

The Newsletter of the

# *Wivenhoe History Group*



Newsletter No. 10 - September 2014

## **Heritage Lottery Fund application**

Thanks to some very hard work by Gill Strudwick and her husband, Eric, together with the support of Chris Thompson, Ian Valentine, Peter Hill and our local schools, our Group has just submitted a new application to the Heritage Lottery Fund in the East of England for the resources we need to complete our work on the World War One project for Wivenhoe. This has been a very complicated and time-consuming process which Gill and her helpers have undertaken with dedication and enthusiasm.

We have had the support of the outgoing chairman of the University's History Department, Alison Rowlands, and of ex-Mayor, Penny Kraft. If we are successful, the website that has been in our plans since the Group was founded in the spring of 2013 should be created in the not too distant future. We shall let you know if we succeed or not. If we do, WHG will need some volunteers for training purposes to populate the prospective website with text, photos and information about Wivenhoe's past.

## **The 1799 map of Wivenhoe**

Pat Marsden who has been working on the 1799 Survey Map of Wivenhoe has now completed the first tranche which involved transcribing and transferring the map details onto an Excel template ready for transfer to the Essex Place Names Project (EPNP). She was assisted in this work by Clive Dykes who collaborated on the deciphering of the map details such as the names of places, owners and occupiers and acreages and by John Foster who worked out a system for establishing compatible grid references for the map by overlaying it onto a modern OS map. Patrick Denny then kindly



agreed to check over our transcriptions to make sure they were correct before the template was handed over to Dr James Kemble of the EPNP. Material is only added to the EPNP once a year usually by the New Year so at that time you will be able to visit the site

at <http://www.essex.ac.uk/history/esah/essexplacenames/> and see the completed work which will supplement material from the 1838 Tithe Award Map for Wivenhoe which has already been added to the site.

## **John Stewart's Memories Exhibition**

Over the last Bank Holiday weekend, 23-25 August, visitors to the William Loveless Hall were able to see John Stewart's latest Memories Exhibition. What is encouraging and highly interesting is that John has been able to display some new documents and photographs each time he has put his



collection on display. These are not just of interest to Wivenhovians, old and new, but to people visiting the town. They come from far away as well as from our community and the immediate locality. If we can get the grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, these resources can be permanently preserved on the website we aim to create. In the meantime, there is always John Stewart's own site, *Wivenhoe Heritage*, where many of his photographs are already available.



Left: The William Loveless Hall full of photographs of Wivenhoe's past.

Below: The Essex Family History Group with their display and a PC to help people research their own family history.



As always, the Exhibition was well attended and drew people not just from Wivenhoe but Colchester and many other places.

## Our visit to Harwich on 16 August



On 16<sup>th</sup> August a small party from the Wivenhoe History Group went to Harwich for a guided walk led by two volunteers from the Harwich Society. The Society was founded in 1969, by a lady who restored one of the oldest houses in Harwich, 5 Church Street. She lived in it until she died and left it to the Society, which uses it as Committee room, archive, and general store. We were shown around this charming house during our tour. The Harwich Society now has 2,000 members and has acquired and restored further historic properties, which we were shown.

We started at the Ha'penny Pier, so called from its original toll for ferry passengers; it is now free, and has fine views of Felixstowe docks in the distance, and Trinity House facilities near at hand. Trinity House has a control room, which we did not see, showing the condition of lighthouses and buoys around the British Isles, and a ship, which we did see, which sails right round Britain checking the state of buoys and replacing them when necessary. The ship has some spare buoys ready on deck.

We then started around the town. We passed Navyard Wharf, the former naval dockyard, now private. Later we were shown the 16<sup>th</sup> Century Treadwheel Crane, which was powered by dock workers walking

round inside two large wooden wheels. The crane could lift up to two tons, and was in use in Navyard Wharf until the last century.

Next we were shown the outside of the Electric Palace Cinema, one of the earliest purpose-built cinemas in Britain. Since early improvised cinemas suffered from frequent fires, as a fire precaution this cinema has a separate projection room, entered via an external spiral staircase. We also saw a large mural of Harwich, painted along a whole row of houses by local children about ten years ago. We went on to the Angelgate/Timberfields memorial to the 1953 flood, and walked along the new floodwall which it is hoped will prevent any recurrence of the floods; it worked in this year's surge.

Our next stop was the Lifeboat Museum. This houses a retired lifeboat which originally served at Clacton. The lifeboat is no longer usable as there is no slipway, and the boat had to be dismantled to get it into the museum; when reassembled it would not go through the doors.

Our next visit was to the High Lighthouse. This tower is misnamed; it was in fact a landmark for shipping. If the High Lighthouse was lined up with the Low Lighthouse, half as tall and nearer the shore, it showed ships that they were on course to enter the harbour. The tower was for a while the only known five-storey council house. It has recently been transferred to the Harwich Society by the Council.

We then visited the Harwich Society's headquarters at 5 Church Street. Our tour finished by viewing the outside of the Guildhall, a handsome 18<sup>th</sup> century building now used as council offices, and the outside of the house, now private, once lived in by Christopher Jones, Master of the Mayflower. In the course of our tour we passed numerous pubs and restaurants which were highly commended by our guides; unfortunately it was the wrong time of day for us to check this.

John Black



*John Black at the recent Wivenhoe Memories exhibition.*



## Forthcoming events

10.30 am Monday  
6<sup>th</sup> October

Meeting of the WWI Research Group at Gill Strudwick's new house 9, Woodland Way.

7.30 pm Wednesday,  
8<sup>th</sup> October

Group Meeting with a talk by Christopher Thompson on "The Sex in Essex! Family, Sex and Marriage in Early Modern Essex."

7.30 pm Friday,  
17<sup>th</sup> October

Public Talk in St Mary's Church by Paul Rusiecki who has just published a book called "*The Impact of Catastrophe - The people of Essex & WW1*".

7.30 pm Wednesday,  
3 December

Social Evening with wine and mince pies with an amusing talk by Jim Lawrence about his life as a bargeman and skipper up and down the River Colne.

NB. Charge of £1 per head for all Group Meetings in the Scout & Guide Hall.

Paying Guests are always most welcome to all Group Meetings.

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Wivenhoe History Group - [www.wivenhoehistory.org.uk](http://www.wivenhoehistory.org.uk)