

Faversham Society Newsletter

June 2019

662

CHRIS WOOTTON



Donald Church (left) hands over a collection of 200 samples of wallpaper from houses and the Faversham area and beyond. They were collected by his late brother, Derek, conservation officer for Swale for many years. Donald is pictured with Clive Foreman, who is moving away from the town after working with the society for more than 20 years
See page 2

Chairman's column

HAROLD GOODWIN

It has been another busy month with preparations for the AGM and the opening of the Planning Inspectorate's hearings on the Cleve Hill Solar Park application.

Our vice-chairman, David Melville, will be representing us when the hearings open on 30 May. David is also chairing the new Heritage Harbour Group and representing the society on the Bridge Steering Group.

On 17 June, Michael Whiting, Kent County Council's cabinet member for planning, highways, transport and waste, is coming to meet with members and guests of the society. We have concerns about the growth in traffic stemming from the demand for housing and travel in a

medieval town of limited road capacity and the air pollution that results. We want to hear from Mike Whiting about traffic forecasting and traffic management within the strategic road network. Please reserve a seat if you wish to come along. *See diary, page 3.*

It is important that the society engages with efforts to secure the heritage of the creek and we shall be at the Nautical Festival on 6 and 7 July with a stall on both days. If you would be willing to join us in staffing the stall, please do get in touch.

On Sunday, 30 June, we have the Faversham Open Gardens (10am-5pm) and Garden Market (10am-4pm). These, like our Open Houses programme on the first three Saturdays of July, are not to be

missed. These are flagship days for the society.

chair@favershamsociety.org

Looking to the future

HAROLD GOODWIN

The Faversham Society's annual meeting will be held at the Fleur hall at 7pm on 10 June.

At the AGM we have decided to present some of the work we have been doing and discuss with you our plans for the next year – and that is why we are calling it *Looking to the Future: A Boss, Butterflies, Houses, Traffic, Wallpaper and much more.*

We are about to embark on major works on the Fleur roof, Cleve Hill Solar Park goes before the Planning Inspectorate, Swale's plans for roads, traffic and housing will gear up after the election and our core business in the Fleur continues.

We have nine candidates for nine vacancies on the board, but under our new articles, each needs to be voted for individually. There will be the usual opportunity to question the board about its stewardship if the society over the last year.

The annual report and accounts, along with details of the candidates for election and re-election to the board, will be available on the website from 27 May at the latest. You can also collect printed copies from the Fleur. The board has not completed its review of the membership rules and we shall not be bringing forward any changes at the AGM.

Museum news

CLIVE FOREMAN

Early in May we were delighted to receive a donation of about 200 samples of wallpaper from houses in the Faversham area and beyond. These had been collected

DIARY

10 June The 2019 annual general meeting of the Faversham Society, Fleur hall, Gatefield Lane, at 7pm. *See this page*

17 June Members' and guests' meeting with Michael Whiting, Kent County Council highways traffic management in Faversham, Fleur hall, 7pm. Reserve your place for this meeting on favershamsociety.org, top right

27 June *The Huguenots in Kent*, talk by Dinah Winch, Faversham Guildhall, 8pm. *See page 7*

30 June Open Gardens. *See page 6*
6,13, 20 July Open Houses. *See page 5*

6-7 July The society will have a stall at Faversham Nautical Festival on the Front Brents by the bridge

20-21 July Hunt for the king's manor, Market Inn, Whitstable Road, 10am-4am. *See page 4*

by the late Derek Church, conservation officer for Swale for many years, who took great interest in Faversham. The collection was donated by his brother Donald.

The collection ranges in date from the late 17th century to the 1930s, and includes some from Belmont House, as well as less grand houses in the area. Of particular interest is an architectural design from King's School Canterbury, dating from the late 19th century.

Unlike today, repapering in the past was done on top on the previous layer, so a succession of layers of papers can be carefully peeled off, showing the changes in design and printing method over time.

The earliest designs were printed from wooden blocks. This method is still used by artisan printers, such as the one offering hand-printed papers from a studio at Creek Creative in Abbey Street.

As the 19th century progressed, mechanical means of printing were developed; at first these were letterpress machines simply mechanising the hand process. The lithographic process, whereby the image is formed by blocking out parts of the design with an ink-resistant substance, was also used, and later the gravure process, whereby the image is formed by etching the design into metal, allowing a much finer line to be printed, as well as graduation in tone.

A small group of us met in the Boston Room at the Fleur to receive the collection. Heather Wootton, who chairs the Museum Committee, and Mike Frohnsdorff, a former society chairman, represented the society. Ray Harrison, who liaised with Donald, was also present, as was I.

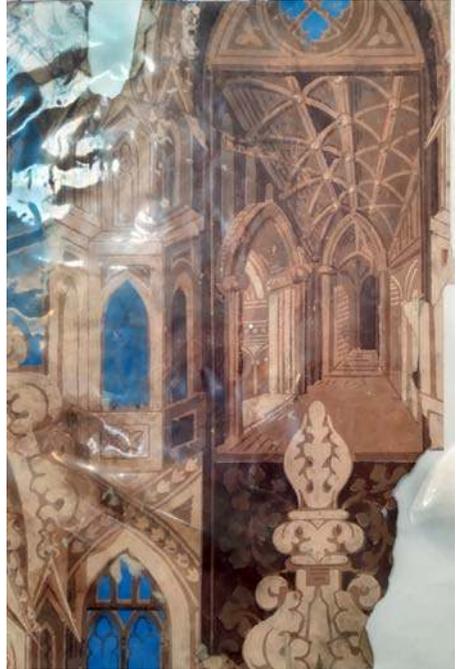
For me this was a fitting end to my time with the museum. For more than 20 years I have enjoyed the privilege of being able to delve into the collection at will, and to discover the rich heritage that represents. Thank you all for your help and kind thoughts over the years.

Editor's note: Thank you, Clive, and bon voyage. Your reports have always been punctual, informative and with just the right amount of fascinating detail (as befits a fellow old boy of Rochester Mathematical School) – SR.

How will town manage?

CHRIS WRIGHT AND TIM STONOR

A members' and guests' meeting with Michael Whiting, Kent County Council's cabinet member for planning, highways,



Wallpaper featuring a late 19th-century architectural design from the King's School, Canterbury, has been donated to the society

transport and waste, will be held in the Fleur hall at 7pm on 17 June.

Society members are concerned about the consequences of housing development on the outskirts of the town. New homes at a distance from the town centre will generate a disproportionate level of movement.

How can this be managed in a way that protects the heritage of the medieval town centre together with its attractive pedestrian environment? Should the new developments be private enclaves, or should they be structured so they contribute to a coherent area-wide network that encourages people to move about on foot and bicycle as well as by private car?

On a wider scale, there arises the question of how the traffic that the new housing estates will generate can be accommodated within the current network. Is our traffic forecasting robust? Is planning permission for new developments predicated on a realistic assessment of their cumulative effects on roads throughout the town?

Are we assuming that all new residents will drive, or are we allowing for “modal shift” to walking and cycling? What needs to happen to encourage that shift?

Most would agree that a vibrant economy that supports local employment is a good thing. Can the resulting goods traffic be handled in a more sensitive and efficient way?

At present the A2 acts as a feeder to the industrial estates on the western side of the town, which were encouraged to move there on the understanding that there would be a direct link to the M2 to provide access for heavy traffic. This link did not transpire, and many believe that the present arrangement is not sustainable.

Along the line of Watling Street, the A2 is one of Britain’s oldest proper roads, the route along which three successive Roman invasions took place 2,000 years ago. Today, the environment in Ospringe suffers from pollution and noise levels above the limits recommended by the World Health Organisation.

Moreover, the town is expanding southwards. In the past, the A2 acted as a bypass, skirting the town’s most densely populated areas. Within the next two decades, this will no longer be the case. The focus will change, and the A2 will take on new functions, first as a gateway, second as an all-purpose spine road that must accommodate many additional journeys,

and, third, as a mile-long pedestrian crossing.

It will sit between a new residential population together with two schools on the south side, and a larger population together with the town’s commercial centre on the north side. There will be a significant level of movement between the two, including children going to school, cyclists, delivery vehicles, and car commuters as well as railway travellers walking to and from the station. Do people want a “walking town”, or do they want roundabouts? The two are not compatible.

Members believe that now is the time to agree on a coherent vision for the area that links planning control for residential developments and industrial activity with travel provision for all.

Forward-looking planning, design and management of the strategic road network will be vital to the quality of life for residents in all parts of the town over the next few decades.

As the capacity of the hall is limited please reserve a seat. For those without a reserved seat it will probably be wise to arrive in good time. Reserve your place for this meeting on the society’s website favershamsociety.org, top right.

Hunt for king’s manor

PAT REID

Join the Faversham Society Archaeological Research Group (FSARG) in July as we hunt for the king’s manor in a town described in an AD811 document as the “Kings little town of Febresham”.

Our contribution is part of the national Festival of Archaeology, organised by the Council for British Archaeology, and will

To page 6 ►►►



Open Houses: we're up to 53

MOYRA HARDING

The final count of properties taking part in Open House – on 6, 13 and 20 July – is 53, including 14 new or returning houses.

We will feature our first property that is registered as an ancient monument – the Foreman's House in the grounds of the Oare Gunpowder Works Country Park (which is also an ancient monument). With a grant from English Heritage, the exterior has been restored exactly as it was when it was built in 1846.

It's worth making the effort to go out to Ospringe to visit the church on 6 July, when there will be a flower festival. En route you can see inside the Grade II listed 1 Tudor Cottages in Water Lane. A short distance away is 6 Ospringe Place, built in 1799. It was occupied by female servants of the Montresor family who lived in the main house.

South House on the corner of South Road and Napleton Road was built in 1785 but was bought by Kent County Council in 1943 and used as a youth centre until 2014 when it was converted back into a house.

Another very popular property – the



Foreman's House (top) and South House

former Ship Hotel in the Market Place – is opening again this year. In addition to apartments one and two, the owners have created a third small apartment which will be open to visitors.

There is a link to the list of all the properties and opening times on the Faversham Society website. Handbooks will be on sale in the Visitor Information Centre, Preston Street; the welcome centre in St Jude's Shrine, Tanners Street; the Shepherd Neame shop, Court Street; and the Heritage Hub, the Forum, Sittingbourne, from 4 June.

We are still looking for more volunteers to help owners of open houses. Please contact us if you are interested at tiefaversham@btconnect.com or 01795 534542.

▶▶▶ From page 4

run from 10am to 4pm on 20 and 21 July.

In the summer of 2018, we discovered and excavated a large pit crammed full of early Saxon pottery, animal bone, textile equipment and, at the base of the pit, ironworking slag. This summer we are returning to investigate the area around this site, which is in the extensive grounds of the Market Inn, a fine local pub.

Finds processing will be taking place on site, with last year's discoveries displayed and activities available for young and old alike.

Hope to see you there!

Calendars reminder

MARY RANSOM

We are now already well into 2019 so it is time to start thinking of next year's calendar. If you have any recent photos of Faversham or the immediate surrounding area and would like a chance to show them off in future calendars, then we would love to see them. The images need to show Faversham at its best.

Unfortunately we can't pay you for your photos but if one of your images is selected your name will be mentioned and you will also get a free calendar.

To be in with a chance, all you need to do is submit one best quality jpeg landscape format image per email to ransom@gmx.co.uk using the heading 'Faversham Society Calendar'. You may send as many images as you like but please only one per email.

Please include your full contact details, where the photo was taken and the date it was taken if possible. Images need to be received by the end of June to allow us time to have the calendar printed and out

for sale at the Hop Festival in September.

Thank you for your support in helping to raise vital funds for The Faversham Society.

Open Gardens date

LUCIE NEAME

This year's Faversham Open Gardens and Garden Market Day will take place on Sunday, 30 June. So far, 28 gardens will be taking part including several new openers and many old favourites all over the town.

The garden market will once again take place in Market Place, selling all kinds of garden-related products.

And this year, linking up with Faversham's Plastic-Free initiative, there will be a plastic-free planter competition held in the market. Gardeners young and old are invited to bring along their planters of all different shapes, sizes and types (but definitely containing no plastic), planted up with anything that grows.

The planters will be on display from 10am and prizes will be awarded for the judges' favourite and the people's favourite at 3pm.

Huguenots talk

JULIAN SAUNDERS

Faversham Town Twinning Association presents an illustrated talk, *The Huguenots in Kent*, in Faversham Guildhall at 8pm on Thursday, 27 June.

The talk will be given by Dr Dinah Winch, director of the Huguenot Museum in Rochester and is open to non-members but booking is required.

Please email favershamtownwinning@gmail.com or telephone / text 07854 649776 to book seats or for further information. The recommended donation for non-members is £2.

Any model engineers?

WENDY CLARKE

The society's secondhand bookshop has been given a large collection of *Model Engineer* magazines.

There are several sets, mostly bound in folders, and date from the 1960s to the 1980s. Any reasonable offers will be considered.

Please phone me, Wendy Clarke, on 01795 52916 or inquire in the bookshop in Gatefield Lane. The magazines are rather too bulky for the bookshop and stored elsewhere.

New books at the Fleur

CHRISTINE SMITH

You may have noticed from recent newsletters that we have been increasing our stock of Shire books. The Shire range covers a multitude of subjects that you might be interested in or maybe subjects that you didn't even know you were interested in.

Why not come and browse through our smart new display stands. New titles this month are:

Kent Dog Friendly Pub Walks, by David and Hilary Staines £8.99

Broad Gauge Railways, by Tim Bryan, £7.99

British Railways in the 1950s and 1960s, by Greg Morse, £7.95

British Railways in the 1970s and 1980s, by Greg Morse, £7.99

British Tea and Coffee Cups, by Steven Goss, £5.99

Ceramics of the 1950s, by Graham McLaren, £5.99

Building Toys, by Brian Slater, £7.99

Canals and Waterways, by Michael E Ware, £7.99

Canal Arts and Crafts, by Avril Lansdell, £5.99

Canal Narrowboats and Barges, by Tony Conder, £5.99

Chairman's review of 2018

HAROLD GOODWIN

Over the next few years, Faversham faces a great deal of change, comparable in scale to the changes wrought by the coming of the railway in the mid-19th century.

We know what an attractive place Faversham is to live in – and developers look for opportunities to build in and around just such beautiful towns, particularly with good transport links to London. The stance taken by Swale against housing development left the district without a supply of housing land deemed sufficient by central government and resulted in the Perry Court development.

In the autumn of 2017, we held a members' meeting about "The Heart of Our Town". A strong theme emerged: we value the fact that people can converge, by walking into Market Place, to mingle and meet at weekends and for festivals and events. The growth in traffic and the geographical extension of the town will discourage walking and cycling and create more congestion, as people take to their cars.

Faversham was threatened with a new road layout in the 1960s and Abbey Street was nearly condemned and cleared. Thanks to an intervention by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, Faversham Borough Council launched a first "town scheme". The condemned properties were bought by the council under slum-clearance powers, and their occupants rehoused. The properties were then sold to sympathetic owners who covenanted with the council to restore

them under the supervision of an architect with experience of historic building care. To cover its costs, the council made a slight profit on each – buying the smaller houses for about £250 each and then selling them for about £300.

Joy King, an antique dealer and interior designer who traded as Elizabeth Eaton and who died in July, 2018, was one of the buyers of properties in Abbey Street. The rescue and conservation of Abbey Street was a Faversham First – and we should cherish the memory and learn from it for the future.

Watling Street, also known as the A2, can no longer be regarded as a natural boundary to the development of the town. Without a land supply in Swale sufficient to meet the housing targets set by Whitehall, developers will be able to appeal and secure permission through the Planning Inspectorate, with their costs paid by Swale.

Housing and the associated traffic, air pollution, congestion and health and education infrastructure issues took a lot of our attention in 2018 and will almost certainly do so for the next decade. Swale has begun work on the next District Plan which will have to contain a housing land supply sufficient to meet central government housing targets.

During 2018 the society contributed to the landscape and heritage reviews. In March the society organised a meeting in St Mary of Charity, *The Future of Faversham*, to enable townspeople to hear about the development of the next Swale District

plan. The meeting, co-chaired by the Rev Simon Rowlands and me, heard from Alan Best, head of Swale's spatial planning team and representatives of the Prince's Foundation for Building Community and the Duchy of Cornwall.

In October we held a further meeting in St Mary of Charity Church to hear from the duchy in more detail about its plans. We attracted 260 to the meeting. Many members participated in their Enquiry by Design workshops.

In July, Professor Stephen Peckham, director and professor of health policy at the University of Kent met the society's board to discuss what might be done to monitor pollution at some of the presumed hot spots in the town. The board approved a monitoring programme which is now under way – results are expected in autumn 2019.

In December, we held a public meeting about traffic, pollution and congestion to discuss how best to work together to raise these issues in 2019 and to move towards reducing and mitigating the negative impacts.

Many families in Faversham can trace their ancestors back through many generations and the extended families of Faversham are an important part of our heritage. In February, we hosted a meeting for members and guests on the challenge of securing really affordable housing so that those born in the town would be able to continue to live here and raise families.

Our speakers included Helen Whately, MP for Faversham and Mid-Kent, and

James Freeman, head of planning at Swale Council. The meeting was packed and created the impetus for the subsequent development of a Community Land Trust.

The society has been actively engaged in considering the implications of the proposed Cleve Hill Solar Park for Faversham and examining the likely environmental and other impacts. In March we held a members' meeting to hear their views and in July hosted a meeting with the developers to enable our members to ask questions.

Initially, many of us were conflicted, in favour of renewable energy but concerned about the negative impacts of the proposals. At the second members' meeting this time with the developer and their consultants, we did not receive satisfactory responses and assurances and the board has come out firmly against the solar power station, for this is what it is. We have concerns about access and traffic, landscape and visual impacts, the socioeconomic effects and in particular the safety of the battery technology proposed. You can find more detail about our concerns on the society's website in the blog that carries all the society's policy statements.

The Faversham Society shares the widespread frustration about the lack of progress on the swing bridge over the creek, so essential to the maintenance of a navigable creek and the presence of the iconic Thames barges. We supported the

To page 10 ▶▶▶

Chairman's review of 2018

▶▶▶ From page 9

Where's Our Bridge? campaign and held a members' meeting in October, which brought together many disparate voices.

The board is keen to contribute to conserving heritage across the town and where we see opportunities to create new heritage. Swale councillor Bryan Mulhern contributed £500 from his members' grant to the restoration of the heritage Nescafé advertisement on the side of the house in Gatefield Lane at the entrance to the Fleur car park. Together with the town council we have sponsored the plants which have been put in the beds at the junction between West Street and South Road, and we have commissioned a stone with the town's coat of arms to adorn the junction at the bottom of Preston Street. It will be laid in 2019.

Over the past year, the society has brought together a Faversham Museums Together group of some 15 different heritage groups which are now working together with Christ Church College to develop a new heritage hub platform which will allow better interpretation of Faversham's heritage across the town using a series of GIS (geographic information systems) layers and in ways more likely to connect with future generations.

As can be seen from the accounts, the society's finances are strong, but we are anticipating major work on the roof of the Fleur in 2019, which is likely to deplete our reserves.

In December, 2018, we had 865 fully paid

members and a further 57 subscribers, people still paying their membership dues but who, over the years, have not increased the amount they are paying – 922 people are actively contributing financially to the society as members or subscribers.

We have nearly 240 volunteers giving their time and energy to the work of the society whether in its VIC, the bookshop, the museum, the Open Houses and Open Gardens, Chart Mill, the Faversham Society Archaeological Research Group, the Faversham town guides and not forgetting those who give their time and expertise to the committees and the stalwarts who produce and deliver our newsletter.

Finally, I should like to thank all of those who contribute to the society in such a variety of ways united by a shared concern for Faversham and a determination to contribute by cherishing the past, adorning the present and creating the future.

The next few years will be challenging, as we seek to sustain our built, cultural and social heritage. Faversham is a special place. We need to try to ensure that as it changes, we retain what is special about it.



FAVERSHAM SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



The Faversham Society Newsletter is edited by Stephen Rayner. Contributions are welcomed, and should be received by midday on the 15th of the month before publication, preferably by email to favnewsletter@gmail.com or at the Fleur de Lis, 10-13 Preston Street, Faversham, Kent ME13 8NS, marked for newsletter editor. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Faversham Society or of the editor. The editor's decision is final.

ADVERTISING

Clubs, societies, organisations and businesses are encouraged to advertise in the newsletter. The cost is £40 a page (discounts are available for block booking). The minimum boxed ad measures 59mm x 93mm (or equivalent) and costs £10. If interested, please email the editor. Cheques should be made payable to the Faversham Society and sent to Jan West at the address above.

DIGITAL EDITION

Please consider saving the society printing costs by receiving your newsletter by email. Contact the membership secretary at fleurmem@hotmail.com.

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FAVERSHAM SOCIETY OPENING



The Fleur de Lis museum, 10-13 Preston Street, Faversham ME13 8NS, is open 10am-4pm Monday to Saturday; and 10am-1pm on Sunday. The gallery is open 10am-4pm Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday; 1pm-4pm Tuesday and Thursday; and 10am-1pm Sunday. 01795 590726
fleurmuseum@tiscali.co.uk

The Fleur de Lis visitor information centre and book and gift shop are open 10am-4pm Monday to Saturday and Sunday 10am-1pm. 01795 534542
ticfaversham@btconnect.com

The Fleur de Lis second-hand bookshop at 1a Gatefield Lane is open 10am-3.30pm, Monday to Saturday. 01795 590621

Chart Gunpowder Mills in Nobel Court, off South Road, is open 2pm-5pm Saturday, Sunday and bank holidays from Easter to end of October, at other times by arrangement.

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www.favershamsociety.org