

Faversham Society Newsletter



December 2022



703



The society celebrated its diamond jubilee with an exhibition of secret treasures at the Fleur – including this display made from postage stamps
Sees page 4-5

Chairman's column

HAROLD GOODWIN

As we come to the end of our 60th year, there is much for the Faversham Society to look back upon with pride. We celebrated the anniversary with a tea party for our volunteers hosted at Doddington Place by our president, Richard Oldfield.

Amicia de Moubray wrote eloquently about our history on the Faversham Life website: "All who love Faversham today owe an inestimable debt of gratitude to those determined young folk [who founded] the Faversham Society; and to the hundreds of volunteers who have kept the society active for the past 60 years."

The article is illustrated with some of the society's photographs of Faversham as

it was then. Take a look at favershamlife.org/the-faversham-society-celebrates-its-diamond-jubilee

The collection of Secret Treasures in the Fleur was a great success and the society exhibition held first in the Alexander Centre and then in the exhibition space beside the Visitor Information Centre reminded us all of just how broad the society's activities are.

2023 will be another busy year. We shall be involved in a review of the conservation area and adding to the local list of heritage assets and in early January the draft Neighbourhood Plan will be out for three weeks of public consultation. The Neighbourhood Plan concerns only the area within the parish boundary. Beyond

the boundary, there will probably be planning applications for major developments that will come forward from developers keen to secure permission. We will be particularly vulnerable because of the lack of an updated Swale Local Plan and a five-year housing supply allocation unless removed by government. We shall do our best but it is a David and Goliath scenario, the role of the Planning Inspectorate being to enforce central government policy.

That is for next year. For this year's end may I take the opportunity to wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

chair@favershamsociety.org

Abbey Street revisited

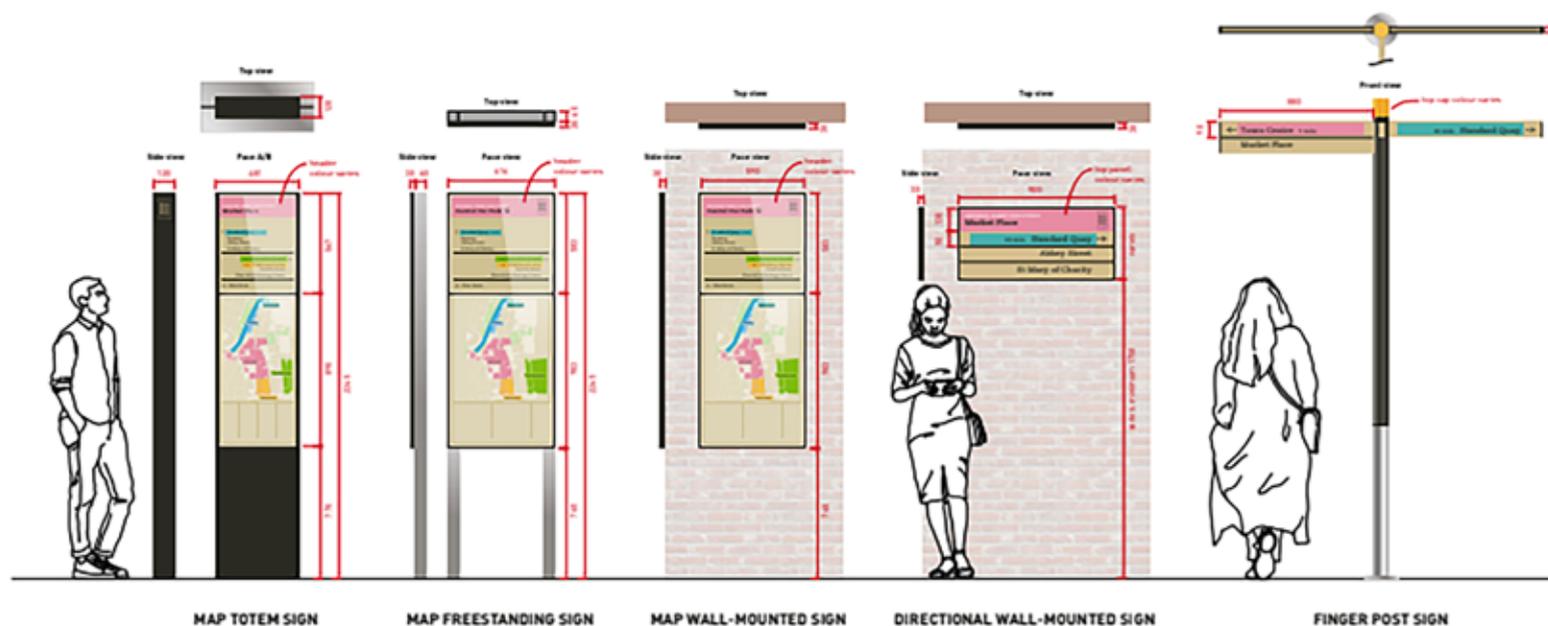
NIGEL MORGAN

The Faversham Society's Publications Group is updating the history of Abbey Street. As a part of this project it is revising the two papers Peter Stevens wrote for the Faversham Society: *Childhood Memories of Abbey Street* (No 44) and *A Second Look at Abbey Street* (No 81) and publishing them in a single edition.

Peter, who was brought up at 92 Abbey Street and was a regular contributor to this newsletter, died last year. His papers record much valuable social history of the street during the first half of the 20th century, and this project is an opportunity to update and expand our records with fresh material for posterity.

Therefore, the society would welcome any additional material to capture as much information about this wonderful street as possible to extend our archive of knowledge – especially pre-1900 and post-1950. Would any members be willing

To page 4 >>>



The wrong direction

Swale has employed consultants who are suggesting three wayfinding signs outside the railway station, on the corner of Market Street and West Street, and on the corner of Court Street and Crescent Road.

Tim Stonor has raised a number of concerns about both the design of the signs and the places being signposted.

“The fact that the project is where it is – pushing ahead in the face of community concerns – demonstrates the perils of undertaking proper community engagement too late into the process” he said. “The local community is a community of local experts with deep experience and contemporary knowledge that would have been of immense benefit at the initial, formative stages of the project.

“There is a large number of off-map destinations. Several were mentioned in a

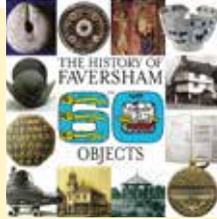
meeting at the guildhall, but they are now omitted. A key reason for having a wider, context map is the opportunity to show how Faversham's compact footprint means it is eminently walkable and therefore explorable for visitors, with consequent benefits for dwell time.”

The proposed colour scheme does not match, nor does it complement, Faversham's current black and gold signposting. The signage needs to be added to, not replaced. Visually intrusive, multi-coloured signage is unnecessary.

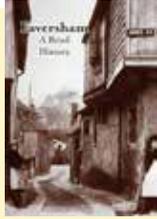
Other board members have commented:

- ❖ I doubt the totems will sit well in the local townscape. They are slick, obtrusive, and very expensive.
- ❖ There's a case for improved signage in Faversham but this is not the solution.
- ❖ Particular bugbears are that there's no mention of the Westbrook as even a secondary or tertiary destination, or of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty nearby.

At the next meeting of the board we shall discuss how we respond to the consultation and post our formal response on our policy website.



The ideal gifts



Faversham in Sixty Objects (£9.99) and Faversham: A Brief History (£4.99) are for sale at the Visitor Information Centre at 12 Market Place

▶▶▶ From page 2

to contribute to this project?

A contribution might entail:

- ❖ Writing about the history of the properties, such as when was a house built, its quirks, and how renovation and modernisation have affected it
- ❖ Recording any information about previous occupants, especially if there is a good story to tell
- ❖ Any anecdotes or nostalgia about life in the street, its shops, pubs and community activities
- ❖ Supplying any newspaper clippings or photographs of the street and/or its occupants, in particular ones that have not been previously published

All contributions will be gratefully received and acknowledged in the final publication.

Any information about the connecting streets – Abbey Place, Abbey Road, Church Lane, Lammas Gate, The Maltings, Vicarage Street – would be welcomed too.

If you are able to help, please email me, Nigel Morgan. With the evenings drawing in, it's the perfect time to get your writing hats on!

nigelhmorgan@btinternet.com

Faversham's railway, Part 3

PETER LANDON

At long last on the eve of Christmas, 1852, an advertisement appeared in The Times for the "East Kent Railway, from Strood to Canterbury, with branches to Faversham Quays and Chilham".

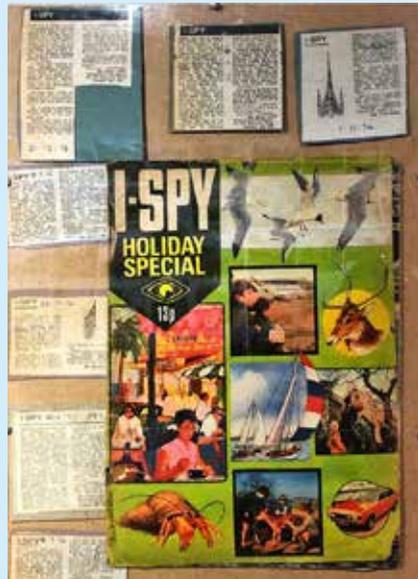
Provisionally registered capital was £700,000, in 28,000 shares of £25 each, and investors could pay a deposit of £2 10s per share. The advertisement said the project

To page 6 ▶▶▶

Secret treasures on display

IMAGES BY JOHN CLARKSTONE

Each of the 16 displays in the Secret Treasures exhibition at the Fleur Gallery comprised 60 items to mark the society's diamond jubilee, some from the museum's archives and some from Faversham people. The mayor, Trevor Martin, contributed his childhood collection of *I-Spy* books and we were pleased to welcome him at the opening of the exhibition.



Clockwise from far left: *I-Spy* books, a popular way of keeping children quiet on car journeys; a collection of hand-coloured photographs taken in Faversham by the Crosoer brothers; a basket of cotton reels; cigarette cards; and a line of men's ties

had the “approval and support of the landowners of the district”.

On 4 August, 1853, the East Kent Act was passed and on 24 August the first general meeting of the proprietors was held at the London Tavern in Bishopsgate. Lord Sondes was elected a director and chairman of the company. David Salomons, who was also a director and held 550 shares in the South Eastern Railway, was voted a director and deputy chairman.

The London Tavern was regarded at that time to be the pre-eminent dining location for gentlemen to meet for business in reserved apartments in the City and be served with the finest food and wine from many parts of the world, paid for on expenses.

Francis Bradley Dyne and James Edward Coleman were appointed auditors. Dyne and William Manclerc proposed that the directors be voted £500 for their past services and that the remuneration to the directors be £1,000 per annum. Other shareholders who spoke at the meeting were the Rev George Bridges Moore, a Sittingbourne magistrate, Lieutenant Colonel Raines, and Edward Knocker, whose family were long associated with the town and port of Dover.

What our visitors say

Here’s a selection of extracts from the visitors’ book at the Fleur museum:

- ❖ Brilliant visit, will be returning with the husband. *Faversham, 13 April*
- Fantastic visit: loads of things for us and our kids to do, and the volunteer guides were welcoming, friendly and knowledgeable. *Amazing. Killingworth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 15 April*

- ❖ Me parece excelente que tengan un museo de la historia de el pueble en especial que es un pueble ton antiguo. (What a beautiful and well put together local museum. Lots to see and gives an informative view of Faversham’s history across a small space.) *Costa Rica, 11 June*
- ❖ I never realised how big it was inside! Love it all. *Broadstairs, 2 July*
- ❖ A wonderful experience – a gem in the heart of the town. Be back next week. Probably missed so much. *Faversham, 12 July*
- ❖ It was very interesting and now I know a lot more about Faversham. *Barbados, 13 August*
- ❖ A brilliant museum. As an ex-history teacher, I thought that this was perfect. Clearly laid out. Possibilities for interaction. *London E4, 27 October*

Speak up and don’t stare

DOROTHY PERCIVAL

When Arthur was doing his National Service, he was given the role of teaching recruits touch typing and the basics of public speaking. He was a crack touch typist and so the first was no problem. The second role was probably an optimistic management add-on. He overcame the raw recruits’ resistance to QUERTY by asking them to type their rudest joke. Worked a treat.

I recently rediscovered the army days’ public speaking guidelines which over the years he has offered to those new to the ordeal and members may find it amusing and enlightening. He last updated them in 2014.

Body language Stand still, avoiding squeaky floorboards. Don’t wave your arms around. Don’t fiddle with anything in your pockets, jewellery, clothing or hair. Glance

Centenarian’s praise

STEPHEN RAYNER

This delightful letter arrived – in immaculate cursive script – from a reader in praise of our brief history book, which was published in August. The writer’s family has asked that we don’t use her name. Here is an excerpt:

Last month I turned 100 and I received *Faversham: A Brief History*, as a gift from my niece, who lives in King’s Road.

A most enjoyable book, I have read and re-read, could not leave it. From the beginning so much information, dates, maps, events. Excellent.

I was born in Forbes Road (well, not in the road!) at No 10, which was destroyed by a bomb in 1940. I went to school in Ethelbert Road, wed a Hampshire Regiment soldier in 1942 and so spent the war years in Faversham, moving to Hampshire in 1946, 71 years married.

However, I am still a “woman of



Kent” and return frequently, a two-hour-plus drive – yes, I still drive.

The history of my home town has always held my interest. Among my papers I have a copy of the letter from Lord Kitchener dated 8 September, 1914, which was sent to the Cotton Powder Co Ltd re their workforce. My grandfather must have had this copy, also a reply, signed by B. E. Todhunter and dated 10 September, 1914. It is very precious to me, although I am sure you have copies, too.

briefly back at slide to check you’re talking about the right one. Don’t admire it for ages, you’ve seen it before and your voice will disappear.

Speaking If you’re using a PA system make sure it’s switched on and you’re using it correctly. With or without one, speak more slowly and much louder than normally to the back row whether anyone is in it or not. After a few minutes or even before starting, do a “hands up if you can’t hear me” check. Don’t let your voice drop when looking down at notes. Look up and

sweep a gaze across the audience from time to time. Never just appear to be looking at or speaking to a particularly person. It can lead to all sorts of trouble.

Delivery Avoid any current irritating speech patterns or words best left to teenagers. (I’m sure that Arthur would now include “like” disease and Aussie-style upspeak (raising the pitch of the voice at the end of sentences). Leave a pause rather than an “um” and “er” filler. A bored audience will start to count them. Whole books could be written about a gripping

verbal style but, briefly, don't drone, do vary pitch and speed of delivery and sound as though you at least are interested in your subject.

Structure The pattern beloved of university lecturers has stood the test of time. Say what you're going to cover, get on with it, then recap briefly what you've done.

The end However riveting your delivery, an audience is always watching the time. About 10 minutes before official deadline look at your watch, say: "A few minutes left so a couple more points, and then time for a few questions." Knowing the end is nigh, the audience always relaxes!

Hope and pray you get someone chairing who can head off endless questions. With a bit of luck an old hand will work the watch trick and say "we have to make this the last question" before it goes on till closing time.

Whatever anyone does you're almost bound to get the groupie who will come up afterwards and buttonhole you with a *very special* question that has to be put to you in person. That person, invariably of the opposite sex, will walk round and round while you're unplugging things, trying not to injure yourself dismantling the projector stand. They will be *unstoppable* on their favourite research or whatever. Ask them to write it down and send it so that you can give it proper attention (they won't), invent an urgent phone call, or turn out the lights.

Black history talk

HAROLD GOODWIN

Marika Sherwood, a resident of Oare, and a long-time Faversham Society member,

To page 10 >>>



Started your Christmas shopping yet? Look no further than our second-hand bookshop in Preston Street, which has thousands of titles on offer.

Or how about browsing at the Visitor Information centre at 12 Market Place? We have Christmas cards and 2023 calendars, both showing the lovely views around and about Faversham.

We have an extensive range of new books, covering local history and more unusual publications about trains and transport, sailing, gunpowder, brewing, architecture as well as many other topics. Ideal Christmas gifts or stocking fillers! The VIC display, above, was made by the talented Lesley, a volunteer at the adjoining Charter Museum, using recycled Amazon boxes.

The ideal Christmas stocking filler!

Give a Walking with History gift voucher. It costs £5 and is available at the Visitor Information Centre at 12 Market Place.

It can be redeemed at any of our regular Saturday walks in 2023, (April to September), or on our Holiday Special Walk on Wednesday, 28 December.

This special walk starts at 10.30 from the Visitor Information Centre, 12 Market Place at 10.30.

■ Get your house guests out and about and have them enjoy

some of our rich history.

- Learn about Saints and Sinners that have lived here. Not only have Kings and Queens left their mark on our wonderful town, we also have had our share of ruffians.
- What has centuries of Boats, Bangs, Bricks and Beer left in their wake?
- This is a gift that will please all generations. Walks last about 90 minutes hours and are on level ground.

▶▶▶ From page 8

spoke in the Guildhall about black people in Faversham and east Kent for the past 2,000 years.

At the talk, on 19 November, Marika told how she found records of a skeleton of 10-year-old girl buried near Eastry in the seventh century. The girl's ancestry is one-third West African. In the early eighth century, Bishop (H)Adrian, from North Africa was buried in the Canterbury Monastery of Saints Peter and Paul.

And the *Faversham Institute Monthly Journal*, in February, 1908, reported: "Aug. 18, 1764. Eloped from his lodgings in Faversham on Monday the 6th inst. the Little West Indian, commonly known by the name of Little Sam, the Humbugger, or Little Noisy..."

Marika is keen to establish a group in Faversham to research the history of black peoples in the area. The term "black" encompasses people of African and Indian origin/descent, and east Kent extends from Faversham to Dover.

Marika was born in Hungary and has worked in New Guinea, studied in Australia, and in Harlem in the 1980s. She has been a senior research fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies since 1991. She has worked on the history of peoples of African origins in the UK since the Roman period; black political activism from the late 19th century; anti-imperialism, human rights and racism. She is still actively publishing. You can find her publications listed at tinyurl.com/3babyhyr

In October, she was awarded an honorary doctorate of history at the University of Chichester by the vice-chancellor, Professor Jane Longmore.



Dr Marika Sherwood with Professor Hakim Adi, who gave a talk last month at the Assembly Rooms, Faversham, on African and Caribbean people in Britain



This calendar image, by Brian Summers, features Santa climbing the pillar box in Middle Row

Calendars and cards

MARY RANSOM

Calendars for 2023 are still available at the Visitor Information Centre in Market Place priced at £5.75 each which represents excellent value for money and would make ideal Christmas presents.

They are also available from our website: favershamsociety.org/store (plus a

nominal postage charge) so there's no excuse if you are not local!

Christmas cards featuring our lovely Christmas tree in Market Place with the cinema in the background, are also available at 65p each or £3 for a pack of five.

Thank you for your continued support of the Faversham Society.

FAVERSHAM SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



The Faversham Society Newsletter is edited by Stephen Rayner, who is independent of the board. Contributions are welcomed, and should be received by midday on the 15th of the month before publication, preferably by email to favnewsletter@gmail.com. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Faversham Society or of the editor. All contributions will be edited and 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. Cheques should be made payable to the Faversham Society and sent to Jan West at 12 Market Place, Faversham. We also use BACS – ask for details.

DIGITAL EDITION

Please consider saving the society printing costs by receiving your newsletter by email. Contact membership@favershamsociety.org.

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FAVERSHAM SOCIETY OPENING



The **Visitor Information Centre** and book and gift shop at 12 Market Place is open 10am-4pm Monday to Saturday and 10am-1pm Sunday (opening hours may vary).
info@favershamsociety.org

The **Fleur de Lis museum** at 10-13 Preston Street, Faversham, is now open from 11am to 3pm on Fridays and Saturdays until 17 December. It will then shut until the February half-term.

The **Fleur de Lis second-hand bookshop** in Preston Street is open 10am-3.30pm, Monday to Saturday.

The **Chart Gunpowder Mills** in Nobel Court, off South Road, are now shut for winter.

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www.favershamsociety.org