The Felixstowe Society Newsletter

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

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

**Chairman:** Philip Johns, 1 High Row Field, Felixstowe, IP11 7AE, 672434  
**Vice Chairman:** Philip Hadwen, 54 Fairfield Ave., Felixstowe, IP11 9JJ, 286008  
**Secretary:** Gillian Hughes, 18 Brook Lane, Felixstowe, IP11 7EG, 276128  
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**Membership Subscriptions**

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

The subscription runs from the 1 January.

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

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

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

**Editor:** Tony Hughes
Notes from the Chairman

A happy New Year to all my readers and I hope you all had a very enjoyable Christmas.

How many of you have made New Year’s resolutions and more importantly, how many of you will be able to keep them? This year I am going to try and do half of the ones that I said I would do last year and never did. I think it would be a very good bet to say that clearing out the loft or the garage or the garden shed are some of the most popular resolutions that will have to be repeated in 2010. I know that our editor, Tony, would love it if one of my 2009 resolutions would be to always submit the ‘Notes from the Chairman’ on time for Newsletter printing. I once asked my wife if she had any suggestions for my New Year’s resolutions – BIG MISTAKE.

A warm welcome to our new members: Colin and Victoria Lister, David and Patricia Hann, Ian and Ellen McLennon, Tess and John Battersby, Pauline Ware, John and Sandra Grosvenor, Brenda and Russell Barnard and Harry and Doris Riley.

I am sure most of you will be aware of the death last November of Ann Rodwell who served as our Mayor in 2006/7. She had a long and distinguished career in public service and last year was elected Chairperson of Suffolk County Council. She was a staunch friend to The Felixstowe Society who always gave us help and encouragement. A most gracious lady who will be sadly missed.

Our first speaker evening this year on 27 January is a presentation about Felixstowe TV, so make sure you are smartly dressed and properly made-up.

This year our Quiz Night is again organised by our Vice Chairman, Phil Hadwen, and is on Friday 30 January. Full details are on page 20 (He has promised some simple questions for me.)

In April we have planned a Society Dinner (that is for members of The Felixstowe Society not High Society – I don’t know though!). Full details are on the enclosed form. Please come along and support this evening. My thanks to Keith Horn for all his hard work in organising this event.

With the exception of Life Members and those new members who joined on or after 1st October 2008, it is time to renew your membership using the enclosed form. Please don’t forget as the sending of reminder letters should be an unnecessary chore. It is also the time of year when we consider environmental awards. Please see page 21.

Thank you.

Philip Johns

Sadly I have to report the death of Mr Sidney Irons who was our oldest member. He passed away on Thursday 2 October at the great age of 101. Both he and his wife were original members of The Society.

He took over the running of his father’s grocer’s shop in 1932 in Hackney, East London. He married Margery in 1936 and they lived in Palmers Green where their daughter, Beryl, was born. In 1951 the family moved to Eastbourne where they remained until 1976 when at the age of 70 Sidney retired and he and his wife came to live in Felixstowe, where his daughter and son-in-law worked. Sidney was a remarkable man who was very musical. He played the organ for St Andrew’s Church until he was in his nineties and sang with the Dorian Singers until he was eighty. Listening to classical music was always a great joy to him. Both Sidney’s daughter and son-in-law, Beryl and Emile Mercier, are life members of our Society. We were represented at his funeral by our Vice chairman, Philip Hadwen and our Planning Chairman, David Crawford.

Philip Johns, Chairman

Felixstowe Station Plaque

As members will be aware, The Felixstowe Society was formed in 1978 almost as a result of the consultations going on at that time with regard to the future of the station building. The then Chairman and Committee worked hard for the next 5 years to get the sort of development it was thought the town deserved. The station was purchased by the Ipswich Co-operative Society in 1981 and it was converted into an attractive shopping scheme incorporating many of the distinctive, original features. In 1987 The Felixstowe Society put a plaque on the surgery wall at Great Eastern Square commemorating the station building. Unfortunately this plaque was vandalised in 1991 and a second plaque was put up to replace it. This plaque was vandalised in 2007.

Because of its association with the formation of The Felixstowe Society, we wanted to replace the plaque yet again, but decided to enquire whether the East of England Co-operative Society would agree to it being housed inside the station building in the hope that it would not be vandalised again. The East of England Co-operative Society kindly agreed to our request and suggested that there might be a short ‘unveiling’ ceremony which was subsequently carried out by the Mayor, Councillor Mike Deacon, on 22 August last year. We are very grateful to the East of England Co-operative Society for allowing us to install the plaque inside the station building and for providing a special ceremony for the occasion.

On the next page there are the three photographs plus text which were used on the plaque. There has been one change this time, with the inclusion of a photograph taken from the bridge in Garrison Lane showing the railway lines and platforms as they used to be. The other two photographs were on the original plaque. At the top is the text used on the plaque, which is the same as the original.
The opening of the Station in 1898

The main concourse about 1910

View of the original Station from Garrison Lane Bridge

Felstowe is a resort town today because of the railway. Although its history goes back to Roman times, Felixstowe’s main development as a town came after 1874 when Col. George Tomline brought his railway line from Ipswich to near Landguard Fort. A more central location for a terminus was needed when the Great Eastern Railway took over in 1879 and their architect William Ashby designed the building you see today. It is in the Arts and Crafts style which was popular around the time the station opened in 1898. One of its main features was a 500 foot glass and steel canopy over the main platform.

By the 1930’s Felixstowe had become a very popular holiday destination with daily direct trains from London taking only 98 minutes. There were 20 trains a day from Ipswich. After 1945 rail travel declined and the station became derelict until it was purchased by the Ipswich Cooperative Society in 1981. The station has now been converted into an attractive shopping scheme incorporating many of the distinctive, original features. The building is protected for its special architectural and historic interest.

The Great Eastern Square development, designed by MWT Architects and built by FJ Construction, was opened in March 1985.
Thirty five years of OFCA

The Old Felixstowe Community Association was formed on the 31 July 1973, with the object of creating a Community Centre based on the former Parish Hall in Ferry Road. The old hall was the subject of a trust, created by the Prettyman family for the benefit of the inhabitants – it was never the ‘property’ of the Church, although it was in the care of the Vicar. OFCA held its first Annual Meeting on the 16 October 1974. Building work started in April 1976, and the Centre opened to members and the public the following January. The official opening ceremony took place on the 12 March 1977, and was performed by J H L Brittain Esq, President of the Association.

The Centre was built at an initial cost of some £25,000, a sum raised partly through a local appeal and partly with the aid of local and central government grants, together with a significant contribution from a local trust. Naturally, there have been many improvements and additions since then. The most significant of these were the construction of the hard play area in the late 1970s, the opening of the Baskerville Lounge in 1983 and the Margaret White Hall in 1992. The resurfaced tennis and netball courts were opened in 2000, and the kitchen refurbished in 2002.

OFCA aims to accommodate the many interests and needs of the community in Old Felixstowe (and indeed beyond). The first Saturday market was held in 1977, and the Christmas Card Delivery Scheme began in 1982 – both these projects are still running today. In April 1983, OFCA formally ‘adopted’ the Old Felixstowe Village sign, and has been responsible for its upkeep ever since.

Highlights of recent years have included the Millennium Party, the broadcasting of Radio 4’s ‘Any Questions’ from the Centre in October 2001 and the creation of a new front garden in 2005.

Today, some thirty groups use the Centre on a regular basis, their activities ranging from an After School Club to WIs (two) via, amongst others, Brownies, Carpet Bowls, Gardening, Keep Fit, Lace making, Literature and Lawn Tennis. The Centre is also used for business conferences and wedding receptions and serves as a polling station. The Hall is reserved for the use of the Church on Sundays.

OFCA has several hundred individual and family members, who receive a Newsletter six times a year. As an ‘umbrella’ organisation, it also comprises Sections and Affiliates, which benefit from preferential hiring rates and are represented on the Association’s General Council. A separate Committee is responsible for the actual management of the Centre.

Laurence McDonald
Beachwatch 2008

This year was the ninth year The Felixstowe Society has taken part in the Marine Conservation Society’s annual Beachwatch event.

As we all know, the litter problem can be a real danger to wildlife and can harm and kill birds and marine creatures. In addition litter is an eyesore for locals and visitors alike. Beachwatch is the largest national coastal clean-up and survey undertaken within the UK and Europe, organised by the Marine Conservation Society (MCS). Last year 3,911 volunteers picked up 346,054 items of litter from over 168.5km of coastline around the UK – an average of 2,054 items per km.

With the above in mind and encouraged by the sun shining brightly on 20 September, 12 adults and 2 children completed approximately 2 hours beach cleaning and collected 8 bags of rubbish weighing 37kg. The area of the beach cleaned was between Seashell and Seagull Cottages and The Spa Pavilion.

Our thanks go to Lynn Allen, Suffolk Coast and Heaths Countryside Officer, for co-ordinating the event once again this year. Also to Susanne Barsby and Gillian Hughes for providing us with refreshments at the finish and not forgetting the following people for their help:- Susanne and Norman Barsby, Gillian Hughes, Deirdre Lewis, Laurence McDonald, Alan Reeve, Lynn Beckley, John Pardoe, Christine Henson, Laura Baker, Jane Steele, Emily Steele and Elizabeth Horn.

The photograph showing our group at work was kindly provided by Suffolk Coast and Heaths.

Keith Horn
Visit to Somerleyton Hall & Gardens

After an enjoyable and uneventful journey on a pleasant Sunday morning our coach pulled into the coach park at Somerleyton Hall just before 11 am on 10 August last year. The reception staff were aware of our arrival and directed us via the nearest conveniences through the picturesque gardens - which we would explore later - to the orangery, our meeting point, where we were greeted by Dawn our guide. After the introduction Dawn, in her wonderful Norfolk accent, told us to don our blue plastic overshoes as later in the tour we would be treading on some very valuable carpets. Sir Francis Crossley, one of three sons of John Crossley, a Yorkshire weaver who started his own mill in Halifax with his brothers, invented the steam-powered loom in 1851, enabling them to mass-produce carpets and thus undercut their competitors. He bought Somerleyton from Sir Morton Peto, who had virtually rebuilt the hall since his ownership in 1843 before financial problems forced the sale of the huge estate of 5000 acres. Today 2500 acres are farmed and the remainder include a pub, a hotel, 120 residential properties, a few commercial properties and Fritton Lake leisure business.

The history of the estate dates back to 1240 when Sir Peter Fitzherbert owned the first house and, following 13 generations, a John Wentworth rebuilt the mansion in a Tudor-Jacobean style. In 1916 Sir Savile Crossley, son of Francis, was created Baron Somerleyton and held many public offices. We saw many of his and other members of the family's memorabilia in showcases or wall mounted in the passageway between the Ballroom and the Staircase Hall. The Ballroom was formerly a huge banqueting hall and is now decorated in deep crimson damask wallpaper, contrasted with white sculptured marble with elaborate gilding and an elegantly designed ceiling, all of which was reflected in the many mirrors facing each other and serving the practical purpose of giving more
light to the room and views of the sunken garden - ideal for the many civil wedding services which take place here.

As we retraced our steps past the Passageway we were able to admire Sir Edwin Landseer's painting of Buck and Fawns before we reached the Staircase Hall with its unique wood panelling by Grindling Gibbons. The windows are decorated with the fourteen coats of arms of the families who have owned the Somerleyton estate since 1240. Beyond the Staircase Hall lies the Entrance Hall where Dawn was very keen for us to see the newly engaged Hon. Hugh Crossley and his fiancee, Lara Bailey, arrive with a number of friends to celebrate in the private quarters. Hugh has resided at the Hall since October 2003 when his father, aged 75, retired and moved to a smaller property on the estate. Following this slight digression we turned away from the windows and noticed two huge stuffed polar bears, trophies of the first Lord Somerleyton's two-man expedition to the Arctic in 1897, and twelve exotically carved oak columns which framed large wall panels of polished, green-veined Devon marble. The dome high in the ceiling allowed bright light to flood through the beautiful stained-glass panes by Ballantyre of Edinburgh depicting several types of game birds. The floor is paved with Minton encaustic tiles in grey, green and blue and with marbles of red and black. In the centre is the charming figure in Carrara marble of Sir Savile Crossley, later to become the first Lord Somerleyton as a boy. He sits holding a spade in one hand and a hat full of shells in the other. Two further marble busts, also by Joseph Durham and dated 1865, are of Sir Francis and his wife Martha Eliza Crossley. In the centre of the Entrance Hall a dolls house modeled on Somerleyton Hall as it appeared in the 17th century, makes obvious the extensive changes made by Sir Peto Morton two hundred years later, and was given to the Hon. Mary Crossley, sister of the present Lord, on her fifth birthday in 1931. It was made in the estate carpenters' shop as a present from the employees. In the dining room completely refurnished and repainted in the 1960s is a specially woven carpet by John Crossley and Sons and features a pattern of the cross and crosslets taken from the Somerleyton coat of arms. On the mantelpiece is a French ormolu clock and two matching vases and on the walls are hung some of the best paintings in the hall. The table is set with an array of silverware including 2 silver pheasants. Passing through the passage with views looking right through the hall from east to west, we entered the library where pale oak bookcases containing over 3,500 volumes lined the walls. An Axminster carpet bought from the Somerleyton's London home just after the First World War further enhanced the room - how's that for recycling! The final room we were able to view was the Oak Room with its superb 17th century panelling from the original Jacobean house, made from oaks grown within the extensive parkland and delightfully carved with sunflowers and acanthus dating from 1730. On the chimney breast a display of cockerels, bunches of grapes, pomegranates and roses. Dawn was very keen to show us a modern portrait of Hugh Crossley in his favourite mode of dress - yes - a well-worn and obviously comfortable pair of jeans. It was then question time and Dawn was thrilled to answer everyone's queries. And no, Somerleyton does not have a resident ghost.

After an hour or so of absorbing all these facts and figures it was time to eat. We found a sunny spot in the grounds to eat our sandwiches followed by a drink in the orangery before exploring the gardens with many fine examples of eucalyptus, redwood, Monterey pine, Atlas cedar and maidenhair trees. Many rare trees have been replaced since the hurricane of 1987. Interesting statuary was in abundance and to the west of the hall stands the great equatorial sundial, encircled by the signs of the Zodiac. To the west of the loggia is the Tunnel Garden, so named because of the tunnel that leads to the old boiler house which once fired the heating for the original Winter Garden but now houses the Bygones collection of old garden equipment - what memories - makes gardening look a doddle
these days. Passing through a very ornate gateway to the Walled Garden or former Kitchen Garden where a wonderful selection of climbing roses, clematis, hydrangeas and yummy figs grew and then on to the ridge and furrow Paxton glasshouses - Sir Joseph Paxton designed the Crystal Palace which looked fantastic because of this unique appearance as opposed to the more usual flat glazing style, and housed lemons and lovely ripe peaches amongst other exotic fruits. The Maze was calling - dare we risk it and be late back for the coach. The notice board assured us that the visit to the centre of the maze will be an unique and enjoyable experience. If you make no mistakes the return trip is approximately 730 metres or 800 yards. The maze was designed by William Nesfield in 1846 and is one of the finest in England. Its yew hedges were cut back drastically in the 1970s but are now lush and firm. The Maze has often been used as a backdrop to shoot TV dramas and Commercials.

Time was beating us and the coach was ready for our return trip leaving us to reminisce all the charms of a wonderful sunny day at Somerleyton, whilst Clive kept his eyes on the road ahead and got us home safely.

Elizabeth Horn

Fuel for the Nuclear Option

As the price of oil increases the attraction of the nuclear option has increased and with it the price of uranium ore and the uranium concentrate known as yellow cake. In 2000 the price of uranium concentrate was $8 per pound and today has reached $135 a pound. This is because the annual consumption of 180 million pounds of uranium far exceeds the production of 100 million pounds and the deficit is made up from inventories.

If the global energy demands say 25% nuclear power, there will have to be an increase in production by the producers of uranium ore, especially as China expect to build 28 new nuclear reactors by 2020. Australia has 40% of the known reserves and accounts for 21% of the world’s production, whilst Canada produces 23% and Khazakhstan produces 16%. In tonnes this equates to 9,476 tonnes from Canada, 8,611 tonnes from Australia and 6,637 tonnes from Khazakhstan. Not surprisingly investment in uranium exploration has rocketed and there are plans to triple output from the Olympic Dam in Australia and two new major mines, the Cameco Cigar Lake and Areva Midwest mines in Canada will come online by 2011.

Japan (59) and France (55) have the highest number of operable reactors globally. The main importing countries in Europe are the UK and Germany with the latter importing 40% of total European uranium imports. Transporting yellow cake is stable enough to be shipped in regular container vessels but cannot transit the Suez Canal which means from Australia it has to travel around the Cape, increasing delivery time and limiting the number of carriers.

Malcolm Stafford
The subject of this talk seemed to have struck a chord with our members and friends for we had a packed hall for the first meeting of the autumn.

Although Felixstowe Ferry has seen little real change in the last 100 years, there had been constant change over the previous two thousand years. Hundreds of years ago it was a vast tidal expanse, providing harbourage and trading facilities for many wooden sailing ships, and areas suitable for anchorage and the loading of ships became places of settlement. There is plenty of evidence to show that there were at least three significant coastal fortifications situated near the area we know as The Dip. The first one was built by order of Constantine the Great when his legions were being withdrawn from the east of Britain. Many Roman artefacts have been found in this area which suggest that there were various Roman settlements along the cliff. Following the collapse of the Roman Empire it is likely that the Saxons used part of the very old Roman fortifications as protection against Danish invaders, which did not prove very effective.

The Domesday Survey refers to the existence of a fishery in the area.

In 1338 Edward III collected men and ships in the area for his battles at Flanders and Crecy. Of the 40 ships, 15 came from this area as did over 500 men. From this we get the name Kingsfleets. Later history shows that Elizabeth I had a survey done of the marshes.

Phil illustrated his talk with a number of photographs; the first was a map showing the area before the marshes were reclaimed. It is known that there had been a ferry across the Deben since Norman times and the ferryman occupied the dwelling which was the forerunner of the present Ferry Boat Inn. In 1886 Mr W C Quilter started to build a seaside home north of the river mouth. This home gradually enlarged and became his permanent residence. It was necessary for him to travel to London each day and so thought was given as to the best means of getting from Bawdsey across the river to Felixstowe Ferry. In 1893 Cuthbert Quilter decided on a steam ferry bridge. He had 3 built in Plymouth and they were towed round the coast. The first does not appear to have a name. The second was called ‘Lady Quilter’ which was used in the summer. The third, the ‘Lady Beatrice’ was smaller and used in the winter. The photograph on the next page shows the Lady Quilter just arriving on the south shore of the Deben, taken not long before she went out of service.

We then heard about Charles Robert Brinkley who was born at Orford in 1870 and who went to sea at the age of 14. In 1895 he left the sea and took over as skipper of the steam chain ferries from Ablett Passiful. He lived in a cottage at Bawdsey, running the chain ferries until they ceased in 1931. He continued ferrying passengers in his own wooden boat. On Christmas Day 1890 he went shooting on Havergate Island. The muzzle loader he was using had been loaded 18 months previously and on firing it exploded, shattering his right hand. The hand was amputated and replaced with a hook. His name was immortalised by the Watson Watt team developing radar at Bawdsey in the 1930s when they called an insulating copper hook the ‘Brinkley’. Charles Robert Brinkley died in April 1963 aged 92.

In mentioning the radar at Bawdsey, Phil told us that the old masts were made of wood but the newer ones were made of metal.
We then moved on to hear about the Martello Towers that had been built as a means of defence against Napoleon. Around 120 were originally built and we have 4 in Felixstowe. They are: the coastguard tower at the south seafront, ‘Q’ tower which is in the town and two at Felixstowe Ferry. There is also one that was integrated into the Bartlet Hospital.

We were given some interesting figures regarding the population of Felixstowe Ferry. In 1840 there were 31 dwellings and around 50 permanent residents. Today there are 40 dwellings and 45 people live there permanently.

Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club is the fifth oldest Club in England. It was inaugurated in 1880 but the game of golf had started in 1874 on Landguard Common. Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club started with 18 holes, was reduced to 15, then 11 and is now a 9 hole course. In 1894 there was a women’s section where the car park is now.

Felixstowe Ferry has also suffered over the years from flooding: 1904, 1931, 1977 but of course the worst was 1953, which had such a dire effect on so much of Felixstowe.

Phil covered many more aspects of Felixstowe Ferry with a variety of photographs which brought it all to life. From the very enthusiastic applause that followed his talk it was clear that all those present had thoroughly enjoyed the evening. In fact it was suggested to me by some members that they would like more of the same please! Our thanks to Phil for a fascinating and informative presentation.

Gillian Hughes
Bawdsey Radar
Talk by Mary Wain on Tuesday 28 October 2008

Never before have we had a speaker involved with her subject matter for the whole of her life as we did with Mary Wain. Her parents met in 1939 as radar operators when stationed at RAF Bawdsey and Mary and her older sister were rowed across the mouth of the Deben to attend school in Felixstowe after the war. RAF Bawdsey became the first fully operational radar station in the world on 24 September 1937, just 18 months after the first experiment conducted by Robert Alexander Watson-Watt and Arnold 'Skip' Wilkins used transmitted radio waves to detect an approaching aircraft - in this case would-be bombers as predicted by Stanley Baldwin in 1932. Nothing would protect us from this type of mass destruction until an early warning system could be devised and fighter planes scrambled to intercept them before reaching their targets. By 1935 Watson-Watt and Wilkins first experimented with a Handley Page Heyford bomber which passed over a receiver, an oscilloscope and trace recorder fitted in an old ambulance. They were able to track the aeroplane to a distance of 8 miles. This system was named Radio Direction Finding to disguise its purpose. It was then necessary to develop a system to identify friend from foe and other subtle refinements and by 1943 the acronym for RA dio, D etection And R anging for the term RADAR was adopted by Britain. By 1935 it soon became apparent that a permanent home was needed to set up and develop radar in extreme secrecy and the remote site of Orfordness was chosen where previously secret aviation research was carried out in WW1. Within a few months progress was rapid and it was now possible to track aircraft 40 miles out to sea and to gauge the height within 1000 ft. Later that year an alternative location was needed and Watson-Watt thought Bawdsey would be ideal if the owners of the manor could be persuaded to sell.

Bawdsey Manor had been the home for Sir Cuthbert Quilter, a successful and wealthy businessman and stockbroker, who bought the title of Lord of the Manor of Bawdsey. Building work began in 1886 on a 'holiday home' but later enlarged considerably when it was turned into his principal residence. Sir Cuthbert died in 1911 and by 1936 his family sold the Manor for £24,000 to the Air Ministry, and Bawdsey Research Station was born. A copy of the mosaic found in the entrance of a house in Pompeii 'beware of the dog' on the floor of the Manor was adopted by the RAF as Bawdsey's official badge with motto 'First in the Field'. In 1937 Watson-Watt proposed that women should be recruited as RDF operators and they proved that alertness, keenness of perception, delicacy of touch and the ability to maintain secrecy were the exact qualities needed for such an important factor in winning the war. The transmitter Block was built in 1939 and 4 transmitter Towers were constructed from bolted galvanised steel girders 358 feet high with 6 cantilevered steel platforms - quite a landmark for us folk at Felixstowe as we gazed across the river Deben until the last tower was demolished in 2000 to make way for the current tower that is used for Communications equipment operated by the Marine Agency. The other 3 masts
on the skyline were the wooden receiver towers slightly shorter at 240ft. Stables and outbuildings were converted into workshops and by the outbreak of WW2 Bawdsey became part of the 24 Chain Home Radar Stations which stretched across the country. Bawdsey did suffer at least 12 bombings during the war but fortunately there were no casualties. A local gentleman who was one of the airborne radar scientists wrote of his work at Bawdsey in a book Echoes and Reflections. He sadly died recently. Bawdsey Manor became home to RAF personnel and the Quilters' sitting room must have been the RAF's most elegant airmen's dining room and the hall was the radar scientists' lounge. The billiard and smoking rooms were also put to good use.

More recently the BBC2's programme Restoration in August 2004 highlighted the plight of a very important piece of history of Britain's survival in WW2. Mary Wain was already chair of the Committee who were anxious to restore part of the transmitter block and with more publicity this could be achieved. When the results were announced The Transmitter Block reached the final as the highest scoring runner-up with just 5,000 votes behind the winner. Radar has developed over the years for safer air traffic control and speed sensors, more accurate weather forecasting and satellite tracking. Next year on Wednesday 19 August the Felixstowe Society is planning a visit to the transmitter block so we can see for ourselves the equipment used, the conditions endured by operators and the brilliance of the system we now take for granted.

The photograph of Robert Alexander Watson-Watt above comes from the Wikipedia website.

Elizabeth Horn

And we think we are over taxed?

In 2002 Ireland introduced a tax on plastic shopping bags and within one week the use of plastic bags dropped 94 percent and within one year almost everyone had reusable cloth bags and the carrying of plastic bags became socially unacceptable - a bit like wearing a real fur coat! Ireland made it illegal for shopkeepers to pay the tax so that it goes directly to government to finance environmental enforcement and clean up programmes. And shopkeepers cannot change to paper bags as the government threatened to tax their use as well as it is thought more greenhouse gases are released in the manufacture and transportation of paper bags.

According to www.reusablebags.com 42 billion plastic bags are used globally each month and this figures is increasing by half a million every minute with many ending up in landfills or as litter. A few countries, such as Germany have long charged a nominal fee for plastic bags and some countries such as Bangladesh and some African nations are banning them outright as they clog up sewerage systems and consequently cause a health hazard. Having proved the success of their plastic bag tax, Ireland is now considering taxes on ATM receipts, chewing gum and conventional light bulbs.

Krystyna Stafford
Hedgehogs in Danger

Late in January last year we had an unexpected visitor in our garden spotted by my eagle-eyed wife. It was a hedgehog whom we thought had awoken early from hibernation due to the mild weather. I was immediately dispatched at the speed of light to our local late night grocery store to buy a tin of cat food, a small saucer of which was then placed under a bush at the edge of our patio enabling us to watch Henry or Henrietta eat his or her supper. After several days of arriving for a late supper our visitor disappeared, back to hibernation we hoped. Being pro hedgehog and anti slug we were most pleased that a hedgehog was lurking in our garden and decided to seek advice in order to encourage and protect such a presence. To this end we contacted the Diss Hedgehog Advisory Service and received the following tips and information:

1. Always look before you cut the grass.
2. Make sure the lid is firmly on the rubbish bin (hogs can get into real trouble with a head stuck in an empty tin).
3. Keep garden netting about a foot above the ground.
4. Keep shed and greenhouse doors closed and any poisons well out of reach.
5. Take care when taking compost from the compost heap. Always check first.
6. Cover drains.
7. Provide a ramp out of ponds and pools.
8. Always check your bonfires before you light them.

The three dangers a hedgehog faces during hibernation are floods, cold and predators. If you see a hedgehog rolled up outside its nest it is not hibernating, they do not hibernate exposed. The time of hibernation depends on the weather and some may not hibernate at all. Most hedgehogs wake up constantly during the winter months and may come out to look for food.

NEVER GIVE A HEDGEHOG COWS MILK OR FISH. Dried cat food, meat cat food, crushed birds' peanuts and sultanas, scrambled egg, Weetabix in warm water or most anything else is OK. Water dishes should not be too high and have large bases so that they cannot tip over. If you should disturb a nest and there is just one hedgehog inside, cover over again and leave, or just move the hog to somewhere safer and cover well. If there are babies in the nest cover over and ring the numbers below for advice. DO NOT TOUCH THE BABIES, because if Mum smells you, she may kill them. Hedgehogs are nocturnal. If you see one out during the day, rescue it immediately. Find a cardboard box and an old towel, pick it up and put it in the box. If necessary provide warmth (a sealed plastic bottle filled with warm water will do) and offer some wet sloppy mashed food. If injured call the vet, Blue Cross or one of the numbers below.

For help or advice call our local expert, Mrs Nettie Drigg – 01394 671735 or try Coral Chittock at the Diss Hedgehog Advisory Service, Norfolk on 01379 644988. Here’s hoping you have Happy, Healthy Hedgehogs living in your garden. They will repay you by eating all your nasty garden pests.

Philip Johns
Felixstowe Museum

Although we are now closed to the public until Easter 2009, there is still plenty going on behind the scenes. We have rooms to refurbish as well as reviewing items on display. Also there is an exciting project running with students from Orwell High School coordinated by Lesley Walker from Maritime Heritage East, but perhaps the most important job is collecting and displaying items for next year's exhibition, which is The Centenary of the Spa Pavilion and Entertainments in Felixstowe. Help is always welcomed (Sundays at 10 am at the Museum).

If anyone has any Spa Pavilion memorabilia or anything related to Entertainments in Felixstowe (this can include personal memories or anything that would be of interest) please contact the museum on 01394 674355 (answer phone), 01394 286008 or e-mail felmuseum@tesco.net. Our Speaker Meetings are now in full swing and only three remain:

Wednesday, 21st January 2009
Felixstowe resident and expert David Hedges will give us an illustrated talk about his recent explorations of 1st World War Tunnels and Trenches.

Wednesday, 18th February 2009
Felixstowe Museum member Mike McKeon will explore the Roman roadway system.

Wednesday, 18th March 2009
This meeting is our AGM, followed by drinks and nibbles, and a Felixstowe quiz.

Wednesday, 15th April 2009
Phil Hadwen will give an illustrated talk on Seaplanes in Felixstowe.

Meetings are held at the Cotman Hall, at the rear of Mrs Simpson's Tearooms, Undercliff Road East next to the Fludyer's, starting at 7.30 pm.

Phil Hadwen

Planning Applications: 4 August to 6 November 2008

SCDC has GRANTED permission for the following:

Previous Applications

Coniston Residential Home & The Mount: Demolish The Mount and erect a part 3 & 4 storey building as an extension of the residential home at Coniston House.

Grounds of The Ordnance Hotel, 1 Undercliff Road: Erect ten flats and houses.

125 Ferry Road: Retention of building to provide self contained residential annexe.
The Feathers, 231 High St, Walton: Erect Pub Signs.

Bus Station, Reporting Centre and 2-4 Langer Rd: Redevelop to provide a food store.

52 Maybush Lane: Erect sunken two-storey extension (existing extension to be demolished).

Recent Applications

18 Cobbold Road: Erect single storey front extension etc. The Society considers that these changes will have little effect on the Conservation Area.

Anglia House, 22-24 Hamilton Rd: Replace ground floor window facing Orwell Rd. This alteration will have little effect on the Conservation Area.

Applications awaiting a Decision from SCDC

Waterhead House, Peewit Hill: Extension to dwelling and conversion of existing garage. The Society considers this proposal to be an over development of the site and therefore objects to this application.

Stowe House, 105 Cliff Rd: Erect 13 apartments & 2 single storey dwellings (Revised Plan). Thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment on this revised application. Having had a second look at the proposals for the Stowe House site, we realise that if the outline application had shown a design of the current building height we would have raised an objection. The Society continues to object to the height and size shown in the revised plans. The proposed buildings over crowd the site and the height is too dominant for this most important site on this stretch of the coast road. We recommend that the main building be reduced by one floor. This would reduce the effect of the proposed building being a monolithic block detracting from the street scene and the surrounding dwellings. The design contains references to the surrounding style of architecture and the wider use of white on the façade is appreciated but the proposed development is too dominant and would have a seriously detrimental effect on a very special coastal scene.

73 Hamilton Rd: Non-illuminated sign. The new sign is unattractive but will have little effect on the Conservation Area.

10 Church Rd: Single storey/two storey rear extension and insertion of window to front elevation. We note that the application makes no mention of whether the side windows will overlook the neighbouring house. We request that this point be taken into consideration when this application is discussed.

65 and 76 Bath Rd: Change of use from flats to one house. This proposal will have little effect on the Conservation Area.

51 Orwell Rd: Build a 3 bedroomed bungalow. This proposal will have little effect on the Conservation Area.
Other Applications

Stowe House, 105 Cliff Rd: Erect 13 apartments & 2 single storey dwellings (First Application). REFUSED by SCDC.

Flats 2 & 4 Martello Place, Golf Rd: Replace windows and doors. These changes will have little effect on the Conservation Area but we would prefer the replacements to be of wood. REFUSED by SCDC.

Side garden 67 Tomline Road: Erect 3 bedroomed dwelling. The Society continues to regret the loss of open garden spaces. We appreciate the efforts to make this building environmentally friendly, but because of the importance of the site within the Conservation Area, we object to this application in its present form. We doubt that the simple design of this new property will enhance the Conservation Area. It would have been of help if there had been an architectural impression showing the relationship of the proposed building with other houses in the street. Similarly, we would have liked information on how the materials to be used would have blended with the street scene. REFUSED by SCDC.

David Crawford

Research Corner (5)

Every November we remember our war dead and like many towns of our size we hold a Festival of Remembrance and a ceremony at the War Memorial near the Town Hall. The money to build our War Memorial was raised from public donations organised by Walter Cross JP, the Chairman of the Felixstowe District Council, who was assisted by about 30 voluntary helpers.
The dedication service was held on Sunday 15 August 1920 and the band of His Majesty’s 1st Lifeguards provided the music. In attendance were officers and men from the Royal Garrison Artillery (RGA) from Landguard and Brackenbury, Bluejackets from HMS Blake and destroyers in Harwich harbour, and a contingent from the RAF. Also there were the Rev. Walter Horne (the vicar of Felixstowe), the Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk (Sir Courtney Warner) and various civil dignitaries. A very large crowd was evident. After the dedication prayer the Lord Lieutenant unveiled the column and then gave a short address. The hymns ‘Fight the Good Fight’ and ‘For All the Saints’ were sung and after the benediction the Lifeguard trumpeters sounded the ‘Last Post’ and ‘Reveille’. The National Anthem was played and the procession moved away.

There is another war memorial outside St John’s Church, and there are war memorial tablets at various churches around the town, all containing the names of those who sacrificed their lives from the specific parishes.

But I wonder how many of us read the names on our memorials, or could name anyone from the Felixstowe area who has died in either of the two world wars: or for that matter has perished fighting for their country recently.

I feel rather ashamed that well over a hundred names (164 actually!) are inscribed on our memorial just from the 1st World War and I know nothing about any of them. So I thought it was time that I did, and I immediately started researching. If there is anywhere in Felixstowe where this information is kept I have yet to find it, so it is the long, slow route, which hopefully will have dividends.

I can remember travelling with David Hedges on one of his excellent battle field tours and being told of our own Felixstowe VC, so after consulting David I visited the internet and found out about Ernest Seaman VC. We seemed to have adopted Ernest because he was born in a small village in Norfolk, moved to Scole and only worked at the Grand Hotel in Felixstowe, as a page boy and in the billiard room, for a very short period of time. He then apparently had a few other jobs before enlisting.

On 29 September 1918 at Terhand, Belgium 25 year old Lance-Corporal Seaman of the 2nd Battalion The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers went forward under heavy fire with his Lewis gun. Attacking single-handed he captured two machine guns and 12 prisoners, also killing one officer and two men. Later in the day he again rushed another enemy machine gun post and captured the gun under heavy fire. Ernest was killed immediately afterwards, but due to his gallant conduct his company was able to push forward to its objective. He is commemorated at Tyne Cot Cemetery (panel no. 70), the memorial to the 36 Division at the Ulster Tower near Thiepval on the Somme, Felixstowe War Memorial and the Scole War Memorial in Norfolk.

It’s not unusual for our war dead to feature on more than one memorial. H E Baxter is named on our war memorial, the one at St John’s and also on the Tablet at Trimley St
Mary’s church. Also there is William Henry Middleton, Captain in the RGA, mentioned at St John's and nowhere else!

The most obvious place to find out about our war dead is the internet site Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) where there are thousands of names, but entering our memorial names doesn’t always come up trumps. For C Wood there are 146 entries and not one from a local regiment, so more work is needed here. Other entries prove more successful. Acting Bombardier W H Middleton, 293213, 140th Heavy Battalion, Royal Garrison Artillery, who died on 8 June 1917 is buried at the Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, so is R J Mills, son of Charles and Jessie Mary Mills of 63, Chapel Lane (Maidstone Road), Walton. He was a private in the Suffolk Regiment and was killed on 3 April 1916.

William Arthur Moyes was also a private in the Suffolks. He died on 6 January 1918 and his name can be found in bay 4 of the Arras memorial. His family also lived in Chapel Lane; his father was James Moyes of number 73, five doors away. Information such as this really brings home to me how whole communities, areas and streets suffered not just individually, but also collectively.

William Harold Minter, another private in the Suffolk Regiment, was killed on 3 August 1916 and because his body has yet to be recovered, his name is found on the Thiepval memorial. He was the son of Henry and Eliza Minter of 11, Osborne Terrace, Langer Road, Felixstowe.

So far I have researched 70 names and have some information on 38. I feel it is necessary to continue!

When I read J Kent on the memorial I regard him as just a name, but to find his full name immediately makes him more human, and other details really bring him to life, so that he will not be forgotten for his sacrifice. There is still much to do and I would welcome any information that others might possess. How wonderful to leave for future generations fuller details of our war dead so that we can truly say “We will remember them”.

**Phil Hadwen**

**Quiz Night**

This year’s Quiz Night will be held on Friday, 30 January at St Felix Church Hall, Gainsborough Road. The starting time will be 7 pm for 7.30 pm, finishing around 10.15 pm. There will be teams of 6-8 people and a prize for the winning team. There will also be a raffle. Tickets will cost £7.00 which will include a fish and chip supper. If you do not eat fish the alternatives are sausage and chips or vegeburger and chips. When you apply for tickets please let Phil Hadwen know which is your preference.

**Please bring your own drinks and cutlery/condiments.**

Tickets are available from Phil Hadwen who will be master minding the evening. His address is 54 Fairfield Avenue and his phone number is 286008. Please make cheques payable to ‘The Felixstowe Society’ and the closing date for tickets is Monday 26 January.

We look forward to seeing you on Friday 30 January.
Award for the Enhancement of the Environment

The Executive Committee of The Felixstowe Society will be considering suggestions for this Award during March 2009. If members have any proposals will they please complete the form enclosed with this Newsletter.

This should be for developments **completed during 2008**.

To remind you, the aims of the scheme are as follows:

**To stimulate local interest in the quality of development in the town.**

**To recognise developments which have made a positive and beneficial contribution to the town (particularly important).**

**To encourage such developments in the future.**

Both landscaping and architectural schemes can be nominated. The list below suggests some questions which it might be helpful to ask when considering nominations for the Award:

*Is the scheme in character with the surroundings? This may depend upon the area having a distinct identity. It need not necessarily be in character if it is to serve as a focal point or terminates an important view.*

*Is the scheme in scale? (Scale is not size. It is the relationship of one building to another. Contrast can be positive and interesting, or negative and detract from the area.)*

*For restoration: Is the scheme an improvement on the original building or setting, or is it a restoration of the original? Does it add or detract from the designers’ intentions?*

*Is the scheme well detailed? Have sympathetic materials been used? Has colour been applied imaginatively? Have any aspects such as signs, down-pipes, paving, been considered only as an after-thought? Have too many, or too few, materials been used and are these pleasing to the eye in adding up to a unified whole?*

*Is the quality of workmanship and the standard of finish of good quality? If it is an older scheme, has it stood the test of time? Is maintenance suffering?*

*Does the scheme create an impact? Would it be good to have similar schemes elsewhere? Is it an example of good practice?*

Not all these considerations will come into play in all circumstances, but the last two points will always be important.
Programme for 2009

Tuesday 27 January  

**Felixstowe TV.** A team presentation of all aspects of their work.

Friday 30 January  

**Quiz night** at St Felix Church Hall, Gainsborough Road.  
7.00 for 7.30 pm start. Please see details on page 20.

Tuesday 24 February  

**Boudicca.** Local enthusiast, Mike McKeon, talks to us about this warrior queen.

Tuesday 24 March  

**Recent developments at the Port of Felixstowe and Future Plans.** A talk by Rachael Jackson (Publicity Officer) and James York (Costains).

Tuesday 28 April  

**Society Dinner** to be held at the Brook Hotel. See enclosed form for further details.

Tuesday 19 May  

**AGM + Colonel Tomline, an alternative view!** An entertaining talk by David Tolliday, a prominent Felixstowe historian.

Wednesday 17 June ***  

**Cruise on the River Deben** including a glass of sherry and a cheese ploughman’s lunch. Following this a coach drive to Woodbridge for time to explore this market town.

Wednesday 22 July ***  

**A day visit to Snape Maltings and The Red House, Aldeburgh.** A guided tour of the Concert Hall in the morning and a guided tour of The Red House, the former home of Benjamin Britten, in the afternoon.

Wednesday 19 August ***  

A day visit to the **Bawdsey Transmitter Block and then on to Sutton Hoo.** The morning visit to Bawdsey Transmitter Block will enable us to take in the atmosphere of the history of Radar. The afternoon visit to Sutton Hoo will include the Edith Pretty Tour and a cream tea. There will be time for members to have lunch in the restaurant at Sutton Hoo or enjoy a picnic.

Tuesday 22 September  

**Old Felixstowe.** An illustrated talk by Phil Hadwen.

Tuesday 27 October  

**Felixstowe Then and Now (1) – The Reunion Gallery, Gainsborough Road.** An illustrated talk by the team from the Gallery.

Tuesday 24 November  

**An evening with ....** two long-standing local residents share with us their memories of Felixstowe.

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

*** The Booking Forms for these Visits will be in the May Newsletter
If you wish to join The Society, remove this page from the Newsletter, complete both columns and send it to Betty Woollan at the address given on the back page with a cheque payable to *The Felixstowe Society* for the correct subscription, and enclose a stamped addressed envelope.

Full names ..........................................................
........................................................................

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

Post Code ..................

Telephone ..........................................................

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

Artwork
Archives/Exhibitions
Litter clearance
Monitoring planning applications
Newsletter delivery
Organising activities
Survey work
Secretarial work
Maintenance work at Abbey Grove and Gulpher Pond

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

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

Please ensure that the name on the cheque for the membership subscription (donation) in the same as the donor.

**Donor details**

Title ............

Forename(s) ..........................................................

Surname ..........................................................

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

Post Code ..........

I would like The Felixstowe Society to treat all donations I make from the date of this declaration, until I notify you otherwise, as gift aid donations.

Donor to sign and date here

**sign** ..........................................................

**date** ..................................................

**Notes**

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

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**For office use only** (please tick and date)

Receipt issued ............

On Newsletter delivery list ............

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If you wish to join The Society please read on

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

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

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

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

Joining
To join The Society please complete the Form and the Gift Aid Declaration on the previous page, and send it with your membership subscription plus a stamped addressed envelope for the return of the receipt to;

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

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

The annual subscription runs from the 1 January.

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