

# Faversham Society Newsletter

February 2024

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## Chairman's column

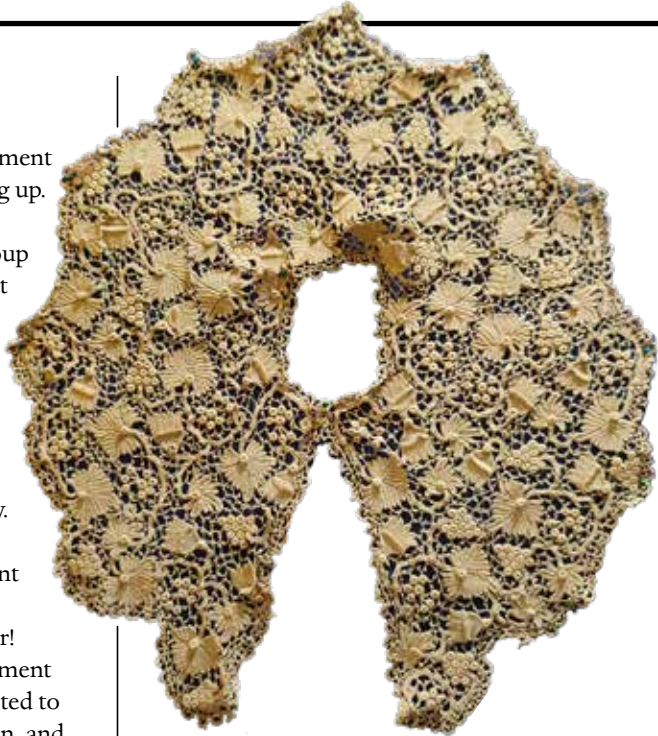
HAROLD GOODWIN

The work of the society's Environment and Planning Committee is hotting up. Swale Council and the Faversham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group have responded to the independent examiner's questions and we now await his comments on the acceptability of the neighbourhood plan for Faversham. He has to determine whether or not the plan is sound and compliant with national policy.

Then Swale councillors must determine whether they are content with the plan. And then it goes to referendum. The sooner, the better!

Many members of the Environment and Planning Committee contributed to developing the neighbourhood plan, and we played a significant part, through the Faversham Future Forum, in encouraging the town council to undertake a neighbourhood plan's development. The neighbourhood plan will have legal status, and Swale planners will have to pay heed to it.

We have grave concerns about the battery safety management plan for the Cleve Hill Solar installation at Graveney. The issues we have been raising for some time have not been addressed by the independent consultant appointed by Swale Council to advise on whether to approve the developer's proposal.



**A close-up of one of the intricate lace exhibits that will shortly go on show at the Fleur Gallery in Preston Street**

**See pages 2-3**

Batteries catch fire and are hazardous. Our concerns are restated in the barrister's letter: explosion, the possibility of multiple simultaneous fires and the risk of release of potentially lethal toxic fumes, which would affect both Graveney and Faversham depending on weather conditions. Our

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# Lace, a treasure as valued as jewels and silk

JENNIFER SHIPMAN

We all know what lace looks like. But have you ever thought about what it is, other than a series of holes joined together with thread?

Several large boxes of lace, donated to the museum by a local lace-maker and collector, are stored in our costume attic and, when the Fleur museum reopens on 9 February, we shall mount an exhibition to allow visitors to learn more about this ancient and skilled craft.

In the 1500s, lace was embroidery on linen undergarments. The threads of the linen fabric were pulled together or even cut away then oversewn with black thread, to create a decorative contrast. About the same time crochet, made with a hook and a single continuous linen thread, was in vogue in Europe. Indeed, Queen Elizabeth I ordered six caps of knot work with cheyne stitch for her ladies.

In examples of needlepoint from the late 1500s, the pattern was drawn on parchment, with pins pricking out the design and a main thread of linen following the pattern. This, of course, took time and lace pieces were valued as much as jewellery and silk fabric.

Then came bobbin lace, which is the type most of us think of when lace is mentioned. In this, bobbins are used in a form of weaving with multiple threads – as many as 1,200 have been known – with a lap pillow to hold the pins, around which the linen thread is woven.

King Charles I prohibited the import of



foreign lace, the Puritans discouraged the wearing of it, and then Charles II continued his father's promotion of home-made lace, although foreign lace was smuggled into the country.

The fashion for wigs meant the lace collar died out and was replaced by a lace-trimmed cravat, along with lace



Net lace (opposite page) and tape lace (left). The fine example on the front page is Irish lace

handkerchiefs and beautiful fans, trimming for gloves and nightcaps.

King William III continued the ban on imported lace and Flanders, where most of the finest bobbin lace was made, retaliated by banning English wool. This caused such distress to our wool trade that in 1699 the lace ban was repealed.

Now lace was seen and worn everywhere, and even soldiers going off to war had lace cravats. Pickpockets snatched lace rather than jewels, which could be cheap imitations and often were.


With the Huguenots fleeing from France to Britain, our lacemaking improved greatly. Towards the end of George II's reign, silk lace was appearing but still the majority were linen threads.

Tape lace of a kind was produced during the 1700s in Italy but Devon improved the tape, made it of an even width, easier to fold and stretch into scroll and flowers. However, this glorious era of lace through Europe crashed with the French Revolution in 1789. Gowns became simple, made of fine muslin or silk gauze.

Then came the age of machine lace. With the Great Exhibition of 1851 industry took great leaps forward.

New laces continued to be invented. In the 1800s came chemical lace from central Europe: machine-embroidered patterns were made on silk fabric and then chlorine or caustic soda was used to dissolve the silk, leaving the embroidery.

However, from 1920 lace went into a steep decline from which it is only just beginning to recover. In the late 1920s came Broderie Anglaise, where the pattern is printed on to firm cotton material, holes are punched out then oversewn by machine for the commercial market. Great quantities could be produced to any width and length.

Let us hope that the efforts of modern lace-makers can preserve these skills. 

▶▶▶ From page 1

barrister has raised a series of issues about the procedure that has been used by Swale, the independence and expertise of the expert and the quality and completeness of the report. You can access our barrister's letter from the policy blog on our website.

The headline on the front page of the Faversham News on 11 January, Official bid in for Duchy estate, informed us that the full planning application is in and that once it is validated, a technical process, it will be posted on the planning portal and the Faversham Society will need to comment and determine its position on the plans.

The fourth major strand of our work will be on the Swale Local Plan, which is now being developed at pace. The fifth is the conservation area appraisal in which we are now engaged.

This volume of work will stretch the volunteers active in the Environment and Planning Committee, which advises the board. If you have relevant skills and are willing to contribute to this part of the society's work, please get in touch.

*chair@favershamsociety.org*

## New year, new members

LEIGH ALLISON

We need new members, to help keep up with the work that the Faversham Society does. There seems to be an ever-growing list of areas to work in!

Our loyal members are our best resource — so, please, speak to your neighbours, friends and family and encourage them to join. You can be as active as you want to be, but the more support we have, the more we can achieve.

It's easy to join – either online at [favershamsociety.org/join-society](mailto:favershamsociety.org/join-society) or there are

forms available at the Visitor Information Centre at 12 Market Place.

As well as supporting the work of the society, new members receive a welcome pack and the chance to join a free guided town walk. This year we are hoping to launch a programme of talks that will be free for Faversham Society members.

Annual membership starts at £12 or £20 for a couple.

So, please spread the word! Any queries to [membership@favershamsociety.org](mailto:membership@favershamsociety.org)

## Open Faversham ...

HAROLD GOODWIN

This year's Open Faversham taking place from 17 to 25 August and the town council is joining the Friends of St Mary of Charity and the Faversham Society to promote this celebration of our town's rich heritage.

Last year, Throwley joined the fun and this year we plan to encourage more of the villages around Faversham to take part. Likely themes include Shakespeare in Faversham, the 80th anniversary of D-Day and the demise of the Faversham Borough Council in 1974.

If you have ideas or know of individuals or groups who would like to be part of Open Faversham this year, please encourage them to get involved.

## ... and Open Gardens

LEIGH ALLISON

The Faversham Open Gardens scheme is back this year, on Sunday, 30 June, and we have already started planning this popular event.

So, if you love your garden and are happy to open it to visitors for one busy day, please get in touch with us at the email address below.

Back gardens and front gardens in



homes old and new are all welcome. The only criteria are that you're proud of your garden, there's access to it other than through your house, it is ideally walkable from Market Place, Faversham, and you ensure that your insurance company is happy for you to allow visitors for one day. We don't select gardens but are very happy to visit you and give any advice and help you may need to make a decision.

[favershamopengardens@gmail.com](mailto:favershamopengardens@gmail.com)

## Chalk streams neglected

Matthew Hatchwell, a member of the society board and the Environment and Planning Committee, has written for Faversham Life about the state of our chalk streams.

"The Westbrook and Cooksditch are just two of the dozen or more streams that flow from the underground chalk of the North Kent Downs into the Thames Estuary along this stretch of the coast between Graveney and Bapchild," he says. We have 12 of the 325 chalk streams in the world.

"As a priority habitat in the UK, chalk streams should be treasured and protected. That is the goal of local voluntary groups like the Friends of the Westbrook and Stonebridge Pond and Friends of Cooksditch.

"The reality, however, is that these rare ecosystems have been badly neglected and mistreated for decades. Water quality is poor in both Cooksditch and the Westbrook as the result of combined sewage outflows that discharge raw sewage into these precious environments whenever heavy rain threatens to overwhelm the outdated infrastructure."

More details on the link below.

[favershamlife.org/faversham-chalk-streams](http://favershamlife.org/faversham-chalk-streams)

## Celebration of lutenist

A celebration of the life of John Wilson of Faversham, the great English lutenist and song composer, will be held at St Mary of Charity Parish Church at 7pm on Saturday, 25 May.

Wilson, born 1595, died in 1674 and this year is therefore the 350th anniversary of his death. He had moved to London by 1614 and became the principal composer for the King's Men. He knew Shakespeare and he set many of the bard's stage songs to music, along with those of his successor, John Fletcher. He is buried in Westminster Abbey.

The concert will be performed by the Baroque music ensemble Galliarda, with a programme devised and introduced by Dr Matthew Spring, and performed with voices, viol, lute and recorder. The concert brings together Wilson's songs and vocal works from all periods of his life, many from the stage and masque productions in which he appeared.

Galliarda will also perform works and pieces by Wilson's close friends and associates, Robert Johnson, Nicholas Lanier, Henry Lawes, John Jenkins and Matthew Locke.

Tickets cost £10 and are available from the address below.

[openfaversham.info](http://openfaversham.info)

## Date for 2024 AGM

JAN WEST

The 2024 annual general meeting of the Faversham Society will be held at the Assembly Rooms, Preston Street, at 7pm on 12 June.

# Have you got what it takes to

**KATIE BEGG**

Harold Goodwin, who now chairs the Faversham Society, has announced that he will retire from this role at our next annual general meeting, which is due to take place on 12 June.

The society is therefore seeking expressions of interest from any member who is considering seeking nomination for chair of the society. We have provided the below role specification to aid people in considering whether to seek nomination, and a small group of existing trustees will be available to meet anyone interested in the role.

If you would like to learn more about the role of chairing the society, or express interest in being nominated for this position, in the first instance please contact me, Katie Begg, at [kfuller82@hotmail.com](mailto:kfuller82@hotmail.com). I am a society trustee.

## **Role specification**

The Articles of Association of the Faversham Society (Article 17) state that the “chair and vice-chair of the society shall be elected annually, from the elected directors and by a majority vote of the members, at the annual general meeting.”

The purpose of the chair is to provide leadership in particular of the board of trustees and of the executive committee to which the board has delegated the responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the Faversham Society.

Our president, Richard Oldfield, plays an important role in our external communications and at the AGMs and major public meetings.



**Books, visitors and history: just a few of the society's facets led from the chair**

## **Responsibilities**

- ◆ Provide leadership and oversight of all aspects of the work of the Faversham Society and to engage and enthuse its many volunteers.
- ◆ Drive the society's new strategy.
- ◆ Act as an effective spokesperson and ambassador for the society working with our president.
- ◆ Develop and maintain effective working relationships with external partners and stakeholders as necessary.
- ◆ Chair the Faversham Society board of

# chair the Faversham Society?




trustees effectively, including ensuring financial probity of all transactions, good governance, compliance with statutory requirements, and adherence of activity with the aims and objectives of the organisation.

- ◆ Present an overview of the society's work at the society annual general meeting.
- ◆ Chair the Faversham Society's executive committee, which manages the society's activities and reports to the board of trustees.
- ◆ Support the executive committee management group chairs to manage

activities and engaged volunteers to effectively deliver the society's work, and identify successors for committee chairs should the need arise.

- ◆ Recruit new trustees and support recruitment of new volunteers when necessary to provide stability within the society.
- ◆ Work with the society's trustees to ensure implementation of decisions made by the board and executive committee.
- ◆ The board of the Faversham Society meets on a quarterly basis, via Zoom, and meetings take place in January, April, July and October.
- ◆ The executive committee of the society meets on a more ad hoc basis either online or in person, approximately once per month.

## Personal skills

- ◆ Strong commitment to the goals of the Faversham Society.
- ◆ Experience managing, motivating and inspiring volunteers within a community or charitable organisation.
- ◆ Experience of stakeholder relationship and partnership building.
- ◆ Experience or interest in community-led campaigning.
- ◆ Deep personal or professional interest in the future of Faversham, and conservation and heritage issues.
- ◆ Strong inter-personal skills.
- ◆ Good presentation skills and confidence in chairing meetings
- ◆ Confidence in financial and operational organisational management 

## 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 shut until 9 February and will then open Fridays and Saturdays. Please see website for additional opening days.

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 closed for winter and will re-open in April.

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The Faversham Society is registered charity No1135262 and a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales No 7112241.  
[www.favershamsociety.org](http://www.favershamsociety.org)