

## FELIXSTOWE'S FERRIS WHEEL

**T**HE 34.5m FERRIS WHEEL began operating at the southern end of the seafront in Sea Road during August 2023, providing breathtaking views to see the town as it had never been seen before, from

Manor End to Cobbolds Point.

It was installed by an Essex firm Observation Attractions Company and can seat 144 people with 24 gondolas. It is scheduled to re-open in Spring 2024.





# The Felixstowe Society MAGAZINE



Issue No. 134 January 2024



# THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY

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

The Society endeavours to:

- Stimulate public interest in these areas
- Promote high standards of planning and architecture
- Secure the improvement, protection, development and preservation of the local environment.

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Photograph courtesy of Alan Boyle  
*Everything Felixstowe and Beyond*

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I would like to apologise for failing to record my thanks to Susanne Barsby for proof-reading the issues dated January, May and September 2023 and, of course, this Issue!

Thank You, Susanne. *The Editor*

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.

## SPEAKER'S EVENINGS 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.*

### JANUARY 23rd

*Antarctica* by Chris 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

*Details to be advised*

### SEPTEMBER 24th

*A talk* by Lynn Mortimer *Details 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*





## THE CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

**W**ELCOME TO AUTUMN. We have had a beautiful few days, haven't we, but getting progressively colder.

Hence I have succumbed to wearing a sweater today for the first time since last winter! Really noticed the cold yesterday morning when I had to get my husband, Jon, to Ipswich Hospital for 7.00am for surgery on his ear. It was dark and freezing cold! However, it was really worth it as all the cancer has been removed and I fetched him home at 12.30pm. He seems fine this morning although a bit sore. Also he had to sleep last night and tonight at a 45 degree angle, not conducive to a good night's sleep!

I hope that you have all had a good summer and are looking forward to the restart of the Speaker's Evenings. By the time that you are reading this we shall have had 3 or 4 of these thanks to Roy's careful planning. Would you believe he has the 2024 to 2025 programme planned already!

The Summer programme was very successful with an enjoyable Buffet Supper with lovely entertainment by Suzanne Hawkes and Friends, singing, poetry and instrumentalists. My thanks go to all concerned.

Once again there was a superb Exhibition from our Archives put together by our amazing Joint Archivist, Bev Boyce. I believe that Bev always has offers of objects for the Archive at these exhibitions. You will be interested to hear that the Archive is expanding so rapidly that we are renting another room from Harvest House next to the present one, for which we thank the Harvest House Management Committee.

We also had another Exhibition at the Hut on the Prom to try to recruit New Members on an extremely hot day in September.

Unfortunately, Keith hasn't been able to re-book the trip to Thetford so this will have to be postponed until next year.

As you probably all know by now, Keith and Elizabeth have already booked next year's

holiday. This time the Society will be off to Basingstoke and the environs including Beaulieu Abbey. We went there just after we were married in 1968 to see all the vintage cars but, apparently, there is a lot more to see and do nowadays. Keith and Elizabeth are an amazing pair to get everything done so quickly.

Next year will be the time for another Heritage Weekend in September. As you may or may not know, this can be held annually but, when it was decided that Felixstowe would take part, bi-annually was agreed. We have set up a small sub-committee to run next year's event including a couple of our new committee members. Wonderful to bring in new blood and new ideas. So, watch this space!

We have received complaints from some members that they can't hear some of the Speakers properly. We have been talking to the technicians at the Salvation Army re this problem and are investigating other avenues for sound production. We do realise that there is nothing worse than not being able to hear a Speaker properly. We do insist that they all use a microphone but some are not terribly *au fait* with these. Please bear with us.

The Committee, in a further attempt to increase our membership, has decided to hold a recruitment drive. For example, there are areas where we currently have little relevance, including certain environmental issues which are of interest to both residents and visitors. Further details will be forthcoming in the New Year.

Well folks, enough for now. Have a lovely Autumn, Christmas and New Year. I hope to see you all soon.

Oh, and thank you to those Life Members who contacted us to confirm their whereabouts etc...

Kindest regards

*Jan Garfield, Chairman*



# PLANNING APPLICATIONS

COMMENTED ON BY THE SOCIETY JULY 2023 TO NOVEMBER 2023  
(INCLUDING UPDATES ON APPLICATIONS PREVIOUSLY LISTED AS  
“AWAITING DECISION”)

**DC/22/1983**

**The Triangle, Hamilton Road, Felixstowe  
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

**DC/22/1955**

**19 Margaret Street, Felixstowe  
Erection of two-storey terrace house**

The Felixstowe Society considers the proposal to be good use of a brownfield site.

ESC DECISION: Refused

**DC/22/2159/FUL**

**Great Eastern Square, Felixstowe  
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 touch-screen information point would be a far better solution.

This proposal is backward thinking.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

**DC/22/4418**

**Felixstowe Sea Front, Martello Park  
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

**DC/23/0424**

**37 Ranelagh Road, Felixstowe  
Works to trees in Conservation Areas**

The Felixstowe Society has no objection to this proposal.

ESC DECISION: Approved

**DC/23/0507**

**11 Picketts Road, Felixstowe  
Insertion of dormer windows**

The Felixstowe Society has no objections to this proposal.

ESC DECISION: Approved

**DC/23/0422**

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

**Erection of a pair of three bedroom  
houses and two bedroom bungalows**

The Felixstowe Society has no objection to this scheme.

ESC DECISION: Approved

**DC/23/0534**

**14 Non illuminated billboards  
Great Eastern Square, Felixstowe**

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



**DC/23/0433**

**Marden House, Martello Lane, Felixstowe  
Works to trees in Conservation Area**

The Felixstowe Society has no objections to this application.

ESC DECISION: Approved

**DC/23/0460**

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

**Alterations to public toilet block**

The Felixstowe Society has no objections to this proposal

ESC DECISION: Approved

**DC/23/1773**

**Brandeston, Golf Road**

**Alterations to garage/outbuilding**

The Felixstowe Society has no objections to this proposal

ESC DECISION: Approved

**DC/20/1860**

**Howlett Way, Trimley St Martin  
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

**DC/23/1683**

**22-24 Hamilton Road, Felixstowe  
2 external window awnings**

The Felixstowe Society has no objections to this proposal

ESC DECISION: Approved

**DC/23/1635**

**91 Western Avenue, Felixstowe  
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

**DC/23/1612**

**109A Hamilton Road, Felixstowe  
Conversion of upper floors to  
self-contained flats**

The Felixstowe Society has no objections to this proposal

ESC DECISION: Prior Approval Granted

**DC/23/1614**

**30 Maybush Lane, Felixstowe  
Works to TPO tree**

The Felixstowe Society objects to the application as no justification for felling the Holm Oaks is provided

ESC DECISION: Approved

**DC/23/2353**

**Homeorr House, Felix Road, Felixstowe  
Works to trees in conservation area**

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: Approved

**DC/23/229**

**109 Undercliff Road, Felixstowe  
Works to trees in conservation area**

The Felixstowe Society has no objections provided that the Council's Arboriculturalist is satisfied that the works are necessary.

ESC DECISION: Approved

**DC/23/2249**

**St Marys, Undercliff Road East,  
Felixstowe**

**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.

Application withdrawn

**DC/23/2089**

**Undercliff Road West, Felixstowe  
Reinstatement of 14 beach huts**

The Felixstowe Society fully supports this proposal

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

**DC/23/2045**

**34 Maybush Lane, Felixstowe  
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.

ESC DECISION: Approved

**DC/23/1986**

**Glenfield Court, Glenfield Avenue,  
Felixstowe  
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: Approved

**DC/23/1945**

**The Firs Residential Home,**

**186 Grange Road, Felixstowe**

**Replacement UPVC windows and doors**

The Felixstowe Society has no objection to this proposal

ESC DECISION: Approved

**DC/23/2291**

**109 Undercliff Road West, Felixstowe  
Works to tree in Conservation Area**

The Felixstowe Society has no objections provided that the Council's Arboriculturalist is satisfied that the works are necessary.

ESC DECISION: Approved

**DC/23/3025/TCA**

**85 Ranelagh Road, Felixstowe  
Works to trees in Conservation Area**

The Felixstowe Society has no objections to this proposal.

ESC DECISION: Approved

**DC/23/2570**

**60 Orwell Road, Felixstowe  
Single storey porch**

The Felixstowe Society objects to the application. The proposed porch is out of scale with the façade of the building and would have an adverse impact on the amount of light to the ground floor window of the adjacent dwelling.

ESC DECISION: Approved

**DC/23/2745/DEM**

**Landguard Lodge and Landguard Cottage, Manor Terrace, Felixstowe  
Prior notification of demolition.**

The Felixstowe Society strongly objects to this proposal. The two existing dwellings are identified as a Monument (FEX212) on the Suffolk Heritage Explorer website.

The two buildings are illustrated in the following historic photographs. The Felixstowe Society considers that these buildings are important as they contribute to the character and setting of the area. The Felixstowe Society considers that the buildings should be the



subject of a Building Preservation Notice (BPN). There are no public benefits arising from the demolition of the buildings which would justify the total loss of these heritage assets.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

**DC/23/3120**

**Flat 2, 2 Beach Road East, Felixstowe  
Replacement windows**

The Felixstowe Society fully supports this scheme which proposes to use replacement wooden windows.

ESC DECISION: Approved

**DC/23/3084**

**Stonestrow, 16 Thornley Road,  
Felixstowe**

**Extensions and alterations**

The Felixstowe Society objects to this proposal. The Society considers that the proposals are not in keeping with the character and appearance of other properties nearby. The proposal represents an over-development of the site.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

**DC/23/3112**

**St Marys Nursing Home,  
Undercliff Road East, Felixstowe  
Non-material amendment**

In this instance, The Felixstowe Society has no objection to the use of UPVC (white) replacement windows. There are UPVC windows in the building currently.

ESC DECISION: Approved

**DC/23/3073**

**18-20 Hamilton Road, Felixstowe  
Works to trees in Conservation Area**

The Felixstowe Society has no objections to this scheme. It would appear that these trees are the subject to pollarding and lopping in the past.

ESC DECISION: Approved

**DC/23/3039**

**Office Wardens House, Viewpoint Road,  
Felixstowe**

**Installation of solar panels**

The Felixstowe Society has no objections to this proposal.

ESC DECISION: Approved

**DC/23/2962**

**193 Maidstone Road, Felixstowe  
Erection of dwelling**

The Felixstowe Society has no objections to this proposal. It represents an efficient use of brownfield land.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

**DC/23/2928**

**Land at Adastral Close, Felixstowe  
Erection of 4 dwellings**

The Felixstowe Society has no objections to this proposal.

ESC DECISION: Refused

**DC/23/2476**

**8 and 8A Orwell Road, Felixstowe  
Change of use of shop to live work unit  
and three flats**

The Felixstowe Society has no objections in principle, the concern is that the live-work unit has very cramped accommodation.

ESC DECISION: Approved

**DC/23/3366/TPO**

**73 Tower Road, Felixstowe  
Proposed replacement planting  
of 1no. Chestnut**

The Felixstowe Society considers that there is no justification to fell the tree. The application should be refused and instead the tree could be lopped or the height of its crown altered.

ESC DECISION: Refused

**DC/23/3332/TCA**

**4 College Green, Felixstowe  
1 No. Silver Birch Tree at the rear of the  
property in the centre of the lawn to be**

**felled and removed. The tree has been poorly pruned in the past and is considered too large for the garden.**

The Felixstowe Society objects to the application. There is an insufficient justification to fell the tree. The tree could be lopped or pollarded as before.

ESC DECISION: Approved

**DC/23/3313/TPO**

**1a Brook Lane, Felixstowe  
1 No. Beech (T1 on plan) - Crown reduce  
the top 30% of the main canopy  
by 2 metres all round**

The Felixstowe Society has no objections to this proposal.

ESC DECISION: Approved

**DC/23/2930**

**Construction of lorry park  
Land south of Felixstowe Road,  
Stratton Hall,  
Suffolk.**

The Felixstowe Society strongly objects to this application. The application site is in the countryside and is therefore contrary to a wide range of development plan policies including SCLP 10.5, SCLP 3.3 and SCLP 11.2.

Whilst recognising that there is a need for a lorry park, since the closure of the Orwell Crossing, The Felixstowe Society considers that this is an inappropriate location for such a development due to the adverse impacts of the scheme on the character and appearance of the landscape, highway safety, rail safety and residential amenity.

The proposed development would have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the local landscape by introducing an urbanising form of development in an otherwise agricultural landscape.

The development will be harmful to highway safety due to the potential conflict between

HGVs and other road users. As the Levington junction of the A14 does not allow traffic to travel onto the A14 in an easterly direction, it is likely that HGV drivers would continue along the backroad through Trimley and into Felixstowe.

The development may also cause issues with rail safety. The site is alongside the railway. Unless all lighting is shielded in accordance with railway authority guidance, there could be interference with drivers views of the line ahead with moving beams of light across the track from turning vehicles.

The scheme is also likely to have an adverse impact on the amenity of nearby dwellings as a result of increased noise and disturbance.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

**DC/23/384**

**121 Ferry Lane, Felixstowe  
Proposed first floor rear extension  
to existing single storey.**

The Felixstowe Society objects to the application. It is considered that the proposal results in an overdevelopment of the site.

It is further considered that the development would be out of keeping with the local streetscene.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

**DC/23/3858**

**29 Buregate Road, Felixstowe  
Conversion of linked garage to a  
family annex with dormer window  
to create mezzanine storage level.**

The Felixstowe Society has no objections to the development provided that the accommodation is used for ancillary purposes and conditioned as such.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

**DC/23/3965**

**1 Grasmere Avenue, Felixstowe  
Side extension and alterations  
to garage.**



The Felixstowe Society considers this to be a well-designed corner extension.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

**DC/23/3988**

**12 Stanley Road, Felixstowe**

**External stainless steel flue**

The Felixstowe Society considers that the development would cause no harm to the significance of the Conservation Area.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

**DC/23/4051**

**Rowan Lodge, 246 Ferry Road, Felixstowe**

**Alterations, extensions and erection of new detached garage. Alterations to vehicular access.**

**New front boundary wall.**

The Felixstowe Society is concerned that the proposals although very well designed, may result in some overlooking of the adjoining property to the south from the balcony.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

**DC/23/4054**

**61A Cobbold Road, Felixstowe**

**Conversion of redundant offices to residential (1 flat)**

The Felixstowe Society has no objections to this proposal.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

**DC/22/4494**

**The Felsto Arms, Sea Road, Felixstowe**

**Erection of open sided gazebos on existing hard standing, within the curtilage of the property, to provide sheltered seating area.**

**A number of timber framed gazebos have been constructed, with Polycarbonate roofing.**

The Felixstowe Society has no objections to this proposal.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

**DC/23/2572**

**Sky Lounge, 55-57 Undercliff Road West, Felixstowe**

**Change of use from restaurant to sports bar and restaurant with amended hours**

The Felixstowe Society has no objections to this proposal.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

**DC/23/311**

**12 Holland Road, Felixstowe**

**Rear extension and installation of air conditioning unit**

The Felixstowe Society objects to this proposal on the basis that it results in a loss of outdoor amenity space for the property.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

**DC/23/3477**

**Land in front of Ferry Boat Inn,**

**Felixstowe Ferry, Felixstowe.**

**Resurfacing and extension of existing car park**

The Felixstowe Society considers that on balance, this proposal is acceptable. Whilst the urbanisation of Felixstowe Ferry is resisted, in this case, the hard surfacing of the carpark area would improve facilities to visitors in the area.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

**DC/23/3618**

**28A Bath Road, Felixstowe**

**Garden room**

The Felixstowe Society has no objections to this proposal.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

**DC/23/3737**

**7 High Beach, Felixstowe**

**Installation of 6 No. replacement windows to first floor flat**

The Felixstowe Society objects to this application on the basis of the use of inappropriate materials.

ESC DECISION: Awaiting decision

# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2024

## JANUARY 2024

23rd **Speaker's Evening** *Antarctica by Chris Parfitt*

## FEBRUARY

27th **Speaker's Evening** *The Suffolk Punch Trust by Barry Bloomfield*

## MARCH

17th **Phil's Sunday Walk** *The Tomline Walk*

26th **Speaker's Evening** *The Royal Year by Ken Stone*

## APRIL

14th **Phil's Sunday Walk** *The Old Felixstowe Walk*

15th **The Annual Dinner at Felixstowe Golf Club**

23rd **Speaker's Evening** *Architecture by Brian Ansell*

## MAY

12th **Phil's Sunday Walk** *The Seafront Gardens Perimeter Walk*

17th-20th **Members' Holiday to Hampshire**

28th **The Annual General Meeting** followed by  
**Speaker's Evening** *Subject to be confirmed by Derek Peters*

TBA **The Ipswich to Felixstowe Historic Vehicle Run**

## JUNE

## JULY

TBA **The Society's Day Visit to ?**

TBA **The Social Event at Harvest House**

TBA **The Felixstowe Carnival**

## AUGUST

31st-2nd Sept **Love Felixstowe** *Details to follow*

TBA **The Archive Exhibition at The Hut**

## SEPTEMBER

2nd **Art on the Prom**

5th-8th **Heritage Weekend** *Details to follow*

24th **Speaker's Evening** *Subject to be confirmed by Lynn Mortimer*

## OCTOBER

22nd **Speaker's Evening** *An A to Z of Ipswich by Sarah Doig*

## NOVEMBER

11th **The Service of Remembrance at The War Memorial**

26th **Speaker's Evening** *Details to follow*



# OUR ARCHIVE ROOM WAS **BURSTING...**



SO....



...THANKS TO HARVEST HOUSE...  
...WE HAVE A NEW  
ABOUT TO BE FURNISHED ROOM...



# THE SOCIETY'S EVENTS 2023

14th June

## IPSWICH WATERFRONT WALK

I VISITED the waterfront several years ago, and thought wow this will be something when it is finished, it will be as stunning as any marina in the south of France, full of millionaire yachts! with lovely restaurants and bars lining the promenade looking out at the stunning Orwell Bridge. Now I know after a guided tour taken by Tony Marsden and arranged by The Felixstowe Society (which was well attended), the reasons behind the unfinished waterfront.

We started at the James Hehir Medical College and the award-winning sculpture the Argentinian/Portuguese marble statue. Then opposite we can see the University Archive and Time Capsule Building, (the Hold), open to all and with a recommended café, then onto the old *Neptune Inn* home of female pilot Edith Maude Cook, famous for flying and parachute displays, this is now a magnificent venue building available for hire. This adjoins the merchants'

houses some dating back to 1438. Did you know that Ipswich still has a public baths open to all? This was built by Cobbold Brewery for its workers! We continued past a car park which was a wharf where one of Nelson's ships was built. There is also a lovely old pub named after him here, the nearby church also has some history on Nelson.

We continued past the *Salt House Hotel*, (clue to the history is in the name. Then past the British Oat Cake mills, Isaac Lord restaurant/bar/café. This is the largest most interesting complex of this sort I have visited, with pictures and artifacts of the history of the malt house and the port inside on display. We now came to the west dock then Prince Philip's Dock, and went onto the old St Peter's Dock, which is now waste land. I always wondered why this had been left, and not developed.

This holds the secret to the unfinished waterfront. This is desecrated land and is under investigation as human remains have been found and many of them are children, so all further





development for hotels, apartments etc is on hold.

We finished walking past Cardinal Wolsey Gate, the gate stands alone, which was the entrance to his estate, then a visit to St Peter's church which has on display all the history of the waterfront and I did want to stay longer, but will certainly go back, it is open daily to everyone.

The biggest puzzle for me are the two enormous industrial buildings which were once part of this thriving busy port but now need so much money to rectify and be made safe. One of these I believe, is owned by the council, but it will be difficult for them to justify spending so much public money on the development. I would suggest a sea and sky scene like the Uni-serve building in Felixstowe! It would blend in well with the background and the ground floor could be painted to depict the old scenes of the port without the hording.

Finally, this is only my first walk with The

Society, please continue as I am planning to go on as many as I can.

*Greg Doman*



*Opposite: The Lord Nelson Inn.*

*Above: The sculpture outside Suffolk University.*

## **21st July SOCIAL EVENING at Harvest House**

**T**HE SOCIETY held another popular social event in the elegant dining room at Harvest House. The attendance for this members only event was down on previous gatherings due to the weekend Felixstowe Carnival event starting that evening.

Keith Horn welcomed all the attendees. The relaxed atmosphere brought together friends old and new.

Everyone supplied their own drinks (a few bubbly corks going off were heard!), and a finger buffet with delicious sweets to follow was supplied by the Crescent Cafe, Felixstowe.

During the evening, members of the popular Black and White Productions provided musical entertainment with popular and nostalgic songs. The members, Suzanne Hawkes, Stephanie Stoddart and Paul Stone with vocals and Bill Stoddart on the piano.

Suzanne, the founder of Black and White

Productions and a Felixstowe local, read some of her self-composed poetry after each vocal performance with subjects as diverse as Queen Elizabeth, Felixstowe School and love lost and and found. Further details of this excellent



*An area of the dining room at Harvest House.*

group can be found at [www.blackandwhiteproductions.org.uk](http://www.blackandwhiteproductions.org.uk)

A raffle was held with much appreciated prize donations. This yielded £110. The money raised will be donated to Black and White Productions and The Harvest House Building Fund.

As always we are extremely grateful to the Directors of Harvest House Ltd and their

Manager Mick Marlowe for allowing us to use their facilities.

These events would be impossible without the generous support of the helpers Hilary Eaton, Elizabeth Horn, Heather Carpenter, Rebecca Haughton and Dave Carpenter.

Keith closed the event giving a brief insight into future Society holidays for which details will be in the May 2024 issue of this Magazine.

## 20th August ARCHIVE EXHIBITION at Harvest House

**W**E RAN ANOTHER Archive Exhibition for members only in the lovely Palm Court at Harvest House. The attendance was a modest 55, down on last year's event. It was a nice day and the attendees had access to the lovely gardens.

Jan Garfield opened the exhibition and in welcoming everyone in attendance, reiterated the importance of recording and preserving the town's heritage, plus having the use of one of the town's historic jewels - Harvest House - where the Society's archives are stored.

On view were lovely to see photographs of the carnivals from yesteryear, with former carnival queen Heather Carpenter and her attendant Hilary Eaton (The Society's Treasurer); a very interesting display on the Martello Towers in the town and many 'definitive' definitions on the origin of the name; Master Mariner John Cresswell was on hand with a display of the history of the town's lifeboats, which were a surprise to many; very interesting to read through copies of letters written by visitors, holiday makers and residents with lovely memories of days by the sea at Felixstowe.

There were plans and photos of the Pier Pavilion, which was demolished to be replaced



*Former Queen Heather Carpenter (left) with her attendant Hilary Eaton at the Carnival display at Harvest House*



by The Leisure Centre in 1985, the attendees spoke of many happy events at the Pavilion.

The Mayor Seamus Bennett joined us in the afternoon and was very interested in the content.

It would not be possible to show these items without the exceptional work done by the Society's Archivist Bev Boyce, who manages the entire archive, prepares the exhibits and puts

together the displays. Our thanks as always to the management of Harvest House for access to the room and the refreshments provided by Elizabeth and Keith Horn and family.

We would welcome any photos, documents and memorabilia that members have that can be shared in future events.

*Both articles by Derek Bundock*

## 10th September ARCHIVE & RECRUITMENT EVENT at The Hut on the Promenade

**T**HIS WAS ONE of the hottest days of the year, so the promenade and the beaches were crowded with people making up for the 'lost' weekends of July.

Inevitably, therefore, it was difficult to get people interested to leave their family and friends sunbathing and picnicking to come and see the truly magnificent exhibition that The Society's Archivist, Bev Boyce, had put together.

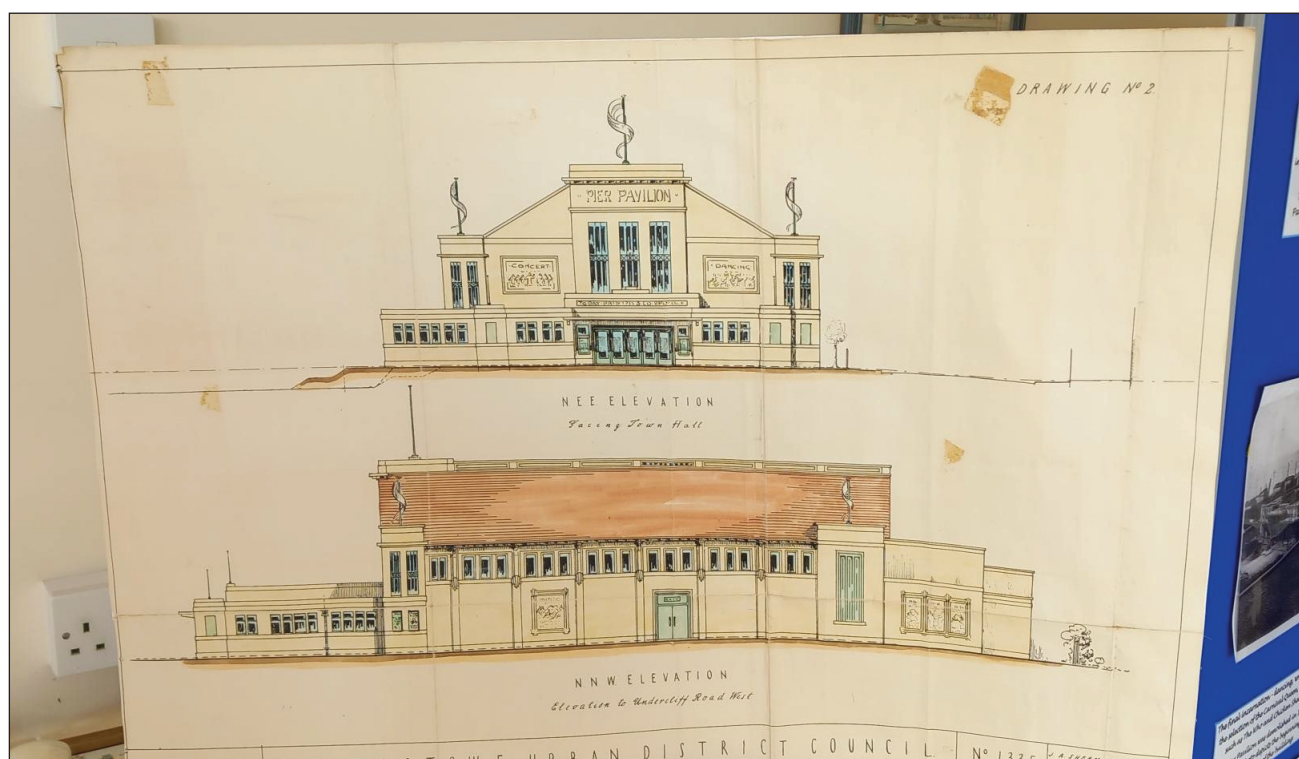
Looking back to that day, it is quite surprising that just under 100 people took advantage to come and see what was on view. A wonderful collection of photographs supporting brief

commentaries of different aspects of The Society's work over the last 40 years or so.

The more cynical might say it was to take advantage of the free refreshments which were provided by Keith and Elizabeth Horn, two of the stalwarts who were, as usual, supporting Bev, not only to show the public what The Society is all about, but trying to recruit new members too. About a dozen took away Applications for Membership, but it is too early to know if any new members have joined.

Thanks must also be given to Jane Stevenson for creating The Port display and for her invaluable cataloguing of archival documents during the year.

The event was both enjoyable and successful,



*One of the original drawings of the Pier Pavilion among the many items on display at The Hut*



in that although numbers were lower than in previous years, the word was spread and the weather certainly helped the event to be a memorable one.

For example, our 'neighbour' - Karon's Kiosk

- further along the prom, was crowded all day long, indeed, their sales of tea, coffee, sandwiches and ice cream surely had to be one of their best of the year!

*The Editor*

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## SPEAKER'S EVENINGS - 2023

**September 26th**

**'THE EYES OF THE FEW'**

**by Keith Willetts**

**K**EITH WILLETTS modestly claimed twice during his talk that he was 'not an expert' on radar, but I think few of his audience really believed him. Without any notes, he showed a confidence and authority and maintained the attention of his audience from start to finish.

The Bawdsey Radar unit, like Bletchley Park, made a very significant contribution to the successful outcome of World War Two, and continued to work in the national interest up to the end of the Cold War.

To illustrate the influence of radar today he listed seven people who have been affected by the medium in modern times including the Foreign Secretary Suella Braverman (was caught speeding); Brian Cox (during his work on space operations); Michael Fish (the late weather forecaster); Herman Goring (the leader of the Luftwaffe); Richard Branson (due to his involvement with balloon flight); Tony Robinson (of the Time Team programmes on television); and Jamie Oliver (for his regular use of the microwave oven) - all involving radar.

This talk's title 'The Eyes of the Few', refers to be precise, to the eyes of the few pilots who risked their lives everytime they climbed into their cockpits. It was tremendously dangerous work, which relied upon radar to determine when, where and at what time the German

aeroplanes would be - invaluable information not only during The Battle of Britain, but also during the critical battles of the Atlantic, when our merchant navy was delivering vital supplies to avoid our people suffering starvation.



*Keith Willetts*

At the time, radar itself was in its infancy - crude, but so desperately helpful. The enemy also had it, but needed it less than us at that time because they were on the offensive, while we were on the defensive. Later in the war, of course, the roles changed.

It must not be ignored that early in the war, Germany had the upper hand - superior equipment and plenty of it and also many more very well trained

airmen, whereas we had been for too long reliant upon pacifism.

The East Coast became one of the areas of the country dedicated to research into matters involving the security of the nation, radar under the leadership of Robert Watson Watt at Bawdsey Manor being just one of the activities. Just a few miles up the coast is Orfordness where other secret work was also taking place.

The evening was very successful thanks to Keith's knowledgeable talk, highlighting many of the difficulties experienced by our parents and grandparents during the nineteen thirties and forties, which on top of the usual highs and lows of bringing up a family, can only make us all realise how lucky we are today without the additional worry of our nation being at war.

Let us all hope that it remains that way!

Photograph by Paul Sanderson

## October 24th 'THE IMPERIAL WAR GRAVES COMMISSION'

by Bev Boyce

**B**EV MAKES A SUCCESS of everything she does, whether it be organising archive exhibitions or a lecture at one of our Speaker's Evenings. I understand the last one was in 2017 when Mrs Wallis Simpson was the subject. Many in the audience remembered this and showed their enjoyment of it.

This talk was not subject to Commonwealth War Graves Commission sanction but they are running training sessions to guide people around cemeteries in Europe where there are CWGC graves and Bev hopes to attend some of those courses...

Prior to 1914 little was done about bodies of fallen soldiers for many reasons. Soldiers laid where they fell, there being no facilities available to alter this situation, especially in theatres of war such as Passchendaele, which was an horrendous mud bath.

This alarmed Fabian Ware who had joined the Red Cross and toured the front lines in an ambulance, making records as best as he could and formed a Graves Registration Commission, introducing a Graves Registration Form. He negotiated with the French and Belgian Governments to supply land for military burials, allowing him to establish cemeteries and to communicate with families back home to inform them what had happened to their relations and where they were buried.

Many killed in action had been completely destroyed, or buried in mud and many graves had been obliterated by later battles.

It is likely that six million troops were killed in action, with almost a sixth being British or Commonwealth personnel. Eventually 54,000 were recorded at the Belgian Menin Gate in 1927 and in 1932 at Thiepval, in France, where 72,194 died on the Somme before 1918.

The Imperial War Graves Commission was created in 1917 which led to controversy over the simple crosses marking burials which were to be replaced by headstones. The crosses were made of whatever was handy - a piece of wood, a broken rifle, perhaps with written details like the soldier's name.

As arrangements became more formalised bodies were exhumed and reburied in cemeteries with IWGC headstones designed by Edwin Lutyens and the lettering designed by Macdonald Gill.

In 1919 Lady Florence Cecil launched a petition for a cross to be erected instead of the IWGC's headstone. She came from a well connected family, and having lost three of her four sons, sent a letter to the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII) the President of the IWGC on behalf of thousands of parents.

However after heated exchanges in Parliament, opposition to the headstones was withdrawn and the crosses were offered to the families of the soldiers commemorated by the crosses, of which 23 have been tracked down in Suffolk, one of which is in St John's Church in Orwell Road, Felixstowe. It is dedicated to Captain William Myddleton Kersey aged 24, who died at Passchendaele on 17 October 1917 after attending Wellington College at Oxford, reading law. His father founded a solicitors with offices in Felixstowe and Ipswich. His parents lived in Seagull House, Felixstowe.

The exhumation and repatriation of bodies was very controversial and was banned at first - even Gladstone's grandson's body was not repatriated until the end of World War One.

The work of the Imperial War Graves Commission which still continues, grew with the outbreak of World War Two, with new roads built in Europe unearthing many more bodies, but those from wars after 1947 are not part of the remit of the Commission today.

*Both articles by The Editor*

# ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT WEEKENDS OF THE YEAR

**B**ETWEEN FRIDAY 6th and Sunday 8th of September, The Felixstowe Society will be embroiled in one of the most important and widely enjoyed weekends of the year. It will, of course, be the weekend that we will be holding Heritage Open Days here in Felixstowe.

Celebrated Europe wide and enjoyed by both young and old, this international celebration is held annually with the express idea of opening usually closed buildings to an eager to visit general public. The scope is tremendously wide and many surprises are included along the way.

The Felixstowe Society organises the events in Felixstowe every other year and 2024 is our year. We have already held a meeting to discuss ideas for differing venues to join those last opened in 2022 - all free of charge. At the time of writing several aspects are being looked into for further discussion at the next meeting in early January.

There are four ways members can volunteer to help at this moment in time -

1. Volunteer your services now for that first weekend (or part of) in September.
2. Agree to put an A4 sized mini poster in your window or place of work to publicise event(s).
3. Agree to open your house and/or your garden during that weekend.
4. Help by distributing brochures in your

neighbourhood to publicise the weekend.

Last time we organised Heritage Open Days in 2022 we had 30 volunteers, but in 2024 we hope to double the number of venues open to the the public, we therefore require double the number of helpers to man the venues. It is likely to be a hectic but enjoyable weekend, because we will be well organised. Your help will assist this being so.

We therefore hope that many more members will volunteer their services now, to enable us to cope with the increased activity.

**Make Heritage Open Days in Felixstowe in 2024 really successful - put your weight behind The Society and make the difference happen!**

If you are prepared to help please contact Keith Horn, as soon as possible - your assistance will be greatly appreciated. His address is 75 Ferry Road, Felixstowe IP11 9LU. Telephone: 01394 270845. Mobile: 07989 314706. Email: [kjandehorn@btinternet.com](mailto:kjandehorn@btinternet.com)  
Many thanks.



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## PHIL'S SUNDAY WALKS - 2024

**A**LL WALKS START AT 2.30PM. THEY LAST APPROXIMATELY 1-1½ HOURS.

### **MARCH 17th** **The Tomline Walk**

STARTS at Martello P and finishes at the Sea Road end of Cavendish Road.

### **APRIL 14th** **The Old Felixstowe Walk**

STARTS at the back of The Orwell Hotel on High Road East and finishes opposite *The Grosvenor* Pub on Ranelagh Road.

### **MAY 12th** **The Seafront Gardens Perimeter Walk**

THIS is not a garden walk. Starts and finishes at The Town Hall.



# “LOVE AND MARRIAGE... LOVE AND MARRIAGE...”

Frank Sinatra fans will know that they “Go together like a Horse and Carriage...”



Well, we had a perfect example of this when on a beautiful sunny Saturday in September, Christopher Drewitt and Lianne Royal became Mr. and Mrs. Drewitt. Here they are along with Bev Boyce and Peter Constable when they visited Felixstowe last year to see the site of the garden shed that turned out to be an old London horse bus.



The wedding was a wonderful occasion and the family-owned horse bus was much in evidence with plenty of passengers – travelling free!



Christopher works for The Royal Collection in charge of carriages and coaches. He is an authority on horse buses and was able to identify “our bus” and provide photographs of it in early times as well as when it went, in fully restored condition, to auction in 2000.



Unfortunately, despite his and our endeavours, we have yet to discover the whereabouts of this elusive carriage, but we will keep up the search.

*Michael Thomas*

## FELIXSTOWE SEAFARERS' CENTRE

**T**UCKED AWAY in an unassuming building in the Port of Felixstowe is a place that for nearly 50 years has hosted visitors from all over the world on a daily basis. Located just inside the dock at the end of Carr Road is the Felixstowe Seafarers' Centre, offering rest and relaxation for the crews of the numerous container ships calling at the port.

Seafarers typically from the Philippines, India, China, Taiwan and Denmark make use of the facilities, as do those from Ukraine (and sometimes Russia, usually on the same ship). There are also crew members from such far-flung places as Montenegro, Togo, Myanmar, Fiji and Tonga. As well as those aboard ships calling at the port, the Centre also regularly hosts those joining a ship at Felixstowe. These seafarers usually have had a long journey on multiple flights from the likes of Manila and Mumbai.

Seafarers typically have contracts lasting at least six months on each ship and time ashore is limited, especially on container ships where fast turnaround times are the norm. These days, most of the main container terminals around the world are a long way from city centres. The newest berths at Rotterdam, for example, are over twenty miles from the city. Felixstowe is unusual and therefore special for the visiting



*The entrance to the Seafarers' Centre*

seafarers, because it is a pleasant and safe seaside town within easy walking distance of the port. Lidl is a popular destination to stock up on treats, as is McDonalds for a change from on-board food. Getting traditional British fish and chips on the prom always goes down well, as does refreshments at one of the pubs, cafes and restaurants in town. Felixstowe also regularly meets specialist needs – a crew member might want bicycle parts from Wilco, another being a fan of vinyl records loves the two second-hand record shops on Orwell Road. Haircuts also feature on the list!

Run by the charitable organisation, Queen Victoria Seamans' Rest (QVSR), the Centre has a small number of paid employees, a chaplain and ship welfare visitor, plus paid and volunteer drivers. The latter take the Centre's minibus out to the gangways of the ships, collecting and dropping off seafarers and taking them through the port's security process to allow shore leave.

The Centre is open from 10am to 10pm, seven days a week and provides seafarers with various facilities including a small shop, bar, money exchange, table tennis, pool table and air hockey. It also has free wi-fi and this is the first and most popular thing seafarers take advantage of, immediately contacting their families to catch up via video calls as internet access on board ship is sporadic and expensive for them. This family contact is all important. For example, the Midlands-based sister of a Filipino seafarer drove all the way down to the Centre to meet her brother when his ship called at Felixstowe this year. She brought his young niece and nephew who he had never before met in person.

The chance to stretch your legs on dry land is also welcomed. One crew member regularly jogs from the Centre to Felixstowe Ferry and back. Another has a fold-up bicycle and has reached Woodbridge, Ipswich and even Sudbury on it! Those with a bit more shore time and money available have been known to venture to London by train, and even Cambridge by taxi no less.

*Neil Davidson*





*Four views of the large downstairs room at the Seafarers' Centre showing some of the facilities available*



*The bell commemorating the European Gateway roll-on roll-off ferry which sank off Harwich*



*The ensign of the Nordic Ferry, which saw active service in the Falkland Islands War*



## THORA'S STORY

**M**RS. J. SPURR, well known in music circles, died at the Gwanda Hospital last Saturday after a short illness. Her infant son, Geoffrey John Spurr, died a few days earlier, having lived only a few hours... Mrs. Spurr had a fine gift of providing beautiful music of all kinds to suit the taste of her audience. She is survived by her husband and baby daughter.

The above is an extract from an obituary published in a Southern Rhodesian newspaper in January 1942.

Mrs. J. Spurr was born Thora Musgrave in Bradford on the 3rd June 1914, the third of five children and a member of a well-travelled family that included a number of what might be called high-flyers – in one case literally.

The 1911 Census tells us that Thora's grandfather John Keenan Musgrave (1856-1934) was a 'Worsted and Woollen Cloth Manufacturer' in Bradford. Evelyn (1892-1978) was awarded a British Empire Medal for her services to the savings industry. Norman Musgrave (1924-2007), generally known as 'Bill', flew Spitfires with 237 Squadron of the Rhodesian Air Force over Italy in the latter stages of the Second World War. (One of his fellow pilots was a future Prime Minister by the name of Ian Smith).

Thora's father was Geoffrey Musgrave (1882-1949), a mining engineer whose work took him to many different parts of the world including Siberia, Bechuanaland, Baluchistan, the Far East and

Australia. He also worked in Norway, where he met and married Karen Larsen (1886-1962) in Skien. Geoffrey and Karen eventually settled in southern Africa, where he became the General Manager of Chrome Mines in Southern Rhodesia. He was awarded an O.B.E. in 1941.

Thora's death at the age of only 27 - a young mother who was clearly an accomplished musician - and her son, was clearly a tragedy, not least because of the circumstances surrounding it, but she achieved a great deal in

those 27 years.

I don't know whether motherhood would have subsequently led to the curtailment or abandonment, temporary or permanent, of her promising career, but I do know that she had a glittering record of achievement on her way to becoming a qualified teacher of pianoforte in 1935. This involved passing exams and gaining certificates from the University of South Africa, Trinity College of Music and the Royal Academy of Music.

She seems to have been something of a star pupil, as she was awarded three medals by the Royal Academy of Music – a bronze medal for pianoforte in 1936 and a silver for pianoforte and a bronze for aural training in 1937.

Like many of the Musgrave family, she was also a great traveller. She sailed from Table Bay in September 1930, returning to South Africa just over two years later. She visited Norway in August and September 1935, and the



*Thora's passport 12th May 1930*



*Thora in Norway in August 1935*

Bavarian Alps and the Austrian Tyrol in September 1936.

Thora clearly approved of Norway and its people: *'Most beautiful country I've ever been... I love the wild berries... very attractive wooden houses... we met the Norwegian Consul and his wife and kid. Charming people... went for a walk with the chauffeur – such democracy as never was!!... went on a marvelous road which corkscrewed up the mountain... we yelled at everyone we passed and they yelled back – really marvelous fun.'*

On the train back to Bradford, there was *'... an awful baby in our compartment... Heaven preserve me from ever having any babies!!'*

Her mood didn't improve much when she returned home: *'Bradford at last – how awful it is – so dirty and dingy'*.

Germany offered a different kind of experience, as her guides seemed intent on highlighting the early struggles of the country's new leader: *'... saw the inn in which he (Hitler) first started his movement, also saw the guards at graves of 16 Nazis killed there in 1923... saw the prison where Hitler was held from 1920 to 1923'*.

On the 17th October 1937, Thora and Karen set sail from Dover, travelling first class on the *Jagersfontain*, and arrived back in Cape Town on the 2nd November. It looks as though, although they had once again visited England and visited family members in Bradford, they had not ventured into Europe. It would also appear, from Thora's passport, that she made no further trips abroad. Karen made further visits to England, the last in 1954.

In 1938, Thora met Arthur John Spurr (1913-1982), known

as 'Jack', who was born in Cape Town and became Chief Electrical Engineer of the Southern Rhodesia Electricity Supply Commission. Thora and Jack married in 1939 and their daughter Elizabeth Anne was born in November 1940. Tragedy struck just over two years later.

The decision to refer to a 'short illness' in that 1942 newspaper article may well have been made to spare any distress that might have been caused had the actual cause of Thora's death been reported.

Family members claimed that she could not be

dissuaded from accompanying Jack on a trip into the country, but while asleep in their tent she was bitten by a tick insect. The resultant fever proved fatal, and the hospital was unable to save her life or that of her newborn son. Jack remarried and had three more children.

I never got the chance to meet Thora, but I like to think she would have been happy to learn what happened to her daughter, Anne, who worked as a secretary for several companies in Southern Rhodesia and South Africa before setting sail for England from Cape Town in 1968 (with the intention of returning).

You may wonder why I've an interest in Thora's story. Her daughter Anne and I met in London in August 1969 on the 8th floor of the IBM building in Basinghall Street in the City, and married in 1970, (she sold the return half of her ticket!) and we moved to Felixstowe 37 years ago.

*Laurence McDonald*



*Thora's Wedding on 15th July 1939*



*To Dad from Thora*

# A SHORT HISTORY OF THE BAUDSEY AND FELIXSTOWE LIFEBOATS 1802-1852

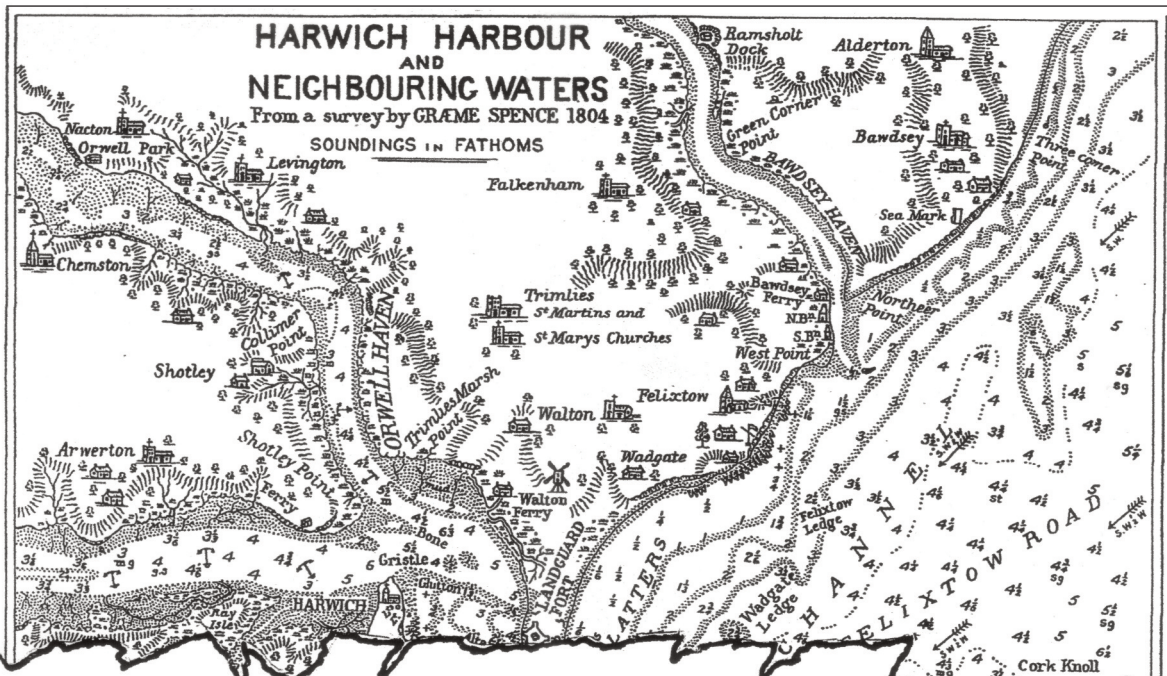
by John P. Cresswell (Captain retired) Part One

**B**RITAIN has long been known as the 'cradle of the Lifeboat', and correctly so, as both Britain and the Irish were the first to establish dedicated rescue boats. This was mainly through the efforts of the 'British Humane Society' for the Recovery of Persons Apparently Drowned, established in 1774 and later known as The Royal Humane Society. Prior to the introduction of any formal maritime rescue organisations during the 1800's, it was largely the introduction of numerous local Humane Societies who strove to encourage the saving of lives at sea, such was the devastating loss of life around our coasts. Britain's first lifeboat was established at Formby Point, Merseyside in 1775 by the 'Liverpool Institution for Recovering Drowned Persons'. Meanwhile, the Independent Irish Parliament established a lifeboat in Dublin Bay as early as 1786, whilst Britain's second lifeboat was established at Bamburgh on the Northumberland coast.

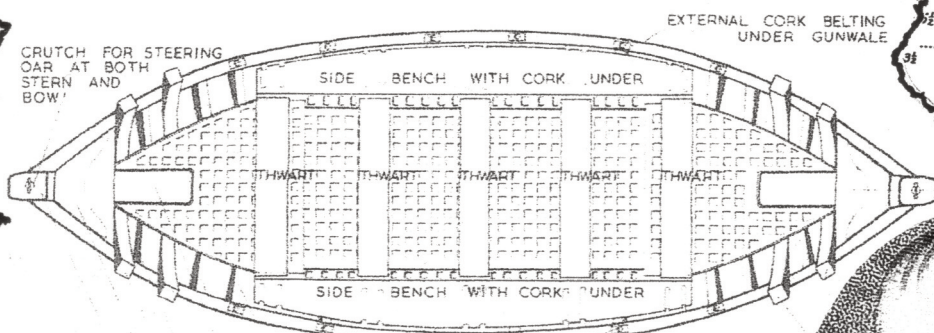
The first mention of any lifeboat in Suffolk was in 1739 when an 'unimmergible craft' was built for the Admiralty by shipwright John Bernard of St Peters Yard, Ipswich, however it was never intended for civilian use. The first lifeboat to appear on the Suffolk coast was in 1801 when the 'Lowestoft Sea Charity' soon to be the 'Suffolk Humane Soc' purchased a Henry Greathead purpose built lifeboat. Yorkshireman Henry Greathead had served his apprenticeship as a shipwright in the Royal Navy during the American War of Independence 1775-1783. In 1785 when he left the R.N., he set up his own boat building firm in South Shields, building his first purpose built lifeboat, the *Original* in 1790. His design was unique and probably based on the surf boats that he had seen bringing cargoes ashore in heavy surf by when he was serving in the West Indies. The most outstanding feature of the Greathead boats were its deep curved keel

fashioned in a flat four inch thick oak 'ram plank' running for 20 feet, which, together with her extremely high stern post and stemhead, resulted in a massive 2 ft 6 inch sheer of gunwhale. She was a completely open boat of 30 feet overall, a beam of 10 feet and a draft of 3 feet. The *Original* pulled ten oars double banked (5 oarsmen on each side), and having no rudder was steered by a helmsman with a long sweep oar. Being a double ended boat, she could be steered from each end without the need for turning round. Being heavily built of British oak with a massive pair of timberheads (bollards) on each side of her high bow and stern, her buoyancy relied solely on large cork belting on each side of the hull under the gunwhales and under the thwarts and side casings. The *Original's* sea trials took place on 30th January 1790 in rough seas, and it was reported that 'the great rake of the stem lifts the boat up almost perpendicular, the sea breaking as she goes over it and the stern of the same form is lifted up and launches over it with great velocity'. By 1811, some 25 Greathead lifeboats were in service around the UK, with many more serving abroad. In total Henry Greathead built 31 lifeboats and his eleventh, the *Zetland* built in 1802 and seeing 78 years of service at Redcar still survives today and can be seen at the Redcar Heritage Centre. Henry Greathead never ever patented his lifeboat design, saying that his plans were for the benefit of others and for the public good. At around the same time as Lowestoft had received its Greathead lifeboat, a public subscription had been raised by The Rev Frank of Alderton, Admiral Sir Philip Broke of Nacton - infamous for his engagement between his warship *HMS Shannon* and his victory over the larger *USN Constitution*. Another naval hero was the High Steward of Ipswich Horatio Nelson, who gave five guineas towards the cost of two





### HENRY GREATHEAD'S "ORIGINAL"



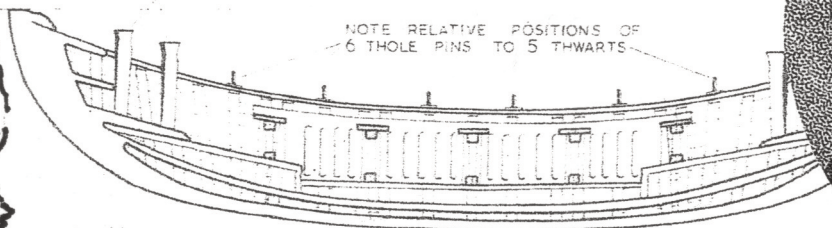
NOTE EXTREMELY HEAVY TIMBERS

### PLAN

THOLE PINS

TIMBER HEADS

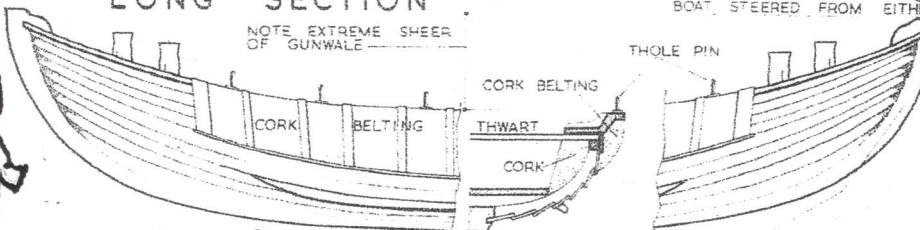
NOTE RELATIVE POSITIONS OF  
6 THOLE PINS TO 5 THWARIS



### LONG SECTION

NOTE EXTREME SHEER  
OF GUNWALE

BOAT, STEERED FROM EITHER



PART SAILING PROFILE.

HALF CROSS SECTION AT  
MIDSHIPS.

NOTE GREAT CURVATURE  
IN KEEL EXTENDING INTO  
AND STERN POSTS



hundred guineas required to purchase a second Greathead lifeboat for Hollesley Bay. Up at Lowestoft, the Greathead lifeboat had to be launched directly off the beach as the town was not to have a harbour until 1831. On the 2nd March 1801 *The Ipswich Journal* reported that the lifeboat had undergone sea trials and that 'In the opinion of the best judges, it was calculated to answer the purpose intended'. This was not the opinion of the experienced beachmen who were expected to crew the lifeboat. They refused to use the boat which they regarded as unsuitable for shallow waters and confused seas of the East Coast. Their opinion was that it was easily swamped on launching in heavy surf, and it was near impossible to row windward. Therefore the lifeboat lay idle whilst they continued to favour their trusty beach yawls, said to be the most handy, largest open sailing boats in Europe. *The Ipswich Journal* then published a letter from one of the main thirty-one promoters and lifeboat subscribers addressed to the pilots, seafarers and Lowestoft townsfolk expressing disappointment with the lifeboats crews stating that 'a more worthy race of men would have to be found'. Within only a few weeks the seventh Greathead lifeboat arrived in Suffolk. She was to be named the *Baudsey Lifeboat* after trials at Orford, she was put on station at East Lane, Baudsey, where there was an existing boathouse close by 'Mortella' tower gun battery 'X'. The Greathead lifeboat soon found favour by her crews taken from the local coastguards, the sea-fencibles militia, pilots and beachmen, who may well have been the likes of the 'Whyards, Mannells and Brinkleys of Orford', or the 'Langmaids, Gibbs, Williams or Harris at Shingle Street'. These men did not hesitate to put her to good use as we shall see.

Although the *Baudsey Lifeboat* records of service are rare, we do know that in 1804 when under the command of coastguard Lt Hailes from the nearby signal station, that with a full crew she went to the aid of the collier brig *Pallas* with eight persons aboard which had foundered on the notorious 'Cutler Bank' one and a half

miles SE of East Lane, her crew taking to the rigging. *The Ipswich Journal* published a letter of praise from a local Magistrate saying, 'Sirs. I call your attention to the great success that has recently attended the Lifeboat established at Baudsey, the lives of six or eight souls, who without her assistance, most inevitably would have perished'. A later report of 1811 refers to the '*Baudsey Lifeboat*' being inspected by Vice Admiral Lord Carthew R.N. with great satisfaction prior to a meeting of the Hollesley Bay lifeboat subscribers that was held at the Baudsey *Star Inn* where a large sum of money had been raised towards its upkeep. A further report tells of the lifeboat being launched in a severe December gale with snow blizzards, to assist the Yarmouth schooner *Ruby* aground in Baudsey Flats and breaking up. Her crew of four and a passenger were all safely brought ashore. At another meeting of lifeboat subscribers, again held at *The Star Inn* in 1826, it was recorded by the Committee the 'Life Boat crews should entitle themselves to the benefit of salvage in all possible cases without risking the loss of life'. We also know that on several occasions the lifeboat could not be launched off the very exposed beach owing to heavy seas. On one such occasion the lifeboat on its wheeled carriage had to be hauled by horses, the two miles along the beach down to the mouth of Woodbridge Haven where she was launched in total darkness, only to be swamped crossing the dangerous Bar causing her to unfortunately turn back. This may be one of the reasons why in 1824, the Baudsey-Hollesley lifeboat and her boathouse were moved down to Woodbridge Haven where the boathouse was re-erected on the foreshore just below Deben ferry crossing. Within a short time, she was moved again across the river to Felixstowe Ferry where the boathouse at a cost of £30 was re-erected beside 'Mortella' tower 'U', close by the coastguard cottages. All that was left to mark the *Baudsey Lifeboat's* existence in Hollesley Bay, was *The Lifeboat Inn* in Shingle Street.

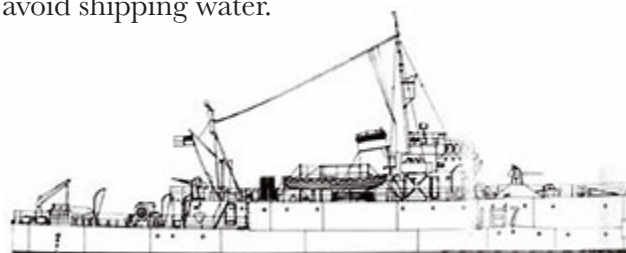
*To be continued in Issue 135 May 2024*



## H.M.S. FELIXSTOWE

**H**.M.S. FELIXSTOWE is the only Royal Navy ship ever named after our town. With Pennant Number J126, she was a member of the Bangor Class of minesweepers, named after *H.M.S. Bangor* together with others named after coastal towns in the United Kingdom.

Although described as running 'as smoothly as a sewing machine', the lack of size of Bangor Class ships with a shallow draught of only ten foot six inches and a displacement of only about 700 tons made for difficult handling and instability in poor sea conditions, they are accordingly seen as 'lively movers' in rough weather and went with the sea rather than against it and depended on their buoyancy to avoid shipping water.



There was usually a total complement of about eighty serving on a minesweeper, including five or six officers, about thirty six deck hands and the remainder being signalmen, engine room and technical ratings, cooks and stewards. When a minesweeper was active with its sweeps out, everyone not on watch was at his action station or on lookout except those in the engine room and the galley. About every six months, each man had five or six days' leave and another three weeks' leave during the annual refit. The favourite recreation on board was playing ludo, darts and tombola as well as reading books from the ship's library. Most men also had a hobby such as making ship models in any spare time on board. There would also be a NAAFI (Navy, Army and Air Force Institute) canteen to visit.

Enemy mines at sea were usually globular, some three feet in diameter and contained around three hundred and fifty pounds of

explosive which with the firing batteries occupied about half the space available - with the balance of the space serving as an air chamber to make the mine more buoyant. A minelaying vessel would drop both the mine and its attached sinker straight to the sea bed. This sinker then automatically released the mine's mooring wire for the mine to rise under its own buoyancy to the required height to be effective.

*H.M.S. Felixstowe* itself was ordered to be built on 9 September 1939 - just six days after the start of the Second World War. However, ship building by Lobnitz and Company in Renfrew, Scotland did not commence until 8 August 1940 but within months she was able to launch on 15 January 1941. Even so, *H.M.S. Felixstowe* was not commissioned as ready for her role as a minesweeper until almost six months later on 11 July 1941.

With a maximum speed of 16 knots (18 miles an hour) and powered by two vertical triple expansion steam engines, *H.M.S. Felixstowe* had a maximum range of 2,800 nautical miles (3,200 miles) when sailing at 10 knots (12 miles an hour). Her armament consisted of a single 12 pounder, 3 inch anti-aircraft gun forward and a single quick-fire 2 pounder anti-aircraft gun aft. When on escort duties, around 40 depth charges could replace her mine-sweeping gear.

*H.M.S. Felixstowe* joined the 13th Minesweeping Flotilla which also included *H.M.S. Clacton* and five of the other Bangor Class vessels seeking to methodically clear mines in an area declared dangerous to shipping. This clearance was achieved by streaming at an angle, a mechanical sweep - often called a paravane - each located at the bow of the minesweeper on the port and starboard sides. These sweeps had a sharp serrated wire which could serve in one of two ways. It could cut the mooring wire of the mine which anchored it so that the wire floated to the surface and could be destroyed by gunfire from the minesweeper's crew which either exploded the mine's protruding horns or riddled



it with holes so that it sank with seawater inside it. Alternatively, the sweep itself was in contact with the mine which would cause it to explode - in which case the sweep would have to be retrieved by the minesweeper for replacement. Another duty of a minesweeper was to lay danbuoys as markers to show where mines had been swept and there was safe passage.

It was customary for a minesweeper to paint on her funnel the count of mines which had been destroyed with a white chevron for a single mine, red chevron for five, a blue star for twenty five and a red star for fifty. However, no ready information is available about the exact tally for *H.M.S. Felixstowe*.

It is known that *H.M.S. Felixstowe* within the 13th Minesweeping Flotilla was deployed in October 1942 to Gibraltar to assist other naval vessels on their way to support the build-up for *Operation Torch* - the code name for the Anglo-American invasion of Morocco and Algeria which later took place in November 1942. She was further deployed as part of

*Operation Perpetual* for continuous minesweeping duties at Bougie Port in Algeria. In September 1943 *H.M.S. Felixstowe* was detached from minesweeping to important danbuoy laying north of Salerno Bay in southern Italy to identify where it was safe to voyage after mine clearance.

By a fateful twist, *H.M.S. Felixstowe* was herself sunk by a mine which detonated three miles east of Cape Ferro, Sardinia on 18 December 1943. Remarkably and very fortunately, she suffered no loss of life with survivors being rescued by accompanying Flotilla ships.

During her short career, *H.M.S. Felixstowe* had only two commanders with Lieutenant Commander Colin Corbert-Singleton D.S.C. R.N. in command from June 1941 for a year and then Temporary Commander Lieutenant Charles Pawney, Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve from 18 June 1942 until its loss on 18 December 1943.

*Michael Sharman*

Illustrations courtesy of The Imperial War Museum



*H.M.S. Stornaway, one of the Bangor Class minesweepers which is a typical example of how H.M.S. Felixstowe would have appeared but for her loss in 1943.*

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY  
The Holiday to Hampshire  
17th-20th May 2024

We are pleased to inform you that arrangements have been made for our Mini Break to Hampshire.

We will be staying at Hampshire Court Hotel and Spa, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG24 8FY.

The approximate cost of the holiday will be £500.00 per person as costs may rise slightly between now and next May.

The estimated cost includes: -

- \* Coach Travel by Klarners Coaches Ltd and a tip for the driver.
- \* Portage on arrival and also tea/coffee on arrival.
- \* Half board basis with private dining.
- \* Fully cooked Breakfast with a choice of hot and cold food.
- \* Three course Menus for Dinner plus tea/coffee after dinner.
- \* Use of Hotel Spa and swimming pool.
  - \* Entry to Guildford Cathedral and Guided Tour.
  - \* Entry into Milestones Museum.
- \* Full day visit to Beaulieu including entry into Beaulieu Motor Museum, Palace House and Abbey.
- \* Entry into RHS Hyde Hall near Chelmsford. No charge for RHS members and each RHS member can bring a guest with them free of charge. Memberships cards will have to be produced on the day.

As in previous years we will need a minimum of 40 people and if you would like to come on the holiday would you please complete the Application Form and return it to me with your payment of the deposit of £100 per person.

Please make your cheque payable to **Felixstowe Society.**

Please note that you will have to make your own insurance arrangements.

Looking forward to hearing from you as soon as possible.

Best wishes, Keith Horn.

P.S. If you have any concerns, please telephone me on 01394 270845 or mobile 07989 314706 or email me at [kjandehorn@btinternet.com](mailto:kjandehorn@btinternet.com)

APPLICATION FORM  
The Holiday to Hampshire  
17th -20th May 2024

I/We would like to go on this holiday and enclose my/our deposit of £100 per person.

Please make your cheque payable to Felixstowe Society and return to  
**Keith Horn**  
75 Ferry Road, Felixstowe IP11 9LU.

Name(s) .....

Address .....

Telephone No. ....

Email .....

For Couples:

Bedroom with Twin or Double Bed  
Twin  or Double

Single Room please

Special requirements in your room  
Yes  No

If yes, please state requirements

Any dietary Requirements?  
If so, please advise.

Have you had your Covid Vaccinations  
and boosters ?  
Yes  No

Please advise us your next of Kin in emergency

Name .....

Address .....

*continued overleaf*



APPLICATION FORM  
The Holiday to Hampshire  
17th -20th May 2024

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

**Keith Horn**  
**75 Ferry Road**  
**Felixstowe**  
**IP11 9LU.**

Many thanks.

THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY  
ANNUAL DINNER 2024

**F**OLLOWING THE SUCCESS of this  
year's Dinner, we have arranged that the  
Felixstowe Society Annual Dinner 2024  
will be held at the Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club  
on Monday 15th April 2024 at 6.30pm for a  
7pm start.

The cost will be £24.00 for a 2 Course meal  
and £28.00 for a 3 Course meal and includes  
the following: -

Tea and coffee after the meal; a tip for the  
staff; our costs for printing, stationery and  
telephone calls etc. Last year tips for staff were  
not included nor the event expenses.

If you require a 2 Course meal you will have  
a choice of either a Starter and Main Course or  
a Main Course and Sweet Course.

We hope that you will join us once again and  
would ask that you complete the double-sided  
Booking Form and return to me at the address  
shown.

If you enjoyed last year's Dinner, please  
encourage your friends to join us on 24th April  
2024.

As in previous years we will be holding a  
raffle and I would welcome donations of prizes.  
Please note that any profit made on the night  
will go to the Mayor's chosen Charities.

Many thanks,

*Keith Horn*







**THE MENU  
WILL BE AS FOLLOWS**

**STARTERS**

**A.**

Prawn and Crayfish salad with granary bread

**B.**

Goats cheese, cherry tomato and pesto served on toasted brioche

**C.**

Smoked chicken salad with raspberry vinaigrette

**MAIN COURSE**

**D.**

Plated Three Meat Roast - Beef, Pork and Turkey

**E.**

Salmon and Cod en croute served with asparagus and Hollandaise sauce

**F.**

Leek and Camembert tart served with a Provençal sauce

*All served with roast potatoes, seasonal vegetables, Yorkshire pudding & Gluten-free gravy*

**DESSERTS**

**G.**

Treacle sponge with custard

**H.**

Chocolate orange cheesecake

**I.**

Warm chocolate fudge cake with ice cream

**J.**

Cheese and biscuits

Two courses £24.00. Three courses £28.00

If you suffer from a food allergy or intolerance, or would like to know what allergens may be present in each of the menu items, please let a member of staff know upon placing your order.

**THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY  
ANNUAL DINNER 2024  
Booking Form**

I would like.....places for this event.

Forename.....

Surname.....

Address.....

Post Code.....

Telephone.....

Email.....

In order to inform the Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club of diners' requirements, please enter the names and their choices from the menu featured in the left hand column.

Please provide the information below and also on the retained portion on the next page, for your own records.

Your party can be up to 8 people.

The forename and surname of each of my guests are below, with their choice of menu

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....
- 6.....
- 7.....
- 8.....

A 2 course meal cost £24 each and a 3 course meal cost £28 each, including tea or coffee, tip and expenses.

**Please insert letters (A-J)** from the Menu left beside the names for each person attending and duplicate it overleaf for your own records.

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



# THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY ANNUAL DINNER 2024

## Booking Form

When you have completed both sides of this  
Booking Form, please cut as indicated  
and post it to

**Keith Horn**  
**75 Ferry Road**  
**Felixstowe**  
**IP11 9LU.**

Please include your cheque for payment,  
made out to **Felixstowe Society**  
with a **stamped, addressed envelope**  
for the return of your tickets.

# THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY ANNUAL DINNER 2024

## Your Booking Form Record

FROM PAGE 29 AT THE



### THE MENU

**STARTERS** **A.** Prawn & crayfish salad with granary bread. **B.** Goats cheese, cherry tomato & pesto served on toasted brioche. **C.** Smoked chicken salad with raspberry vinaigrette.

**MAINS** **D.** Plated Three Meat Roast - Beef, Pork & Turkey. **E.** Salmon & Cod en croute served with asparagus & Hollandaise sauce. **F.** Leek and Camembert tart served with a Provencal sauce.

*All served with roast potatoes, seasonal vegetables,  
Yorkshire pudding & Gluten-free gravy.*

**DESERTS** **G.** Treacle sponge with custard.

**H.** Chocolate orange cheesecake.

**I.** Warm chocolate fudge cake with ice cream.

**J.** Cheese and biscuits

The forename and surname of each of my  
guests are below, with their choice of menu

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....
5. ....
6. ....
7. ....
8. ....

A 2 course meal costs £24 and a 3 course meal  
£28, including tea or coffee, tip & expenses.

I inserted letters (**A-J**) from the Menu above  
beside the names of each person attending and  
it is duplicated here for my records.

I enclosed a cheque for £ .....made  
payable to **Felixstowe Society**.





# THE FELIXSTOWE SOCIETY APPLICATION/RENEWAL OF SUBSCRIPTIONS

*Please complete this Application Form and send to*  
Hilary Eaton, 102C Queens Road, Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 7PG

Annual Membership: Single person - £10.00  
Two persons living at the same address - £15.00  
Under 18 years - Free Corporate Members - £30.00  
Annual Subscriptions run from 1st January to 31st December

Payment by bank transfer, cheque or cash accepted.  
Bank Account - Felixstowe Society (T.S.B.Bank).  
Sort Code: 77-66-25 Account Number: 25273660

Full Name/s.....

Address.....

Post Code ..... Telephone Number.....

Email.....

I/We enclose £..... being subscription for 1 or 2 persons

Signed.....

## DATA PROTECTION PERMISSION

As an organisation which holds members' details we are obliged to obtain your written permission (GDPR) to retain the personal information provided on this form.

These are stored on a password protected computer and as paper records. The information is shared only with those within the Committee and helpers who need access for the express running of The Society and will not be shared with other organisations.

By providing us with your details and signing this form, you accept that this information is stored for these purposes.







## A SUMMER IN THE SUNSHINE

**T**HE IPSWICH Over 50's Brass Band and our home-from-home in Felixstowe. I have been the Musical Director of the Ipswich Over 50's Brass Band for a little over 11 years, which might seem surprising given my slight frame and predominantly brown hair visible in the photograph below!

Adopting my second band whilst on maternity leave following the birth of my daughter, Lillian, in 2012, I quickly became familiar with the towns and villages between the Orwell and Deben rivers, having previously lived a very Colchester-centric life, most recently as General Manager of the notable Arts Council funded Roman River Festival.

Longstanding engagements for the Band included The Suffolk Show; a series of outdoor performances at 'The Triangle' in Felixstowe and Christmas concerts at The Orwell Hotel and in Capel St Mary. The Band also moved its summer series to the Hotel for a time, when some local office workers complained about the noise we were making in the afternoons!

During the coronavirus pandemic, there was some question over whether wind and brass ensembles could ever be rekindled, but the determination of these musicians from Suffolk, Essex and sometimes further afield, eventually saw the band – to borrow a now somewhat

hackneyed phrase – 'build back better'.

Having previously played for several events marking the Platinum Jubilee of the late Queen Elizabeth II, in May 2023 the Band started summer with three Coronation concerts, adopting King Charles' community focus by playing to over 500 school children as well as other local events in Capel St Mary. Later, the usual summer series at 'The Triangle' in Felixstowe attracted lots of interest, including from local radio, with subsequent donations to St Elizabeth Hospice in Ipswich and the East Anglian Children's Home. Their fundraising concert on behalf of the Felixstowe Carnival Committee was also a resounding success and led to several follow-up visits to local care homes, for those unable to travel in order to see the Band in person, including Mill Lane (see photograph below).

Whilst the remainder of the year focused on Christmas, the Band agreed to squeeze in a visit to White Gables (another Felixstowe residential home) on 16 November and further fundraising took place – playing for Christmas shoppers in the town centre – on 16 December, and at The Orwell Hotel on 21 December.

We hope that you saw us there and look forward to playing for you in Felixstowe in 2024.

*Victoria Steinitz*

