

# Faversham Society Newsletter

October 2023

713



*The Faversham Society's 2024 calendars are now on sale.*

*This scene, on the July page, features Oyster Bay House and was taken by Lesley Sears*

*See page 3*

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## Chairman's column

HAROLD GOODWIN

My piece this month is devoted entirely to an urgent message compiled with the society's deputy chairman, David Melville, about the solar power station at Graveney

We believe that the battery storage system for the solar power station at Graveney represents a real danger to residents of Faversham and other communities around the Cleve Hill site between Faversham, Seasalter and Whitstable.

The specification and detail of the battery storage, or battery energy storage systems (BESS) to maximise its safety is an extremely complex matter depending on

recent science and emerging practical experience of incidents around the globe. The Faversham Society therefore strongly urges Swale Council to seek expert advice from a recognised authority on battery safety. Please write in and demand that Swale employs appropriate expertise in determining this planning application.

In 2019, the society was active in opposing the BESS on the grounds of the risk of fire or explosion for what then would be the largest such installation in the world. Since that time, on an almost monthly basis, there have been fires and explosions reported for lithium-ion batteries throughout the world.

The most recent (21 July, 2023) and very

# OPEN FAVERSHAM

## Let's do this again

HAROLD GOODWIN

*The first edition of Open Faversham was widely considered a success and there is strong support for it to become an annual fixture in the town calendar.*

*This year, we found that some of the events were overwhelmed. We did not expect to attract the numbers that we did and we have learnt a lot from experience. Next year, when Open Faversham will run from 17 to 25 August, there will be a booking system.*

*Open Faversham is a great opportunity to bring the cultural and natural heritage groups together and to jointly promote our town's rich heritage.*

*We hope that next year we shall be able to engage with more of the villages around Faversham and that more groups will engage with us in Open Faversham.*

*A meeting will be held at St Mary of Charity Parish Church at 7.30pm on Tuesday, 10 October, to discuss what we learnt from 2023 and begin to plan 2024.*

*We would like more people to add to the posts about the 2023 event – and if you would like to contribute, please send the text and a photograph to the address below.*

*[info@openfaversham.info](mailto:info@openfaversham.info)*

close to home were the electric car fires at Lydden Hill which, besides destroying two racing cars, engulfed a service truck and burnt down a pavilion. Kent Fire and Rescue Service attended with nine appliances and a bulk water carrier but firefighters were unable to put out the blaze. Racing was stopped and presumably this 105kWh fire had to be left to burn out. The Cleve Hill battery is 4,000 times bigger.

There have been about 65 fires and explosions reported in grid-scale BESS across the world to date, primarily in installations that were two years old or less. Of these, 38 have been in the past three years. Overall, these incidents may have represented up to about 6% of global installed capacity, suggesting a significant probability of incidents.

As well as fires, confirmed vapour cloud explosions (VCE) have taken place in Belgium, Arizona and Liverpool. There is a list of some of the recent grid-scale lithium-ion BESS fires and explosions in our submission last month to Swale Council.

Simple probability suggests that the chance of a failure somewhere in a BESS will increase with its size. This is reflected in a statement by an employee of DNV GL, a risk management company, in 2020 that: "Over the life of an [industrial] BESS at least one failure will occur. It is unrealistic to eliminate all chance of failure." The company is acknowledged as a world expert in the risk analysis of large lithium-ion battery systems.

According to Professor Paul Christensen of Newcastle University, one of the world's leading authorities on lithium-ion battery safety: "LFP [lithium iron phosphate]

To page 4 ►►►



## 2024 calendars on sale


MARY RANSOM

Calendars for 2024 are now on sale from the Visitor Information Centre at 12 Market Place. They are priced at £5.75, which is excellent value for money and would make ideal Christmas presents.

Calendars will also be available from our website, [favershamsociety.org/store](http://favershamsociety.org/store) (plus postage), so there's no excuse if you are not local!

Christmas cards are also available priced at 70p each or £3.25 for a pack of five.

And already we are planning for 2025 and need your photographs. To submit an image, showing the Faversham area at its best, please email them to [ransom@gmx.co.uk](mailto:ransom@gmx.co.uk) with your contact details and when and where the picture was taken. One image per email please and they need to be best quality in landscape format.

We can't pay you for your image, but you will receive a free calendar and your name will be mentioned. 

The September calendar view (above) is a delightful view by Brian Summers of a skiff on the creek. Below: the Christmas card by Mary Ransom



▶▶▶ From page 2

batteries have a worse risk [than the more common NMC type] of vapour cloud explosion simply because the cathode collapse leading to release of free oxygen internally results in delayed ignition.”

Water is the only extinguishant routinely recommended for lithium-ion battery fires. Large lithium-ion battery fires require very significant quantities of water and can reignite many times after the initial incident. Many BESS fires have taken days to bring under control and have required vast volumes of water to both cool the containers (rather than try to put the fires out directly) and, where necessary, to contain toxic fumes via fogging.

The developers appear to misunderstand this and are relying on the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) suggestion of a water-cooling system capable of delivering “no less than 1,900 litres per minute for at least two hours”. This would deliver a total of 228,000 litres. There is limited data on

the measurement of water volumes deployed in previous BESS fires. However, there are at least two well-documented incidents which indicate that the requirement is much larger and will be needed over many more hours, if not days: Moorabol, Victoria, Australia took 900,000 litres over six hours for a 4.25MWh fire. Drogenbos, Belgium took 1.4 million litres for a 1MWh fire.

These are very small BESS compared with the now proposed 448 MWh Cleve Hill BESS and the larger the BESS, the greater the risk of widespread propagation and the greater the risk of multiple simultaneous fires.

We welcome that fire-water run-off is highlighted in the NFCC guidance, but there should be greater emphasis on the toxicity of very large volumes of fire run-off water and the need for its storage and treatment, linking also to the environmental impacts section of the guidance. We were very concerned to hear from the developers that they propose to



**COME FOR COFFEE AND CAKE**

WE ARE MACMILLAN. CANCER SUPPORT

WORLD'S BIGGEST COFFEE MORNING

Take part in the **World's Biggest Coffee Morning!** It will be held at the Alexander Centre from noon to 4pm on Friday, 29 September. Money raised will go towards Macmillan Nurses, the cancer specialists.



collect the highly toxic fire-water and reuse it to augment the firefighting.

Finally, we note that there has been no mention of cyber-security threats. There have been warnings of threats to BESS similar to the DarkSide ransomware attack on the Colonial gas pipeline in the southeastern United States in May 2021. Scientists at the technical services provider TÜV Rheinland have shown that BESS are vulnerable to hacking and could be used to dump energy onto the grid or turn the BESS into a bomb.

Our full August submission is here: [favershamsociety.org/major-concerns-about-battery-safety](https://favershamsociety.org/major-concerns-about-battery-safety)

David Melville is working on a further submission, which we expect to publish before 28 September on our policy blog [favershamsociety.org/blog](https://favershamsociety.org/blog). Please do not delay – the opportunity for objection apparently closes on Friday 28 September.

Please write to Swale planners and express your view – this is of major concern to all residents of Faversham and our children. The objection is not to the solar power station, but to the battery. This is the reference you need to quote: 23/503812/SUB | Submission of Details to Discharge condition 3 – Battery Safety, Phase 2, land at Cleve Hill Graveney ME13 9EE.

## Barbs, lorries and teapots

PETER QUINCE

The Fleur Bookshop is never short of intriguing experiences. I have written previously about some of them, but by no means all. Our customers come from all corners of the globe (OK, a globe doesn't have corners, but maths was never one of my strongest subjects). They come from all social classes, from those who speak the

## FRIGHTFUL FAVERSHAM



GRAHAM SAMPLE

*I would like to invite you to one of my evening town walks. These are designed to be fun and introduce you to some of the less savoury sides of the wonderful town of Faversham. I will not just talk about some of the gruesome history but describe some of the ghostly stories that have their home in Faversham, said to be one of the most haunted towns in England.*

*Expect death, murder, poisoning, hanging, disease, ghostly sightings (human and animal), unexplained sounds, and tales to make you shiver.*

*You may never look at Faversham in the same way again!*

*The guided walks are on 31 October, and 8, 13, 24 and 28 November. They will take 60-90 minutes (if it gets too frightful you can leave early) and cost £5.*

*Booking is essential and can be made at the Visitor Information Centre or online at the address below. Please wear sensible shoes as paths are uneven and it will be dark!*

*It is not suitable for young children or those of a nervous disposition.*

*[FrightfulFaversham@gmail.com](mailto:FrightfulFaversham@gmail.com)  
[favershamsociety.org/live-events](https://favershamsociety.org/live-events)*

King's English (formerly the Queen's English) to those who seem to glory in a pseudo-Cockney accent (or even a real one).

It doesn't matter: bibliophiles come in all shapes and sizes and with amusingly varied intellects. We serve professors and pigeon-fanciers, wealthy patrons as well as the financially challenged. All are welcome into the rarefied atmosphere of the Fleur, both to buy books and, sometimes, to bring a little verbal magic in with them.

They don't even have to part with any cash, as long as they have a good story to tell (though we'd prefer a bit of cash too). After all, before we ever celebrated words on the page, we gloried in what is known as the oral tradition, or at least our largely illiterate forbears did.

But I digress – back to those intriguing experiences. Some time ago a man entered the shop, approached the desk and opened a conversation. It went something like this:

“Do you have a book on barbed wire, by any chance?”

“Barbed wire?” I must have looked gobsmacked.

“Yes,” he said. “Barbed wire.”

I thought: I'm quite sure we haven't. In fact, I can't imagine a book on that subject ever having been written. To be honest, I didn't know where to look, in more ways than one.

“Has there ever been a book published, you know, just on barbed wire?”

“Oh yes,” he replied. “In fact, in America there's a museum devoted to barbed wire. You wouldn't believe how many kinds there are.”

“But this isn't America, sir.” I must have sounded rather condescending. “Let's try the hobbies section.” It was clearly a long shot. “Or maybe trench warfare.”

“Nah,” the customer replied. “I'll look elsewhere.”

And with that he went. Was he kidding? I suddenly thought of the old TV programme *Candid Camera* and looked around for a hidden feed.

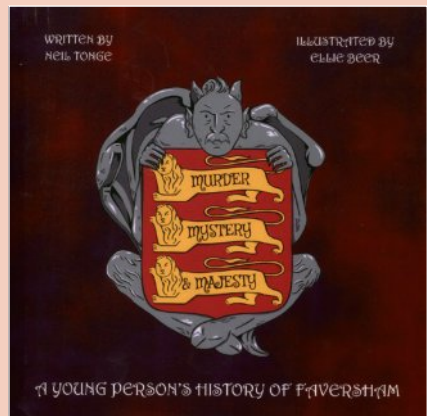
The man, of course, never came back.

A few years ago, in the old Fleur premises in Gatefield Lane, regularly, once a week, an elderly gentleman used to come in with a more or less empty shopping

## **A gruesome gift!**

***Don't forget our new book, Murder, Mystery & Majesty: A Young Person's History of Faversham, written by the Terrible Tudors author Neil Tonge and illustrated by Ellie Beer.***

***It uncovers some of the gruesome history of our town and is on sale for £6.99 at the Visitor Information Centre at 12 Market Place or buy online for postal delivery.***



trolley. Invariably he was with a younger person who was possibly a carer, but that was never established. He was a lovely old gent who used to browse for anything up to an hour, mumbling to himself, but he always bought several dozen books covering a variety of subjects: novels, plays, history, military, art, hobbies, children's picture books and so on.

He always went away smiling and highly satisfied.

One time he came in with his companion and then went out into Gatefield Lane where we always displayed a trolley of paperbacks. I took the opportunity to say to the assumed carer, "This fine elderly gentleman must be quite a bookworm; where on earth does he find the time to read a shopping trolley full of books every week?"

With a look of surprise his companion said, "Oh, he never actually reads them, he just likes collecting them. He's got thousands of books. Never reads a single one."

One female customer came in, having seen a rather nice a pink teapot in the window next to the impressive display of books. It was rather fetching, an old-fashioned design. I went and got it for her. I said to the lady, "Nice teapot."

"Yes, isn't it? How much is it?" she asked.

"Four pounds," I said. She'd not noticed the label stuck on it.

"Oh, that's fine. There you are." She handed over the cash and looked highly satisfied.

"We have lots of nice books here, don't you think?" I ventured to say.

She sort of frowned and looked about. "Oh, I never do any reading – but I do love drinking tea."

I wonder if she ever reads the tea leaves.

**CLIPPINGS FROM**  
**The Faversham Institute,**  
FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF  
**Literature, Science, and Art.**  
(Established 1864, and in union with the Society of Arts.)  
**MONTHLY JOURNAL.**

*On Wednesday Evening, February 8th, 1871,*  
**A LECTURE**  
WILL BE DELIVERED BY  
**MISS EMILY FAITHFULL,**  
ENTITLED.  
**"The Position and Claims of Women."**

**Nourishing London Stout.**  
Dr. Hassall's Report.  
"I have carefully analyzed BLOCKER'S well-known nourishing Stout, as obtained from 21, Duke Street, St. James's, and find it to be a genuine, most wholesome, and highly nourishing beverage, less heavy and consequently more digestible than London Stout in general."  
*Signed,*  
ARTHUR HILL HASSALL, M.D.

|                  |   |         |            |
|------------------|---|---------|------------|
| Reputed Pints -  | - | 3s.     | per dozen. |
| Imperial Pints - | - | 4s. 6d. | "          |
| " Quarts -       | - | 6s.     | "          |
| 9 Gallon Cask -  | - | 10s.    | "          |

AGENT FOR FAVERSHAM—  
**Mr. J. FAGG, MARKET PLACE.**

Our photographic expert, Chris Wootton, has been thumbing through the pages of the Faversham Institute Journal in the society's vast archive and found these reports.

In 1871, Miss Emily Faithfull (a forebear of Marianne, perhaps?) was lecturing on the position and claims of women. Here also – date unknown – is an ad for Nourishing London Stout (a favourite of the editor). Reputed pint? Doesn't sound too encouraging, does it?

I recall that a gentleman came into the bookshop once, marched straight up to the counter and, without more ado, said: "Lorries."

"Lorries?" I was taken aback.

"Yes, lorries. You know, those big things with lots of wheels and ..."

"I know what lorries are, sir," I answered knowingly.

"Good. Well, have you got any books on them?"

"Of course." (This was easier than barbed wire.) "Over here in the transport section."

"Excellent!" he exclaimed. He selected one and brought it to the counter. "This one'll do, thank you."

"Okay. That'll be two pounds exactly. Keen on lorries, are you, sir?"

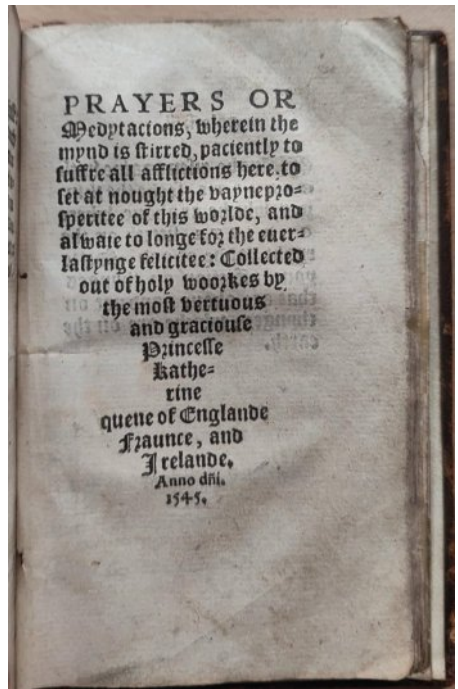
"Oh yeah, mad about them. I've got about 50 books on lorries but another one won't do any harm. I've never driven one, mind."

He left smiling. Another satisfied customer.

The Fleur Bookshop provides not only inspiring volumes (and a few teapots) but a wealth of experiences for the volunteers, myself included.

I am always amazed by the characters who come into the shop, browse, chat, regale us with bookish anecdotes of their own, buy contemporary novels, classics, vintage books, local books, comic books, art books, signed books, on every subject one can imagine.

Oh, and I don't mind posh accents, Cockney accents, Irish accents, American accents, and even a bit of creative mumbling; just so long as all those enthusiasts value the printed word, accompanied perhaps by a cup of tea – but nowhere near the dreaded barbed wire.



*Title page of the Katherine Parr prayer book, the first British book to have a female author*

## Justin's book talk

HAROLD GOODWIN

I have received this anonymous piece in praise of the medieval book guru Justin Croft, who lives in Faversham, and his talk about the book of prayers translated by Queen Katherine Parr – Henry VIII's sixth and final wife – in 1544.

The book's existence was revealed exclusively in the Faversham Society Newsletter's August issue. Our correspondent writes:

"Justin brought the discovery of Katherine Parr's 16th-century book to life at his talks given in St Mary of Charity Parish Church during Open Faversham Week.



“The rare book written by her was discovered by an eagle-eyed volunteer at the Fleur de Lis Museum. This book - in fact three books - was shown to Justin who immediately knew this was a major find.

“Justin’s talks were revealing, bringing to life the times of Katherine and her court. He totally engaged his audience in the history of that period with clear and concise details.

“Justin chose to give three talks in all and each audience was mesmerised by his carefully crafted words. Without notes he spoke clearly without a microphone so those of us who have a hearing loss could understand every word in what were quite difficult acoustics.

“Our grateful thanks to Justin and everyone who was involved in the discovery of these books and their unique presentation.”



## Accessorise it! Exhibition traces

JENNIFER SHIPMAN

I made a new friend the other day, thanks to our mutual admiration of one another's scarves: beautiful silk squares that you drape round your neck, tuck into a jacket collar or tie onto the handle of your handbag, just in case it is needed. Most of all we like them because they add a dash of colour and wit to your outfit.

However, the time seems to have passed for some accessories. At the Fleur Museum we have many examples of pre-loved items. Some we want to immortalise, such as parasols and hand muffs.

Others you may not think have dropped out of use but when did you last

use or see one? Waistcoats, for example. They are not just for weddings.

And ties – how many men wear them regularly now? We have exhibited ties previously – you'll remember, I'm sure, Jack Salmon's collection dating from the late 1950s to the 1970s. But do you remember how in the early 1980s women wore statement ties too? These quickly changed to floppy bows at the neck of a shirt. At the same time we were carrying handbags that were more like briefcases and jackets with padded shoulders.

There are a few straw hats about on men and women on sunny days. Did you know you used to be able to tell a man's position in society by his hat? Top hats for top people, bowlers for middle



## the history of fashion's fripperies

management and a flat cap for the rest of male society. A felt fedora was the height of sophistication in the 1930s until the early 1950s but now it is some type of software! (Editor's note: I'll have you know I wear a fedora in the winter.)

We have some beautiful fans made of lace and feathers and other more basic ones that were given away in the early days of continental travel to advertise a hotel or restaurant. How many times have you wished you could pull one out on a hot day? That is something we could all still be carrying.

Where have belts gone? There are still belt loops on our jeans but rarely a belt through them. So, tuck your T-shirt in and thread in a belt. No belt? Use a bright

scarf. Both are obtainable from a second-hand shop if you haven't got one tucked away in a drawer.

Something we have not displayed before is jewellery. We have a few treasures tucked away in the society vaults: nothing from recent years, mainly late 1800s through to the 1900s, but some interesting pieces nevertheless.

Why don't you reach for a long-forgotten object and give it an airing? The worst thing that could happen is that you will be noticed. Pin a brooch on your beanie hat – you could make a new friend.

And do come and see what we have brought down from the costume attic this time.



## 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](mailto:favnewsletter@gmail.com). Views expressed here 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](mailto:membership@favershamsociety.org).

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## FAVERSHAM SOCIETY OPENING



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

The **Fleur de Lis museum** at 10-13 Preston Street, Faversham, is usually open on Fridays and Saturdays from 11am to 3pm.

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

The **Chart Gunpowder Mills** in Nobel Court, off South Road, Faversham, are now open on Saturdays and Sundays from 2pm to 5pm.

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[www.favershamsociety.org](http://www.favershamsociety.org)