



# Emsworth Maritime & Historical Trust

President: The Rt Hon Lord Willetts of Havant  
Registered Charity No. 1204910

## Emsworth Museum

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# *The Emsworth Echo*

**A Special 50th Anniversary Edition about Local History and the Trust**

**Issue No. 57 November 2025**

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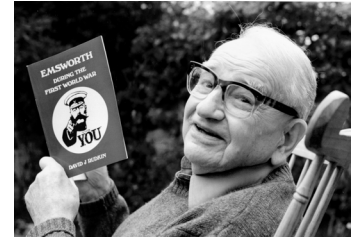
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**Emsworth Maritime & Historical Trust**  
**celebrates 50 years since its inception**



*Above: The Earl of Bessborough opening the Museum in 1988  
President 1988-1993*



*Margaret Rule  
President 1994-2015*



*David, Lord Willetts of Havant  
President 2015 –*

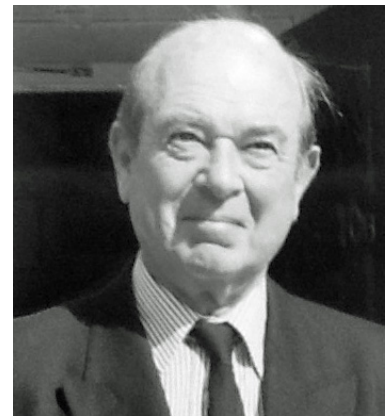
*Above: Founder David Rudkin  
Chairman 1975-1990*



*Michael Kennett  
Chairman 1990-1993*



*Strahan Soames  
Chairman 1994-1997*



*Gerry Williams  
Chairman 1997-2013*



*Tony (W.A.M.) Stimson  
Chairman 2013-2017*



*Margaret Rogers  
Acting Chairman 2017-2019*



*Trevor Davies  
Chairman 2019 –*



## The Trust and The Museum

by President,  
David, Lord Willetts of Havant

I always enjoy reading the Trust’s newsletter. It is full of interesting material about Emsworth’s history, just like the Museum itself. And it is a particular pleasure to contribute to this edition celebrating 50 years since the creation of the Trust in 1975.

Local history is sustained by local people. Emsworth Museum is a wonderful example of this. Local people find and contribute the objects – and record the memories – which add up to an understanding of the place we live. Local people are also the volunteers who help maintain and preserve these collections. They also provide stewards and do all the record keeping and accounts necessary for a properly run charity. The Trust can celebrate its fiftieth birthday because of all these volunteers – their work over the years is greatly appreciated.

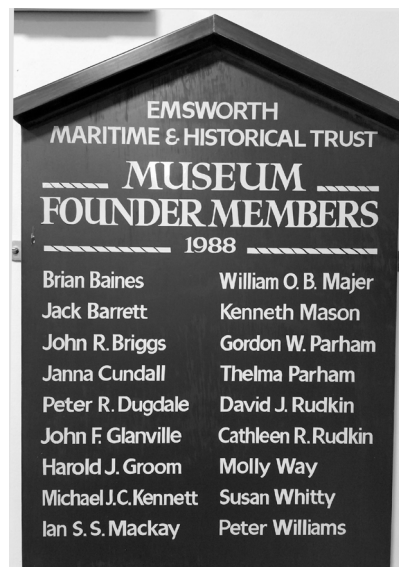
The Trust was initially set up to try to preserve one of Emsworth’s original oyster boats. That attempt to preserve Echo II sadly failed (though a subsequent preservation of the Terror has of course been a great success). But that first campaign to save Echo II led to the creation of the Trust to ensure local history was protected. It developed into the maintenance and growth of a collection which has been sustained in the old Emsworth council offices above the fire station since 1988.

People in Emsworth know that if they find something of historical interest they can bring it in. It could be an old hat under the floorboards. (Two rare eighteenth-century tricorne hats from a house in Queen Street are on display.) It could be an old brick at the bottom of the garden – such as one from the Rowlands Castle brickworks and the same shape and size as the bricks decorating the windows of the Museum.

It could be local fishermen finding stuff in their fishing nets. (That is the basis of a wonderful collection of old barnacle-encrusted wine bottles.) It was fishermen who found the oldest objects in the Museum. There is a neolithic flint tool from about 5000 years BCE but far more extraordinary a palaeolithic flint from perhaps 500,000 years BCE, preceding the evolution of homo sapiens.

The efforts of volunteers can be more organised as well. It was volunteers who did the hard work of excavating the Warblington Roman villa. They found another of the oldest objects in the Museum – part of a Roman amphora for transporting wine dating back to about 50 years BCE. That means it precedes the Roman invasion. The amphora was made near Naples. It shows that we were already importing wine from Italy 2000 years ago – something to think of when buying your Pinot Grigio at the Co-op or elsewhere.

Volunteers with their own distinctive areas of expertise can apply it to enhance our understanding of the artefacts and



documents too. There is a photo of the old Victoria cottage hospital, now become the local GP practice. It shows the terrace on the first floor with an awning over it. A volunteer who is a retired radiologist identified that it was for treating the TB patients.

Our volunteers with up-to-date technological expertise and software skills contribute to the displays in other ways. They help ensure the explanations around the displays are clear, modern and accessible. They have subtly re-designed the motif for the Museum.

The Museum shows how important the oyster industry was for the people of Emsworth. But then it all came to a shuddering end in 1902 when there was oyster poisoning at a civic banquet and two people died. That was the end of industry though it is reviving in different form now.

P G Wodehouse heard about the incident at the time and shortly after moved down to Emsworth to live at the prep school on the site of what is now Emsworth House, later moving to Record Road. The Museum does an excellent job of showing the connection between Wodehouse and this change in Emsworth's fortunes. He wrote some extra verses for the Walrus and the Carpenter by Lewis Carroll to include oyster poisoning. That link was discovered because of a visit to our Museum by an expert on Lewis Carroll.

Many local place names appear as characters in Wodehouse novels. The map in the Museum traces the connections between local places and his novels. The best known is of course Lord Emsworth. When I was appointed to the House of Lords, I had to go to the Garter King of Arms to agree the title I should take. Titles are often linked to places and I was proud to have Emsworth, where my parents lived, in my former constituency. I asked about perhaps taking the title 'Lord Emsworth'. The College of Arms explained very sternly that "the Queen does not approve of jocular titles". So I have ended up as Lord Willetts of Havant. But I can still take great pride in serving as President of this excellent Museum and Trust.

*During a recent visit to the Museum, David left a note in the visitors' book*

**"Always great to visit here. Every year it is refreshed, updated, and better presented. Many thanks to all the volunteers who make it possible."**



*Left: Displaying an artefact*



*Below: Discussing an exhibition*



*Left: In the office*



*Below: Manning the reception desk*



*Left: Fundraising*



*Below: Social activities*

# Tribute to David Jonathan Rudkin

by James David Rudkin

*On the occasion of the Trust's 25th anniversary, David Rudkin's son, also David, was invited to say a few words about its founder, David Rudkin, from the personal perspective of a son.*

*This speech was adapted for the 30th anniversary of the Trust in 2005 and a shortened version is republished here on the occasion of the 50th anniversary.*



The Museum as we see it now is manifestly a flourishing enterprise, multifarious, ambitious and of significance in the local community; but it had its beginnings in something very rough and simple – way back in the mid 1970s the quest for somewhere to house a few pieces of wood. But these were no ordinary pieces of wood. They were all that it had been possible to save of a craft that never sailed, and had come to be known as Echo II, for she had been designed as a sister to the Echo herself, queen of the Emsworth oyster fleet. Where 'queen' Echo's fate was to be destroyed by fire in the early 1960s, the fate of her sister, Echo II had been, if anything, more pitiful.

Launched around 1903, she was never completed beyond the rigging stage, and lay rotting away for some 70 years, tied up to the so-called ARK, the oyster storage tank, in the Emsworth fairway. Today, the Museum houses what few fragments of Echo II survive, and that it does so, by common consent is thanks mainly to my father – though he was helped by many individuals of good will. For instance, our Secretary Dorothy Bone remembers keeping for years a section of mast in her back garden. And I remember bits and pieces of the timbers around my father's house in Westbourne. It is not for me to claim that my father was an inspirational man, but I may fairly describe him as a persistent man. It is reasonable to say that he nagged this Museum into existence. So this is an appropriate occasion on which to write a few words about him.

As we stand already five years into the 21st century, it shocks me somewhat to reflect

that it's almost a century itself since my father was born. The records give his place and year of birth as Bosham, 1907. He came from a different world. And it's a melancholy reflection too that in the nature of things there are now among us fewer and fewer who knew him. Did I know him? Do sons know their fathers? It's a common human experience that we don't come to know our parents until very late; often, we've left it too late. I was fortunate; though I do have to be honest and acknowledge that, when I was a younger man, mine was not a good relationship with my father. I felt a great difference between us, a distance. But, in his later years, I did begin to come to know him as a man.

You would expect him, as a non-conformist pastor, to be pastorally skilled – and he was good with people, equally genuine with people of high station and humble. And there was a jocular character to him; he had the clergyman's line in appalling jokes – Where in the Bible is the game of cricket played? Acts II xiv, where "Peter stood up with the eleven and was bold"...

After his first wife died, Cathy's mother and mine, he retired. He had, on his return from Texas, for some 20 years or so been a Free Church minister, then a schoolmaster in Birmingham, and on his retirement he came back down here, to the landscape of his own beginnings. Here he was to enjoy some years of happiness with his second wife, until she too was tragically taken. But, if I say he retired, I can mean that only in a formal sense. In fact, for him a new career – careers indeed – began. First, there were

his endeavours to save Echo II, of which, as I have said, only a few fragments was he able to preserve. But those few pieces of her timber began more than this Museum. He had first set out in professional life as a qualified carpenter. He became an accomplished model-maker, as you can see from his model of the original Echo in the main room of the Museum. And he was always a skilled draughtsman and water-colourist too. But, in his 70s, he found himself mastering yet another skill, that of a writer. For, side by side with his efforts to save Echo II, he was researching and writing a book on other aspects of Old Emsworth that were then beginning to disappear, under new road-schemes and building developments. This book, *The Hermitage and the Slipper*, published in 1974, was to prove the first of a sequence of seven such books that he would write, the 'Emsworth Series', on one or other aspect of local geography or history. *The Hermitage and the Slipper* would later fall for a long time out of print, and I decided, for the 25th anniversary of its original publication to re-edit it and arrange for its re-printing by St Richard's Press. (Subsequently, I have done so.)

And, as though that were not enough occupation for him – the research, collection and collation of drawings, photographs, maps and the anecdotal material for these seven books, the writing of them and seeing them through publication and into sale – to the very last his horizons were expanding. One of my more touching possessions is his Hebrew primer. In his last years, he began teaching himself the language of the Old Testament too. The page he had reached in it is bookmarked still with a leaf of exercise paper, on which he had been practising various forms of Hebrew script in the last days of his life.

There's an old Latin quotation: *Si monumentum requiris, circumspice*. If you're looking for the memorial, look around you. In Emsworth itself we see his visible legacy: the Museum, and in bookshop windows the sequence of his Emsworth Series, now

an invaluable source for those researching into local social history. To end on a forward-looking note, I have with St Richard's Press begun the process of preparing a second edition of the last of these still needing to be brought back into print – *Emsworth: Echoes of the Past* – which I intend to have ready and available in time for the opening of the Museum, Easter 2005, the Trust's 30th anniversary year.

*Today, all the books in the Emsworth Series are still in print and can be purchased either in the Museum or from Bookends of Emsworth.*

## Diary Dates

### Volunteer Thank You Party

Thursday afternoon,  
January 29th, at the  
Parish Church Hall

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### Winter 2026 Talk

Talk tickets available at £5 each  
from Bookends of Emsworth.  
Cash only.

February 5th Global Wars and  
Chaos (How did we get there  
and what's the solution?)

by Field Marshal The Lord  
Richards of Herstmonceux

Venue: Baptist Church Hall,  
North Street, Emsworth

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Emsworth Museum  
will  
reopen for the 2026 season  
on  
Good Friday, 3rd April

## Memories by Christine Bury

*With contributions from Dorothy Bone, Wendy Bright and Clive Pugh, Margaret Rogers, Cathy Rudkin, John Saunders and Tony Stimson. My thanks to all of them for sharing their memories of Museum life and the Emsworth Maritime & Historical Trust (EMHT).*

### Cathy Rudkin

Cathy's Emsworth home and garden are full of her father David's memorabilia. The original printer on which the first letterheads and newsletter were published is in the garden shed. Her dad acted as a compositor, painstakingly assembling the metal characters. No word processors then, no professional printers such as we use today.

David lived in Thorney Road as a child. His mother was an eloquent and fiery preacher in the tin tabernacle opposite the house. David returned to Emsworth on retirement and his vision became to put Emsworth back on the map – we had oysters, the railway, seafarers, fishermen, entrepreneurs like J D Foster and Jack Kennett, and most importantly we built ships. There were ropemakers, carpenters etc. all with skills that he wanted to preserve. There was a great story to tell.

Cathy recalls both him and Jack Barrett in retirement digging in the mud near the Thorney side of Emsworth Marina looking for an artefact that David was sure they would find, even if he did not know what they would find. After digging and digging they uncovered a small donkey engine.

*Celebrating the 25th anniversary of the opening of the Museum are (from left to right) Cathy Rudkin, Dorothy Bone, Margaret Rule and Tony Stimson*



*David Rudkin by the river Ems*

David thought it essential that the Museum be run by volunteers who would invest both time and effort into making it a success. Cathy remembers the generosity of spirit shown by the people of Emsworth in making the Museum the success it is today.

Cathy moved permanently from Birmingham to Emsworth after her father died in January 1995. She became a regular steward. Cathy loved meeting Museum visitors and hearing their stories.

### John Saunders

John, our longest serving EMHT member, was at that very first meeting in Admiral Gick's offices in the marina where the Emsworth Maritime Trust was mooted. He had been bought along by his friend Bill Majer. A further meeting was convened in David Rudkin's home to draft the new constitution. John's expertise as a bank manager along with that of Harold Groom who had recently helped set up a constitution for the Bosmere 100 Society, a local conservation group, proved invaluable. John became the first treasurer, a position he held until 1989.

He recalls a time from those early days when a Director of the Hampshire Museums Service came to give them some advice about setting up an Emsworth Museum. His advice, 'not here, perfectly good museum in Havant' and he walked out.

The assembled group were determined to prove him wrong. 'Come hell or high water' they would establish a museum.

### **Dorothy Bone**

The land alongside Emsworth Marina was a good source of artefacts which were usually begged, borrowed or given to the newly formed Museum. Dorothy remembers workmen excavating a bank on the edge of the Marina discovering a long wooden mast in the mud.

David Rudkin came to have a look and decided that it was probably a mast from one of J D Foster's ships either Echo or Echo II. Noel Pycroft used some of his equipment to lift the mast and a section was removed and kept in the driveway of Dorothy's home for a number of years until the Museum opened in 1988. Members of the Trust stored many items destined for the Museum in their garden sheds.

Fundraising was a vital activity in those early years. Dorothy remembers standing outside the old post office with a collecting tin encouraging Emsworthians to give generously. The specially-made tins were designed by Keith Stoneman and many members rattled their tins around the town to encourage donations from passers-by. There were fundraising dinners, bric-a-brac sales and special events. One such event was a large public auction held in the old Baptist Church Hall in 1988 just before the Museum opened. Harold Groom was the auctioneer and John Saunders the treasurer.



*Preparing for the public auction in 1988*



*Getting ready for the Museum opening are, from the left, David Rudkin, Michael Kennett and Dorothy Bone*

Legacies have also helped keep the Museum solvent and the Laurence Mountford bequest enabled the refurbishment of the rooms. Prior to the opening up of the David Rudkin Room and the Archive/Research Room, the David Rudkin Room was self contained and was used as a meeting room. Margaret Rule and the Mary Rose committee used to have meetings there. The office of Tessa Daines, the then administrator, was in the Archive Room.

Volunteers in those early days were enthusiastic but unprofessional. They were part of the wartime make do and mend generation.

Dorothy became Honorary Secretary to the Trust in 1982, a position that she still holds. She was awarded the BEM in 2022 in recognition of her services to both the Trust and the Stroke Club.

### **Margaret Rogers**

Margaret loved to talk to people. She found that people wanted to tell you their stories. One of the first oral history recordings that she and Sylvia Courtnage did was about the WWII incendiary bomb that fell in Bath Road.

It was felt that there was a need to capture stories before people moved away or died.

*Continued on page 11*



## Michael Kennett

by Richard Kennett

My father Michael Kennett was a proud Emsworthian. He loved the village (as it was) and town (that it became), and one of his proudest achievements was playing a significant leading role in the creation of our much-loved Emsworth Museum.

Dad grew up in Emsworth in a house in Warblington Road. His grandfather was Jack Kennett, the oyster merchant who is pictured in the oyster industry exhibition at the Museum. He was clearly so proud of his family's heritage that he named our house on Tower Street 'Oysters'. It was built on land that had been a boat yard and stables in the late nineteenth and well into the twentieth century. Dad inherited dozens of moorings on the foreshore, and while he was never into sailing, we spent many hours maintaining the chains and painting the wooden mooring numbers. Several of them became unchained and loose during the 'Great Storm' of October 1987 and washed up outside our house.

Community spiritedness ran through my father in his committed support for all aspects of Emsworth. He was a proud founder member of the Emsworth Maritime & Historical Trust who attended that first meeting back in the summer of 1975 where the ambition had been to preserve Echo II. That instead turned into a plan to develop the Museum, and it was a proud day in summer 1988 when these ambitions turned to reality and the Museum opened. It has gone from strength to strength ever since.

Dad was Vice-Chairman of the Trust for many years before becoming Chairman in 1990. I remember the many annual dinners he would organise with the committee at the Post House Hotel in Langstone (now Langstone Quays) back in the day when it was quite an upscale setting. Dad would spend hours poring over the table placings to ensure that the guests were happily seated. Being the 1980s there was plenty of prawn

cocktail, coq au vin and black forest gâteau on the menu, and it was always a lovely and well-attended occasion.

One of my happiest memories is filming the reopening of the Museum at Easter 1989. Lord Bessborough, the Trust President at that time, attended with his wife and they were, even then, of a lost and much-loved gentler time. The following day I filmed Dad as he toured around Emsworth providing a commentary on the history of the buildings and roads. It is lovely that this film is on the Trust's YouTube channel, and I have been able to show my children their grandfather whom they have never met and share his knowledge of Emsworth.

A further memory I have is of the Trust committee meetings that were held at our house in Tower Street. My mother and I would be banished elsewhere but were always on hand with teas, coffees and plenty of biscuits. There was always plenty of laughter and I imagine that the harbour view was also an attraction for committee members to regularly show up, much as it is now at Trevor Davies's house just along the foreshore.

In his day job Dad was a Police Officer. He worked in Brighton, Scotland Yard, then Special Branch (supporting the likes of Ted Heath and Harold Wilson in the 1970s, and walking the course at Goodwood with Princess Anne). He moved to Chichester Police Station, before ending his career as Inspector at Bognor Regis. Alongside this he found time to be a prolific writer. He had an article published in every monthly edition of the *Hampshire Magazine* from its first

edition to the month after he passed away, as well as producing the What's On column. He would travel across the county with his trusty tape recorder and microphone, interviewing people from across the community about their lives, working or otherwise. He wrote several articles about Emsworth, copies of which are kept at the Museum. I fancy that had he been allowed, he would have written about Emsworth far more regularly.

As well as the *Hampshire Magazine*, he wrote for *The Cricketer*. He was a massive fan of Hampshire County Cricket Club. We spent many happy days at the grounds, including Bournemouth, that he was disappointed had moved into Dorset but where Hampshire still played back then. He also proposed me, with my godfather, for MCC (Marylebone Cricket Club) membership when I was 18, and I only had to wait the small matter of 25 years to achieve this. Whenever I am at Lord's, Dad is always there with me.

I never found out how he got into it, but for many years in the 1980s Dad also wrote a restaurant review column for the *Portsmouth News* titled 'A Matter of Taste'. It was pretty much advertorial and introduced Mum and Dad to cuisines (often curry) that had hitherto been undiscovered. Many was the time that he would extol the virtues of a curry house in the likes of Drayton or similar. When he wrote a similar column for the *Hampshire Magazine*, it was sponsored by Hildon Spring Water, a hint that the restaurants were rather more upmarket!

It was my father who developed my love of writing and community. When he moved into Tower Street in 1982, he was delighted to live in the centre of Emsworth, able to watch the harbour as the sky and tide changed by the hour. Quite simply, Emsworth was the centre of his world and had he not been taken far too soon at the age of 61 I have no doubt that he would have taken his community endeavours even further.

One of my reasons for wanting to represent Emsworth as a borough councillor was that I was sure Dad would have been brilliant in that role. He saw the value of public service, giving back, and making a difference to the community. I am so proud that 50 years on from the founding meeting that Dad and others attended, Emsworth Maritime & Historical Trust continues to flourish. Emsworth Museum is a fitting testament to those people who had the vision and ambition to provide such a valuable resource for (hopefully) generations to come.

*Richard, who lives in Emsworth with his family, was the Emsworth Ward Councillor from 2017-2024. He has continued his father's commitment to the Museum.*

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*Memories continued from page 9*

Margaret and Sylvia studied the best methods for producing oral histories at a course at the British Library. Later I did it too. We all learned a lot on how to record stories and the variety of people on the courses was illuminating.

Margaret and the late administrator, Linda Newell, would go out to give talks to schools about the Museum and its artefacts. Margaret had a connection with Portsmouth University and students would come to the Museum as part of a course. In return the Museum would benefit from their expertise.

She also wrote books. This began when Margaret was doing a degree course and covered a section on the expansion of the



*Sylvia Courtnage worked with Margaret on many projects*

*Continued on page 13*



## A dip into my father Strahan Soames' archive

by Sue Soames

I have 16 scrapbooks compiled by my father containing over 300 of his published articles. He loved books and writing and read English at Oxford University after the war. While his working life was as a civil servant in the Pilotage Department of Trinity House, he spent a lot of his free time writing a variety of articles which were published between 1940 and his death in 2000.

I remember many Saturdays when he set off with his notebooks and returned home to sit in a quiet room, definitely not to be disturbed, to write up interviews. These were carefully typed up in double spacing and handed to my mother for proof reading and comment. He always insisted on correct spelling and I still have a well-worn copy of *The Little Oxford Dictionary* I was given at the age of eight, as well as various other inherited dictionaries of quotations and thesauruses.

Two thirds of the articles are profiles of dinghy sailors and yachtsmen and women. These started in *The Yachtsman* magazine in 1962 and included Jack Holt and Peter Scott. They continued in *Yachts & Yachting* from 1969 to 1994 and Crab Searl of Emsworth Sailing School and round the world racer Sir Peter Blake are included amongst some other well-known names.

There are also many personal pieces about sailing in Chichester Harbour firstly in *Emsworth One Designs*, then *Alchemy* the Albacore and *Yorick* the Mirror dinghy. *Alchemy* was built in Fishbourne on the Isle of Wight and my parents sailed her all the way back to Emsworth. I remember the relief of seeing her red sails appear as they slowly came up the harbour. We had many family days out sailing to East Head for picnics, and I learnt to sail in her. After many years she returned to the Island, to the Classic Boat Museum.

*Yorick* was often greeted with shouts of 'Alas, poor Yorick' but the name was chosen for the continuation of the quotation from Hamlet

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"a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy; he hath borne me on his back a thousand times".

Not all the articles are about sailing or Emsworth, as I found particularly when browsing through the earliest volumes.

The very first piece is 'Two enthusiasts and a Morgan' published in *Motor Cycling* magazine in 1940, for which my father was paid £2. 18s. and 9d! This three-wheeled car was owned by his older brother Martin and they had great adventures driving it on the then much quieter roads. Martin became a mechanic and racing driver, and also competed in RAC hill-climbing trials with my father and their elder brother Gordon squeezed into his Ford V8 as balancing weight.

Gordon and Martin joined the RAF and were sadly killed in World War II and my father would never talk about them. However, he did later search the South Downs near Petersfield and found the hills they had climbed and wrote a rather wistful piece for *Hampshire* magazine (published in 1994) about his search and describing the event held on Boxing Day back in 1937. I do have some information about the brothers – Gordon was a medical student training to follow in his father Dr R M Soames' footsteps, and it would be interesting to research more into Martin's car racing.

There are some articles giving glimpses of my father's boyhood in Emsworth such as 'Nostalgia is not what it was', and 'Last Holiday' about the summer of 1940 before

he was called up into the Army (the three brothers did meet on Thorney Island RAF base at that time).

My father continued to be interested in motor racing and cars. One of the earliest profiles is of Stirling Moss. Another is a report of the 1957 London to Brighton Veteran Car Run when he travelled in a 1903 White Steamer – yes, a steam-powered car, which completed the journey in three and a half hours! He also wrote about visits to Brooklands, and the 1960 Grand Prix at Silverstone when British cars finished first, second and third.

Other early pieces are a miscellaneous mixture: travelling from Euston to Manchester on the footplate of the Royal Ulster Rifleman steam engine, a family holiday in France, and profiles of Sue Ryder, Olympic showjumper Dawn Palethorpe, and Jack Bryce the test pilot who flew the VC10 on its maiden flight in 1962.

I am more aware of my father's more recent writing in the *Hampshire* magazine, which includes a report on the raising of the *Mary Rose* in 1982 when he had a grandstand view of events from the press boat a few hundred meters away from the giant lifting barge. He also wrote about *HMS Warrior* coming into Portsmouth in 1987.

Emsworth continued to feature with a piece titled 'The Emsworth rope trick' in 1985 about the rope shop that was in The Square and sold all sorts of things from macrame to dog leads to rope for boats. And, of course, information on Emsworth Museum – the opening in 1988, and a visit by American P G Wodehouse fans in 1996. My father was Chairman of the Emsworth Maritime & Historical Trust from 1994 to 1997.

It has been fascinating to look back through this archive and dip into some of the articles. I need to go back into the loft and read some more!

*Sue is a steward and member of the EMHT committee.*

*Memories continued from page 11*

railways which promoted town development as here in Emsworth. This led to linking up with Ralph Cousins and the Park Community School. The school printed her books which are on sale on the Museum.



*Margaret Rogers with Steve Miller who oversaw the reorganisation of the files in the Archive/ Research Room*

Margaret was a steward, committee member, vice chairman and acting chairman.

### **Wendy Bright and Clive Pugh**

They joined in 2008/9 as stewards, who then became senior stewards, keyholders and exhibition creators. On the way they picked up many small jobs such as housekeeper, talks organiser and newsprint distributor.

Linda Newell suggested Wendy join the committee. Wendy took the letters EMHT as a model for the type of talk, i.e. E for Emsworth, M for Maritime, H for Historical and T for any other type. Wendy worked as a guide at the National Trust's Uppark estate and took many of her ideas for talks from their list of speakers. Local historian Philip Robinson gave Wendy's first talk in 2011 and he proved so popular that he gave many other talks on topics as wide-ranging as the Battle of Jutland and St Peter's Chapel in Emsworth.

Fundraising was all important and talks were a good way to promote the Museum. The talks were also an outreach to encourage local interest and participation.

The plan chest and maps in the Main Room were Clive's contribution. Up to his advent maps had been rolled and stored and Clive

*Continued on page 16*

# When the Canal came past Emsworth.....

by Andrew Butler

During the mid 1800s, Chichester Harbour was a busy, tidal environment that supported a mix of commercial, fishing and other vessels. If you had been standing on the quay at Emsworth, you would have seen all manner of vessels – fishing boats, working the lucrative oyster beds and inshore waters; naval vessels and revenue boats; small trading vessels – and even, perhaps late at night, smuggling cutters and luggers. But a canal barge? Surely not!

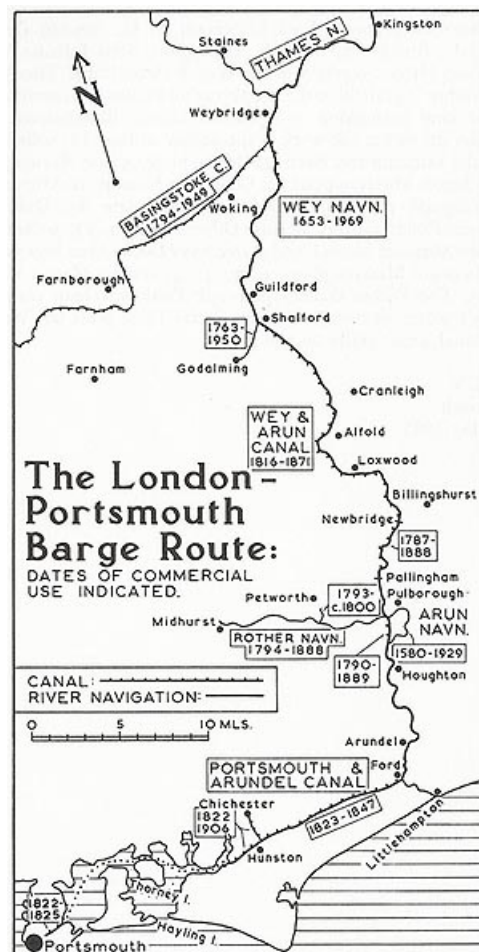
And yet for just 32 years, from 1823 until 1855, those canal barges – usually towed by the steam tug *Egremont* (named after the 3rd Earl of Egremont who financed much of the project) – would have been commonplace as well, making their way from London, along a complex and expensive combination of natural and man-made waterways, into the heart of Portsmouth. But why on earth would you build a canal from London to Portsmouth, when both cities are already major maritime ports?

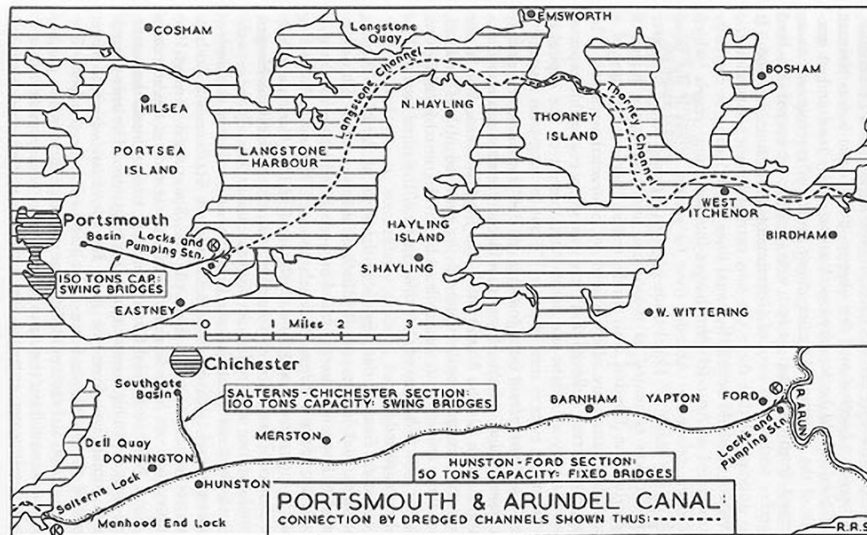
The answer lies in the need to guarantee a reliable route for naval supplies – especially the gold bullion needed to pay the sailors based in Portsmouth – and particularly in times of war. Around 1800, the British Empire was approaching its zenith, and Portsmouth was a critical component for Britain to project its naval power around the world. But supply routes from London to Portsmouth were risky. Highwaymen ruled swathes of the A3 turnpike. So transportation by road was simple, but carried the risk of highway robbery.

Sadly, the equally simple route by sea around Kent and the English Channel was fraught with the danger of French corsairs. While regarded as pirates by the British, these privateers often carried letters of warrant, issued by the French government, that authorised them to attack British naval and merchant vessels at will. Chief among them

was a businessman and slave trader named Robert Surcouf, who achieved particular infamy in 1813 when attempts by the 10-gun schooner *HMS Alpheia* to board his cutter *Renard* resulted in the sinking of the Royal Navy ship. But I digress...

John Rennie, the renowned canal engineer, proposed a canal route from London to Portsmouth as early as 1802. So, in 1817, an act of parliament was passed to authorise the building of a secure inland waterway, at a cost of £101,250. Wherever possible, the plan utilised existing rivers and canals. The River Wey was already navigable from the Thames at Weybridge as far as Godalming, and the River Arun could be navigated from the sea to Houghton Bridge, just upstream from Arundel. The act of parliament authorised four new canal stretches:





1. Upgrading the River Arun to navigable status, from Houghton Bridge upstream to Pallingham.
2. A new link from Pallingham with the River Wey at Shalford, near Guildford.
3. Ford (on the River Arun) to Hunston, with a spur into Chichester, and then on to meet Chichester Harbour at Salterns, near Birdham Pool.
4. Milton sea lock from Langstone Harbour (near the Thatched House in Southsea), leading to a final canal basin, now lost, below the Cascades Shopping Centre.

separates Thorney Island from the mainland, which formed part of the new waterway. Not even the ancient Wadeway (from Langstone to Hayling Island) was immune. The low-tide land route (dating back at least to Roman times) was breached in 1821, and replaced by a wooden swing bridge to carry vehicular and foot traffic. And when the 'Billy Line' railway bridge was built in 1867, it too was designed with a swing mechanism to allow the larger boats through (even though by then the canal was defunct).

Once fully open, the canal section through Portsea was problematic from the very start, as saltwater seepage from the Milton sea-lock into Langstone Harbour contaminated many of the freshwater wells upon which the Portsmouth residents relied. In addition, the promised cargo volumes never materialised. During the first year of opening, only 3650 tons of freight used the canal (less than 8% of the planned quantity).

The map above shows the route of the canal that is most relevant to those living in Emsworth. So, the rest of our story will focus on those two local sections that can be explored today, plus the saltwater stretch past Emsworth.

So, the Portsea section's life was brief – by 1830 the whole section from Langstone Harbour to the Arundel Street basin was abandoned, and the Milton sea lock was converted to a quay where the barges offloaded their cargo. The section from Salterns to Ford was easier to maintain, but as with so many canals, the arrival of the railway meant that its days were numbered too. Trains provided a much quicker and cheaper method of transporting naval

After a frantic five year period of construction, the new canal was fully opened by 1823 – with a final building cost of around £125,000. The Portsea section, and the stretch from Langstone Harbour to Chichester, opened even earlier in 1822. But the effort was not restricted to just inland waterways. To enable barge traffic to navigate the section from Salterns to Portsmouth at all times, without using the outer harbour entrances, the route through Chichester and Langstone Harbours was dredged, including the Great Deep that

*Continued overleaf*

*When the Canal came past Emsworth... contd*

supplies from London to Portsmouth, eroding the strategic importance of the canal and making its survival dependent purely on revenue. By 1840, the cargo traffic had dwindled to just a few hundred tons a year, and the section from Hunston to Ford was abandoned in 1847.

That left just the Chichester spur and the canal section to Langstone Harbour – explaining the peculiar 90 degree bend that today’s boats have to navigate south of Chichester. The Portsmouth & Arundel Canal Company ceased to function in 1855 (although the company was not formally wound up until 1896). But the section to Chichester – now rather grandly named the Chichester Ship Canal – enjoyed modest success through the nineteenth century, and only finally stopped carrying cargo in 1906. Sadly, by 1928, the investment in the A286 and B2201 roads made navigation from the city to the harbour impossible. The area around the Salterns entrance lock evolved into today’s Chichester Marina, and the section from Hunston to the canal basin in Chichester became largely unused for the next 50 years. But the canal has enjoyed a welcome renaissance since the creation of the Chichester Ship Canal Trust, and boats can now make their way almost to the B2201 Crosbie Bridge.

Thankfully, there are many opportunities to remember the Portsmouth & Arundel Canal, all along its length – but it often needs a bit of imagination. Street names like Arundel Street, Canal Walk, Locksway Road and Towpath Mead all hint at their original roles, and the deep embankment from Fratton to Portsmouth & Southsea station is built straight along the disused canal bed. At the eastern end, the area around the Thatched House pub has lots of visual artefacts.

Across the harbour, it is easy to walk the towpath from Salterns to Hunston, where the canal swings north towards Chichester. Beyond here, the waymarked canal path from Hunston to Ford is peppered with

tantalising clues, with some sections of the canal still easy to spot. But many of the old bridges are hard to visualize these days. Tack Lee Bridge, in Yapton, is the only fully intact bridge that can be navigated both over and under. Now perched incongruously in a modern housing estate, the entrance road to five houses travels under the bridge along the route of the canal. Nearby Burndell Bridge (near the aptly named Navigation Drive) is also worth a visit. And to properly follow in the footsteps of the boatmen who used this short lived but vitally important waterway, why not conclude your walk at the Ship & Anchor pub, located just north of the original (but now rather overgrown) canal entrance lock on the River Arun at Ford.

*Map sources: Chichester Ship Canal, Royal Institution of Naval Architects, Gosport History*

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*Memories continued from page 13*

unfurled them and made them visible in the browser and the plan chest. He catalogued them too. In the attic of her cottage in Emsworth Janna Cundall had a plan chest in which she used to keep architectural drawings. The Museum could have it but they would have to move it down the spiral staircase, over to the Museum and up some more stairs. The chest came out in two halves and was reassembled in the Museum thanks to stalwart volunteers.

Clive curated map exhibitions as well as others on properties and the photographer Maurice Broomfield. He also wrote booklets and articles on Emsworth’s engraver William Pink and print publisher Edward Sandell.



*Wendy Bright and Clive Pugh viewing documents from the Historic Properties exhibition*

*Continued on page 19*

# Margaret Pole's Warblington Castle

by Dr Rachel Delman

In 2024 historian Dr Rachel Delman of the University of Oxford published an article in Issue 15 of *Tudor Places* magazine. In the article Dr Delman considered the life of Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury, and argued that her principal residence was at Warblington. She compared the castle to other Tudor residences and suggested, based on in-depth archival research, how the interior may have looked. Dr Delman's abridged article can be read below.

Born Margaret Plantagenet in 1473, the Countess of Salisbury had known both the highs and lows of life before being restored to her lands and properties in 1512 by the young Henry VIII. This now powerful and wealthy woman had four main residences but chose Warblington to be the site of her principal seat. She had inherited the land from her mother, Isabel Neville. The location was well connected and many of Margaret's other lands and properties were located in the south. Moreover, she already owned property in the Isle of Wight.

Building of the castle began sometime after 1515 and was complete by 1525. Very fortuitously we have the building accounts for 1519 kept and audited by Bernard Holden, Rector of Warblington. We know, therefore, that the castle (more like a manor house) was brick built with an inner courtyard. The whole was enclosed within a moat. The buildings were roofed with slate, the chimneys coloured with ochre and the windows glazed. Labourers and most

materials were sourced locally but some luxuries such as Normandy glass and Caen stone were imported from France. Today, all that can be seen of Margaret's castle is an octagonal brick gate tower faced with Caen stone which is now on private land, but dominant in the landscape.

A survey was taken of this 'fair' property in 1632 so we know a great deal about its scale and the probable arrangement of the surrounding landscape. The buildings' footprint was 200 x 200 feet. Conjectured floor plans based on earlier archival evidence can be seen in Fig 1.

The main rooms included a great hall with an adjoining lower parlour, a great parlour, plus great, waiting and dining chambers. Two rooms in a tower above the great parlour close to the household chapel were set aside for Margaret's personal use. They were fitted with large oriel windows featuring heraldic stained glass. Margaret had 73 servants and 11 ladies in waiting including her own granddaughters.

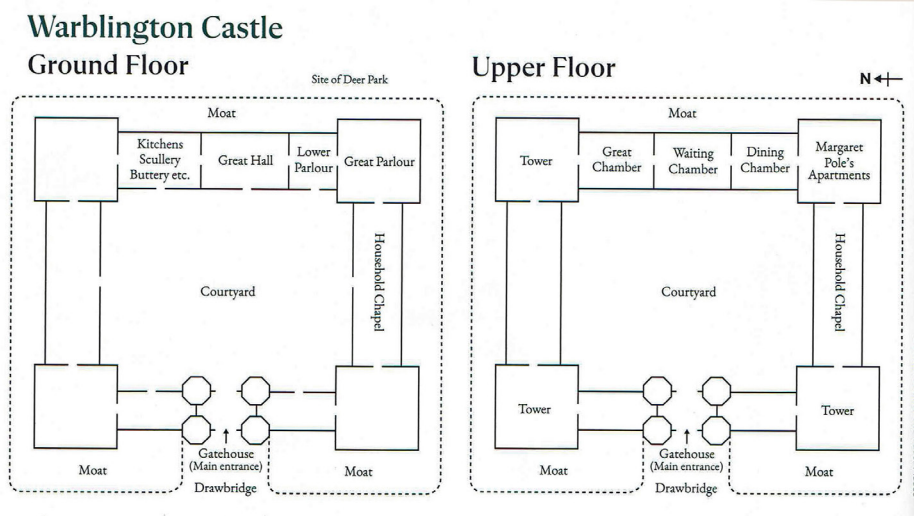


Fig 1

Continued overleaf

*Margaret Pole's Warblington Castle contd*

### **Luxurious and colourful interior**

The castle would have been richly decorated. There were nine wall hangings in the great hall depicting the recent 'discovery' of Newfoundland by the Venetian navigator, John Cabot, who had set sail from England at Henry VII's request in 1497. The tapestries likely showed the stages of his voyage and the people, places and animals he encountered on his travels. At the time of Cabot's voyage, Margaret was a member of the royal court. It is possible that the Warblington tapestries showed a scene of Cabot's departure from the court, in which case the Countess may well have figured among the company bidding him farewell.

The great parlour housed seven tapestries depicting the adventures and feats of Ulysses, the Roman name of the Greek Odysseus, hero of Homer's *The Odyssey*. The design of Margaret's tapestries may have resembled a slightly later sequence belonging to Bess of Hardwick which have been on display in the great chamber at Hardwick Hall ever since they were first put there in 1601.

The sumptuous and colourful visual environment was complemented by a rich musical soundscape. Three sets of virginals, keyboard instruments from the harpsichord family, stood in the main waiting chamber, great chamber and great parlour. Their

presence likely referenced Margaret's role as a governess to Catherine of Aragon's daughter, Princess Mary. The Princess practised the virginals as part of her daily routine.

### **A noble and lavish lifestyle**

Warblington Castle had all the appurtenances necessary to support Margaret's noble lifestyle and was even lavish enough to host a visit from the King in 1526.

In the great hall and dining chambers, guests would have enjoyed food and drink served on silver plate and Venetian glass while taking in the rich scenery around them. Several items of tableware showcased Margaret's royal connections, including a silver salt cellar, gilt cup and bowl engraved with roses and portcullises and a cup featuring a rose and the distinctive pomegranate of Catherine of Aragon. Spices used to flavour food included expensive, imported luxuries such as mustard and green ginger, the latter of which Margaret kept among her personal possessions in a silver and gilt box with a little fork to accompany it.

The park, fishponds, orchards and gardens provided additional food and herbs for the table, as well as for medicinal purposes, while the adjacent deer park of 184 acres provided opportunities for hunting and hawking.



*The gatehouse is all that remains of Margaret Pole's Warblington Castle*

The Catholic Countess was renowned for her pious character. Three chaplains served her household and devotional items in the chapel featured imagery of the Annunciation and the life of Christ. Expensive and luxurious textiles included blue and yellow altar cloths made of sarsenet and vestments of velvet and fustian, a type of heavy woven cloth. There were liturgical books to aid devotion and it is known that Margaret owned a set of coral rosary beads.

Margaret Pole oversaw a busy household and was active in the management of her affairs and estates. However, it was machinations at court that led to her downfall.

She was a staunch Catholic who supported Rome, one son was a Cardinal. Henry VIII's decisions to seek a divorce from the

Catholic Catherine of Aragon, marriage and beheading of the Protestant Anne Boleyn, and the advent of the Reformation led to Margaret's arrest at Warblington in 1538. She was imprisoned and executed for treason at the Tower of London in 1541.

Following Margaret's death, the next long-term owners of Warblington Castle were the Catholic Cotton family who held the property up until the Civil War when much of the building was destroyed.

An inventory compiled by the king's officials during Margaret Pole's arrest provide a snapshot of the castle's layout and furnishings. When considered alongside further archival and archaeological evidence, we gain a vivid impression of Margaret's life at Warblington before her detention.

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*Memories continued from page 16*

### **Tony Stimson**

Tony recalls that in the winter of 2012/13 he and Bob Duncan (2 old codgers – his words) redecorated the lobby, stairs and reception area. As a contrast in the March at the AGM he was elected Chairman. During his tenure, the lease to 10b North Street was found to be unsigned so following renegotiation with Havant Borough Council (HBC) the lease was signed in February 2014.

In 2015 a new oyster gallery was created in the Main Room, constructed by 'carpenter' Bob Duncan. It was opened by Mayor of Havant, Cllr Marjorie Smallcorn. When Linda Newell died suddenly the gallery was renamed in her honour.

Evening soirées were held in the Museum linked to temporary exhibitions which improved community relations when notables came and added to the publicity.

Tony was not born in Emsworth but his 3xgreat grandmother, Charlotte Payne, was born here in 1802. So Tony has roots here. His late wife, Julia, was Emsworth born and often met others whom she was at school with and encouraged them to visit the Museum.

Tony remembers visits to the RNLI headquarters in Poole and the Houses of Parliament when Peter Morse would organise quizzes for the coach journeys.

Dorothy, Wendy, Clive and Tony worked long and hard over all the procedural documents that had to be written to achieve the initial Accreditation. These put us on the professional path which is still being followed. Accreditation gave us and the Museum status and credibility.

One of Tony's last tasks as Chairman came in 2018 when he welcomed Paul and Linda Degriss to the Museum. The couple donated photographs and the French Naval uniform worn by Paul's father when he was stationed at the Free French Camp in Hollybank Lane during WWII. To his delight, Tony spotted a Gieves label in the inside pocket of the uniform.

Tony has continued his liaison with HBC and master minded the fitting of the new blue front door. A front door that welcomes visitors and symbolises the Trust's achievement in reaching the 50th anniversary.

# Collections Management and Conservation

by Curator, Philip Magrath

I am delighted to have the opportunity to reflect on the curatorial achievements made following my initial guidance which was to professionalise the Museum. This covers a multitude of activities under the heading of collections management, and I quickly identified two areas for attention. Firstly, the display itself and secondly, the need for preventative conservation. The first would make an immediate impact and the second would be largely unseen.

By modern museum standards in 2015 Emsworth Museum could be classed as 'of the old style'. Most of the cabinets although functional had seen better days and I noticed how 'busy' many of them had become. In other words, too many objects crammed into small areas and oftentimes label text too small for comfortable reading. Several objects were moved into storage and labels were upgraded. Old curtains and other textiles used as backdrops were removed and replaced with modern materials.



*Old cabinet showing maritime trades and tools*

The most notable advance in museum display came a few years ago when we were able to replace two of our older display cases with two state-of-the-art models from

Germany. Florea design of Frankfurt provided showcases of museum-grade quality in terms of conservation and functionality as well as airtightness, non-damaging lighting, security, smoothness of operation, easier maintenance and long-lasting appearance. They now house the Free French and WWII display and the Edwardian wedding dress.



*Modern cabinets with the WWII, Free French and Edwardian wedding dress displays*

Preventative conservation involves the practical measures taken to slow down the inevitability of material deterioration which all matter is subject to, and some objects more than others depending on material type, proximity of metals and storage conditions. The Museum stores' wood racking was of the highest concern.

Wood has great advantages for museum use. It is tough, hard and durable but most wood species are naturally acidic. Hardwoods like oak can release both acetic and formic acids due to the breakdown of hemicellulose influenced by factors such as fluctuating temperature and relative humidity. The wood composite board MDF or medium-density fibreboard has immense strength making it especially attractive for racking, but it is especially acidic due to the process involved in its manufacture. A preferable option was to strip out the wood and replace it with modern metal racking which was achieved at no cost.

Although some preventative conservation techniques are beyond our control such as temperature and relative humidity, in the absence of air conditioning and central heating other simpler practical measures are possible. These involve the use of acid-free tissue, acid-free card, Renaissance wax, plastazote and insect traps.

Acid-free tissue resembles the tissue that off-licences wrapped up our bottles of wine and spirits in in former times but with an entirely neutral acidity/alkalinity profile. It has a multitude of uses from wrapping store objects to being made into supportive bundles for textiles, especially for jacket arms when they are taken off display and placed into close-season storage.

Acid-free card available in sheets can be used to make storage boxes of any size and represent a much cheaper option than those ready-made from conservation suppliers. These in effect create a micro-climate for the stored object and we use them for delicate books and for textiles such as Black Rod's attire, the Edwardian wedding dress and the Free French jacket.

Renaissance wax is microcrystalline wax and is used extensively in museums for non-intrusive light cleaning and for providing a layer of protection. It can be used on all surfaces and is the best material for removing the dreaded Blu Tack currently banned in the Museum!

Plastazote is a lightweight, crosslinked low-density polyethylene block foam discovered in 1962 by the Zotefoam company. It was in immediate demand for medical and healthcare applications and due to the purity of its materials was recommended for museum use. It is entirely neutral and available in different thicknesses and colours. We use it in grey or black and of 3 mm thickness to line store shelves or display cabinets safe in the knowledge that no colour or corrosive material will degrade the object.

Insect traps are small, easily assembled card units containing an extremely sticky surface.

This exudes pheromones which invading insects find more attractive than the material surrounding it and come to a sticky end. It is both interesting but worrying to report that some insects are now developing a double annual life cycle thanks to global warming!

Controlling the deleterious effects of ultra-violet light is another challenge facing the museum curator/conservator. Two ways in which this was achieved was to apply blocking film to the windows and replacing the old deteriorated vertical blinds with museum grade Roman blinds from Sun-X of Worthing.

In 2018 the Museum committee were able to successfully achieve accreditation renewal from Arts Council England and one of the major changes which found reflection in our Collections Management Policy was to only consider taking objects into the collection that had a demonstrable link with Emsworth and the parish. This did not prevent the Trust from having to use external storage at cost for about a year before being able to accept the kind offer of free storage from Geoffrey Marsh at Marsh Plant, New Lane, Havant.

This year the focus has been more on collections management and specifically ensuring that object information on the Museum database is accurate and detailed. This has raised importance since the database is available for public access. Between November last year and April this year the in-house Museum store was completely emptied and the store cleaned. Exact locations were assigned to each object, photographs taken and the details recorded on the database with a note for any other necessary action such as object number marking or conservation.

I often wonder what the next decade will bring. It may be linked with the fire station and its survival but for the moment the old has to work as best it can with the new. QR codes have been introduced and it maybe that these will replace the good old-fashioned museum label.

# Our Museum in a Digital Age

by Trevor Smith

To understand how we approach the development of a digital museum we must re-examine the main purpose of Emsworth Maritime & Historical Trust. Our purpose, declared to the Charity Commission, is “To advance the **education** of the **public** in the history of Emsworth and the surrounding area...”. Whilst the provision of a physical museum and the acquisition, restoration, and preservation of ‘articles, items, objects, artefacts, documents or memorabilia’ are vital to our purpose, a digital presence is becoming equally as important.

We all know that most web platforms have a global reach, so with a digital presence, our ‘public’ becomes the whole world at any hour of the day or night, not just the very small proportion of people who are able to physically visit our Museum when it is open. Fulfilling the purpose of ‘education’ means making as much of our valuable information available and accessible to the public in a form that is appealing and searchable and can be viewed on any size screen.

In planning for the future, we must ensure that the technology we use is scalable and secure. We must also ensure that we preserve our reputation for impartiality, give no offence to any of our worldwide public in what we publish and that we do not breach copyright.

We must therefore develop that digital presence in a fashion that is accessible, relevant, comprehensive, sustainable, moderated and secure.

Emsworth Museum has had a digital database recording details of our collection of items for many years. More recently, this has been based on a web publishing tool for digital collections and on-line exhibits called Omeka (Google it!). Since 2014, we have had a website providing information about the Museum, opening times, upcoming events and news. Many of our volunteers

have contributed to building Omeka and the website in the past and both have evolved tremendously.

## Sharing our Collections and Exhibits

I took over IT at the Museum in February 2022. I discovered that we had quite an extensive collection of digital assets, but that many were not available to the public (see Fig 1 below). We have been working steadily to make as much as possible publicly available, always respecting any copyright or confidentiality restrictions. We have also moved service provider and switched to WordPress as our website content management system. These changes have reduced costs and improved performance, ensuring pages are rendered far more quickly. The Omeka database has been maintained and updated, and

### Fig 1 – The Museum Digital Collections

There are digital records of more than 10,000 items held by the Museum, including:

- 170 videos
- 112 audio recordings, including oral histories
- More than 4000 photographs
- Photos of many of our physical artefacts

On the website we also have over

- 150 news articles, some now archived
- 57 issues of our newsletter
- 150 *Emsworth Echo* articles

There is also a growing number of on-line exhibitions.

Many of the documents held in our archive/research room, however, are yet to be digitised.

we have introduced the use of YouTube to host the extensive video collection, which avoids hosting costs but does mean users can be interrupted by advertisements. These videos in our collections are linked seamlessly into Omeka.

I have long been aware that our exhibitions in the David Rudkin Room take a great deal of work to produce by the curators and volunteers who stage them. For a valuable few weeks, they provide an additional attraction for visitors to the Museum and boost our footfall enormously. However, that work can be preserved for posterity by converting them into digital on-line exhibitions. So, we have been publishing many of the recent exhibitions in full on the WordPress website, in a format that is searchable and compatible with all devices, including mobile phones. Notable amongst recent exhibitions are ‘the Story of a Ship’ (40th anniversary of Falklands War), Emsworth Fire Brigade, and the 80th Anniversary of D-Day with more than 100 photos and a dozen personal accounts.

**Reaching a Global Audience**

We currently get more than 100,000 digital visitors per year, although many pageviews are very short (<30 seconds), typically 100 or more per month dwell on one page for at least 2 minutes and some for more than an hour. Much of the traffic to our website is brought by search engines; Google being the most used. With our worldwide public audience, visits come from a wide range of countries – see Fig 2.

The Google search engine is very powerful. For example, if you Google ‘historic photos of Emsworth’ from anywhere in the world, Emsworth Museum website will come up many times on the first page of hits. The text in our site is also input to many AI tools. Ask an AI tool such as ChatGPT or Copilot about Emsworth’s history and the source is likely to be our Museum site.

**Social Media**

Whilst the website, YouTube and the Omeka database are important, we must

not neglect social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. We have a page on Facebook, which has a community of followers, and we have been venturing into the use of Instagram. The social media presence requires support on at least a weekly basis, and as Trevor Davies mentions in his article, we are looking for a volunteer to help with this.

**Fig 2 – Website Page Views**

Month	Unique visitors	Number of visits
Jan-25	7,949	10,772
Feb-25	9,895	35,984
Mar-25	8,185	14,095
Apr-25	6,120	13,830
May-25	11,110	18,237
Jun-25	9,135	16,066
Jul-25	10,041	16,604
	<b>62,435</b>	<b>125,588</b>

Country	Code	Pages	Hits
Great Britain	gb	55,396	90,455
Canada	ca	8,902	9,265
United States	us	6,687	17,554
Australia	au	588	2,326
India	in	557	1,417
China	cn	426	1,355
Egypt	eg	333	530
Poland	pl	272	510
Ukraine	ua	201	487
Brazil	br	172	300
France	fr	157	742
Argentina	ar	151	265
South Korea	kr	137	729
Denmark	dk	136	537
Germany	de	131	537
Iran	ir	122	169
Russian Federation	ru	118	771
Bulgaria	bg	110	726
Latvia	lv	85	110
Netherlands	nl	84	732
Japan	jp	83	185
Vietnam	vn	73	97
Lithuania	lt	61	76
Angola	ao	60	157
Romania	ro	50	87



## (In 2005 with some prescience) The Chairman Looked Forward

by Gerry Williams

It would seem that, as children are our future, they should appear first on our list of priorities. It is important that we maintain good contact by exchanging visits with local schools so that children continue to look at and learn some of the history of Emsworth, and understand how the community has developed.

With the increasing growth of technology we should continue to absorb some of the more pertinent developments into our organisation for recording exhibits, and try to embrace modern methods of displaying information, having first determined the feasibility thereof.

Seeking publicity for the Trust will always be an important task and the need for close liaison with the media will be ongoing. Advertising on the World Wide Web will continue, as responsibility for updating information on the Trust website transfers from Alan Beer, Eddie Lewis's godson, to a local resident. The former is to be thanked for his valuable contribution to the work of the Trust.

The promotion of sales, which has been excellent over the past few years, is under new management and new items, for example golf balls, are appearing already on the sales table. These have a particular emphasis on advertising the Museum, even when lost, which doubtless they will be.

As a new season of talks and exhibitions gets under way, planning is already taking place for next year. The General Committee may wish to examine the possibility of exhibition hire in the future and likewise the hire of a Speaker once in a while.

The Recorders continue to expand their fascinating libraries of audio and video tapes, and are exploring new methods of recording.

Group outings have become an important feature in the life of the Trust and one would wish to see these events continue to provide enjoyment for all members.

Now for recruitment. We have a thriving Museum, with an imaginative and industrious administrator, an incomparable secretary, two outstanding archivists, and three hard-working committees. We have an excellent team of stewards who regularly and gladly give of their best throughout the open season. Add these stalwarts to the list of contributors assuming responsibility for the various tasks mentioned above and you have a strong group of likeminded people, who know what they want to do and get on and do it. The future of the Trust looks bright for tomorrow, but we must always remain aware of the need for new recruits for the day after tomorrow.

May I take this opportunity to say thank you to all 'Shaker' members of the Trust. Your subscriptions are an important contribution to our running costs and Museum improvements, and make the Treasurer's job worthwhile. If you feel like becoming a 'Mover' however, and contributing some of your time to the Trust, you can be sure of a warm welcome. To the 'Movers' I say, "Well done, and thank you for your tireless efforts, and, of course, your subscriptions too".

Finally, a big thank you to those who have been and are currently involved in the production of posters, the *Emsworth Echo* and the newsletters, of whom there are many. This is no mean task, compiling, editing, typing, proofreading, packaging, designing and delivering.

Well done all!



## What of the Future?

by Current Chairman, Trevor Davies

When she asked me to write this article, the editor Christine Bury thoughtfully provided the similar article my predecessor, Gerry Williams, wrote for the 30th Anniversary edition of the *Emsworth Echo* in 2005. It makes interesting reading – some issues have not changed; others have changed out of all recognition.

In his article 20 years ago, Gerry, included a nod towards changing technology. I doubt that he would have realised quite how much the Museum depends on it today. Trevor Smith has revamped our website and integrated our database software Omeka into it. This means that our database is searchable globally. As a result, we have enquiries from all over the world. In one recent example, the Wong family visited us from Hong Kong with a particular interest on P G Wodehouse, because PGW's father Ernest was a Colonial Magistrate there. They presented the Museum with a packet of Chinese Oolong Tea to acknowledge that Jeeves served oolong tea to Bertie Wooster in two of PGW's books. We have now incorporated the tea into the PGW display!

But we are still only in the foothills of the technological mountain. Social media is, to quote Donald Rumsfeld, one of our 'known unknowns'. I know our presence is limited, but the Trustees have a peripheral personal involvement with social media, and do not have the cultural background for a comprehensive approach. We need a volunteer who understands this; can grasp it and run with it.

Similarly, we can use the new website to extend our marketing and attract visitors from outside Emsworth to see our displays. To this end your Trustees have agreed that the Museum will join the Art Fund. The Museum will feature in the Art Fund handbook, and on their website. In return, we will offer Art Fund members 10 percent reduction on items for sale. This should be a start to establishing ourselves on wider networks.

As many will know, the Museum is housed in the former offices of the Warblington Urban District Council. The offices became surplus to requirements when the council merged with Havant and Waterlooville Urban District Council in 1932, although Havant Borough Council (HBC) still own and maintain them. Since then, the upper floor of the building has been living accommodation, a dance studio and a room for hire. Opened in 1988, the Museum has benefitted from a constructive relationship with HBC. Today the Museum has a lease until 2034 at a peppercorn rent. We value HBC's long-term support in kind, and I firmly believe we have repaid their trust in the Museum by developing a substantial cultural asset for the borough.

However, Local Government is reorganising. It is unclear which part of the new Local Government organisation will be responsible for the Museum building, and what priorities they will have. Although we will probably not know for two or three years, the Trustees would prefer to maintain the status quo, but it is not our decision.

To maintain its relevance to Emsworth, the Museum needs to have a symbiotic relationship with the community. This is best achieved through the programme of temporary exhibitions, created by local groups to showcase their work. If they provide the material, Museum staff can mentor the production process. Typically, members of the exhibiting groups come into the Museum to see the exhibition, many visiting for the first time. After this introduction, we believe that they will return to delve into other parts of the Museum's displays.

*Continued overleaf*



*Emsworth Museum, 10b North Street, PO10 7DD, today*

### *What of the Future? contd*

From the Museum's perspective, the boundaries of Emsworth have deliberately been a little vague. We have never regarded the Hampshire/West Sussex border as a constraint. For example, Emsworth's ropemaking businesses were mainly in West Sussex; the Emsworth Yacht Harbour (who have produced exhibitions in the Museum to celebrate both their 50th and 60th anniversaries) is in West Sussex. We are fortunate that Emsworth is surrounded by history groups – in Havant, Westbourne and Rowlands Castle. This gives us the opportunity to share research with a wider audience, as we planned in the case of the Swing Riots exhibition. I believe that it is in everyone's interest that this cooperation continues.

One issue that Gerry raised is unchanged. We all continue to be proud of the fact that our Museum is volunteer run. This has provided us with a robust financial model that allowed us to weather the Covid pandemic without serious problems. Without volunteers, the Museum could not function. So, we try hard to recruit new supporting members; we then try hard to persuade them to become stewards; but we need to go further.

Running the Museum requires many inputs from administration to research. I am therefore always interested in our volunteers' backgrounds. Few of us have been involved with museums during our working lives, but many of us have developed transferable skills that could help this Museum. I have never thought it correct to formally interview volunteers because they are exactly that – volunteers. However, as many of you might have noticed, that does not stop me making a few gentle enquiries about volunteers' backgrounds, with a view to seeing how their expertise could be fitted into our organisation.

The constitutional change to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation brought with it a time limit for Trustees who can now only serve for three periods of three years before taking a break. This requirement is to ensure new volunteers are regularly recruited, because they are vital to injecting new energy, new expertise and new ideas into the Museum's work. On this basis, I am sure that Emsworth Museum and the Trust will continue its development for the next 50 years.



## **Emsworth Museum**

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