

Rope making In Emsworth



Rope making using a rope walk returned to Emsworth over the weekend of 2nd and 3rd July.

We've made rope! Mike Rogers, left, turned the wheel of the jack. Allan Yalden, second left, inspected the rope made by Trevor Davies, third left, watched by Ken Yalden

Rope making was a thriving industry in the town for more than 200 years. Christopher Day is recorded as having a rope making business here in 1714. The manufacture of cordage was a profitable concern in the days of wooden ships and sail but, sadly, no industrial rope making exists in the town today. The industry dwindled in the period between the world wars but David Rudkin, founder of Emsworth Maritime & Historical Trust (EMHT), worked for Carter Sons & Lewis almost exactly 100 years ago.

The Lewis mentioned above was John Lewis and it was his son, Bob, who gifted a rope making jack to the Museum. Over the winter EMHT Chairman, Trevor Davies, investigated making a small rope walk for the Museum. He had seen one in operation at Bridport Museum and staff there were very helpful with the research needed to design and build Emsworth's own rope walk using the Lewis jack.

Once built, everyone was anxious to see it in operation and Trevor Davies masterminded a series of demonstrations in the David Rudkin Room.

Further demonstration weekends will be held.

The yarn in a large ball was bought from Chatham Dockyard. Their rope walk is a quarter of a mile long, ours filled the exhibition space but the process is the same. Multiple lengths of yarn are laid on the rope walk to form strands. Turning the handle on the jack twists the strands and rope is made under a slight tension guided by a wooden top.*

While today's rope walk is on a small scale, Emsworth had its own rope walk, probably covered, that was 200 metres long running parallel to the Slipper Millpond from the Sussex Brewery Pub down to the Slipper Mill. This rope walk is shown on the 1908 Ordnance Survey Map of the area. There are reports of a second rope walk within Tatchell's sacking factory at the bottom of King Street and Hendy's Quay. This factory occupied the whole of Stanley Road right out to King Street.

**Photographs of the Museum's rope walk under construction were in the May edition of the Newsletter.*

Diary Dates

Mask wearing is no longer mandatory. However, current government advice is to continue to wear masks in crowded places. Talks are held in the Mountford Rooms, Emsworth Community Centre, North Street. Admission from October will be £5.00 per person. Tickets will only be available in advance from Bookends, 7 High Street, Emsworth from Monday, 5th September.

July 9th – August 21st	Exhibition “A Celebration of the Life of Sir Peter Blake 1948–2001” by Pippa, Lady Blake and Trevor Davies
August 26th – September 4th	Exhibition “Past and Present Visual Marks” by Elizabeth Saunders/Visual Marks Textile Group
September 10th – October 30th	Exhibition “Living with War in Emsworth: The Valerie Bacon Diaries 1939–45” by Nigel and Wendy Gossop with friends
Thursday October 6th	Talk “Operation Overlord: Great Plans and Big Egos” by Lord Richards of Herstmonceux. This is a repeat of the over-subscribed lecture held in January 2020
October 30th	Museum closes for the winter
Thursday November 3rd	Talk “Unwrapping the Valerie Bacon Archive” by Nigel Gossop
Thursday December 8th	Stewards’ and Helpers’ Thank You Party

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Preview of Exhibitions in the David Rudkin Room

August 26th – September 4th Exhibition “Past and Present Visual Marks”

The Visual Marks Textile Group was founded in 2013 by Elizabeth Saunders and friends from diverse backgrounds who came together to share their ideas and skills. The group exhibits their stitched textiles and mixed media work in a number of locations during the year.

September 10th – October 30th

Exhibition “Living with War in Emsworth: The Valerie Bacon Diaries 1939–45”

Valerie Bacon was born in London in 1921 and moved with her mother to Emsworth at the end of August 1939. She stayed in Emsworth until her death in 2002.

From a very young age Valerie kept a daily diary and this exhibition mainly concentrates on her diaries and letters to her father from 1940 to 1945 with a few entries from pre-war years.



Valerie Bacon

Personal items such as this are a valuable resource for researching the past in a way that digitised diaries and social media will never be. Written with a candid honesty these items allow us to understand something of the social norms of the times in which they were produced and also give an insight into the writer’s life.

This exhibition, kindly sponsored by Zero West Watches of Bridgefoot Path Emsworth, has been assembled by Nigel and Wendy Gossop with friends.

Activity sheets for Children in the Museum

In order to help make our exhibits more accessible to children visiting the Museum, we now have a range of activity sheets to offer families. The stewards on duty will have a folder available on request.

Preview of Two Autumn Talks in the Community Centre

Thursday October 6th "Operation Overlord: Great Plans and Big Egos"

This is a repeat of the lecture given by Lord Richards in January 2020. Operation Overlord was the biggest amphibious operation in history. It took years of almost faultless planning and preparation. Yet it was a close run thing, in part because of the oversized egos and rivalries of the politicians and generals involved, on both the Allied and Axis sides.

Underpinned by a campaign narrative that culminates in the fall of Paris, this revealing talk also examines the conduct and motives of the characters in whose hands our destiny lay.

Thursday November 3rd "Unwrapping the Valerie Bacon Archive"

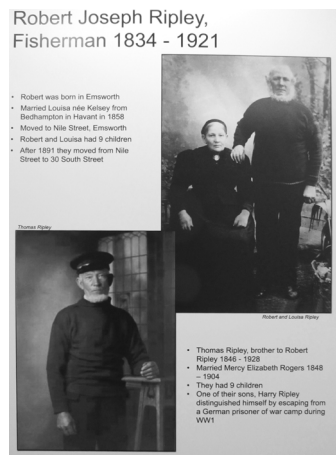
These diaries were never meant to be read by others and were Valerie's day by day personal observations and thoughts. After her death they were kept by her friend and solicitor, Bernard Stanley. He saw the value of the letters to her father, that she had recovered after his death in 1943, and he donated them to The Bedhampton Historical Collection because of the Havant connection – but the other material including her diaries, were not discovered until after Bernard Stanley's death in 2021.

The diaries were then offered by his family to local historians who felt that the whole collection would be of significant value to Emsworth Museum. The collection will eventually be deposited in the Research Room.

The People of Emsworth

This was the title of the opening exhibition in the David Rudkin Room curated by Trust Chairman, Trevor Davies. For the first time since 2019 Emsworth Museum began its opening season in the Spring and a special exhibition was mounted in early April devoted to some of Emsworth's luminaries from all classes of society.

Petty Officer Cook George Borsberry RN could be viewed alongside Admiral Sir Dudley North and former Black Rod Admiral Sir Richard Scott Thomas. Fisher families were juxtaposed with seaborne racing enthusiast Sir Peter Blake.



The Ripley family

Titanic baker, Ernest Farrenden and RN pensioner, William Alfred Stevens rubbed shoulders with film actor, Albert Finney. All these former residents were either famous, controversial, ordinary or extraordinary, and often were known for all four traits.

The exhibition ran from April 2nd to 18th and proved popular with Emsworth residents of today.



Andrew Foster and The Emsworth Arts Trail

The Arts Trail in 2022 was a great success. The weather during the weekends of April 23rd/24th and April 30th/May 1st and 2nd (Bank Holiday) was glorious and Emsworth people came out in force to view the work of artists using a variety of media. Held just a few months after the 2021 trail, Emsworth Museum welcomed back artist Andrew Foster. Andrew showed a new body of contemporary work. The human condition, abstract energy and thought-provoking themes were his focus and the results could be seen in dynamic works in oils, digital and mixed media.



Two of Andrew Foster's mixed media paintings



From the Chairman

In recent months, there has been a great deal of activity in the David Rudkin Room centred on our programme of temporary exhibitions. The exhibitions will be handled in more detail elsewhere, but below are some of the highlights.

Falklands *HMS Antrim*

The team led by Christopher Morrison put on a stunning exhibition explaining the role *HMS Antrim* played in the Falklands conflict. This was an exhibition that succeeded on so many levels. The story was told very effectively, highlighting the moments of high drama. The exhibition included some unique objects including the model of *HMS Antrim* and the flag from the captured submarine *Santa Fe*. This is the first time that Emsworth Museum has borrowed a major item from another Museum – with all the related bureaucratic and insurance issues successfully overcome. The exhibition generated some of the best publicity the Museum has had for some time. The item on ITV News South was very impressive. Many members of *HMS Antrim*'s company travelled to see the exhibition – some from considerable distances.

Platinum Jubilee

Bernie Gudge's offer to lend his late father-in-law's model of the Coronation coach to the Museum to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee prompted us to see if we could borrow other members' Coronation memorabilia. Members responded to our appeal magnificently. We were able to put on a comprehensive celebratory display. Judging by the number of visitors the display was well received.

Rope making demonstrations

In my May update, I reported on the rope making equipment the Museum has had built around the rope making jack which was gifted to the Museum by the Lewis family in the mid-1990s.

During the weekend of July 2nd/3rd the Museum took another step forward by presenting a rope making weekend, during which a length of rope was made every hour. Seventy one visitors attended these sessions. We still do not have very much experience, so the input of Mike Rogers and Ken and Allan Yalden was much appreciated. Their suggestions caused modifications in the technique as the day progressed. We are thinking of running another ropemaking weekend next year, but

next time we will try and avoid competing with Wimbledon and the British Grand Prix! We will also aim for the school holidays so more children can attend.

Sir Peter Blake

In December 2001, Emsworth resident Sir Peter Blake was killed by pirates on his research boat *Seamaster* while travelling on the Amazon. Starting on July 9th, just over 20 years later, his extraordinary achievements have been celebrated in an exhibition. It was opened formally by his widow, Pippa, Lady Blake on Sunday, July 10th at 2.00 pm.

Stewards' Rota

I am really pleased how all the stewards have embraced the new interactive system for scheduling. So far, we have been successful in scheduling stewards into their sessions at least a week and more often, two weeks ahead of time. This makes all our lives so much easier. Remember, without stewards, the Museum cannot open. I recognise that scheduling will become trickier in August because of the pressures of family and holidays. I do hope we can continue to maintain progress.

Friday opening

We are planning to extend our opening hours during August, by opening on Fridays as we did pre-Covid. To recognise the changes in footfall around the Museum because of the surgery and library, we are planning to open from 10.30 am until 4.30 pm on each Friday in August.

Trevor Davies, Chairman

Museum Opening Times 2022

Fridays in August, Saturdays and Bank Holidays 10.30 am to 4.30 pm

Sundays 1.30 pm to 4.30 pm

until 30th October

HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Exhibition



Sampler stitched by Olive Jane Mason in 1953 and lent by her granddaughter Libby Habershon

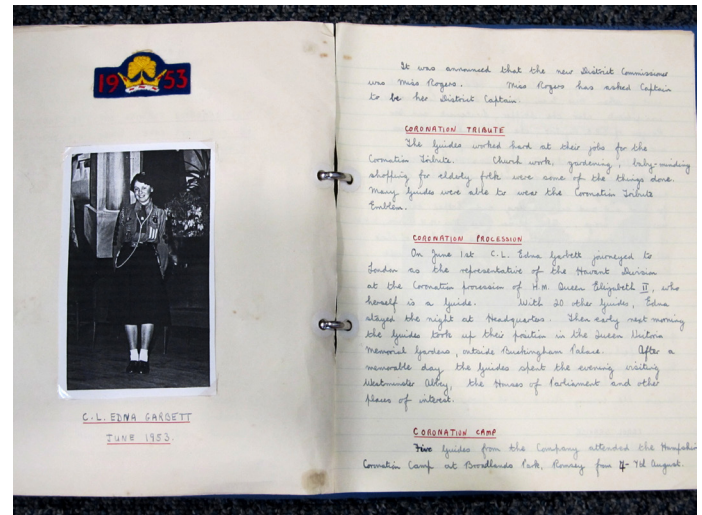
Congratulations to our EMHT members. Thanks to your wonderful response to the Museum's plea for Coronation memorabilia, Chairman Trevor Davies was able to mount a fascinating exhibition in the David Rudkin Room which ran from June 2nd to 26th.

Photo archivist, Bernie Gudge lent a 1/16th scale model of the Coronation coach. It was made by his late father-in-law Don Shearman in 1953. The intricate modelling took Don about 600 hours and the almost 70-year-old model was the centrepiece of the exhibition. Among the other exhibits was a beautiful sampler stitched by Olive Jane Mason in 1953 and lent by her granddaughter, Libby Habershon. Books and china given to schoolchildren at the time of the Coronation have been treasured and many were on display. There were invitation cards, newspapers, souvenir brochures, cut out models of the elaborate procession, coins, brooches and colourful handkerchiefs.



Above: Scale model of the Coronation coach lent by Bernie Gudge

Right: Page from the Emsworth 1st Company of Girl Guides 1953 Report, part of the EMHT collection. C.L. Edna Garbett, pictured, travelled to London to represent the Havant Division in the Coronation procession



Emsworth celebrates



HMS Antrim

The Falklands War: The Story of a Ship

The raising of the *Mary Rose* (see story on page 8) was not the only 40th anniversary commemorated this year. The Falklands War was the subject of a major exhibition in the David Rudkin Room during May. Curated by Captain Christopher Morrison and Vice Admiral Sir Anthony Dymock KBE, the exhibition told the story of *HMS Antrim*, a Portsmouth-based guided missile destroyer in which they both served during the Falklands conflict.

For many years both Britain and Argentina had disputed ownership of the Falkland Islands and South Georgia which lie close to Antarctica. Britain has administered the islands since 1833. Events took a more serious turn in 1982 when Argentine invaded the Falklands on April 2nd. Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher was incensed by this precipitous action and a taskforce was raised to retake these British Overseas Territories.

HMS Antrim and her crew were on exercise off Gibraltar. *Antrim* was the flagship of Rear Admiral Woodward who was told in a laconic signal, **'Assume command of HM Ships [...] and proceed to Falklands. Aim: Recover the Falklands.'**

The taskforce sailed South for Ascension Island. Rear Admiral Woodward moved to *HMS Glamorgan*, and *HMS Antrim*, *HMS Plymouth* and *RFA Tanker Tidespring* detached to retake South Georgia. On April 24th intelligence indicated that an Argentine submarine, *Santa Fe*, was en route to land special forces and sink the ships. The Argentine submarine was damaged by depth charges from *Antrim's* helicopter 'Humphrey' and limped into port in South Georgia. The crippled submarine was re-captured following a successful landing of British forces on the island and her ornate flag was on display in our temporary exhibition.



Captured Argentinian Flag lent by The National Museum of the Royal Navy

HMS Antrim and her cohorts returned to the Falklands and on May 20th the amphibious assault began. *Antrim* took part in the bombardment and while under Argentinian air attack, a Mirage V aircraft came from astern and put a bomb straight through the flash doors of the empty missile Ready Use magazine. It finally came to rest in the after heads (toilets) but did not explode. Not for nothing was *Antrim* known as a 'lucky' ship. A bomb disposal expert was required.



Lt White inspecting the bomb damage

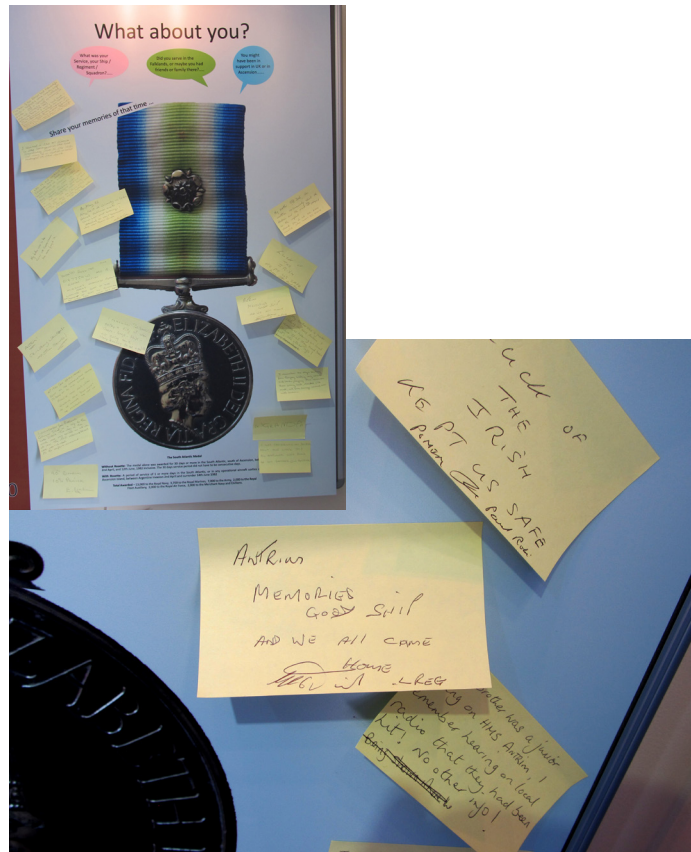
Photos left and top left are by Stewart Cooper and Kevin White

Enter Chief Petty Officer Diver (Warrant Officer) Mike Fellows dangling on a winch wire from a Wessex helicopter. He successfully managed to cut the bomb free and it was later disposed of overboard. It was a British 1000 lb bomb. Mike Fellows remains the most highly decorated Warrant Officer in any of the three armed services and has been awarded an MBE, a DSC and a BEM and bar. Not surprisingly, he was the VIP invited to open this exhibition on May 7th.



Mike Fellows, right, with Christopher Morrison and the model of HMS Antrim

Following the bombing of the ship, *HMS Antrim* was no longer an effective fighting unit, so the ship returned to South Georgia. On June 14th Argentine surrendered the Falklands and on the 26th the crew sailed for home. One of the boards on display in the Museum was devoted to press cuttings of the bombing and the thoughts of loved ones left behind. The episode still raises powerful emotions as shown by the numbers of post-it notes displayed in the exhibition.



HMS Antrim and crew returned home to Portsmouth on July 17th 1982 with a piper from the Royal Irish Rangers playing them home. Since leaving Portsmouth on March 17th, the ship had sailed 32,767 miles.

'He that outlives this day, and comes safe home, Will stand a tiptoe when this day is named'

Shakespeare, Henry V



Home at last on July 17th 1982

Celebrating the Life of Sir Peter Blake 1948–2001

This exhibition which began on July 9th is still running so you can catch it up to August 21st. Curated by Pippa, Lady Blake and Chairman, Trevor Davies the exhibition celebrated the life of a world renowned sailor from New Zealand (NZ) who made his home in Emsworth.

Sir Peter Blake was shot and killed by pirates who boarded his research vessel while he was monitoring environmental changes in the Amazon River.

The Museum's exhibition was opened by Lady Blake on July 10th and in his welcoming remarks Trevor Davies commented that Sir Peter was a planner, a communicator, a problem solver, a people person, but above all he was charismatic and highly competitive. The list of his sailing honours is enormous. To mention just a few: Winner America's Cup in *Black Magic* for NZ, World Record Jules Verne Trophy with Robin Knox Johnston, Winner Whitbread Round The World Race with Robin Knox Johnston, Winner Fastnet Race in *Condor*.



Sir Peter and Pippa, Lady Blake

Lady Blake spoke about Sir Peter's love of Emsworth and of the great esteem in which Sir Peter is still held in NZ. At the time of the America's Cup challenge many New Zealanders supported the country's team by wearing Sir Peter's 'lucky' red socks. On his death in December 2001, Helen Clark, the then Premier of NZ, and her Sports Minister attended the funeral in Warblington.

Emsworth Sailing Club (ESC) set up a fund in 2002 to commemorate the life of Sir Peter Blake who was an ESC member. Since the fund was established, thousands of pounds have been raised to help to support young members competing in racing events in venues as far afield as Europe, Japan and the USA.

Following his sailing career, Sir Peter focused his attention on helping to protect the environment and raising awareness of the issues it faces. The Sir Peter Blake Trust (BLAKE www.blakenz.org) was established in 2004 and is dedicated to continuing his environmental leadership legacy.



The *Mary Rose*: A Unique 500 Year Story

Maritime Archaeologist Glenn Dunaway was one of the volunteer team who dived on the *Mary Rose* wreck in the

Solent. Thus he was the perfect speaker on April 13th for the last of the winter series of lectures to tell us more about how a 16th century shipwreck became a much loved 21st century visitor attraction. Today part of the warship and its often unique artefacts can be viewed in a purpose-built Museum in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard next to that other landmark of a bygone era, *HMS Victory*.

2022 is the 40th anniversary year of the raising of this internationally important ship which sank in the Solent off Southsea castle on July 19th 1545 while sailing forth to help the British fleet repel a French invasion fleet. No one can be sure why the ship sank in front of the watching crowds who included Tudor King, Henry VIII. The most likely explanation is the flooding of the ship through open gun ports as she manouvered close to the shore. The ship sank rapidly until she became embedded in the soft sediments of the seabed. There were few survivors.



Painting of the ship on the seabed

A few attempts at salvage were made both then and in the 19th century but the site was only rediscovered in the late 20th century by the dedication of one man, Alexander McKee, and his team from the British Sub-Aqua Club. Bits of wood and deck beams were seen by divers at the wreck and limited excavations began to see how much of the *Mary Rose* had survived. In the 1970s

and early 80s over 500 volunteer divers, including Glenn Dunaway, found that more and more of the ship was still intact. Cannon, planking and artefacts were brought to the surface and placed in controlled environments. The *Mary Rose* Trust was formed in 1978 to excavate the ship in its entirety and raise it from the seabed. This was done on October 11th 1982 watched by over 60 million people worldwide on television.

Once in air, everything on board ship and the surviving structure would deteriorate so conservation became the task for decades. The remains of the hull and the ship's artefacts can now be viewed without intervening glass, sprays and air drying pipes. The hull has remained in the dry dock into which it was first placed in 1982 and the present Museum has been built around it. The public have been able to view conservation work since 1984. The sprays were eventually turned off in 2013 and the new state-of-the-art *Mary Rose* Museum was opened in 2016.

Glenn's talk was much appreciated by a sold out audience many of whom had watched the progress of the conservation work and toured the *Mary Rose* Museum marvelling at just how much we have learned about a fighting ship, its people and their artefacts in the Tudor era. Many of the objects found on the ship are unique and seeing them *in situ* has brought the era to life.

Videos on YouTube

Museum volunteers are hoping to put some of our oral history and event videos on YouTube. Do have a look. We would welcome comments. Videos can be viewed at: <https://emsworthmuseum.org.uk/emcms/items?type=3>



The QR code for the YouTube channel is on the right.

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If you would like to provide a news article or illustration, please send it to the editor, preferably on disk or by email.

Printed by SRP Design & Print, Leigh Road, Chichester, PO19 8TU Tel: 01243 782988

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