

THE WIVENHOE SOCIETY

President  
Sir CHANDOS HOSKYNS-ABRAHALL

Chairman  
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NEWSLETTER: Spring, 1967

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on March 21st, in the Public Hall, at 7.30 p.m. This will be followed by a Public Meeting at 8.15 p.m. at which Councillor Westlake, Chairman of Wivenhoe U.D.C., and one of the directors of Messrs. J. Gliksten and Son (the firm that is developing the shipyard site as a timber yard), will give us their views on the future of Wivenhoe.

All members of the Society are asked to make a special effort to turn up for the A.G.M., at which officers and committee of the Society will be elected for the forthcoming year. They are also asked to tell their friends about the public meeting so that as many people as possible will hear the views of two authoritative speakers on what is, to all who live in Wivenhoe, the vital topic of the town's future.

Like all similar Societies, we need more members, and the Committee hope that each member will try to enroll a new member. The following Newsletter gives some idea of what the Society has done in its first year, and we hope that you will show it around to anyone you think might like to join the Society. (The annual subscription is only 5s.0d.) If you have any views on the Society's activities or any other matters you think the Society should concern itself with, please don't hesitate to get in touch with any of the Committee members: their names are given at the end of this News-sheet.

RIVER WALL WALK

Several years ago an exceptionally high tide broke through the river wall, between Wivenhoe and the Hythe, and what was one of the most popular walks around here came to a sudden end overnight.

It is now the aim of the Wivenhoe Society, with the co-operation of the Colchester Civic Society, the Colchester Ramblers Association and the Walkers Association of the University of Essex, to try to re-open this walk. With this in view, members from the above Societies met one Sunday afternoon on the site of the breach to discuss whether this was possible or not.

The Council Surveyor, with Councillors Hatch and Kemble, and two members from the Essex Rivers Catchment Board, also came along to give their valued advice.

It was decided, unfortunately, that the cost to repair the wall professionally would be prohibitive, but it is hoped that, with voluntary labour from members of all these Societies, this delightful walk will once again be enjoyed by the local public, and at not too great a cost.

## TREES

It may come as a surprise to some of you to learn that this area was once known as the Forest of Wivenhoe. When we first became interested in tree preservation it soon became obvious that large areas of the Urban district did not have a single forest tree remaining. Unfortunately, many established trees have been cut in the last year or so, and many more will go if something is not done (and this is true of the whole of north east Essex as much as Wivenhoe). At present the Society is trying to inform both the local Council and the public that this problem exists. Members of the Society can help by interesting their friends and local Councillors in stopping the felling of trees.

If a tree has a trunk with a circumference of three feet at five feet from the ground it can be preserved simply by notifying the County Council of its existence. If you let us know of any such trees in danger, we can and will act.

## PRESERVATION

At the present time there are only two premises in Wivenhoe under the shelter of Preservation Orders: The Old Siege House and the old bakery. The following houses, without being particularly grand or historical, nevertheless have interesting features and are full of character and charm and might well be fit subjects for preservation:

- 1) The White House, High Street, and Ropery House, The Cross.

Two early Georgian domestic buildings superimposed on earlier structures, many traces of which survive. Panelling, alcoves and mantels exist in each.

- 2) The Old Manse and Little Wick, High Street.

Both built in 1740 and altered at intervals over the years. Again, earlier interior features. Both have delightful staircases. Little Wick has two well-concealed smugglers' holes and a beamed underground room also used for smuggling (invisible until the recent windows were added).

- 3) These very pleasant and ordinary buildings form a wonderful group with the Falcon and its adjacent red roofed cottages and without this group much of the flavour of the older part of the town would depart. The Falcon has many Tudor features beneath its 18th century façade and appears repeatedly in parish registers from 1550 onwards. (Such documentary evidence is invaluable when a case is being made for the preservation of buildings.)

- 4) Archer Hall and the houses around it, including Riley's and the cottages opposite Riley's, are an essential and pleasing ingredient of old Wivenhoe. A commercial facelift - removal of ugly advertisements and careful use of colour wash, at at Scheregate Steps - would work wonders.

- 5) The bow-fronted sea-captains' houses on the Quay, so light and airy upstairs, form a characteristic group and are an essential part of the character of the Wivenhoe waterfront. These should be preserved as a group.

But, for all the above, popular as well as documentary support is required. While members of the Committee and others can provide the latter, we need the co-operation of the whole Society in enlisting the former. Margery Dean is in charge of this operation and hopes that some definite action will be possible in the near future.

## "PARKING PATCH"

By this we mean the piece of waste ground belonging to the County Council immediately outside the main entrance to the Playing Fields and which has long been used as an unofficial car park, greatly to the detriment of the appearance of that part of Wivenhoe. As soon as the new official car park was completed just inside the Playing Fields, we wrote to the County suggesting that something might be done to improve this patch and offering to help with the possible provision of trees, benches, etc. This was very well received; the County agreed to do up the land, with a high kerb so that it would be physically impossible for cars to use the ground for parking, and the U.D.C. will maintain the area.

## 1966 COUNCIL ELECTIONS

We held a most successful meeting immediately prior to the elections to which all the candidates were invited to give their views on various topics of interest to the Society. This was followed up by a leaflet setting out the views expressed by the candidates. While the effect on the elections was probably only marginal, it did create a considerable amount of interest.

## SHIPYARD DEVELOPMENT

The Society has been greatly exercised about the future of the old shipyard site and of the Saltings to the west of it, particularly when it learned that the Wivenhoe U.D.C. supported the application for planning permission for the open storage of timber on all 35 acres of the Saltings. The Society lodged objections to this application and was gratified to receive a letter from the Clerk to the Essex County Council stating:

"The appropriate Committee of the County Council have taken your views into account and forwarded them together with the applications to the Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Local Government. The Ministry has no objections to the course proposed by the County Council which was that permission should be given for the open storage of timber on about 10 acres of land adjoining Wivenhoe Shipyard but that permission should be refused for the remaining 25 acres of land included in the application."

The Society has also expressed great concern both to the Wivenhoe U.D.C. and to the County Council about the increase of heavy traffic through the town resulting from the new timber yard. From the replies we have received it is clear that the route used by the lorries will be Station Road - High Street - The Avenue. The Society has learned nothing, however, to cause it to lessen its concern in this regard.

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman	Mr. G.S. Gale	Ballast Quay House	Wivenhoe 365
Treasurer	Mr. B.G. Humphry	Wick House, Gt. Bentley	
Secretary	Ann Griffiths	"Herons", Anglesea Road	" 8159
Committee:	Mr. P.A. Brown	"Aluric", Queen's Road	" 751
	Mrs. D. Clarke	"Gurney Vale", Belle Vue Road	" 547
	Mrs. P. Cross		
	Mrs. M. Dean	The Old Rectory	" 523
	Mrs. C. Fraser	Tenpenny Farm, Alresford	" 283
	Lady Hoskyns-Abrahall	Maple Cottage, The Quay	" 663
	Mr. C. Hughes	"Riverview", Ballast Quay	" 459
	Mr. D. Mason	Trinity House, The Quay	" 754
Mr. H. Naylor	Wrawby House, Park Road	" 430	
Dr. E.G. Palmer	"Ten Acres", The Avenue	" 209	
Mr. J.A. Tatam	Waverly House, The Avenue	" 577	