



Gosport Society

Registered as Charity No. 289942

GOSPORT SOCIETY SPRING NEWSLETTER 2024

Dated 21st February 2024

Dear Gosport Society Members,

Spring is upon us and likewise Gosport Society subscriptions are due shortly. Throughout last year careful consideration has been given to strictly control Gosport Society's finances. We have been very prudent and have made a number of changes in the Society's administration to reduce costs, Our meeting venue was changed to The Maritime Building, not only a saving on hire cost, but the problem of poor acoustics, resolved. Local delivery of news updates has been carried out by a GS member by hand, saving postage costs. Also, less members without Email, thus saving postal costs. All social visit events have been organised locally, avoiding unnecessary travelling costs to members.

However, we are facing increased costs as we have no Hon. Treasurer. Acting Hon. Treasurer, Sue Cook kindly agreed to undertake this post until a replacement can be found. The Executive Committee agreed the need to employ an independent financial assessor to monitor our accounts, including a formal Audit to be carried out at the end of the financial year, end of March 2024.

Our income from publication sales will also be reducing, currently we have only 20 copies of our last publication, Gosport – Conservation & Restoration left in stock, these are on sale at the Tourist Information Centre (TIC). Hopefully these may be sold before the TIC closes in the summer. Sales of our earlier publications are minimal.

Therefore, taking inflation into account and the fact that membership fees have remained the same for quite a few years, discussion has taken place at our Executive Committee meeting on 20th February to review the situation.

The Executive Committee cannot ignore the situation and have decided to ask members to agree to increasing subscription to £15.00 per year, to maintain Gosport Society's financial stability.

We wish to advise members well in advance, as it will be important for members to make alterations to their banking arrangements, Renewal of Membership 1st April 2024.

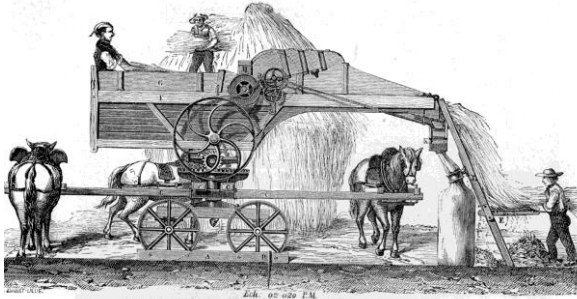
RIOTS IN STOKE ROAD – READ ON!

We may wonder what the effects of Artificial Intelligence will have on employment in the future, and what the outcome will be? Cont.,

However, in Gosport, during the period of the Industrial Revolution 1830, the effects of changes in employment were real.

We may all know about the Puddletown Martyrs, but have you heard or read about ‘The Captain Swing Rioters’

Two hundred years ago the county of Hampshire along with much of the rest of rural England was in a state of agricultural distress, With the introduction of notably, threshing machines, the traditional way of workers life was disappearing.



The Governments of the time were very slow to make Parliamentary reforms, such as the Poor Laws resulting in unemployment and discontentment amongst the working classes, who were quiet literally starving.

William Cobbett, born in Farnham, a farmer, toured the country addressing workers to encourage reform. During one of his visits to Gosport, it left a deep impression on the local townsfolk. Inflamed by his oratory, protestors gathered in Stoke Road and started a series of fires in neighbouring farm properties, other troubles followed.

The Hampshire Chronicle noted, with concern, fires at Mr Westmore’s Rickyard just outside Gosport and damage at the barns a Bedenham Farm, together with riotous behaviour in South Street Gosport!

The Government was concerned that England would follow France into Revolution, they appointed ‘The Iron Duke’ to restore order! The Duke of Wellington, the Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire, came down hard on all offenders.

Henry Pollexfen a 26-year-old clerk from Gosport enters the story. He was an attorney’s clerk of a local Gosport firm of James Hoskins Esq.

Henry was accused and charged with writing a threatening letter to Captain John James Pervis R.N. of Bury Hall, Alverstoke. (the site of the now Northcott Nursing Home Bury Hall Lane.).

Pervis was one of the Town’s Magistrates responsible for keeping law and order, there was no police force in those days. Wellington introduced rewards of £50 for identifying anyone who was involved in lawless and disorderly conduct.



300 ‘Captain Swing Rioters’ in Hampshire were arrested and speedily brought before the ‘Grand Assizes’ held at the Grand Hall, Winchester, hundreds were transported to Australia, a number hung, notably Henry Cook a young man from Micheldiver, who only knocked off the hat of a member of the Baring family (Barings Bank maybe?). Cont,



Many of the accused did not have legal representation, Henry Pollexfen was fortunate, he was acquitted, having legal representation.

Sue and I attended a seminar in Winchester University last year, held by The English Project whose aims are to Commemorate the Bicentenary 1830-2030. Re-enactments may even take place, so if there are any budding thespians out there, I am sure your participation would be welcome.

Going through the Gosport Records issue No9 (1974), to my delight I found Lesley Burtons article, 'The Disturbances' of 1830.

Thank-you Lesley Burton Gosport Society's Hon. Vice President, for recording this forgotten story.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

May I on behalf of the Gosport Society take the opportunity to wish our Hon. Vice President, Joyce Upperton, a very happy 100th birthday on the 26th March 2023.

Joyce is currently recovering from a second fall, in which Joyce broken her hip again. We all wish Joyce a speedy recovery. We are pleased to report Joyce is now out of hospital and at home in Gosport.

We were so pleased to see Joyce back on her feet at our Speakers Meetings last year after her first fall, Joyces determination and her interest in life is an example to us all.

We must not forget Harry, who has been a great support to Joyce. Well done, Harry.

Gosport Society Current Business.

Gosport Society Planning Sub Committee

Our Planning Team (Richard Harrison, Jeff Knott & Brian Mansbridge) have been extremely busy since our last meeting of 14th November 2023,

24 Planning Consultations have been received and responded to, a no mean feat undertaken by Planning Team, especially as Richard Harrison has also been abroad during this time.

Gosport Borough Council seek Gosport Society's opinions as a Consultee on every Planning Application of Listed Building or property within our Conservation Areas.

To view Gosport Society responses, please see the Gosport Society Web Page (Planning Application section)

Gosport Society Web Pages.

It has been a number of years since we embarked on a review of our Web Page, the current format is old and has been replaced by systems such as WordPress.

Our GS Webpage subcommittee has been investigating various options, and have sought quotations from specialist companies to update our Webpage.

The costs that have been obtained are eye watering!

Fortunately, Chris Kerrison who joined Gosport Society's Executive Committee last year, has agreed to update the Gosport Society Web Pages. Chris is a very experienced Web Designer having worked for HM Government and other authorities, Gosport Heritage Open Days Web Pages, is one of Chris's creations.

The current Gosport Society Web Page will continue for the time being, but we are anticipating the new Web Page to be a big step forward in communication.

SEA DEFENCE Sub Committee.

Our Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) representatives, have been voicing Gosport Society's concerns regarding Fort Blockhouse Sea Defences on a very regular basis at the quarterly HAZ Partners meetings held at GBC offices.

This was a result of Chris Donnithorne's presentation to Gosport Society (June 2022) and his research and report, 'The Threat to Portsmouth Harbour'.

As reported in previous news updates, the Sea Defences at Fort Blockhouse (and Royal Haslar) failed during recent storms, urgent repairs apparently continue to be carried out. The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) promised to provide a Structural Engineers Report by the Summer of 2023, this failed to materialise and is still awaited. Reinstatement costs of the Blockhouse sea defences has been talked about in the region of £150M +.

As part of the HAZ initiative, consultants were appointed to review the site to ascertain recommendations for its future use. This was completed, the historical listed building identified and recorded.

The (DIO) who are responsible for the site have been very tight lipped throughout the period of HAZ, it could not be confirmed if the Royal Navy would dispose of the site or not?

However, the site has been vacated and apparently will be sold on the open market.

Gosport Society has been closely discussing the situation with GBC, our mantra is that the Sea Wall Defences need to be retained by the Government, not sold to a developer, who would off load the responsibility to the future occupants of Fort Blockhouse.

At the last HAZ meeting, Claire Collins (DIO), eluded that the DIO were well aware that as Gosport Society is a 'Partner' in HAZ, a copy of the Structural Report concerning the Sea Wall Defences may be available?

The DIO have also commissioned a Road Traffic Survey to be carried out, which indicates possible information for future planning permissions.

A Liaison Meeting between Gosport Society and GBC will be arranged shortly, Gosport Society will continue an address the situation with GBC.

Gosport Society Current Speakers Meetings 2023/2024.

13th March 2024 – Speaker - Richard Jones – Ship Wrecks around the Solent and Isle of Wight.

Richard's new book on the subject will be available on the evening, no doubt you will be able to have a signed copy!

8th May 2024 – Speakers - Portsmouth Royal Dockyard Historical Trust. - Women at work WW1, 'The Triangle Girls.'

Current Items of Interest

There are several Drone Videos of local Redevelopments currently being undertaken, namely,

Battery No2 – The Diving Museum at Stokes Bay. – ariel footage of the repairs being carried out to resolve water ingress and improved disabled access to the building.

See – <https://thehds.com> Gosport Drones Video.

Fort Gilkicker – Dramatic views of the exposed original Fort and refurbishments being carried out.

See – YouTube – South Coast Drones UK

Gosport Gun Boat Yard – view around the remaining Gun Boat Yard Sheds.

See – Dave Rolands Gosport Area. Facebook page.

Forthcoming Visit to Grange Airfield Museum at HMS Sultan

This visit has also proved very popular and we are looking forward to this visit on 16th April 2024.



Future Visits- Gosport Society Members visits for the next Season 2024/25.

Visit to Royal Haslar to view the redevelopments that are taking place.

Date 5th June 2024 at 10AM, reservations may be made, secretary@gosportsociety.co.uk or 07542-515014

The Tour will take approximately 2 hours and include the St Lukes Church.



The following visits are being organised, details will be circulated to GS Members in due course.

Visit to Solent District HM Coastguard base at Lee on the Solent airfield



Annual Subscription Renewal

As mentioned at the beginning of this Spring Newsletter, annual subscriptions **will be Due 1st April. 2024. Membership subscription £15.00 per annum.**

We will also be distributing AGM nomination forms with this newsletter, this is to give all members the opportunity to consider standing for any of the posts on the Executive Committee, as follows,

Chairman
Vice Chairman
Hon. Secretary
Hon. Treasurer
Publishing Supervisor
Archive Supervisor
Membership Secretary
Social Secretary.

As mentioned in previous news updates / News Letters, the current administration is being undertaken by a small Executive Committee which is not sustainable. If we are unable to fill these posts, we will be limited in continuing offering some of our services, which would be regrettable.

Restoration in Action.



For those who are interested in building restoration, may we recommend viewing ‘Opening up the Soanes’ on YouTube.

The Sir John Soanes Museum in London has undergone major restoration in recent years, the film goes step by step through the alterations carried out over several years.

Sir John Soanes, a bricklayer’s son became one of the most famous Regency Architects in London, the Bank of England is one of his designs. It is an amazing museum and well worth a visit. Entry is free! His personal collection of artifacts, including many Hogarth, Turner and Canaletto paintings is extraordinary. Sir John Soanes left his collections to the Nation, the Museum is at Lincon’s Inn Fields, London WC2A 3BP.

We trust you have enjoyed the newsletter, and thank you for your continued support of Gosport Society,

Richard Cook
Chairman Gosport Society.

21nd February 2024.