



THE FAVERSHAM SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1962

FLEUR DE LIS HERITAGE CENTRE

ESTABLISHED 1977

ANNUAL REPORT TO MEMBERS NUMBER 55 2017

**‘CHERISH THE PAST, ADORN THE PRESENT,
CREATE THE FUTURE’**

**The Faversham Society (company limited by guarantee) 10-13 Preston Street,
Faversham ME13 8NS Charity No 1135262, Company No 7112241**

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Foreword and Introduction by the President

This has been a year of strong progress at the Faversham Society. The breadth of activities for which the Society is responsible is really astonishing, especially in view of the fact that all of these activities are the result of the effort, the ability and the enthusiasm of volunteers: the museum, the gallery, the visitor information centre, the bookshop, the committee work. The profile of the society has been enhanced by the series of stimulating public meetings arranged by our energetic chairman. We who are members of the society have reason to be very grateful for the huge amount of time put in and trouble taken by the Chairman and all the trustees as well as all volunteers.

At this pivotal point in the future of our town the role of the Society is more important than ever in ensuring that the town's history is remembered and respected; and as a centrepiece of many things that are excellent in Faversham and, to a large extent, as the voice of Faversham. From its beginnings the Society has been a remarkable force. Its membership now is not far off one in ten of the adult population of the town – a figure which places the society among the foremost amenity societies in Britain. It would be nice if in the next year or two we could push the membership figure through the 1000 mark.

The launch of the Arthur Percival Memorial Fund recognised someone who played such an important part in the Society and in Faversham and had some clear and strong values which we all hope will be sustained as the values of the Society. The Society can be proud of its past, and we have an exciting and no doubt sometimes challenging future.

Richard Oldfield President

Faversham Society Annual Report 2017

Chair's Review 2017

We celebrated our 55th year with a Tea Party in the Alexander Centre for our volunteers and members. Our President Richard Oldfield was there, and we took the opportunity to formally launch the Arthur Percival Memorial Fund. Earlier in March we unveiled a memorial plaque to Arthur Percival, one of the founders of our Society, and a man who worked unstintingly for Faversham and our heritage throughout his life. Arthur was firmly of the view that we should “cherish the past, adorn the present and create the future.” Our members and volunteers share this passion for Faversham and its heritage, making it accessible to residents and visitors alike through the VIC, the museum, through town walks, FSARG, the Open Houses and the Open Gardens programmes, the historical talks, the exhibitions in the gallery and the work of the Environment and Planning Committees.

The Board is increasingly aware of its responsibility not just to conserve our historical heritage but also to ensure that it engages with future generations and to create some ‘new’ heritage. The grandparents and grandchildren days in the museum over the summer were a great success, creating conversations between the generations about the past, what it was like and how things change. We have approached the owners of the watchman’s box at the entrance to the old dockyard on Upper Brents to see whether we can paint it as a Tardis, creating new heritage for children and their parents. We have also ordered a large granite cobblestone to be embossed with Faversham’s coat of arms to grace the junction where Preston Street, East Street and Market Street meet.

Following the success of Will Palin’s talk at the AGM, in October, we organised a very successful visit to Sheerness to visit the Dockyard Church and Naval Terrace and Bluetown and the Criterion. In the dockyard our guides were Will Palin and Andrew Byrne, whose knowledge, enthusiasm and good humour made it both educational and enjoyable. Jenny Hurkett introduced us to the Criterion and Blue Town. We came away impressed with what is being achieved in Sheerness and by the heritage that they have to offer. We have realised again the value of Faversham Society excursions in enabling us to experience the work of other heritage groups, to gain new ideas and to spend time together experiencing and enjoying heritage. The Sheerness excursion quickly sold out and we felt encouraged to organise more.

The Society used to have a regular programme of talks on the history and heritage of Faversham and we began towards the end of the year to re-establish a regular programme of talks. Tim Stonor and I gave talks on “Making Faversham a better place for people to live in” to a packed Fleur Hall in October. Tim Acott from the University of Greenwich talked about fishing and sense of place in November and John Blackford talked about the “Legacy of Henry Wreight” in December. Both talks drew around forty people and were very well received by those who came along to hear them. With St Mary of Charity, we invited the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, the Admiral of the Fleet the Lord Boyce, only the second naval officer to occupy the position, to speak on the Cinque Ports and the Cradle of the Royal Navy. The church was packed for his lecture which dealt admirably with both the history and the current threats. John Blackford spoke about the history of Faversham as a King’s Port and Will Palin about the maritime connections between Greenwich and Faversham.

The history talks, along with the town walks, the Open Houses and the Open Gardens programmes, our publications, the work of the Faversham Society Archaeological Research Group (FSARG) and the exhibitions in the museum and the gallery are all part of our mission to educate our members and the public. The members’ and guests’ meetings that we organise on current issues have an educational function as well as assisting the Board in determining its views on key issues and to engage with councillors, planners and other

experts. An evening meeting on freight traffic in Faversham featuring our resident expert Professor Chris Wright, until retirement Head of the Transport Management Research Centre at Middlesex University, drew 50 people including local business leaders and councillors.

In November we held a members' and guests' evening on "The Heart of our Town" for our members and town councillors to share their views about how the area around our Guildhall could be enhanced. One of the themes which came through strongly in people's comments was convergence: the feeling that it is in the Market Place, around the Guildhall, that residents come together for festivals and markets and that people walk in, often with their children. As Faversham grows out on the marshes and south of the A2 it will be a challenge to ensure that the "walkability" of the town is maintained.

In May the Society formally encouraged members to vote yes in the referendum on the Creek Neighbourhood Plan. We campaigned in the Market Place to raise awareness of the referendum and why it mattered. We were pleased that 88% of those who voted were in favour. The Society continues to press for a second Neighbourhood Plan to address the challenges of Faversham's growth whilst maintaining its heritage.

Members of our Environment and Planning committees have been actively engaged with our Mayor's Faversham Future Forum in a personal capacity. In June the Board endorsed the Design Brief developed by Chris Wright for the Faversham Future Forum and wrote to our Mayor expressing our support for the Forum's Guidelines for Housing Development in Faversham and asking that a Design Review Panel be established. We also pressed the case for an alternative to yellow lines around the Guildhall, expressed our support for "20's Plenty" and urged the Town Council to press for adequate and safe provision of walking and cycling routes in the town. In July James Freeman, Head of Planning in Swale met with the Board for a very useful discussion about the possibility of a Neighbourhood Plan and issues around planning gain and the conservation of listed buildings.

The Board initiated a review of our communications and of the changes the Society needs to make to ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), which are enforceable from 25 May 2018. Some of the most important work undertaken by our volunteers is often unrecognised. Our volunteers all provide sterling service. We are grateful to all of them for their time, commitment and service, and thank them for it.

Our new membership secretary has undertaken a major review of our membership and our management of them. As at the end of 2017 our membership stood at 932. During 2017 we signed up new members from Ashford, Boughton, Faversham, Margate, Toronto and Whitstable. The Board gave a life membership to Duncan Harrington in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the Society over so many years.

The Society is run entirely by volunteers without whose contribution the Fleur would neither be maintained nor opened. Our thanks to all of them, we do not take them for granted. They are the very lifeblood of the Society and without them we would not exist. With more volunteers we could achieve more, if you are reading this and would like to be part of us, please engage, you will be welcome.

If you would like to be kept informed of our work please read our newsletter and subscribe at www.favershamsociety.info

Harold Goodwin Chair

About the Faversham Society

Formed in 1962, the Society is a Registered Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee working to preserve the heritage and fabric of the historic town of Faversham and its surrounding parishes. Created in response to modernisation and the loss of historic buildings in Faversham, the Society aims to ensure that Faversham's individual sense of place and outstanding heritage features are not lost.

The Faversham Society is managed by the Board of Trustees through four committees: General Purposes, Environment, Planning, and Museum. Jacquie Hitchcock, a founding member of the Society and elected to the first Executive Committee, and Margaret Slythe, both still regularly contribute to Board meetings in their capacity of Honorary Vice Presidents.

The Society is also represented on the following bodies:

- Kent History Federation
- Visit Faversham (formerly FATA)
- Kent Museums Group Swale Museums Group
- Faversham Historians

The Society's functions and activities are managed and staffed entirely by volunteers without whom none of the Society's activities and achievements would be possible: the Society has no paid staff. Roles range from volunteering professional skills and expertise, to working in the Visitor Information Centre, staffing the Fleur de Lis Gallery and Museum, acting as a Town Heritage Walk Guide or attending committee meetings, to name but a few. All volunteers share an interest in promoting and preserving Faversham's historic and cultural heritage and the Society is indebted to them all.

With more volunteers, however, more could be done. The time commitment need not be onerous and existing and new members who have time to volunteer, even for just a few hours each week, would be particularly welcome in the following areas of activity:

- Sitting on the Environment Committee
- Sitting on the Planning Committee
- Being a Guide for the Town Heritage Walks
- Working in the Visitor Information Centre, Museum and Gallery
- Working in the Fleur Charity Bookshop
- Participating in the Faversham Society Archaeological Research Group - working on digs, including administrative work
- Writing contributions for the Newsletter
- Translating marketing leaflets
- Assisting at the Chart Gunpowder Mills
- Cataloguing and reviewing (i.e. curating) the museum collections and libraries

If you would like to get involved and have time, expertise or both to offer, do get in touch – contact Joanne Wintle-Smith by e-mail at favsocvolunteers@outlook.com, telephone 01795 534542 or drop into the Visitor Information Centre and leave a message.

Committee Work in 2017

Four principal committees report to the Faversham Society Board of Trustees: Environment, General Purposes, Planning and Museum. This structure enables the Board to take a strategic overview of the work of the Society. For the Environment, Museum and Planning Committees, any recommendations to be made to external bodies are required to be ratified by the Board. The reports of each Committee's activity during 2017 have been prepared by Committee Chairs.

Environment

The Committee takes a very broad view of the concept of environment. It encompasses our natural, cultural and built environment. The Committee's focus is on conserving the best of our heritage and creating a new heritage for the future. This year, it has recommended to the Board that the Society commission a large cobblestone, with a town crest to grace the centre of the cobbles at the junction between Preston Street, East Street and Market Street. The Board agreed, and the stone has been ordered; it will take some time as the mason understandably prioritises gravestones. The Committee has also approached the owners of the police or watchman's box on Upper Brents to see whether the Society might paint it. A Tardis in Faversham would engage youngsters, and their parents, in enjoying "new" heritage.

A Heritage Fair with the Alexander Centre took place in March which was judged a great success by those from across Swale who participated – it will run again in 2018. In February, a meeting brought together some 30 people who were interested in developing the interpretation of the natural heritage from the Westbrook to the Swale. Unfortunately, no one was able to take the project forward - there was enthusiasm but insufficient energy to accomplish it. If you are reading this and may be able to move the idea forward, please do get in touch.

The Committee has continued, through the Board, to engage with Swale Planners. Listed buildings at risk are now kept under review, and the Committee has worked in the last year on Abbey Barns (the Stables), the Brents Church, Gulliver's in West Street, Pett Dane, the Railway Station and Engine Sheds, and Standard House with varying degrees of success. The Society has actively supported the Uproare campaign against the expansion of the East Kent Recycling plant at Oare for a range of environmental reasons and because of the increase in lorry movements which would result.

Following a successful members' meeting with Swale Planners in September 2016, the Committee organised a members' educational event in February 2017 with Andrew Jeffers and Simon Algar on enforcement. The Committee subsequently provided information on our policy and events site for anyone wanting to take up a planning or conservation issue. See www.favershamsociety.info SBC & Planning.

The Committee continues to support the '20s Plenty for Faversham' Campaign for safety and health reasons. With increasing pressure on Faversham arising from changes in national government planning policy and the preference of the major house builders to build in Faversham where a higher price can be secured for new houses, Faversham is going to have to cope with significantly greater traffic. The Committee is also keen to see traffic calming and to increase the ease with which people can move around the town on foot and by bicycle to reduce traffic and the pollution it causes. Representations have been made on the KCC Freight Action Plan, and in October a members' educational evening was held on the management of lorries in Faversham.

The Committee has not been successful in our efforts to encourage the Town Council not to place yellow lines around the Guildhall. They will be painted in 2018, and it will be clear whether they will impact on the aesthetics of our Market Place and the Guildhall, and on

parking. The Environment Committee will remain active on the issue and develop an alternative to be implemented, at some point in the future, if the public opinion is that the yellow lines have not solved the parking problem or that the aesthetic impact is unacceptable.

If you would like to be kept informed of our Environment Committee's work, once it had been approved by the Board, you can follow events and representations on www.favershamsociety.info and if you wish subscribe for updates.

General Purposes

The General Purposes Committee is concerned with all practical aspects of maintaining the Faversham Society and its interest. A large part of its work covers building maintenance for those buildings owned and occupied by the Society.

2017 was a relatively quiet year in respect of maintenance works, at least for planned activities. 'Emergency' tasks, however, required our attention as frequently as always. Our larger projects included the replacement of our emergency lighting to comply with legislative standards and the replacement of the gas boiler providing heating and hot water to No. 12 Preston Street. No 12, for those that are unfamiliar with the Heritage Centre, is the Museum reception, the Boston Room and the archive storage above. This work became necessary following the breakdown of the boiler, inevitably during the coldest part of the year. It has also, unfortunately, caused the postponement of the scheduled boiler replacement to No.13 Preston Street.

Other larger projects included the redecoration of the Visitor Information Centre, the Long Gallery of the Museum and all four of our toilet facilities. All these works were carried out by contractors, but the redecoration inevitably lead to a number of small and not so small works to be carried out by volunteers – removing/replacing all the VIC display units and sales material, installing an improved notice board, removing the artefacts and displays from the gallery and replacing the emergency signs to name just a few.

A new intruder alarm system has also been installed. This large exercise was forced upon the Society by the collapse of the previous provider Howfields. It could be said that this was opportune as the old system was giving keyholders problems, and Howfields were frequently being called out at all hours as a result of system failures and on occasions the activity of spiders. The new contractor is J. C. Lock & Safe a Faversham based company.

A programme of replacing the general lighting with LED bulbs that are more energy efficient was undertaken. The car park land drain was also refurbished, and the surface re-laid, creating a puddle and weed-free parking area.

Though it is not a part of the centre that is obvious to visitors, the leased accommodation above the VIC has to be maintained. In 2017 the kitchen was refurbished, and carpet refreshed.

Just a few examples of the 'emergency' tasks that arise almost weekly and have been carried out in house are: adjusting door locks, replacing light bulbs, attending to leaking taps and leaking radiators, unblocking toilets, repairing office desks, replacing broken light switches, replacing door bells and repairing water heaters. For these and indeed some of the larger works, grateful thanks go to our volunteers.

Fortunately, those activities that are managed in house only lead to an outlay on materials (thanks again to our volunteers). Nonetheless when considered with the works contracted out, maintenance expenditure was in the order of £12.5k. It is to be hoped that at least some of this outlay will result in lower running costs in future years.

In October the Committee commissioned a fire inspection from which a reasonably clean bill of health was received, with just one or two relatively small tasks to be undertaken. However, as a result of a false alarm triggered by hirers in the Fleur Hall no less than five fire engines arrived in Preston St. Quite exciting with blue lights flashing, the street blocked and something like a dozen fire fighters about the premises. However, as a consequence, Fire & Rescue paid a further visit, toured the premises and identified some works that they would like to see undertaken. Quotes for these works, which are likely to be quite costly, will be sought early in the new year.

Planning

During 2017, the Planning Committee continued with its work of interacting with Swale Borough Council and other bodies on matters relating to planning for the Faversham area and in doing so fulfilling the aim of the Faversham Society to promote a high standard of planning and architecture for the town and area.

Janet Turner has been Secretary and Vice Chair for all of 2017 and there is one new member, Guy Felton. All recommendations are required to be ratified by the Board.

This has been an important year in the planning history of Faversham with several large schemes and other controversial proposals. The Faversham Creek Neighbourhood Plan and the Swale Local Plan to 2031 were adopted.

In January, the Committee considered planning and listed building applications for an extension, alterations and change of use to a restaurant and museum of Building 1 at Standard Quay. This is in accordance with the policies in the Faversham Creek Neighbourhood Plan, and all the internal and external works were considered to be acceptable by the planning and conservation officers at Swale Borough Council. This was the first use of the policies of the Faversham Creek Neighbourhood Plan in a planning report by Swale Borough Council. The applications were approved and the works have taken place.

The Committee also considered the major rebuilding and re-planning of the Macknade Fine Foods site in Selling Road. This has also been approved by Swale Borough Council but no works have taken place.

Also in January, the Committee considered the development of 105 houses and associated accesses, roads and landscaping in a full application for the site north of Graveney Road formerly occupied by Nova furniture factory and before that a canning factory. The Society urged Swale Borough Council to ask for 35% affordable housing. The scheme was later approved with only 17% for viability reasons. The planning conditions are now being discharged.

The Committee also commented on the scheme to build 250 houses at Preston Fields between Ashford Road and Salter's Lane. The layout is appropriate for the site, but there were objections from the Highways Agency about the impact on the capacity of junctions 6 and 7 of the M2. For this reason, the Society objected to the scheme. These and other issues are being negotiated by Swale Borough Council.

In May, the Committee supported Dunkirk Parish Council's objection to the erection of 49 dwellings together with a shop and business units at Canterbury Road, Dunkirk. This was a second similar proposal for the site and was refused by Swale Borough Council. A larger scheme including 77 houses and the same additional uses on a slightly more extensive site was also refused by Swale Borough Council and has been dismissed at appeal because the site is not allocated for housing in the Local Plan.

The Committee has also considered the discharge of some of the conditions on the outline planning permission for the development of 350 houses at Ospringe Brickworks in Sumpter Way. Some of the conditions have now been discharged and the reserved matters application is being considered by Swale Borough Council. The Society asked Swale Borough Council to request 35% affordable housing but since the outline permission was granted before the Local Plan was adopted, they cannot insist on this. It is expected that work will commence on this site in 2018.

The Committee also commented on a proposal to erect 9 houses with landscaping including a replacement orchard on land adjoining 9 Ashford Road. This is a revision of a scheme from 2013 which was dismissed at appeal and is now acceptable because the circumstances of the site have changed due to the allocation of Preston Fields adjacent for housing, and also significant changes to the scheme itself. This is yet to be determined by Swale Borough Council.

In July, the Committee took part in the consultation on the Whitstable to Iwade section of the England Coast Path. The Society supported the proposals for Faversham between Nagden and Oare Creek as shown on the relevant maps.

In September, the Committee raised objection to the proposal to add roof and rear extensions, new fencing and a front access to Standard House. These alterations would have harmed the appearance and character of the listed building and were contrary to the policies in the Faversham Creek Neighbourhood Plan. The owner had already carried out works to restore the front elevation and roof of the building and has done this to the satisfaction of Swale Borough Council's conservation officer. The owner is still working on the property. The applications have been withdrawn and the planning officer has advised the owner that any development should be carried out in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan.

In October, the Committee raised objection to proposals to extend the East Kent Recycling Works along Oare Creek including extending hours of operation and the number of lorries. A detailed paper was prepared about the impact on the appearance and visibility, traffic from the site and through Ospringe and use of the public footpath. This application is likely to be determined by Kent County Council in March 2018.

In November, the Committee considered an outline application for the erection of 50 houses together with a new access and landscaping at the junction of the A2 with Western Link in Ospringe. The scheme included a mix of house sizes and 40% affordable housing. Documents supplied with the application set out its implication on ecology, noise, air pollution, traffic, ecology and archaeology. The main issues were the impact on the landscape and the setting of the Ospringe and Syndale Conservation Areas balanced against whether Swale Borough Council was likely to be able to deliver the number of houses required over the next 5 years in its Local Plan. The Society supported the scheme for these reasons. This application had not by the end of 2017 been determined by Swale Borough Council.

In December, the Committee raised objection to an application for the erection of 12 dwellings at Mutton Lane, Ospringe. This is because the site is not identified in the Local Plan and has not been supported by any parish council as a rural exception site. There is also a highways objection from Kent County Council to any development which would add to traffic on the Water Lane junction with the A2. This has also not been determined by Swale Borough Council.

In addition to planning applications, the Committee considered the Swale Borough Council Draft Statement of Community Involvement. This is an early part of the preparation of the next 5 years of the Local Plan. The principles and proposed methods of consultation were considered to be acceptable.

On a much larger scale, in fact the largest proposal of its kind in the UK, a solar farm is proposed at Cleve Hill, Graveney. This would cover a large area comprising most of Nagden and Graveney Marshes. It is of a scale that it has to be treated as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project and will be dealt with at public inquiry. Members of the Planning Committee and Environment Committees attended the public exhibition as part of the initial consultation in December. A paper has been submitted commenting on the scheme with regard to the Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal, National and International designations of the South Swale for wildlife, traffic, the impact on footpaths and possible changes to coastal management. The developers have acknowledged this response. A further round of consultation with more detailed proposals is expected in March 2018.

Museum

The Museum Committee reports on the work and needs of the museum to the Board.

A huge thanks to all the Museum volunteers for the varied and important work they do over the whole year from those who meet and guide visitors around the displays to those who work behind the scenes. 2017 was busy with 2523 visitors, slightly down from 2,591 visitors in 2016. The museum continues to support the "Wheels of Time" initiative and we have had several presentations to youngsters this year who have chosen to receive their awards at our Museum.

In March, Museum volunteers supported the first "Heritage Fair" in Faversham and were very pleased with attendance, estimating that 200 people were introduced to the Museum. The summer saw an increase in visitors because of the Thursdays' "Bring your Grandparent" days - thanks to all who helped. This was recreated at Christmas time too. The Museum also arranged a stimulating gallery exhibition concerning World War 1, "The Threat from the Air".

Behind the scenes at the Museum, much progress has been made this year.

In February a specialist report was produced about the Arthur Percival Photographic collection, followed by training in May on "Handling Photographic Materials". Meanwhile Arthur Percival's archive, which comprises paper records, photographs, slides and digital records continue to be processed. This is a very interesting and absorbing project

There are dozens of items offered to the Museum each year. The Collection Policy guides us to decide whether the item is a heritage item. Our volunteers ensure that items we do keep have a strong link to Faversham or the surrounding villages, are associated with the industries or may be concerning a Faversham person. Chris Fagg has retired from her Artefact work this year and the Committee are very grateful for her dedication to the Museum. The long-term review of all artefacts in the museum (over half way complete) continued in 2017 with decommissioned items this year raising £356.50 for Society funds. The current project work to refresh the displays in the Long Gallery following the repaint earlier in the year is progressing very slowly.

There is also an ongoing project reviewing the "paper" archives which has been very productive. The museum has also had valuable help on short-term projects this year - adding to the Legal Documents collection and reviewing the "Bygone Kent" collection. Work on cataloguing the papers from the Town Council continues.

The museum received 104 enquiries in 2017, mostly answered satisfactorily, thanks to our archive volunteer, who did most of the work. A few welcome donations were obtained but most enquirers assume the Society provide this service as part of our support to the Community.

Following a presentation about the available Museum "space" (within the Heritage Centre) from the Society Chair and Vice Chair the Museum Committee have presented a paper to the Board for approval with various changes detailed to maximise available space.

The Museum window has been changed regularly. There has been a succession of "pop-up" exhibitions in the Museum foyer. Various museum volunteers continue to represent the Museum at Kent Museums Group, Swale Museums Group (soon Historic Swale), the Faversham Museums Group and the Faversham Town Council Heritage Committee.

Further Activity in 2017

Visitor Information Centre

The highlight of 2017 has been the long-awaited redecoration of the Visitor Information Centre shop. The effect is brighter, warmer and more welcoming and, with the addition of new notice boards, much smarter.

In June, coinciding with the Society's 55th anniversary, Arthur Percival's last contribution, a book entitled 'Faversham Streets and Places' was published. Arthur had been working on this book before he died, and the Society is grateful to Steve Rayner and Laurence Young for picking up where Arthur left off to edit and publish the book. An enduring fondness of Arthur together with lots of interesting facts were a winning combination and nearly 300 copies were sold.

Another new edition to the stock during the year was a china mug depicting a coasting barge, beautifully drawn by Hugh Perks. The same drawing was used to produce china coasters - another first to the VIC.

We have tried to maintain a good range of books, maps, DVDs and gifts, always taking heed of current demands. The good people of Faversham are always loyal in their demand for the Faversham Calendar and, yet again, some 500 copies were sold.

The volunteers in the VIC have to have a good knowledge of the area and what is happening locally, have an in-depth knowledge of what we sell, maintain stock and supplies of leaflets, provide a front of house service for the Society and provide statistics to organisations such as Visit Kent and Swale Borough Council, to whom we are grateful for their continued support. All this would not be possible without the willingness of the volunteers to maintain a service, seven days a week, and the Society is extremely grateful to all of them.

Fleur Charity Bookshop

The Fleur bookshop continues to thrive. Donations are buoyant, and income has duly increased. Internet sales have expanded over the last year and now provide about a third of our takings.

We have a loyal and reliable team and have welcomed some new members during the year.

Fleur Hall

The regular hirers of the Fleur Hall all signed up for 2017. The Hall now has regular collection of one off meetings, parties and events both with new hirers and those who have used the hall previously.

Progress has been made this year in relation to some of the more practical concerns for hirers, including updating fire instructions, the booking form and initiating reviews of heating and access.

Fleur Gallery

Visitors to the Gallery in 2017 enjoyed a variety of different exhibitions throughout the year. These included events by the local senior schools, Abbey School and Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, and Faversham Carnival Club celebrated 125 years with an exhibition. The museum also used the gallery to continue the WW1 exhibitions. Local artists were on display, showcasing work from jewellery and sculpture to paintings in oils and mixed media, much of which was for sale.

A total of 3,515 visitors attended the gallery during this year. Art sales generated a little over £800. The Society is grateful to the artists that exhibited in 2017 and the sale of work which added to our income.

Finally, special thanks goes to all the volunteers for keeping the gallery running.

Open House

Open House 2017 presented another wonderful opportunity to gain special access to properties of architectural and historical interest in Faversham and the surrounding area, some of which are not normally open to the public.

It is very likely that the scheme was the first of its kind in the UK when it started in 1969 and was later used as a template for the National Heritage Open Days Scheme. Since then it has been held annually on the first three Saturdays in July.

In 2017, a total of 37 houses took part, including 5 new ones. It is important to have new properties in the scheme each year so that regular visitors to Open House will remain interested and continue to support the scheme. The money raised by Open House, over £4,000 in 2017, helps to protect these historic buildings and the environment through the work of the Faversham Society.

Faversham Open Gardens and Garden Market Day

Once again, the sun shone down on Faversham on Sunday 25th June 2017 and the town saw around 1200 visitors buying tickets to gardens and even more visiting the garden market. Many visitors had been before and were returning to see the new gardens and ones they had missed in previous years.

36 seems to be the lucky number of gardens opening in aid of the Faversham Society, with several of them being new or reopening after a break. There were small and large, paved and lawned, wildlife friendly, walled and waterside gardens on display all looking resplendent in the sunshine. Many of them served teas and refreshments to footsore and thirsty visitors. The garden market, which included 30 stalls, was the place to be if you were looking for beautiful specialist plants, ice cream, bakery, vintage tools and gardenalia amongst many other things.

The Society was delighted to welcome Jane Beedle, runner up of the 2016 Great British Bake Off and herself a garden designer. Jane opened the event and then toured some of the gardens offering her advice and welcome encouragement as our roving expert.

A dedicated team of local volunteers helped out on the day, without whose help we could not manage. We would like to thank them, and the Fleur staff for giving their time to this special day. The whole event raised nearly £6,000 for the Society. The plans for the 2018 event are well underway and we already have 6 new gardens taking part.

Faversham Town Heritage Walks

Year on year growth in visitor numbers continued to increase with 19 group walks entertained during the year. There has been diminished attendance at our regular Saturday Walks, and work continues to address this to encourage more Faversham residents to join.

Four summer evening walks were also hosted. A big thank you to our volunteers in preparing and delivering these walks.

The role of the all our walk guides is to illustrate this wonderful town in a light-hearted, yet informative, way. Each guide uses her or his own personality to illustrate Faversham and its history.

Stone Chapel

The arrangement with English Heritage continues, whereby we keep a regular watching brief on the Stone Chapel site, for which we receive some income.

It has been a steady year at Stone Chapel, and thankfully we have been faced with very little litter to pick up. The main problem on the site is the increasing evidence of rabbits, with rabbit holes now on the grass area to the south of the ruins. English Heritage are aware of this issue.

Libraries

In order to make it easier to find books in the library, spine labels with author initials and subject location have been added this year, making retrieval easier. Our collection of older - i.e. eighteenth-century - books has been reviewed and they are kept securely.

The Marlowe Library is at present in its own room. The library has books about Marlowe and Elizabethan theatre. It has been catalogued onto computer with internationally recognised subjects and classification and spine labels added to keep the books in the same subject order as used in Kent University and indeed the Shakespeare Library of Birmingham University. The aim is to move the whole collection to the new Marlowe Kit in the Poor Priests Hospital in Canterbury possibly in April 2018.

Chart Gunpowder Mills

2017 produced 900 visitors to the Mills. This was down on the previous year, due mainly to fewer group visits. The team has refreshed the paintwork and improved the displays. John Breeze has continued his work of enlarging and updating the Mills' extensive family history archive.

Boxing Day Walk

The weather was bright and sunny for this year's walk. An enthusiastic group of walkers forsook the comforts of home and the TV to walk in the woods at Bysing Wood Road and the Oare Gunpowder Works. After lunch, a raffle and quiz were held and £123 was raised for the Society. Thanks are due to our volunteers for all their help and for everyone who supported the event and made it such a fun occasion.

The Fleur Singers

The Fleur Singers continued to meet twice a month in the Fleur Hall to sing and to enjoy fellowship together. Refreshments are provided in the interval. The entry fee helps maintain the Hall piano. The Singers have attended several town events and entertained local care homes and societies.

Faversham Society Archaeological Research Group

The Faversham Society Archaeological Research Group (FSARG) is a group within the Faversham Society. Its Director founded the group in 2005 and still guides its work. This work has added to the knowledge of the history of the Faversham area, particularly of the times before there are any records.

In 2017, the group attended community involvement events with stalls at the Heritage Fair, the Oare Gunpowder Works "Artists in the Woods" and the Food Festival. The Finds Processing in the garden of the Fleur brought in many visitors and the dig behind the Jacobs Yard café was also seen by many people. FSARG is grateful to people who show so much interest in its work and bring their finds to share; these tell yet more of the story of Faversham. Dr Pat Reid has given several talks on the archaeology of Faversham including one to the Stonebridge Allotments Association about the gunpowder works.

FSARG investigations in 2017 include surveying the remains of the gunpowder mills at the Faversham Creek end of the Stonebridge Allotments. These had recently been cleared of undergrowth in preparation to be brought back into use as allotments.

This year's season was themed "Searching for the Kings Manor", to look for evidence of a Saxon Manor which is believed to have been somewhere to the south of St Mary of Charity. Possibly near the Post Office where a Saxon loom weight was reportedly found during excavations in the 1960s.

Several geophysics surveys were performed, including one of a section of the QE School playing field.

The Summer season included digs in Newton Road near the post office, behind Furlongs micro-pub in Preston Street, between Crescent Road and Court Street, St Marys Court in Church Street and the QE playing field where the geophysics had shown interesting marks. One piece of Saxon Ipswich Ware pottery was found in the Newton road dig. Another piece of this pottery was found in 2016 further up Newton Road.

Behind Furlongs, FSARG found a large dump of high status mid to late 18th century pottery and glass. Nothing to do with Saxons, but an interesting insight into the wealth of Faversham at that time. The exhibition in the Fleur de Lis gallery "Faversham's Glory Days" in March 2018 displays this, and an interpretation of why it was there.

FSARG also performed a watching brief on the construction of a house extension in Stephens Close, and recorded more of the foundations of Davington Manor - a large medieval building associated with the old gate in Old Gate Road. Prior to our investigation the location and extent of this building was not known.

For more information go to www.community-archaeology.org.uk.



Digging, Sieving, Finds Processing, Research and a visitor behind Jacob's Yard

Newsletter

This year the content of the newsletter has changed in line with the society's increased visibility, giving more publicity to campaigns, talks and public engagement being encouraged and led by the society.

Sometimes these sit a little awkwardly alongside our history features, including the popular quiz and bygone Faversham. However, this will all change in late spring when a quarterly society journal will be launched to accommodate our historical and more academic side. The news part of the newsletter, including reports from society groups, will still be printed monthly and a greater emphasis will be put on its availability online.

Publications and Print Room

The Print Room had a typically busy year in 2017, printing 3600 copies of the Members' Newsletter and 509 copies of the 2016 Annual Report. As more members agree to receive publications online the printing quantities can be reduced.

Other work included photocopying interactive museum sheets for children, bus timetables, leaflets and town maps for visitors, many of which were in colour and for which a charge was made.

During the year 503 copies of the 'Faversham Papers' book series, 221 A4 size and 283 A5 size, sold in the VIC, were made to replace bought copies. This series, which comprises 127 A4, books containing mainly historical or environmental information, and various A5 books, 'A Brief History of Faversham', 10 Walks in Faversham', the 'Nutshell' series and other small books. The sale of the books and colour leaflets contributes income to the Society to cover other costs.

Our partners

Maison Dieu

The Maison Dieu has close links with the Faversham Society, though its day-to-day running is managed by a separate charitable trust. This trust dates from 1922. The management agreement (LMA) has come up for renewal and is currently being discussed by the three parties that are involved in its overall management, English Heritage, the guardians of the property, the trustees of the Maison Dieu and the trustees of the Faversham Society. The nature of the relationship between the Faversham Society and Maison Dieu in relation to financial management is under review as part of this process. At present, the two trusts are regarded as in partnership by English Heritage and this currently includes supervision of Stone Chapel.

Members of the Faversham Society are represented by the appointment of three trustees on the Board of the Maison Dieu, and stewards and volunteers are usually members of the Society. The trustees of the Maison Dieu continue to be grateful for their support, which is desperately needed in order for us to keep this ancient monument open to the public. Recently a management committee has been formed to assist the trustees in the running of the building and the activities that are planned.

The collection at the Maison Dieu is almost entirely Roman, and Medieval, and loaned artefacts from those periods can currently be viewed at the Fleur Museum. The Roman collection at the Maison Dieu is of national importance. The two museums maintain close links, and the Faversham Society Museum Committee is usually attended by the Maison Dieu curator, Ann Wilkinson.

Maison Dieu Trustees: Roger Bennett, Jonathan Carey, Ted Davis (Secretary and Treasurer), Rev Penny Fenton (Chair of Trustees Building Group), Michael Frohnsdorff (Acting Chair), Jasmine Patience, Rev Simon Rowlands (Chair)

Maison Dieu Steward Volunteers: Angelina Barry, Peter Cook, Rev. Penny Fenton, Dick Frier, Harold Fischer, Ray Godfrey, Ann Godfrey, Sheila Hulks, Sheila Maister, Paul Moorbath, Graham Peter, Stephanie Peter, Keith Robinson, Julian Saunders, Kathy Scarlett, Margaret Slythe, Ann Wilkinson, Nick Wilkinson

Maison Dieu Curatorial Support: Jane Baker, Elizabeth Eyre (Assistant Hon Curator), Pauline Houghton (Collections Cataloguer and Collections care), Margaret Slythe (Hon Archivist, Fund Raiser and Advisor), Ann Wilkinson (Hon Curator)

Faversham Historians

The Faversham Historians have held four quarterly meetings during 2017, on Sunday mornings in February, May, August, and November. Attendances have greatly improved, and there has been some fascinating interchange of information and ideas. A great deal of historical research is going on, both with regard to the second volume of the History of Faversham, from 1550 to the present day, which is in the pipe-line, and also to the production of some new Faversham Papers which, it is hoped, will soon bring the number of published ones up to 130, which is an outstanding achievement both for the dedicated historians of the last thirty years and also for the Society which has had the vision both to encourage and publish the research. Not all eras or aspects of Faversham's history have been covered in the same depth and there is plenty of scope for new research from those interested in developing their knowledge of Faversham's rich and varied history.

John Owen, one of the founders, is a fount of wisdom about our past, and continues to be our chair, and Anne Salmon continues loyally to report our 'transactions' as they are called, often a very difficult task, which she tackles with admirable skill. Our thanks to them both, and to the loyal band of members of the Historians and the Society who come to tell us about their new research discoveries and to ask their colleagues for their advice and interpretation. It is a stimulating experience and we hope to see more members and non-members in the future, and to work closely with the new group which the Society plans to introduce to supplement our work and further the aims spelled out in the Society's Articles.

Financial Report for the year ended 31 December 2017

Another year of successful trading and fundraising has resulted in a surplus of £21k and a surplus on Unrestricted Funds of £148k, so the Society has maintained the statutory target laid down by its Reserves policy (at least six months' core expenditure).

The trustees propose to adhere to the principles of proper budgetary control and financial management in 2018 and future years in order to provide a firm financial basis for the continuance of the conservation and education work of the Society.

There is one new project within Restricted Funds – to preserve the archives of the late Arthur Percival for active use in the Society's educational programme. The urgent repairs to the structure are complete, so the Premises fund has been closed and the trustees have set aside £75k of Unrestricted funds into a Designated fund, specifically for a rolling 10-year programme to restore the integrity of all the premises in Preston Street.

The Trustees acknowledge with thanks further grants and donations to the Society from: John Swire 1989 Charitable Trust, Faversham Town Council, Kent County Council, Swale Borough Council and the Arts Council.

Brian Kelsey BA FCA, Hon. Treasurer

**The Faversham Society
(Limited by Guarantee)
Summary Accounts
Year to 31st December 2017**

<u>Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2017</u>		
	31/12/2017	31/12/2016
Fixed Assets		
Land & buildings, at valuation	545,371	554,428
Computer equipment	3,475	5,212
	548,846	559,640
Current Assets		
Bank balances, Restricted Funds	59,155	58,915
Bank, Unrestricted Funds	148,270	116,190
Stock	9,611	10,380
	217,036	185,485
Current Liabilities		
Creditors	969	959
<u>Net Current Assets</u>	216,067	184,526
<u>Net Assets</u>	764,913	744,166
Represented by:		
Funds		
Restricted Funds	59,155	58,915
Designated Fund	75,000	50,000
Unrestricted Funds	630,758	635,251
<u>Total Funds</u>	764,913	744,166
Note: These accounts are published subject to Independent Review.		

<u>Income & Expenditure Account</u>		
Year to 31 December 2017		
	2017	2016
	£	£
<u>INCOME</u>		
Member subscriptions	11,699	11,838
Rents received	13,213	14,159
Interest receivable	500	876
Museum entry & sales	8,095	8,074
TIC & shops:		
New books & publications	17,483	19,798
Gifts, cards etc	10,848	11,445
Secondhand books	16,485	11,870
Fundraising (net)		
Open houses	2,845	4,571
Secret gardens	5,406	5,706
Walks, events etc	1,881	4,307
Swale grant TIC	3,600	3,600
Donations, legacies & grants	6,252	13,403
	98,307	109,647
<u>EXPENDITURE:</u>		
Premises costs:		
Rent & rates	5,802	6,741
Insurance	8,969	9,140
Light & heat	5,994	7,341
Repairs & maintenance	12,621	11,595
Security	6,870	1,473
Museum costs	570	616
TIC & shops:		
New books & publications	9,788	9,970
Gifts, cards etc	4,895	4,971
Overheads:		
Printing & photocopier rental	2,916	14,105
Telephone & postage	4,948	4,057
Computer costs	83	138
Advertising & promotion	2,921	1,836
Subscriptions & donations	523	321
Legal costs		
Independent review	1,500	2,172
Finance costs:		
Bank charges	-1,394	-3,176
	67,006	71,300
<u>CASH SURPLUS</u>		
Depreciation	31,301	38,347
	10,794	10,794

TRADING SURPLUS of General Funds**20,507****27,553****Restricted Funds**

Projects	01/01/2017	Funds in	Expenditure	Trans- fers	31/12/2017
Land Fund	45,875			- -	45,875
Ardens House	371			-	371
Arthur Percival Memorial		- 5,203	1,200	-	4,003
Museum fund	1,750		1,000	-	750
No. 12 Project	6,733			-	6,733
IT fund	1,628		205		1,423
Premises fund	2,558		2,558		-
	58,915	5,203	4,963	-	59,155

Who's Who – 2017

Environment Committee	Claire Belsom, Janet Gethin (from December), Harold Goodwin (Chair), Ray Harrison, Gulliver Immink, Simon macLachlan, Nigel Mannouch, Chris Oswald-Jones, Tim Stonor, Graham Warner, Susan White, Christopher Wright
Finance Committee	Ted Davis, Michael Frohnsdorff, Harold Goodwin, Alistair Mackay-Miller (Chair), Brian Kelsey, Jan West, Brian Wintle-Smith
General Purposes Committee	Wendy Clarke, Gill Connelly, Juliet Cowgill, Michael Frohnsdorff, Harold Goodwin (Chair), Anthony Millett, Maria Newman, Christine Smith, Jan West, Brian Wintle-Smith, Joanne Wintle-Smith, Heather Wootton
Planning Committee	Anne Salmon (Chair), Janet Turner (Vice Chair and Secretary), Nigel Mannouch, Chris Oswald Jones. Susan White, Patsy Rogers, Guy Felton (part year)
Museum Committee	Heather Wootton (Chair), Clive Foreman (Vice chair), Paul Moor bath, Mike Nicholls, Dr Pat Reid, Catherine Turner, Mike Frohnsdorff, David Slarks, Rachel Baynton, John Harrison, John Robertson, Joanne Wintle-Smith, Rod Morley, Ann Wilkinson (Curator Maison Dieu) and Christine Fagg.
Building Maintenance and Health and Safety	Brian Wintle-Smith
Manager, Fleur de Lis VIC	Christine Smith
Editor, Newsletter	Stephen Rayner
Volunteer Coordinator	Joanne Wintle-Smith
Organiser, Open Gardens	Lucie Neame
Organiser, Open House	Moyra Harding
Membership Secretary	Maria Newman
Editor, Faversham Papers	Clive Foreman
Annual Report Editor	Katie Begg
Faversham Society Archaeological Group	John Clarkstone (Chair), Dr. Patricia Reid (Director), Lizzie Eyre (Treasurer), Nick Wilkinson (Membership), Mike Tillman (Website), Maureen Wale (Finds Coordinator), Keith Robinson (Committee Member), Nigel Mannouch (Committee Member), Chris Wootton (Committee Member), Heather Wootton (Committee Member)
Print Room Manager	Patsy Rogers
Warden, Stone Chapel	Clive Foreman
Fleur Hall Bookings Officer	Juliet Cowgill
Gardeners	Daphne Longfield, Chris Oswald-Jones
Historians' Representative	Michael Frohnsdorff
Museum, Archive and Library Staff	Museum Mentor (curatorial adviser): John Harrison, MSc, AMA

	<p>Librarian (including Doddington Parochial Library): Paul Moorbath Assistant librarian: Valerie Gidlow, Jonathan Hill. Costumes: Jennifer Shipman Archives and computer data: Heather Wootton, Linda Parker and Linda Theaker Archives: Catherine Turner Archive assistants: Veronica Smith, Henry Vinson, Holly Savage, Dave Fagg and Phil Tooker Artefacts: Christine Fagg Artefacts assistants: Richard Adkins, Hilary Truscott and Chris Wootton Archive researchers Linda Parker & John Breeze Enquiries: Rod Morley and Linda Parker Archaeology: Dr Pat Reid Historians link: Mike Frohnsdorff Chart Mills: Rod Morley and volunteers Photographic archive: Clive Foreman, Gill Pinder and John Robertson Telephone engineer: David Slarks Maps and electrical engineer: Mike Nicholls Displays/exhibitions: Daphne Longfield, Rachel Baynton and Clive Foreman Museum and Gallery Volunteers Co-ordinator: Joanne Wintle-Smith</p>
<p>Museum and Gallery volunteers</p>	<p>Helen Albery, Rachel Baynton, John Begg, Sheila Breeze, John Breeze, Rob Brewer, Carolynne Brightman, Fliss Carlton, Ray Churnside, Judith Clarke, Jules Cowgill, Gill Connolly, Ann Dale, , Isobel Downie, Jean Duchin, Glennys Evans, Peter Evans, Clive Foreman, Jean Foreman, Diane Furneaux, Martyn Fuller, Paul Harvey, Linda Ireland, Jim Kilcoyne, June McIntyre, Anthony Millett, Hilary Morley, Rod Morley, David Palmer, Beryl Pleasance, Jay Scaggs, Ted Seal, David Slarks, Diane Skinner, Alan Swan, Julia Vellam, Chris Warburton, Graham Warner, Susan White, Gill Winters, Brian Wintle-Smith & Joanne Wintle-Smith</p>
<p>VIC volunteers</p>	<p>Wilna Bing, Pat Blackford, Pam Boorman, Rob Brewer, Christopher Brooke-Taylor, Jean Bushell, Judith Clarke, Martin Collins, Jackie Davidson, Sue Davidson, Jean Duchin, Sally Fancourt, Sheila Gibbins, Val Golding, Sheila Hulks, Anne Jones, Dawn Kelle, Janet Killian, Peter Landon, Sarah Lipscombe, Pam McLean, Angela Mitchell, Ann Morgan, Penny Newell, Mary Ransom, Patsy Rogers, Patricia Ross, Audrey Sanderson, Christine Smith (Manager), Judy Smith, Rene Stringer, Sue Taylor, Denise Turner, Pamela Willison, Gill Woodlock</p>
<p>Fleur Charity Bookshop volunteers</p>	<p>Anthea Nicholls, Genevieve Ellis, Diane Skinner, Linda Ireland, Julia Vellam, Sarah Windsor, Richard Paris Piper, Janice Dixon, Colin Simmonds, Joyce Lawless,</p>

	Tim Fletcher, Claire Luckham, Liz Austin, George Couchman, Isobel Downey, Peter Quince, Jacky Davidson, Sandra Goodwin, Aileen Smith
Faversham Town Guides	Colin Alderman, Barbara Babbage, Steve Bartholomew, Nuala Brenchley-Sayers, Peter Lock, Anthony Millett, Jim Ransom, Pat Ross, Mike Taylor
Open Gardens and Market Day	Alexandra Iron, Jane Hannath, Fern Alder, Amanda Mannering, Sarah Langton-Lockton, Lucie Neame, Patricia Stubbs, Julie Holbrook, Karina Bateman, Sue Hendry, Linda Rumble, Harold Goodman, Norma Beechey, Jan West, James Finch-Harding, Jill Fordham
Open House	Moyra Harding, Lucie Neame, Helen Albery, Sheila Gibbins, Christopher and Annette Brooke-Taylor
Chart Mills	Rod Morley (rota organiser), Richard Meade, Peter London, Richard Paris-Piper, David Palmer, Nigel Winters, John Breeze (family history), Chris Wooton (maintenance), John Stockley, Tony Golding, John Begg, Phil Tooker
Newsletter Delivery Team	Audrey Sanderson, Chris Warburton, Colin Simmonds, David Iron, Fran Ward, Genevieve Ellis, Janet Killian, Janet Turner, Jean Bushell, Linda Cronk, Linda Ireland, Marian McCann, Martin Collins, Martin Nicholls, Mary Clark, Mike and Kate Taylor, Mike Frohnsdorff, Mike Nicholls, Nigel Mannouch, Pamela Willison, Pat Ross, Paul Harvey, Penny Fenton, Pippa Poulteney, Ray Godfrey, Rod Morley, Susan White, Walter Waller, Doug Warner
Editor, Annual Report 2017	Katie Begg