I could see no sign of any leaks. A hasty phone call to our diesel supplier in Ipswich produced a sympathetic response, but didn't alter the fact that the roads were still impassable so they couldn't help.

In desperation, I made another visit to the Storage Tank along with George. Maybe I thought that looking at the gauge long enough would make it give a different reading (I had seen Uri Geller perform a similar trick on TV the night before!)

Suddenly I had a 'eureka' moment. I noticed that a wooden sleeper supporting one end of the diesel tank had collapsed, causing the tank to tilt away from the gauge and the feed pipe. If it was possible to get that end of the tank raised by a few inches then the supply level could be restored. I got George to summon his Maintenance Team and we headed over to the Bath Road Garage (this was originally the Felix Hotel Stable block). There in the loft we eventually found some old rusty hydraulic jacks, which we managed to bring to life using copious quantities of engine oil and WD40. George and his men then used these to lift the tank and recover the 'missing' diesel. Disaster had been averted.

I may have been too young to help protect the Felix Hotel from any invading Germans, but I like to think that I played my part in saving Fisons and Harvest House in their hour of need.

Jim Stafford.

FROM THE FORTH BRIDGE TO LADIES CORSETS WHILE SEEKING THE SOURCE OF THE NILE...

Historical Suffolk Building Scheduled for Demolition.

THE FATE OF a historical early 19th century Suffolk building used for over 130 years as Felixstowe golf clubhouse will be determined by current members of the club. When they re-appraise the financial viability of demolishing the existing clubhouse and building a new club.

The alternative being to preserve the historical house with financial support from some enabling development. Such support would also enable some new build within the existing elevations to enlarge the interior space and the services for golf and public functions. In a proposal drafted in 2019 by Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club Ltd with the assistance of East Suffolk Council's Head of Planning & Coastal Management and approved by ESC Planning Committee, the Club would be permitted to demolish their existing clubhouse and build five substantial private dwellings and a new clubhouse. The new clubhouse, to be built across the cliff top between the existing house and the sea, would also provide some café facilities for members of the public visiting the Clifflands area of Old Felixstowe. All new buildings will lie within the Suffolk Coasts and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The existing clubhouse is described* by Planning Officer Rachel Smith in her published report to Council as "a historical building."

(* in Condition 7.)

Origins of the present north facing wing and northeast corner of the building (photo on p.8) can be traced back to an 1825 plan prepared by then lease holder, farmer James Cook. Survey of fields and boundaries was already a precise science because of the Tithes system of land taxation. The ground plan of the substantial East End farm building and east to west farmyard enclosure of 1825 can be matched to

the high definition Ordnance Survey of 1880. An earlier map dated 1784 depicts a substantial house at East End farm.

Today, surveyors remain uncertain whether the two storey north facing wing predates the dominant three storey gabled northeast corner block. The enigma arises because the roof of the north facing wing is shaped to accommodate a window in the west wall of the corner block. The 1825 ground plan does not disclose how many storeys existed at that time.

By the time of the 1861 residential Census the main farm building was named "East End House". A smaller building closer to the highway, designated "East End Farm", had been built to accommodate the dairy woman, her labourer husband, four children, a widowed horseman and his daughter. This smaller building remains in use by the Golf Club today but will also be demolished.

Two of the coastal Martello Towers completed in the late stages of the Napoleonic wars remain visible from East End. The farm site is significantly older than the Towers.

The years between 1820 and 1860 are a dramatic period in British social history. A period in which several coastal locations gained a distinctive and more peaceful role. Some gentry and aristocracy had already recognised "Felixstowe Beach" as a potentially attractive "watering place" in accordance with latest fashion.

The nearest significant community was Walton. Old Felixstowe village being then a curious relic of Roman, Saxon and Norman times, lying halfway between Walton and the early coastal forts and priory near East End. Those cliff-top buildings were long ago brought down by a relentless encroaching sea and then pillaged for building stone.

Landowners and farm leaseholders recognised the value of enlarging buildings for seaside holiday letting. As well as speculating on or selling parcels of land near the beach for new houses and associated stables. Those who had the time and wealth to take seaside holidays did so with personal servants who also needed accommodation. Holiday visitors must have provided a useful financial cushion to coastal farming during the agricultural crises of that period.

In 1828 Suffolk landowner Baronet Sir Robert Harland also acquired a London townhouse in Richmond Terrace, on the bank of the Thames a stone's throw from Downing Street. His wife Dame Arethusa, nee Vernon, who loved and probably preferred to visit Felixstowe, started looking for rented summer lodgings near the sea. Historians say that Arethusa made many visits to Felixstowe and that Sir Robert had East End House improved for her. However in 1843 he built, at the foot of Maybush Lane close to the beach, a more elegant "marine residence" with Italianate features in the fashion of the time, which they then called Tamarisk Villa. Later, Vernon Villa but now known as Ridley House.

Today, most motorists only notice the rear of East End House and its later annexes. Cliff Road, which is used as the direct access to East End and Felixstowe Ferry hamlet, was only built in the late Victorian period, joining the original Ferry Road at East End and skirting the house curtilage. The back of the house now stands architecturally naked because the shroud of trees planted along Cliff Road at this point, which has also defined the boundary of the designated AONB, has succumbed to extended paving of the golfers' car park.

Few today recognise the significant role of Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club in nurturing Victorian arts, science and industry. Any golf course provides exercise and mental reinvigoration away from daily tasks and responsibilities. Any clubhouse provides a convivial meeting place irrespective of golfing

partnerships. But at Felixstowe in the 1870's some London-Scottish golfers, having sufficient time and wealth to travel, noticed the humpy tufted grassy "bentels" land along the coast between East End and the Ferry hamlet. Land reminiscent of the long established Scottish golf "links". This became one of the first true links courses in England in 1880 and immediately benefited from Colonel Tomline's new railway to Felixstowe with direct connections to London. Excellent clubhouse facilities were secured in 1884 when the Golf Club acquired from Colonel Tomline the lease of all of East End House that can be seen in the photo overleaf.

The house was extended with a south facing wing and subsequently provided dining, smoking, billiard and card rooms. Plus up to "eighteen excellent bedrooms" for golfers who chose to lodge there. Women golfers who by Victorian custom had a smaller segregated course and pavilion, and also family groups visiting Felixstowe, could find good accommodation at the Bath Hotel and several other Felixstowe lodging houses.

The individual achievements of most Victorians are lost today. It is thanks to modern research by the late Air Vice-Marshal Sam Goddard that the eminent status of most early Club members is known and recorded.

East End House has reinvigorated and nurtured several hundred of the most eminent minds in late Victorian Britain. Probably as wide a cross-section of thought and discussion as could be found in any city Club in London or the Provinces at the time. (See page 8).

Minds elsewhere applied to new challenges as diverse as constructing the Forth Bridge, brain surgery, mass production of ladies corsets, finding the sources of the Nile, and producing biscuits on a global scale.

From the first five years of membership, the Club could muster: 6 Knights, 15 Clergymen, 25 Colonels, 20 Barristers, 11 MPs, and 19 JPs. And such a list does not fully include some leading Surgeons, Engineers and Captains of Industry.



Some of the eminent early Club members who are still widely recognised today from their achievements and/or name, include the following:

Abbreviated List in alphabetical order:

<i>The Lyceum Theatre</i>	Arnold	<i>Design and manufacture of ploughs, agricultural machinery</i>	Ransome (three) also
<i>Brain tumour surgery</i>	Bennett	<i>engines, cranes and railways</i>	with Jefferies
<i>Corn Exchange and Post Office buildings Ipswich</i>	Binyon	<i>Discovery of Helium and founder of periodical Nature</i>	Lockyer
<i>Ipswich Cooperative Society</i>	Bugg	<i>Navy steam warship operation</i>	Lowrie
<i>Suffolk Cider</i>	Chevallier	<i>Expansion of Ipswich docks and warehousing</i>	Miller
<i>Brewing and the gift of Christchurch Mansion</i>	Cobbold	<i>Malting, public refuse collection and the TB Sanatorium</i>	Paul (two)
<i>Norfolk Mustard</i>	Colman (two)	<i>Astronomy. Expedition leader</i>	Plummer
<i>Castrol Oil</i>	Dick	<i>Mass production of ladies corsets</i>	Pretty
<i>The two founders of English Electric Company</i>	Kerr with Dick	<i>The National Telephone Company and steam chain ferry across the river Deben</i>	Quilter
<i>Modernised mental health care</i>	Eager	<i>Construction of Forth Railway Bridge - Chief Assistant Engineer and Designer of Wembley "eiffel tower"</i>	Stewart
<i>The County Medical Officer of Health and public lectures</i>	Elliston (two)	<i>Curator and development of Ipswich Museum</i>	Taylor
<i>Chemical fertiliser manufacture</i>	Fison and also Packard	<i>Designer of tea clipper Thermopylae</i>	Thomson
<i>A biscuits empire</i>	Frean (married cousin of Peek)	<i>Designer of rival tea clipper Cutty Sark</i>	Scot-Moncrief
<i>Ipswich Bank - issuing own banknotes</i>	Gibb (for Bacon, Cobbold & Co)	<i>Developer of Felixstowe resort, port, and railway line and first East Anglian resident to be cremated</i>	Tomline
<i>Second expedition to prove source of the Nile</i>	Grant (with Speke)	<i>Founder of East Anglian Daily Times</i>	Wilson
<i>Art Engravers</i>	Harral and also Keene	<i>Examiner and County Schools Inspector in science and art</i>	Woolner
<i>Hollesley Bay agricultural college</i>	Hervey		Peter Bridge
<i>Campaign for registration of nurses</i>	Havell		

SPEAKER'S EVENINGS - 2023

March 21st

'MY LIFE IN LOCAL RADIO'

by Mark Murphy

MARK MURPHY, the well-known Radio Suffolk presenter, gave us a very lively and amusing talk on his life in radio just prior to the end of his career at Radio Suffolk. Now there are 40 local radio stations, but Suffolk was a late starter beginning in 1990 when Radio Norfolk had been on air for ten years.

Mark emphasised the good work done by the station for the community - he mentioned the £3.5 million Treehouse appeal for the St Elizabeth Hospice; how there had been an appeal early one morning for re-housing 4,000 battery hens, of which 700 were successfully re-housed by 9.00am, and the remainder by the end of the day, and how the station had been the main source of information when schools had to be closed due to heavy snowfalls.

He was born in Ipswich Hospital and ended his schooling at Northgate Grammar School after his 'O' levels, when his suggestions to the careers teacher that he wanted to be a radio presenter were met with derision.

Mark left school and took an apprenticeship to become a motor mechanic at the local Mercedes dealership, where later he began a successful career.

Meanwhile his ambition to be a radio



presenter was honed by the purchase of a disco kit which he then used round local hotels and clubs for parties and weddings. As Radio Suffolk launched he applied for every job going, but was not successful until, prompted by a course at Radio Leicester, he applied offering his services for free. He was quickly employed as a volunteer, and later got a paid post by Radio Suffolk, eventually beating Terry Wogan's listener ratings, and in 2003 was awarded the Sony Gold Award for Radio Presenters.

Mark then told several anecdotes about his experiences at Radio Suffolk, such as the lady from Boxford who telephoned to say that she had been without power for two days and no one from the supply company had

come to her aid. After this was aired in the morning, two engineers turned up in their spare time to fix it that very evening.

He also told the story of an April Fool's Day when he had announced on air that a whale had appeared at Ipswich docks. Much derision ensued, until it was revealed that his wife Leslie Dolphin was there at the docks!

For another April Fool's prank Mark announced that roundabouts were to become allotments, and several people then rang in to say they'd like one - some preferring one with rabbits, and others without!

Doubtless, Mark Murphy will return with further stories on another occasion.

April 25th

'THE SIGN OF THE TIMES'

by Sarah Doig

SARAH DOIG, who is Suffolk born and bred, though for many years working in London for the Foreign Office, has returned to Suffolk and is writing various histories of the County.

She gave us one of her talks on Suffolk village

signs, which have a different and more modern history than pub signs, which date back many centuries. Village signs now number about 3,000 in the UK, with Suffolk (350) and Norfolk (500) being the leading counties to have them.

They were really started by Edward VII at Sandringham in 1912, and George V continued the tradition. A *Daily Mail* competition boosted the appearance of signs, and in 1937 George VI

inaugurated a new sign in Campsea Ashe.

Harry Carter was one of the leading carvers of village signs, one of the best of which is at Swaffham. He carved over 500 of them. Sarah's favourite, not by Harry Carter, is the large scale carving of a Thames barge as the village sign of Maldon, Essex.

A striking metal sign is at Conington in Cambridgeshire which depicts a Flying Fortress, of which many were flown from the nearby airfield by the U.S. Air Force.



Sarah Doig

Many of the signs are humorous - the one at Eaton near Norwich is of an elephant eating a large weight (eat a ton!), or the story of Babingley near Sandringham, depicting a beaver bishop. The story is that when he landed on the Norfolk coast, St Felix was guided to a safe landing spot by beavers, and St Felix immediately made one beaver a bishop!

Sarah had a good fund of stories about her excellent photos of village signs, which were much enjoyed by the large attendance.

May 23rd **'HENRY VIII'S WIVES'** **by Julie Kilbey**

JULIE GAVE US a most comprehensive biography of the six wives of Henry VIII and related them all to the current circumstances of his and their lives, together with references to the complications of obtaining divorces, and relationships with the Roman Catholic Church. This was an enormous subject to tackle, and Julie amazed us by how she had compressed so much information into an hour's talk.

She told us how Katherine of Aragon, Henry's first wife, had previously been married to his brother Arthur, who died aged 15, leaving Katherine a widow at the age of 16. There was then religious and family controversy, and they were eventually married in 1504.

Brought up by her mother and father Ferdinand in Spain, she was feisty, and was a warrior queen, as she led Henry's troops at the battle of Flodden whilst he was away fighting in France. She had numerous miscarriages, but eventually gave birth to Mary.

Henry then fell in love with Anne Boleyn, but there were then



terrible ructions with the Pope and the Roman Catholic Church as Henry sought a divorce. This became the King's 'great matter' as he and his advisors sought divorce, aided by Anne's protestant views. Archbishop Cranmer eventually declared Henry's marriage to Katherine to be void, and Henry married Anne in 1533. The Act of Supremacy in 1534 made Henry head of the Church of England, and a new church was created. However, Anne was disliked by the court with her modern religion and sharp tongue, and Mark Smeeton, a courtier, was judged to have slept with Anne. He was hung, drawn and quartered, and Anne was beheaded and buried in the chapel of the Tower of London.

Henry had fallen for Jane Seymour, a lady in waiting. They were betrothed the day after Anne's beheading. She was a devout Roman Catholic, and was against the Reformation, supporting Catholic activities. She became pregnant, gave birth to Edward, but died after childbirth in 1538.

Following this disaster, Julie then explained that England was isolated in Europe due to the Reformation, and Henry then

SPEAKER'S EVENINGS - 2023

March 21st

'MY LIFE IN LOCAL RADIO'

by Mark Murphy

MARK MURPHY, the well-known Radio Suffolk presenter, gave us a very lively and amusing talk on his life in radio just prior to the end of his career at Radio Suffolk. Now there are 40 local radio stations, but Suffolk was a late starter beginning in 1990 when Radio Norfolk had been on air for ten years.

Mark emphasised the good work done by the station for the community - he mentioned the £3.5 million Treehouse appeal for the St Elizabeth Hospice; how there had been an appeal early one morning for re-housing 4,000 battery hens, of which 700 were successfully re-housed by 9.00am, and the remainder by the end of the day, and how the station had been the main source of information when schools had to be closed due to heavy snowfalls.

He was born in Ipswich Hospital and ended his schooling at Northgate Grammar School after his 'O' levels, when his suggestions to the careers teacher that he wanted to be a radio presenter were met with derision.

Mark left school and took an apprenticeship to become a motor mechanic at the local Mercedes dealership, where later he began a successful career.

Meanwhile his ambition to be a radio



presenter was honed by the purchase of a disco kit which he then used round local hotels and clubs for parties and weddings. As Radio Suffolk launched he applied for every job going, but was not successful until, prompted by a course at Radio Leicester, he applied offering his services for free. He was quickly employed as a volunteer, and later got a paid post by Radio Suffolk, eventually beating Terry Wogan's listener ratings, and in 2003 was awarded the Sony Gold Award for Radio Presenters.

Mark then told several anecdotes about his experiences at Radio Suffolk, such as the lady from Boxford who telephoned to say that she had been without power for two days and no one from the supply company had

come to her aid. After this was aired in the morning, two engineers turned up in their spare time to fix it that very evening.

He also told the story of an April Fool's Day when he had announced on air that a whale had appeared at Ipswich docks. Much derision ensued, until it was revealed that his wife Leslie Dolphin was there at the docks!

For another April Fool's prank Mark announced that roundabouts were to become allotments, and several people then rang in to say they'd like one - some preferring one with rabbits, and others without!

Doubtless, Mark Murphy will return with further stories on another occasion.

April 25th

'THE SIGN OF THE TIMES'

by Sarah Doig

SARAH DOIG, who is Suffolk born and bred, though for many years working in London for the Foreign Office, has returned to Suffolk and is writing various histories of the County.

She gave us one of her talks on Suffolk village

signs, which have a different and more modern history than pub signs, which date back many centuries. Village signs now number about 3,000 in the UK, with Suffolk (350) and Norfolk (500) being the leading counties to have them.

They were really started by Edward VII at Sandringham in 1912, and George V continued the tradition. A *Daily Mail* competition boosted the appearance of signs, and in 1937 George VI

inaugurated a new sign in Campsea Ashe.

Harry Carter was one of the leading carvers of village signs, one of the best of which is at Swaffham. He carved over 500 of them. Sarah's favourite, not by Harry Carter, is the large scale carving of a Thames barge as the village sign of Maldon, Essex.

A striking metal sign is at Conington in Cambridgeshire which depicts a Flying Fortress, of which many were flown from the nearby airfield by the U.S. Air Force.



Sarah Doig

Many of the signs are humorous - the one at Eaton near Norwich is of an elephant eating a large weight (eat a ton!), or the story of Babingley near Sandringham, depicting a beaver bishop. The story is that when he landed on the Norfolk coast, St Felix was guided to a safe landing spot by beavers, and St Felix immediately made one beaver a bishop!

Sarah had a good fund of stories about her excellent photos of village signs, which were much enjoyed by the large attendance.

May 23rd 'HENRY VIII'S WIVES'

by Julie Kilbey

JULIE GAVE US a most comprehensive biography of the six wives of Henry VIII and related them all to the current circumstances of his and their lives, together with references to the complications of obtaining divorces, and relationships with the Roman Catholic Church. This was an enormous subject to tackle, and Julie amazed us by how she had compressed so much information into an hour's talk.

She told us how Katherine of Aragon, Henry's first wife, had previously been married to his brother Arthur, who died aged 15, leaving Katherine a widow at the age of 16. There was then religious and family controversy, and they were eventually married in 1504.

Brought up by her mother and father Ferdinand in Spain, she was feisty, and was a warrior queen, as she led Henry's troops at the battle of Flodden whilst he was away fighting in France. She had numerous miscarriages, but eventually gave birth to Mary.

Henry then fell in love with Anne Boleyn, but there were then



terrible ructions with the Pope and the Roman Catholic Church as Henry sought a divorce. This became the King's 'great matter' as he and his advisors sought divorce, aided by Anne's protestant views. Archbishop Cranmer eventually declared Henry's marriage to Katherine to be void, and Henry married Anne in 1533. The Act of Supremacy in 1534 made Henry head of the Church of England, and a new church was created. However, Anne was disliked by the court with her modern religion and sharp tongue, and Mark Smeeton, a courtier, was judged to have slept with Anne. He was hung, drawn and quartered, and Anne was beheaded and buried in the chapel of the Tower of London.

Henry had fallen for Jane Seymour, a lady in waiting. They were betrothed the day after Anne's beheading. She was a devout Roman Catholic, and was against the Reformation, supporting Catholic activities. She became pregnant, gave birth to Edward, but died after childbirth in 1538.

Following this disaster, Julie then explained that England was isolated in Europe due to the Reformation, and Henry then

met Anne of Cleves. She came from an unsophisticated court, but was a Protestant. She married Henry in 1540, but he couldn't stand her appearance or her manner. She was sent away from court to Richmond, and Henry soon divorced her.

Catherine Howard, by contrast, was lively and intelligent, and she was due to marry Francis Howard, but he was banished from Court, so she spent a summer of love with Henry and married him that year. However, Thomas Culpepper, a courtier, was discovered as

Catherine's secret lover, so they were both beheaded under a retrospective law which had been passed.

His last marriage was to Katherine Parr, a Protestant, who was clever and intelligent, but very religious, as she wrote books of prayers and debated with the King on religious subjects. However, in late 1546 Henry became ill, and died in 1548. As none of his children produced heirs, the Tudor dynasty was short lived under Mary, then Elizabeth 1st.

All three articles by Haley Dossor

GULPHER POND

GULPHER POND has been an attraction for parents and children for many years. Many Felixstowe residents have enjoyed the peace and tranquillity of this beautiful space and have been able to observe the flora and fauna, as well as feeding the ducks!

The Felixstowe Society, in conjunction with the Adams family, (who own the pond) became involved in restoring the pond some 35 years ago as part of The Society's desire to improve Felixstowe's environment.

The accumulated silt and vegetation were stifling the pond. This was cleared out to open up the pond and restore a natural habitat in which insects, such as dragonflies and damsel flies, as well as water birds could thrive. It also made them more visible to passers-by.

By the mid 90's, a repeat clearance was necessary and now the time has come for further clearance and restoration.

There is quite a lot of silt and leaf litter on the bottom

of the pond and reeds and bulrushes are encroaching on the open water from the eastern end.

In order to estimate the amount of work involved, it was decided to do a survey of the water depths and also to check how much silt

and debris had collected on the bottom of the pond.

This gave the opportunity for a few members and friends to put their nautical skills to the test and produce a grid of water and silt depths across the whole of the pond.

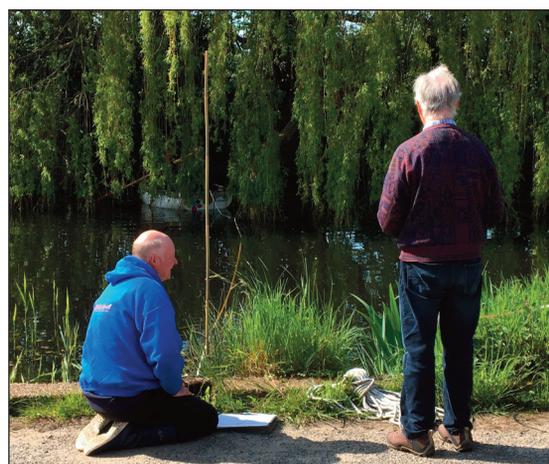
It was a happy occasion and reminiscent of *The Last of the Summer Wine!* (or was it *Two Men in a Boat??*)

The next steps are to decide how and when it can be done, the likely costs and to look for some sources of funding.

Keith Horn and a few willing helpers do a grand job clearing litter and annual vegetation growth on an occasional basis every year.



Three helpers and their dinghy at Gulpheer Pond



Note the dinghy under the willow tree and the transit pole and tape measure, to control the position of measurements

Guy Pearse

THE 125 YEAR ANNIVERSARIES OF FELIXSTOWE TOWN STATION AND THE ORWELL HOTEL

AS ADVERTISED in the May 2023 newsletter, The Society and others were planning events to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the opening of the station. So how did it go ?

Bigger and better and with more groups and individuals involved than we could ever have imagined back in January, when a small number of members of The Society first met with representatives of Felixstowe Travel Watch who themselves had been thinking about arranging a quite modest event.

Quite by chance we met for the first time for coffee and a chat in the lounge of The Orwell Hotel which quickly resulted in The Orwell Hotel management asking if they could be involved as it was on the 1st July 1898 that the hotel also opened for business.

On the Saturday of the event, in addition to The Society; Travel Watch and The Hotel, also contributing were East of England Co-operative (permission to use the original station building); Greater Anglia and the local Community Rail Partnership (organising a “Sea-side bucket and spade” special train outing for Brownies from Derby Road in Ipswich); the children and staff

from Langer Academy primary school (design a poster competition); Colin (with his scale model railway layout); the Felixstowe Museum (an archive of station photographs mostly unseen before); Felixstowe Radio (broadcasting interviews with people taking part in the celebrations); E.S.T.A. (travel information brochures and timetables); and local dignitaries including the Mayor, our Member of Parliament and a senior management representative from Greater Anglia, (all ‘meeting and greeting’ and making speeches).

The day’s programme began with an early morning start setting up the exhibits, displays, flags and bunting and a huge celebration cake in the old station; then over to the working platform to welcome the Brownies off the 10.24 arrival from Derby Road. Back to the station to look at the exhibits; applaud the speeches; be interviewed on the radio; mingling with the larger than expected number of visitors; rounded off by a piece of cake ceremonially cut by the Mayor; and a final hearty ‘three cheers for Felixstowe’. All jolly good fun.

In no time at all, it was then over to The Orwell Hotel for the afternoon celebrations.



prize-winning posters made by the youngsters from Langer Academy, with the Mayor presenting the competition prizes and congratulating everyone who had taken part. Musical entertainment provided by Hattie Bennett had been arranged by the Hotel, and most generously 125 (get it?) free servings of tea/coffee/cakes and sparkling wine.

As some may know, I had ‘a foot in both camps’ being a member of The Society and Chairman of Felixstowe Travel Watch, and while it isn’t possible to mention by name

everyone involved, I cannot end this report without a special vote of thanks to, the archivists Bev and the Museum, without whom there would not have been much of an exhibition; to the group who worked so hard arranging the youngsters’ poster competition; The Orwell Hotel management; Jenny for the cake; those who joined in the fun by being in costume, (I’d have felt a bit foolish if I’d been alone;) but mostly to all in the team that worked so well together. Thank You!

Richard Holland



Photographs by Jenny Holland and Garrett-Moore

IT MUST BE IN THE GENES!

MY LOVE OF SPORT came after I passed the 'Eleven Plus' examination and went to Woodbridge School where although being an average scholar, I excelled at all sports gaining my colours at Rugby, Hockey and Cricket. My cricket coach was Mr Norman Stevens who had played First Class Cricket for Northants before moving to Suffolk and 'The Eastern Counties' at rugby, also 'Suffolk Young Amateurs' at cricket. Leaving School I played cricket and football for Melton and this was when I met Jean, my wife.

In 1956 whilst playing football for Melton, we went to Portman Road for the 'Suffolk Minor Cup Final' where we beat a team from

joined the Metropolitan Police and after my training I was posted to Hornsey. In November 1958 I married Jean Ward, a nurse from the Ipswich and East Suffolk Hospital. I had met Jean at Melton Young People's Fellowship. We moved to Hornsey where our first son Stephen was born. Jean was lonely in London, so after almost four years, I left the force and we moved to Ipswich where our second son Andrew was born.

I started playing for Felixstowe at hockey and returning back to Melton for my cricket. We moved to Woodbridge and it wasn't long before I was captaining Felixstowe Hockey and Melton Cricket teams. Melton Cricket Club



Stowmarket. A month later I joined the Royal Army Medical Corps for my National Service where I became a squad instructor. I became a Corporal and taught drill, first aid and stretcher exercises etc. My love for sport was soon recognised and I was selected for the Corps cricket team and playing with future Test cricketers like Ken Higgs, (Lancs) and Dusty Rhodes (Derby). After my National Service, I

amalgamated with Fisons Cricket Club where I had several enjoyable seasons both as player and then Captain. Both of my sons became good club cricketers during this time. Fisons then sold their sports grounds at Bent Lane, Rushmere to Ipswich Town Football Club. It was then that I and my sons moved to Felixstowe Cricket Club at Dellwood Avenue.

I continued playing hockey for Felixstowe

until I was 55 when I had a hip replacement; my last game was in Paris against 'Racing Club De Paris' whilst on a veterans' tour. After recovery, I carried on umpiring for several seasons.

When I was playing cricket for Felixstowe, I was invited to play for Suffolk Over 50's. A county side to play competitive cricket against other Over 50's counties. After one season I was asked to become captain, a position I held for five years before becoming the team manager.

Seniors cricket is now the biggest competitive competition and now has Over 50's 1st, 2nd, 3rd; Over 60's 1st, 2nd, 3rd; Over 70's 1st and 2nd; and Over 75's.

I must say that Seniors cricket had been the most enjoyable cricket that I have played. Making good friends and spending wonderful times together. In 2001, we were invited to play in Barbados in their Seniors Festival which we won; so two years later we went back but were beaten in the semi finals. Then two years further down the line, we were invited back to take a

for three years as Vice Chairman for Suffolk Umpires Association and then a further three years as Chairman. I was also invited to Lords Cricket Ground to attend a presentation lunch for 'OSCA' (Outstanding Service to Cricket) which I attended with my wife Jean.

My eldest son is now playing Over 60's cricket, my grandson Daniel played for Norwich Reserves, whilst his brother Matthew played for England under 18's whilst in Ipswich Academy, before moving to Wycombe Wanderers playing 541 games before retiring and becoming 1st Team Coach, then Manager at Colchester United FC before becoming Manager back at Wycombe Wanderers, I also have a great grandson who is on Aston Villa's books aged 15.

Memories: - I have played, umpired and managed England - Rest of the World at the Test Ground in Barbados and spent a wonderful lunch with a real cricket legend, Sir Everton Weekes.

John Bloomfield



team and play in South Africa which was an amazing experience. I played my last game when I was 70 and I have just retired from umpiring at 85. I need a knee replacement.

I have been a regular umpire in the Two Counties League, also umpiring for the Royal Hospital School at Holbrook for the last 13 years where I umpired their 1st XI for firstly Don Topley, and then Graham Napier. I also served

ABOVE - Members of the Suffolk Over 50's squad at the presentation in 2001 by Sir Everton Weekes, fifth person in the back row.

LEFT OPPOSITE - Felixstowe Cricket 1st XI 1998 Standing left to right: Ian Connell; Callum Barker; Steve Foley; Matt Sale; David Rusby; Michael Collins; Ed Parker.

Seated: Four members of the Bloomfield family - Matt; Stephen; John and Daniel.

IT HAD TO BE A STEAM LOCOMOTIVE...

PERHAPS. But it was not *The Royal Scot*, *The Mallard* or *The Flying Scotsman*, but number 44932 *The Great Britain XV*, staying in Felixstowe station for just ten minutes.

However, it did attract a crowd in the region of 500 on the day, even in the cold and wet conditions - proving yet again, that steam engines remain great visual attractions for all ages, despite fifty years passing after their being replaced on the rail tracks of Great Britain.

Among those attending was our town Mayor, Councillor Sharon Harkin, who found herself in the cab for a photographic opportunity by Paul Sanderson. See below.

The stop at Felixstowe at about 11.55am on Sunday 23rd April was part of a nine day tour by The Railway Touring Company. The cost of which was £2,575 (£3,755 for 1st Class) which included overnight stays at first class hotels.



Paul Sanderson

...BUT JUST FOURTEEN DAYS LATER....

AFTER a rather miserable, wet Coronation Day, the next day for the Historic Vehicle Car Run was a complete contrast, with blazing sunshine - the warmest so far for 2023.

Felixstowe was buzzing with people attending all along the seafront, and over 500 vehicles turned out for this very special occasion, the 51st to be organised by the Ipswich Transport Museum.

The event was led by the Mayor Sharon Harkin in her usual cheerful manner aboard an open top bus.

A wide range of vehicles took part, from heavy lorries and buses, to cars built not later than 1993. As well as many well known British makes there was also a strong contingent of American cars and Army jeeps.

Haley Dossor

*Do you remember cigarette cards?
Whether you do or not,
turn the page to see
Paul Sanderson's collection of 'spoof'
cards from the Run*



PAUL SANDERSON'S 'CIGARETTE CARDS'



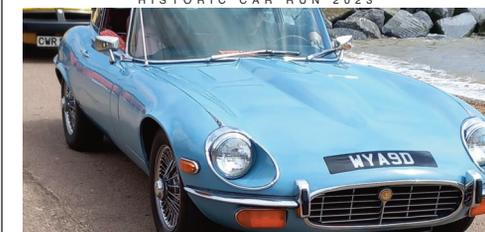
HISTORIC CAR RUN 2023

MINI COOPER



HISTORIC CAR RUN 2023

FORD ZODIAC MK III



HISTORIC CAR RUN 2023

JAGUAR E TYPE V12



HISTORIC CAR RUN 2023

CITROEN DS21 PALLAS



HISTORIC CAR RUN 2023

BENTLEY CONTINENTAL



HISTORIC CAR RUN 2023

FORD CORTINA MK 1



HISTORIC CAR RUN 2023

ROLLS ROYCE SILVER CLOUD 1



HISTORIC CAR RUN 2023

EASTERN COUNTIES BRISTOL LODEKKA BUS



HISTORIC CAR RUN 2023

CITROEN DS INTERIOR



HISTORIC CAR RUN 2023

ROLLS ROYCE GRILLE



HISTORIC CAR RUN 2023

TRIUMPH VITESSE CONVERTIBLE



HISTORIC CAR RUN 2023

FORD LOTUS CORTINA MK II



HISTORIC CAR RUN 2023

ASTON MARTIN DB4



HISTORIC CAR RUN 2023

MINI CLUBMAN ESTATE



HISTORIC CAR RUN 2023

VAUXHALL CHEVETTE SALOON



HISTORIC CAR RUN 2023

MORRIS MINOR 1000



HISTORIC CAR RUN 2023

AUSTIN CAMBRIDGE A55 FARINA

These are a few of the exciting vehicles that were seen at the Historic Car Run 2023, which culminated on the prom at Felixstowe on Sunday 8th May

FELIXSTOWE MUSEUM - 3 FOR '23

YES, THAT'S RIGHT, three 'must visits' here at the Museum down at Landguard for 2023.



1. The Port Room. Dedicated to the 'heartbeat of Felixstowe'. Our container ship scale models, artefacts and port equipment will escalate your interest and invoke memories (if you worked or work there), about this important part of our town. 'Well I never knew that', I hear you say, if port goings-on are new to you, that is....



2. 1953 Room. Here we remember significant

events of the year. One full of joy and happiness, namely the Coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Our six foot long scale model of the gold State coach and horses has, shall we say, a 'Wow' factor. The other being the terrible East Coast floods, remembered here in Felixstowe with sadness, poignancy and dignity. Our tableau explains and reflects that tragic January weekend. Although this room is part of the Museum, to visit it is free of charge. Our grateful thanks to Jean Macpherson and those who made it possible for us to have this fitting tribute .



3. The Beehive Cafe. Buzzing? Sure is. Airy, bright, opened Easter. Latte? Proper tea? Scone, real clotted cream and jam? Something hot? Toastie? Pannini maybe?. Coffee and walnut cake mmm. You choose. All served with the brightest and friendliest smiles in Felixstowe.

Ahh, memories and fun. For 2023, by demand our 1980's room, the one commemorating our 40th anniversary last year, has been revamped. Live aid concert on genuine 'posh' Bang & Olufsen telly. Scalextric racing, genuine Ford Escort XR3 cars.

On that note, looking forward to seeing you and yours here at the Museum at Landguard

Paul Sanderson, Volunteer

THE LOSS OF H.M.S. GIPSY

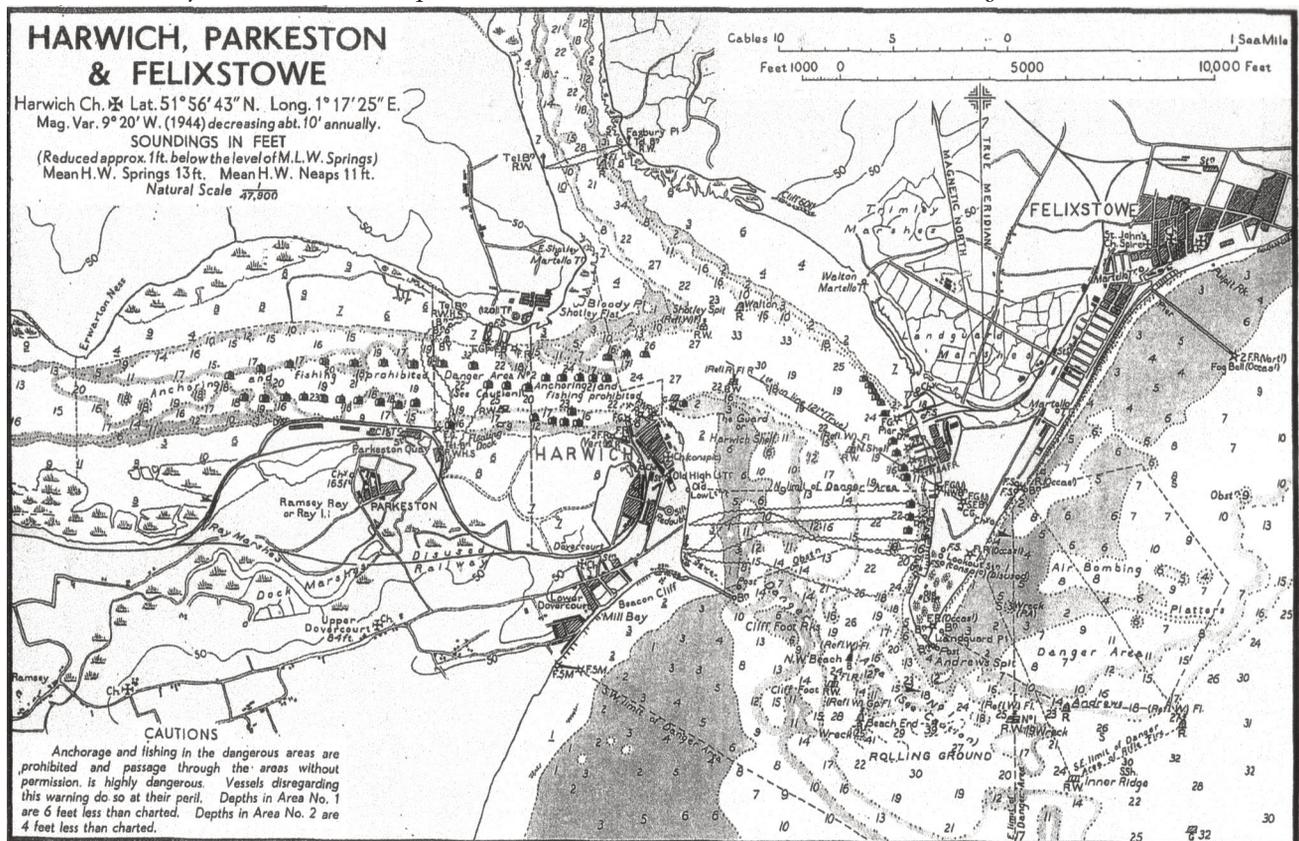
A STORY TO BE REMEMBERED by John P Cresswell (Captain retired)

Part Two *continued from Issue No. 132*

The Loss of 'H.M.S. Gipsy'

AT ABOUT 8pm that same evening, the 21st Destroyer Flotilla, Nore Command, based at Harwich received orders to leave harbour on patrol "with all dispatch". Prior to this, learning of the numerous reports of unidentified floatplane sighting earlier in the afternoon, twenty soldiers were ordered to search the Landguard foreshore whilst an Army launch and Naval drifter were tasked to search the harbour sighting area. Albeit that nothing untoward was found and that it was dark, no further action was taken. Flotilla Commander Captin George Creasy, (later Admiral Sir George Creasy GCB,CBE,DSC, MVO.) issued an order to "Proceed in execution of the previous orders", with all caution, when passing the harbour entrance keep as far to the starboard side of the channel as possible, leaving Cliff Foot buoy close to Port - repeat Port Hand.

At around 9pm, two hours after high water at Harwich, six destroyers were underway in line system of the Polish destroyer 'BURZA' (Squall) with Captain Creasy onboard leading the way to ensure that his Flotilla were mindful of his earlier caution. The 'BURZA' was followed by 'GRIFFIN', 'GIPSY', 'KEITH', 'BOADICEA', and the second free Polish 'GROM'. The first two destroyers passed through the now open harbour defence boom followed by the 'GIPSY' heading for the NW Beach buoy, but just short of the Cliff Foot bouy the 'GIPSY' unfortunately activated a mine. The 'Gallant' Class. 1.335 t.d. destroyer only built in 1935, was ripped apart with her back broken by the explosion, leaving her foc'sle and bridge above water. The remaining aft part of her hull submerged trapping her off-watch sailors and engine room stokers, who were unable to escape through her small side scuttles or the jammed deck hatches.

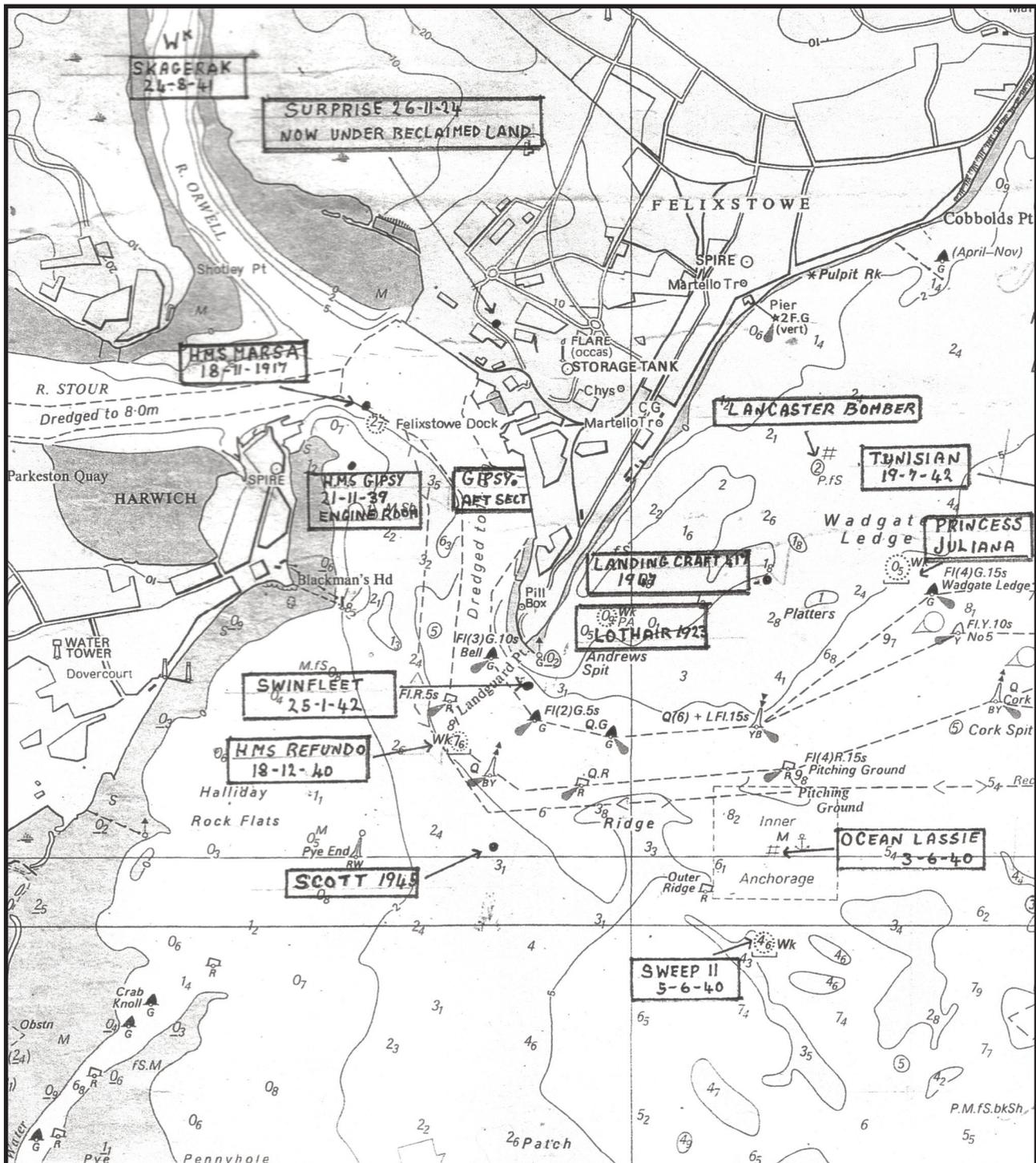


Admiralty Sailing Directions Chart of Harwich Harbour 1943 - most wrecks not shown for obvious reasons

The 'GIPSY's Captain, Lt Cdr Nigel Crossly was thrown off the bridge and on to the foc'sle, fracturing his skull, the 1st Lt Robert Franks was also thrown off the bridge onto the forward gun deck, luckily only being badly bruised and injuring his hand. Most of the officers and men on the upper deck had broken legs, concussion or both and were unable to move. More of the 'GIPSY's crew were blown overboard and a number were drowned.

The now hove-to Flotilla immediately launched their boats, soon to be joined by numerous small harbour craft, the Harwich lifeboat and tugs. The search continued in the darkness for survivors, many of whom were rescued but brought ashore suffering the effects of swallowing oil, cold water exposure, burns and other serious injuries, of which some men later died.

After an hour of a search and rescue attempt,



Harwich Harbour and immediate area showing wrecks, taken from Gray & Thompson's wreck chart

the remaining destroyers resumed patrol to sea, leaving search teams afloat and along the shoreline for the many still missing men. By daylight 29 men were still unaccounted for, and over the coming four months several of their corpses washed ashore. The death toll was feared to be over 50 of the 'GIPSY's compliment of 150, but later scaled down to 31. Nine of the dead including their Captain, who had survived for six days, were buried with full Military Honours in the Naval Cemetery at Shotley Church. Others were interred in their home towns, including an Ipswich sailor who was laid to rest in the Naval Section of the Town's Cemetery.

The Salvage Effort

IT HAS TO BE SAID that on entering World War Two, the Admiralty were not ready for salvage on a mass scale, and this issue was not fully addressed until a few months before hostilities began. They had scaled down their salvage department between the wars and were now left with little or no useful salvage plant of their own, and what they did have, was both ageing or inadequate. Therefore, it was found necessary to put all of Britain's private commercial salvage organisations under Admiralty control, under the Merchant Shipping and Salvage Act and Emergency Powers Defence Act. At this time there were some six major salvage firms from whom the Admiralty could utilise skilled personnel, their expertise, salvage craft and equipment. These salvage firms were each given responsibilities for salvage in appointed areas with Messrs Risdon Beazley Ltd of Southampton largely having the east coast, where they were assisted by the Felixstowe firm of the Gray & Thompson Salvage Co, mainly during the immediate post war years.

Over the very harsh winter of 1939-40, Admiralty salvage teams attempted to clear most of the 'GIPSY's' wreckage from the vital main shipping channel. This was an extremely hazardous task because although she had been

sunk by a severe explosion, she still had all her own unexploded ordnance and ammunition for her guns, depth-charges and torpedoes left among her wreckage. When this was cleared by salvage divers and the wreck made as safe as possible for the work to continue, two large salvage lighters on hire from the Port of London Authority were positioned alongside or over the top of the wreckage at low water, and were attached to the sections by heavy wire hawsers and hauled taught by winches onboard the lighters. With the rise of each tide, each section was gradually lifted further inshore, with the forepart of the foc'sle and bridge being beached on the Landguard foreshore, whilst the heavier waist and stern section was grounded on the shallow Harwich 'Shelf'.

By June 1940 the Admiralty teams were being assisted by the Risdon Beazley Salvage Co of Southampton. The salvage vessel 'FORDE' having massive salvage pumps and assisted by the tugs 'WRANGLER' and 'BESSIE' had managed to move the now semi-buoyant aft section and beach it further north on the 'Shelf'. This more intact section of the hull contained both the main and aux-engines, boilers, condensers, shafts and propellers and many other fittings, all much needed for the war effort. More than 750 tons of valuable reusable scrap iron, and some 38 tons of non-ferrous copper, bronze, brass and gun metal had been recovered. The 'GIPSY's main hulk remained on the Harwich 'Shelf' until after the war, for although its iron and steel was desperately needed, it would have taken valuable manpower to break it up.

During 1942 the beached fore section at Landguard was deemed as unsalvageable, so it was blown apart by the salvagers, with the large remaining pieces being removed by the Risdon Beazley salvage vessel 'FREIJA' and the salvage lighter 'FOREMOST 18'. It was in 1945 with the end of hostilities, that the 'GIPSY's stern section was patched and towed away to breakers. However, this was not the end of H.M.S. 'GIPSY', as it was not until the 1970's, that her last rusting remains were fully removed from the

Harwich harbour where they had been lying forgotten. They were detected by a pre-dredging survey and finally removed by a Dutch Dredging Co, for the construction of the Landguard Freight Terminal.

Shamefully, now all that remains at Landguard to commemorate the loss of H.M.S. 'GIPSY' and the tragic loss of life, are a few old pieces of rusty iron emerging out of the shingle embankment.

Author's Note

IN 2021 I had the good fortune and pleasure to make the acquaintance of the High Sheriff of Suffolk. Edward Creasy is a direct descendant of Admiral Sir George Creasy R.N., and is now the worthy custodian of H.M.S. 'GIPSY's engraved ships bell. This bell is the only reminder of this historical tragedy that we have in Suffolk.

Whilst the loss of 'GIPSY' and her dead are all briefly remembered at the Harwich Redoubt and H.M.S. 'GANGES' Museums, there is sadly, and dare I say, shamefully, little or nothing at Felixstowe, although she was sunk and layed less

than a quarter of a mile off Landguard.

Acknowledgements

Alfred S Cresswell - *Eyewitness*
Capt Robert Franks - *Senior Survivors' Report*
Edward Creasy - *Relative/Custodian*
Julian P Foynes - *Author/WWII Historian*
Robert Malster - *Author/Historian*
IPWM/EADT - *Photo's Media Headlines*
Risdon Beazley History -
Roy Martin/Lyle Craigie-Halkett
Gray & Thompson Salvage Co -
Don Gray/John Gray
Author's own research



**H.M.S. 'GIPSY's motto was
'Trust your luck'**

AN EMBARRASING PREDICAMENT...

JOHN WOOLLAN'S story in the January Newsletter particularly re boarding ships, reminded me of my early days working as a Ship's Agent in London. I worked for Thomas Cook and Son who were then the largest travel agents in the U.K. We had a team of men whose job was to board passenger ships at Brixham, Devon and assist passengers with completion of the customs documentation for the baggage they had on board prior to arrival in London.

One day I was asked to assist this section as they had holidays etc, so I went with a senior man to Brixham and we departed the harbour around 5am on board a tug to meet the large passenger ship in the Channel. The vessel threw a rope ladder over the side so we could climb on

board. The first man jumped and climbed the ladder then it was my turn, I had been told many times when you get on the rope ladder don't stop or look down, just climb as the tug and the vessel were being held apart by men on the tug pushing against side with oars.

I jumped got on ladder, turned round and shouted 'I have made it', I can't tell you the reply I got from my colleague or the tugmen!! ... then I felt cold water on my feet and legs etc as the sea rose up, so I climbed desperately on reaching the deck and climbing over. I was looking like a drowned rat! I had no change of clothes, but luckily there was a cadet on board who loaned me pair of trousers, it certainly was a talking point with the passengers!

Roy Gray



Felixstowe Beach Hut & Chalet Association

AFTER TWO YEARS without a Chairman, we are pleased that Craig Tournay-Godfrey offered his services and was elected unopposed at our AGM in June. Craig has been a member of the Association for several years and has plenty of experience in dealing with local government, having previously been a councillor in Ipswich. After the AGM, Gill Mason was co-opted on to the Committee.

A hot topic at the AGM was the parking of camper vans in Undercliff Road very close to beach huts. At least two of our members have had damage caused to their huts, having been struck by a vehicle, one of which was damage to the gable end which could only have been caused by a tall vehicle. Some of the huts have rear doors as well as front doors and owners are unable to access their huts from the rear. The vehicles put their wheels onto the pavement in order to be level and many of the van owners spill out onto the promenade partially obstructing free passage. There are also reports of waste water and sewage from the vans being emptied into the drains. It appears that neither the District Council nor the County Council has any enthusiasm to deal with the matter. We understand that motor home organisations now advertise the sea front at Felixstowe as a good place to spend time without having to pay! This just cannot be right. On one day, 31 motor homes were counted in the road. We are lobbying councillors in an attempt to get something done to restrict the use of Undercliff Road in this way.

Fourteen huts belonging to our members remain in a compound in the car park at Golf Road having been removed from the promenade

near the Spa Pavilion. The members, supported by the Association, have submitted two planning applications to the District Council in an attempt to restore their huts to the sea front, either on wooden platforms near the Spa Pavilion or on shingle at Manor End. We await the decision of the Planning Committee.

At last, new steps have been installed at Manor End to assist hut owners and members of the public get down onto the beach from the promenade. They were donated by our Secretary, Julie Downton, as the previous steps were washed away on a high tide. The photo below shows our Committee member, Carol Crabb, with employees of NORSE who installed the steps. A plaque on the steps says, 'In Memory of Tony Crabb', Carol's late husband.

Trevor Mason



‘WE HAND OVER THE LAMP OF LIFE’

FELIXSTOWE GRAMMAR SCHOOL IN THE EARLY 1960s

ALL THAT I CAN REMEMBER of my ‘11-plus’ examination is sitting at a desk in a large sunlit hall. I’m pretty certain that my mother, on learning I’d passed, immediately started worrying about the cost of the uniform, games kit and other items.

I certainly didn’t realize in what good stead a grammar school education would stand me throughout my life, nor had I any idea of just how fortunate I was. I kind of assumed that roughly half the local children of my age group went to Felixstowe Grammar School (also known at one time as Felixstowe County Grammar School) and the other half to what was then called the Secondary Modern. Only later did I discover that the split was not 50/50, but 20/80.

A number of pupils were bussed in from the surrounding area, and it was understood that they were allowed to leave the last lesson of the day a few minutes early. The geography teacher, in particular, seemed to be unaware of this

arrangement, or chose to ignore it, and the ‘bus children’ would become increasingly anxious despite his repeated assurances that the bus would wait for them and that they would not have to make their own way home.

Arriving and departing pupils were listed in the school magazine under the Latin heading ‘*Ave Atque Vale*’. The achievements of high flying school leavers were recorded – two particular examples were ‘Head Girl, Prefect, School Play, Tennis VI, 1st Hockey VII’ and ‘Prefect, School Play, Rugger XV, Deputy Head-Boy, Captain Cricket XI’.

Possibly the most famous pupil from this period would be the actor Christopher Strauli, but the School also produced a future Chairman of the Co-operative Bank and a President of the British Computer Society. The art teacher, Ray Twidale, became a co-author of a series of pictorial histories of Felixstowe and the surrounding villages.

‘Speech Day’ became ‘Prize-Giving Day’ in



1961. This event was held at the Spa Pavilion and the programmes listed Form Prizes, Special Awards, A and O level GCE Certificates. In the early 1960s, an average of ten pupils went on to university or equivalent institutions, the most popular destination being London. Oxbridge barely got a mention.

Sport was obviously very important. There was certainly no shortage of school sides – 1st XV, Under 15's, Under 14's and Under 13's in rugby, 1st XI, 2nd XI, Under 15's and Under 13's in cricket, 1st XI, 2nd XI and Under 15 XI in hockey and 1st VII, 2nd VII and Under 14 VII in netball

The School had 3 'houses' – Colneis, Deben and Samford, named after ancient Suffolk 'hundreds'. The House Reports are redolent of a bygone age:

'...fated to be disappointing in the House Hockey Tournament'. 'The response for entering the House Tennis Tournament was very poor, only six entering'. A gallant effort was made on Sports Day and I hope that this spirit of determination will continue and be crowned by success'. This year has been one of mediocre success'. There was some fine running... but I am sure it was



PREVIOUS PAGE -

'The Importance of Being Earnest' by Oscar Wilde

THIS PAGE ABOVE - *The Cross Country Race*

BELOW - *The Colneis Cups*

OPPOSITE - *Cricket 1st XI*

All taken from the School Magazine 1962



their sheer determination which won us this event – Well done! ‘... worthy co-holders of the Cricket Cup’. ‘... once more failed to make any impression on the stronger sides in the Rugby Tournament’. ‘Well done... But let’s make all those 2nd places into 1sts next year’.

There were also activities for those whose interests lay outside the field of sport. The Sixth Form Society offered a wide range of events, including a debate in which the idea that a woman’s place was in the kitchen was ‘(deplorably) overwhelmingly defeated’. There were also a School Stamp Club, a Natural History Society, and a School Choir and Orchestra which performed on Prize-Giving Day.

Destinations for school trips included Venice and Paris, and pupils organized day trips to Cambridge and Norwich, where the girls tried on hats and the boys went autograph hunting at the Anglia TV studios.

A break from tradition in the early 1960s saw performances of a non-Shakespearean School Play – *The Importance of Being Earnest*, produced by French master Alwyn Robinson. Mr. Thornton, Director of the Felixstowe Drama Festival, was most impressed. (The part of Algernon Moncrieff was played by Christopher Strauli).

On December 15th 1961, First Formers

performed an excerpt from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, ‘*The Travelling Companion*’ (from the story by Hans Andersen) and an adaptation of *A Christmas Carol*.

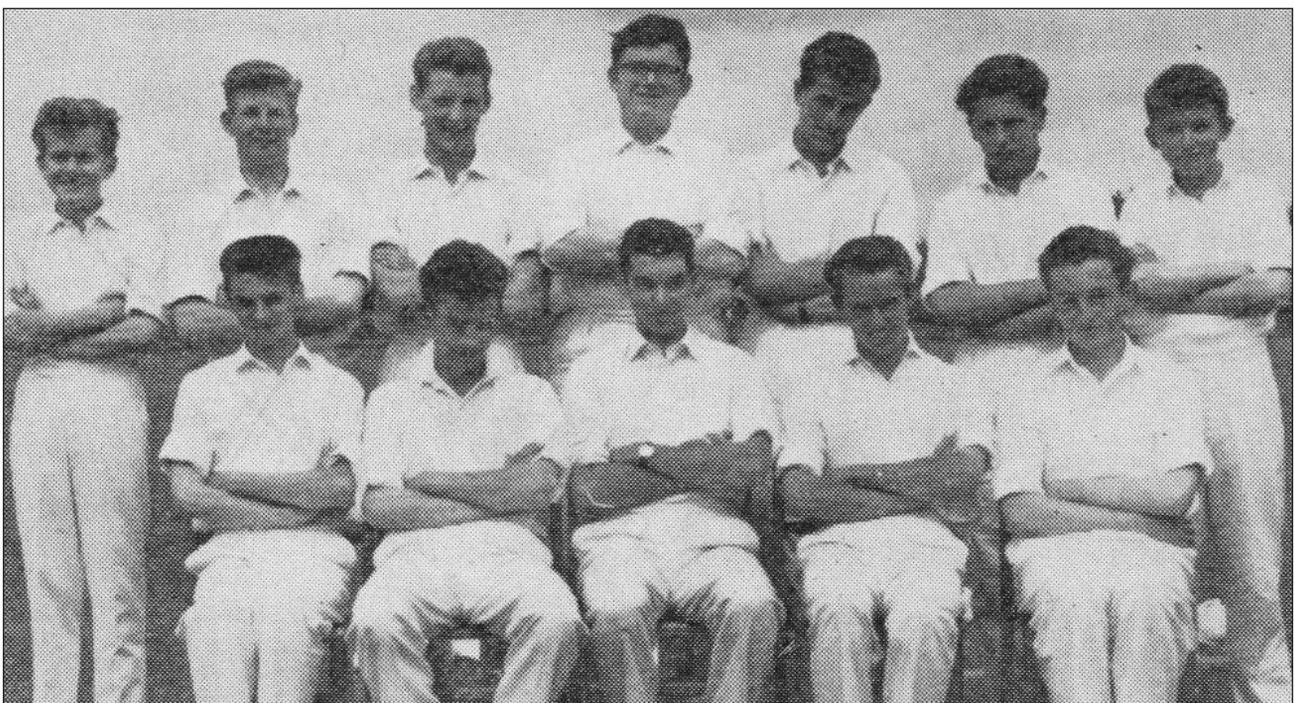
Like any other self-respecting grammar school we had a School Badge. This featured a galleon and the Latin phrase *Vitae Lampada Tradamus* (‘We Hand Over The Lamp Of Life’), taken from the stirring patriotic poem by Henry Newbolt. *Vitae Lampada* was also the title of the school hymn, a setting by the Reverend W.S. Weir, Rector of Kirton and Falkenham, of the poem by Robert Bridges which begins ‘*Thee Will I Love, My God and King*’.



The main part of the Assembly which started each School day took place in the absence of Catholic pupils, who appeared in time for reports of sporting success and failure and other less spiritual matters.

Perhaps the last word should be given to Mr. Smetham, the Headmaster in the early 1960s. Writing in the School Magazine, he urged parents to encourage their children to work and not allow them to be distracted by outside activities, referring particularly to part-time jobs!

Laurence McDonald



NURSE TRAINING IN THE FIFTIES

TO ENTER THE IPSWICH and East Suffolk Hospital Nursing School, a person had to be 18 years old and educated to 'O' level standard, although some people in my set had experience in related occupations rather than educational qualifications. There was also an interview with the Matron and Senior Tutor.

The first few weeks were spent in preliminary training school at a large house near the hospital in Fonnereau Road. At this time we lived in a Junior Home situated at a low level of the hospital building.

Later we moved to live in Norton House, a very large building bordering the hospital and a short walk from Christchurch Park. Handy for romantic walks!

The house was divided into day and night quarters, separated by a thick door so that night staff could get a good sleep. Another important feature of Norton House was a red phone box on the ground floor. We had no mobile phones in those days. People gathered around the box

waiting for calls. A back door led to the hospital.

After training school, I was allocated to work on Felix Ward, a large surgical ward for men. Apart from fairly routine stomach, gall-bladder and appendix operations, there were usually quite a few head injuries, often as a result of motorcycle accidents. Crash helmets were rare in those days. After three months I moved to Sinclair Ward for six weeks, where eye problems were treated. The ward was divided into male and female areas including children. A small operating theatre was also part of the ward. Operations were carried out to deal with problems like cataracts and children with squints. Both entailed a few days in hospital.

Several further moves were made around the hospital, including Mosley Ward and the Ear, Nose and Throat department, divided into male and female areas including an operating theatre. Children were mainly admitted for the removal of tonsils and adenoids.

Other wards we had experience on at Anglesey Road included male and female



The successful nurses pictured with the Duchess of Gloucester and Matron Miss Thompson, at the Presentation of the State Registered Nurse Certificates at Anglesey Road

medical wards to treat non-operative conditions and various other problems. Accident ward, later changed to Bell Jones, dealt with orthopedic problems, often fractures. Children's wards were called Cobbold and Patterson.

After a time, an announcement was made that the two Ipswich hospitals were to be amalgamated and were no longer the Ipswich and East Suffolk and Borough General Hospitals. We now worked at either hospital and lived in either Nurses' Home. Our students covered all aspects of patient care. Each year we had a few weeks off for study leave.

In 1957 State and Hospital exams came along for qualifications as State Registered Nurse. After passing this exam, there was a presentation ceremony at Anglesey Road, where we were presented with our Certificates by the Duchess of Gloucester.

I was allocated to work on a male surgical ward at Heath Road Hospital as a staff nurse. I arrived on the ward one day as a patient had just returned from the operating theatre still under anaesthetic. I stayed beside him until he

regained consciousness.

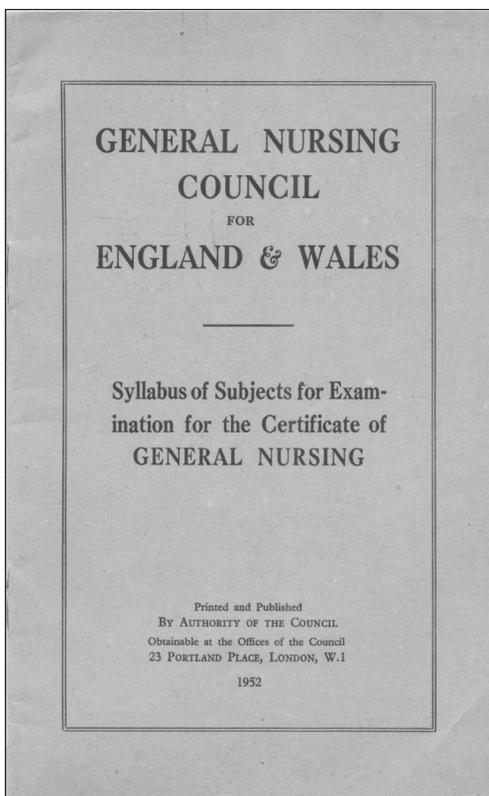
Later the surgeon who had operated came to the ward to say that he had been unable to improve the patient's condition but a surgeon at Guys Hospital was developing an operation to do so and would be willing to treat our patient.

An ambulance was on the way to transport him. I was instructed to accompany him and a doctor would travel with us. As we awaited the arrival of the ambulance, plans were changed. An Air, Sea and Rescue helicopter was to be used. It had all the inner padding removed to make it lighter for doing delicate manoeuvres.

It was extremely noisy. We arrived in London to see a landing spot marked out on a bomb site next to Guys Hospital. There were crowds of people including newspaper reporters, as apparently a manoeuvre like this had not been done before.

I was told that the Guys' Matron wanted to see me. She told me not to speak to the press. I felt somewhat insulted that she would think I would!

Jean Bloomfield



The syllabus for nurses for the State examinations



Myself and two happy colleagues after learning that we had been successful

Bed-sheets guide mercy plane

Express Staff Reporter

A HELICOPTER flew a man to Guy's Hospital, London, last night. An H laid out in bed sheets guided it to a nearby car-park set among four-storey tenement buildings.

The helicopter landed right on the H, causing clouds of grit and clinker to fly up from the car park and cover crowds of onlookers.

Four fire engines were waiting.

The patient, 68-year-old Albert George Thompson, was flown from Ipswich Hospital by the R.A.F. rescue service.

A doctor, a nurse, and a crate of blood plasma came with him. He has a heart complaint.

'DICEY'

The helicopter pilot, Flight-Lieutenant Kenneth Annable, said: "When I was in the air I had no idea where I was to come down."

"By radio I was told that I had to land as near to Guy's Hospital as possible.

"The car park was chosen and police directed operations.

"It was a dicey business landing amid those high buildings. I had to make almost a blind landing in the dust."

LEFT:

The article from
The Daily Express
about the patient and
Guys Hospital

dated Saturday 3rd August 1957

featured on the previous page.

Most of the national press
carried the story on that day.

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.

A REQUEST TO LIFE MEMBERS

AS PART OF a general updating of our Membership Records, we are requesting all our current Life Members to confirm their current address details in order to receive their future copies of this Magazine.

I would, therefore, be grateful if you would contact me to confirm your details. You can write, email, or telephone me at the addresses given at the end of this article.

If I do not hear from you by the end of October, it will be assumed either that you no longer live at the address we have in our existing records, or that you no longer wish to

be sent future copies in 2024.

With thanks for your co-operation and my kind regards.

Jan Garfield, *Chairman*

The Felixstowe Society

27 Rogers Close, Felixstowe IP11 9DG.

Telephone: 01394 210887

Email: jongarf@ntlworld.com



The Felixstowe Society Registered Charity No. 277442 <http://www.felixstowesociety.org>

THE SOCIETY'S HOLIDAY TO LINCOLN 2023

26th-29th May 2023

EARLY ON FRIDAY 26th 42 members of The Society boarded a coach bound for Ely and from there to Lincoln for a long weekend. We soon got to know our driver Dee, and during the holiday we became aware of her many skills as driver, tour guide and dinner lady. There was a relaxed three hour stop in Ely for lunch and to explore the delights of this lovely city, before continuing on our way. Nothing fazed Dee, not even the *kamikaze* pheasant family crossing the A14, and we enjoyed the smooth journeys.

The Romans established a settlement at Lincoln, as they recognised its geographically strategic position, being situated on a high ridge at the junction of the Fosse Way and Ermine Street. They named it Lindum, meaning 'a pool at the foot of a hill'.

Our hotel was situated on Brayford Pool, and on Sunday we had a pleasant, if rather chilly boat trip on *The Brayford Belle*, along the canal which the Romans built. This canal linked the Pool with the river Trent and made it possible for trading vessels to navigate as far as Lincoln from The Wash. We had a peaceful trip between banks lined with willows and cow parsley, listening to the commentary telling us about the abundant wildlife that now lives in and around the waterway.

Just as with the Ipswich waterfront, what was once a busy working and trading area has now become a leisure site, full of eating and drinking establishments and a few hotels. On the opposite bank to our hotel is the campus of The University of Lincoln. The whole area was busy with people dining *al fresco* in the predominantly sunny weather.

The weekend had been brilliantly planned and masterminded by Keith and Elizabeth, who had visited the area previously to do meticulous research, and who gently guided us from one experience to the next, ensuring everyone knew

where to be and when. Our only cause for concern was that Keith didn't often get to eat the meals he had ordered, mainly we suspect because by the time he was served, other folk were eating what they thought they had ordered. Or could the hotel staff have miscounted?

It was a weekend of stories about Lincoln and its famous inhabitants, of how the Romans transformed Lindum, of how Christianity came and the Cathedral was built, and of William the Conqueror's fortification and the development of Lincoln Castle. We had excellent guides at both the Cathedral and the Castle. It appears that their training is very rigorous.

When the Cathedral was built, it was the tallest building in the world and when it was extended in the 14thC it was made taller and wider, breaching the Roman walls of the city. The outline of the Roman walls are marked on the Cathedral floor. It is the only Cathedral never to have had a crypt or undercroft, due to having been built on a rock escarpment. The space inside is huge, and the height to the vaulted ceiling overwhelming. Several people asked how it was possible to build it without the benefit of modern technology. On Remembrance Sunday each year a Spitfire is housed in the transept. All the windows contain glorious stained glass, some are medieval. Amazingly none of the glass has ever been damaged, despite never having been protected, even during wartime. We admired the work of the craftsmen, stonemasons, wood carvers and glaziers. Over 5,000 artisans' marks have been discovered. These marks were the identifying signatures of individual workmen and have been found in many other cathedrals, showing how these itinerant craftsmen travelled from place to place following their trades.

It's just a minute's walk from the Cathedral to Lincoln Castle, a site of many gruesome deeds. Hard to imagine on the lovely sunny afternoon, when the grassy space within the walls was full

of families enjoying games and picnics. But here battles were fought, and felons hanged. It still houses the Lincoln court and assizes. Among the prized possessions housed in the Castle is an original copy of The Magna Carta (King John having been supported by the Castle during the Battle of Lincoln in 1217); The Forest Charter (which gave everyone the right to enter The King's Forest); and a copy of an Argos Catalogue (one of the items buried in a time capsule). We listened to more stories at the International Bomber Command Memorial site, which honours the 57,872 men and women of Bomber Command who laid down their lives in WWII. Truly international, the people who served at the 27 Lincolnshire airfields came from five continents and 62 nations. The most recent addition to the site had been in position for only a matter of days and is an impressive collection of life-size figures dressed in airmen's uniforms, erected on May 16th 2023 to mark the 70th Anniversary of The Dam Busters raids. Among the figures stand Guy Gibson, who led the Dam Busters and Barnes-Wallis, who invented the flying bomb after watching stones skim across water. The memorial does not shy away from the ethical debate around the destruction and bombing of civilians.

It is a beautiful site, elevated above the surrounding countryside with views across Lincoln to the Cathedral. The Spire memorial can be seen for miles around, the height of it being the wingspan of a Lancaster bomber, and its shape commemorating the church spires of Lincolnshire which the airmen used for navigational purposes. There is also a peace garden, planted with flora donated from all the 62 nations represented here. The Spire is surrounded by Walls of Remembrance, bearing the names of the fallen, and is visited by families from around the world.

Our visit coincided with a 1950s/60s weekend, so another walk down memory lane for us who remembered the music, the fashions and the cars of that era.

Back to basics, and a Good Loo Guide soon

emerged. One person was very impressed by the public toilets in Ely, painted in a delicate shade of Bishop's purple, and with the most efficient hand dryer, but top spot went to the 'We'll Meet Again' Museum toilets. This gem (the Museum itself, not just the toilets) had been discovered by Elizabeth, and was a well hidden secret on the outskirts of Boston which we visited on our way home on Monday. We really did wonder where we were heading, as the route became more and more rural and we all hoped we wouldn't meet a tractor coming the other way. Dee remained calm and delivered us safely once again.

Funded and built by Tony and Linda to house the WWII memorabilia that Tony had started to collect when he was eight years old, this proved a treasure trove of items relating to both world wars, bringing back many memories for our folk. Staffed by willing and enthusiastic volunteers, it is maintained primarily as an educational resource for schools.

Back to plumbing for a moment – did anyone manage to work out how to use the hotel showers without first getting doused in cold water while trying to turn on the taps?

So to sum up. A superb weekend, well managed and led by Keith, Elizabeth and Dee, with something for everyone. We packed so much in, without being hurried. We participants are already asking 'Where next?'

Over to you Keith and Elizabeth. We can't wait!

Maddy Rhodes

Photographs by Brian Ellis of this holiday are featured on the opposite page and back cover.

- 1. The splendid Lincoln Cathedral.*
- 2. The Brayford Belle - still fancy another trip?*
- 3. The Bomber Command Memorial.*
- 4. The commanding Spire - 31 metres high and weighing 73 tons.*
- 5. Our hotel - Double Tree by Hilton, Lincoln.*
- 6. This photograph of our group was taken at WW2 Museum at Freiston, Lincolnshire by We'll Meet Again Museum and permission was granted for this use.*

THE LINCOLN HOLIDAY

