



Longstanton & District Heritage Society

Protecting and Promoting
the Heritage of
Longstanton & District

NEWSLETTER

No. 10, September 2017

LDHS Celebrates 10th Anniversary

On 11 May this year we celebrated our 10th Anniversary - so we wish Happy Birthday to all our present members for supporting us so well in the cause of LDHS heritage, over the last 10 eventful years! We also must offer our thanks for those members who are no longer with us, who supported us so enthusiastically in the early years. We certainly would not be here now if it had not been for their faith in us at what was a critical moment in our villages' history.

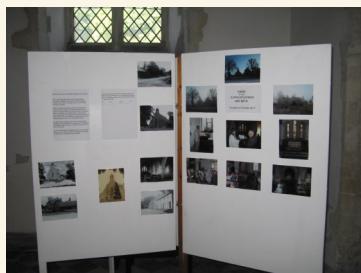


One of our earliest talks with Mike Petty as guest speaker

Looking back over 9 years of **LDHS Newsletters**, the sheer variety of themes tackled by our small team of trustees becomes apparent.

Northstowe has dominated our thinking and has been a driver: how to integrate Longstanton, Oakington and Northstowe heritage which is all encompassed within our District?

Having established our written constitution and gained public support via our inauguration at a public meeting in May, 2007, our aim has been the same: to establish, if it were at all possible, a museum that not only reflects Longstanton's rural, social and military past but to be a repository for finds from the villages of Longstanton and Oakington and Westwick which are being unearthed as a result of the development taking place in our villages. As our generation is witness to the transition from a village to urban landscape we owe it to future generations to record what went before.



An early exhibition held in St Michael's Church—2006 before the official launch of the society

Over the years we have published openly the aims of our organisation and its successes. We have invited input from both members and non-members. A LDHS website was created and more recently this has been followed by a 'Facebook' page. During the last 10 years over 50 public talks have been held on varied subjects relating to local history. Regular updates in the Longstanton Life have allowed members and non-members within the community to follow our work. Historical snippets and the publication of internet links, heritage posters etc, ensure our work is providing a high quality educational resource.



Our very first Newsletter, May 2008, marking the year 2007/8

Progress, BUT Is A Museum On The Way For Northstowe?

Over the years a series of very fruitful meetings between ourselves, HCA (owners of the Oakington airfield site) and others has now resulted in the inclusion of these words within the legally binding Northstowe Phase 2 S106 agreement which was finally signed earlier this year.

"Longstanton District Heritage Society Display Facilities, means the accommodation of display and storage facilities for the Longstanton District Heritage Society within part of the community facilities or public realm within the Development the details and location of which are to be developed as part of the Heritage Strategy."

This may be music to our ears but now is not the time to relax our efforts; we need your support more than ever.

Heritage Core Group Is Created

In addition, we are delighted to inform our members about another legally binding commitment also found within the agreement. We have been provided with the following summary of that provision:

"... the S106 for Northstowe Phase 2 includes the provision for a Heritage Core Group to take forward the issues over heritage assets in and around Northstowe, including the provision of a Heritage Strategy for the entire site, both during and after construction. The group will be convened by the County Council, and initially will include a representative from SCDC, the HCA and LDHS/Longstanton Parish Council. The first meeting is planned for the afternoon of 27/6 at the HCA offices in Cambridge."

A representative of LDHS has asked to be part of this Heritage Core Group and our Secretary, Hilary Stroude, has been nominated by the committee to take on this role. Ever since our world-wide petition to safeguard some of the former RAF buildings within a Heritage Core, the society has lobbied for a heritage strategy for Northstowe, in addition to a museum. The creation of the new town has resulted in the severance of the Longstanton conservation area, with most of our Listed buildings being retained in the village whilst much of the associated historic landscape has been transferred to Northstowe. All the heritage of Longstanton, Oakington and Westwick, and Northstowe needs sensitive, coherent and consensual management and this is what the Heritage Core Group should set out to achieve. That is our aim as we take a place at these talks.



Lobbying for the preservation of a Heritage Core 2011. original artwork commissioned by LDHS committee member Tony Cowley

Goodbye To An Old Friend

We were saddened to find out just recently that one of our earliest supporters, Norman Collinge of 7 Squadron Association, died earlier this year. Norman supported our work to preserve the history of RAF Oakington prior to the official launch of the heritage society in May 2007. Norman was one of the earliest contributors to the archives and often visited The Manor in those early years.



Norman Collinge outside the 'J' Hangar where he worked repairing damaged planes - 2005

The death of Norman and all the other original supporters and members of the society has not diminished our determination to ensure that the history of our villages and the airfield is not forgotten. In fact each loss of a member and friend strengthens our resolve that **"We Will Remember Them"** through the work that they supported for so long.

Another Successful Year Of Talks

Talks Autumn 2016 - Spring 2017

Just for the record since our 2016 Newsletter:

Friday 2 September: **AGM** and talk after, **'Memories of Rural Longstanton'** by Hilary Stroude.

Friday 7th October: **'Chivers Jam Factory at Histon'** (1873-1960) by David Oates.

Friday 4th November: **'Impact of the Second World War'** on South Cambridgeshire by Dr Anthony J Cooper.

Friday 3rd March: **'Changing Face of the Public House'**, by Mark Donachy.

Friday 7th April: **'Recent Archaeological Studies on the Wimpole Estate'** by Michael Coles.

Friday 5 May, **'Suffragettes and Votes for Women'** by Mary Dicken.

These talks represent a continued commitment to giving our surrounding communities a programme that, hopefully, provides interesting 'snapshots' into different subjects.

Looking forward to the autumn, our proposed programme is:

Friday 1 September: **2017 AGM**, followed by **'Samuel Pepys'** by Dr Gordon Hewlett.

Friday 6 October: **'Basket Making in Cambridgeshire'** by Gill Shapland.



Friday 3 November:

'Bricks in West Cambridgeshire - the 17th and 18th centuries' by Michael Coles



2017 - A Historic Year For Longstanton & Northstowe

2017 marks a watershed moment for Longstanton and Northstowe. Out of the soil and fields of Longstanton's parish lands is rising the first new town built in England since Milton Keynes. Although construction of the new town started a while ago, after years in the planning, this Spring saw the first residents move into the new homes built by Bloor Homes just opposite what was Crabtree Corner on the B1050. The occasion was marked by an official launch event on the Bloor Homes site.



Members of the Northstowe Community Working Group at the official launch of Northstowe held on 11 May 2017 on the Bloor Homes site

LDHS Welcomes Northstowe Residents

Late last year LDHS was asked whether we would write a souvenir guide for Northstowe residents so that they would have an understanding of the history of the new town and how that history is shared with the villages of Longstanton and Oakington and Westwick. Supported by the Oakington and Westwick Historical Society, the Northstowe Community Working Group and SCDC, a heritage guide was produced earlier this year. Funding from the development enabled copies to be distributed to all residents of the existing villages. In addition the heritage guide which we have produced will form part of the Welcome Pack that will be handed out to all new residents as they make their home within Northstowe. We hope that the heritage guide will help make the new residents feel part of the wider community and we look forward to perhaps welcoming them to the LDHS talks. An appreciation of our local history is a great way to break down barriers and will help old and new residents come together via a mutual understanding of our shared past.

Now The Serious Work Begins!

It is remarkable how so much progress has been made in the last few months. After 10 years of hard work it is satisfying to see that the heritage of our villages and Northstowe is now being viewed as a significant asset which should be safe-guarded for future generations. Whilst the heritage society can be pleased with what we have achieved we could not have done it without the support of our members. Over the next year we will work hard to influence the heritage strategy for Northstowe and we will continue to lobby and engage with other stakeholders until we really do see a **properly funded and professional museum** out on the former RAF Oakington site.

The Phase 2 Archaeological Open Day, held on 8 July 2017, amply illustrated how important the heritage of Northstowe is and why our calls for a high quality facility are fully justified. We have made progress but a more serious commitment is required from other stakeholders to ensure that this unique community and educational facility is properly funded.



Longstanton & District Heritage Society

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Many thanks to all our members - your membership is our mandate and every single member is invaluable. Remember, please do not hesitate to contact us at any time if you have any queries, would like any information or would like to contribute memories, photographs etc. Contact details are above.