# HERITAGE SOCIETY UPDATE: February - March 2025

## Annual General Meeting 2024 Report

The Heritage Society's 2024 AGM took place in the Village Institute Longstanton on Friday 6th December. The meeting took place in person and on-line and we are most grateful to all members and others who joined us for the evening. Some of those who joined the meeting remotely live in other parts of the country and we thank all those who attended in this way. It gives us confidence that people who may not live locally believe, as we do, that the social, rural and military heritage of Longstanton, Oakington, Northstowe, RAF Oakington and Oakington Barracks needs to be protected, stored and displayed within our local communities.

We continue to believe that the LDHS Archives are a unique historical and educational asset and we hope that local community leaders will help us obtain display and storage facilities within Northstowe or Longstanton soon. We were delighted to have been able to inform members at the AGM that progress is being made to secure temporary safe and secure storage for the LDHS Archives, until a permanent home can be found. Whilst discussion on this will continue in the New Year we are hopeful that 2025, will finally see the storage issue resolved.

Committee member Roger Hetherington provided a detailed report on the Northstowe community events that the Heritage Society had been involved with during the last year. Indeed a number of the heritage events were organised by Roger, and the LDHS Committee is grateful to him for undertaking this Northstowe liaison work. However, for the work of the Heritage Society to play an increasingly integrated role within the Northstowe community, it is important that Northstowe residents join the Society and play an active part in shaping the future of heritage provision across the new town and its neighbouring villages. To this end we are encouraging Northstowe residents to join the Society this year and help us with next steps. You can find more information on how to join the Society by visiting our website at https://www.ldhs.org Alternatively, message us via our Facebook page and we will send you a membership form.

## Can You Help the Heritage Society in 2025?

If anyone has the time and necessary skills to help digitise Sony video taped films and interviews please do let us know. Recommendations of tried and tested companies that provide this sort of facility would also be welcome. The taped films and interviews held in the LDHS archival collection are unique, so safe and secure digitising of this material is essential. We are also keen to hear of residents that may have some spare time and who would like to carry out research which could be used for future Northstowe News articles. If you have time to spare in 2025, we would be delighted to hear from you. Finally, if you have suggestions for information that you would like to see feature in Northstowe News articles please do let us know. In the meantime, we welcome the continued support of the Northstowe community and we hope that we can continue to work together to place heritage at the heart of the new town.

## Longstanton's Catholic Church

*(The site of which is now in Northstowe)*

The Heritage Society posed a Christmas Quiz question on our Facebook page to see whether people could find out where the Catholic Church was located and why it was set up. The LDHS Archives have limited images of this church but we are delighted that at least we have this photograph.

*This photo shows Martin and Bill Rainsford outside Longstanton's Catholic Church - DO YOU KNOW WHERE IT ONCE STOOD?*

Over the years, the Heritage Society has received queries on heritage matters from across the UK and abroad. We have also received visits from descendants of residents, whose families left Longstanton and Oakington in the 19th Century to seek a new life in the burgeoning cities of the UK or across the world. The national and international appeal iof our heritage illustrates how the history of Longstanton, Oakington and Northstowe can promote the new town on an international level.

Recently, we received the following query:

*'My family are Roman Catholic, and as such we attended church services when we were in the area. However, the memory I have of the church was that of a low lying building - almost to the point of being a hut….I also remember that Nuns were quite regularly in attendance at mass, and that at the end of the service as the congregation filed out, a nun would hold a tin of Quality Street (or something similar) for people to help themselves to a chocolate as they left.*

*My question is - which church do you think this may relate to, and does anyone else remember this, as it doesn't seem to correspond to the two churches I can see on Google Street View? The only additional information I can add which may help, is that one of the people in the household who we stayed with was a member of the Armed Forces. It was an Army property that they lived in, and the church was only a short walk away (I'd estimate less than a mile - although I could be wrong).'*

This is the sort of behind the scenes heritage work that is being carried out by the Society; with each query and contact helping us build a greater understanding of our local history. As usual, we have answered this query and more information on this little church can be found on our Facebook page. Please do follow the LDHS page and join the ever increasing community of people who care about the heritage of Longstanton, Oakington and Northstowe and the surrounding area.

**Hilary Stroude**

Secretary, Longstanton & District Heritage Society, c/o The Manor, Woodside, Longstanton, Cambridge. CB24 3BU
For more information please visit our website at https://ldhs.org or contact us by post, Facebook message by or e-mail at **ldhssec@hotmail.co.uk**